

Parenting Styles of Hmong Parents and its Effects and Contributions to Hmong Student's

Academic Achievement

by

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A Research Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the
Master of Science Degree
in

School Counseling

Approved: 2 Semester Credits



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December, 2010

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Title: *Parenting Styles of Hmong Parents and its Effects and Contributions to
Hmong Student's Academic Achievement*

Graduate Degree/ Major: MS School Counseling

Research Adviser: Diane Klemme, Ph.D.

Month/Year: December, 2010

Number of Pages: 42

Style Manual Used: American Psychological Association, 6th edition

Abstract

In 1975, the Refugee Assistance Act of 1975 granted access to the first wave of Hmong refugees into the United States. The 2000 United States Census counted 170, 049 people who identified themselves as Hmong. While the struggles of the Hmong people are very different in Laos and Thailand; the United States refugees and immigrants continue to face a different array of difficulties and hardships. In spite of their difficulties acculturating into the culture and adapting to the United States, Hmong-American parents soon identify and stress the value of an education to their children.

This research reviewed parenting styles of Hmong-American parents and how the parenting styles contributed to Hmong-American children's academic achievement and success. Parenting styles have been correlated with children's academic achievement and success. Limited research has identified that Hmong-American parents are viewed as more authoritarian in regard to their children's education than European-American parents. Even though Hmong-

American parents are viewed as more authoritarian, their children still do very well in school when compared to Caucasian students whose parents are typically identified as authoritative; the parenting style research suggest correlates to better academic achievement in children. This research also identified that Diana Baumrind's parenting styles may not necessarily reflect those of other ethnic cultures.

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Acknowledgments

First of all, I would like to thank my thesis advisor Dr. Diane Klemme for guiding me through this process. Thank you for having been so patient with me and serving as my source for answers and guidance.

To my wonderful husband of eight years, thank you for your unconditional love and support through this long journey. If it was not for your words of encouragement, I would not be where I am today. Thank you for believing in me when I doubted myself. I love you!

Bryant, oh how much you have grown and now comprehend at twenty months! Thanks for being so patient with me while I completed my coursework. There is never enough time in a day to play with you and to share with you the energy that you have. Now that I am done with this part of my academic career, you have all my attention. We will have more play dates! I love you and hugs and kisses!

To my family, thank you for loving me for who I am and for supporting me through this. I cannot thank you all enough for the love and words of wisdom that you all have shared with me through my graduate studies. Thank you for helping me with Bryant when I needed someone to watch him so that I could do my homework or when I had to work late. I know how hard it is to try to get a twenty month old to listen, but without all of your help, I would not have been able to complete this phase of my education. Thank you for your help, and I love you all!

Lastly, I would like to thank the faculty in the School Counseling program. This journey will be an unforgettable experience for me. Thank you all for sharing your experience and knowledge with me these past two years!

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Chapter I: Introduction

As an ethnic minority group with origins traced to Central Asia, what is now Southern China, and more recently parts of Southeast Asia that include Burma, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam, it is only fitting that for nearly three decades now, scholars and intellectuals have referred to the Hmong as “freemen” or “free-people” (Lo, 2001). The reference can be attributed to the manner in which the Hmong, who for decades and even centuries, lived in their isolated and independent communities of relatives or clans in the highlands of the before mentioned countries, which allowed them to maintain their personal freedom and avoid hostilities between themselves and with other groups of people (Lo, 2001).

As a result of the turbulent times of Southeast Asia during the mid-twentieth century that is commonly known as the Vietnam War in the Western Hemisphere, many of the Hmong were displaced from their homes due to their involvement in the conflicts throughout that region of the world but primarily in Laos. As refugees who fled to escape political reprisal and ethnic persecution, the United States of America would be one of their many destinations that included Australia, Europe and other parts of North America. Although their resettlement in the United States would mean permanent changes to their way of life and result in an array of new issues, it would also allow for opportunities that would have never been available to them in the old country. It was clearly evident that one of these newfound opportunities would be the access to an education that would allow for economical and social progress and success. Understanding the importance of an education, Hmong parents encouraged and pressed their children to do well in school, and the general manner in which they did it would also influence or have other effects on their children.

Statement of the Problem

The Hmong people, as with any other group of people have always wanted what was the best for their children, and their time in the United States has allowed them to become aware of and value the importance of an education. In Laos, many of the Hmong children were unable to attend school and attain an education because it was not economically feasible for their families. Children normally remained with their families and tended to their parents and/or siblings' needs, the family's fields, etc. Life in the United States however changed this for Hmong children as the accessibility to an education was no longer a luxury but the norm.

One aspect of the Hmong culture that has remained the constant custom is the role of the parents in their children's lives. Hmong parents continue to still heavily influence their children's everyday lives and especially in regards to their children's education. The parents' involvement and authority continue to have a significant determining factor in their children's academic achievement and success in school. It was typically the case that Hmong parents never had the opportunity to attend school in Laos, and that is why they had become and remain so adamant about their children's academic achievement and success.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to review current literature and research on the parenting styles of Hmong-American parents and how the parenting styles affected and contributed to Hmong-American children's academic achievement and success. In addition, the research will examine parenting styles in relation to the Hmong-American parents' acculturation into the Western culture and compare Hmong-American parenting styles to existing Western culture parenting styles. The research will be done at the University of Wisconsin-Stout campus during

the fall of 2010. Data will be gathered through literature reviews. The following research questions will help develop a better understanding of the issue.

1. What parenting styles are most often identified in Hmong parents?
2. Do parenting styles and beliefs of Hmong parents play a part in Hmong children's academic achievement?
3. How has acculturating into the Western culture affect Hmong parents parenting styles?
4. How do Hmong parenting styles compare to existing parenting styles in the Western culture?

Assumptions of the Study

An assumption of this review is that there is an abundant source of research articles available about parenting styles and their relation to children's academic achievement and success. The review also assumed that research on the Hmong-American people, their parenting styles, and how parenting styles play a role in their children's academic achievement and success will be available. The review also assumed that the Hmong-American people will be hidden in the larger generalized group of "Asians."

Definition of Terms

Hmong: The Hmong are people living traditionally in mountain villages in southern China and adjacent areas of Vietnam and Laos and Thailand; many have emigrated to the United States (dictionary.com, 2010).

Western Culture: The Western Culture is the modern culture of western Europe and North America (Dictionary.com, 2010).

Parenting styles: Parenting styles are standards and demands set by parents for their children and the responses to and communication with their children (Pong, Hao, & Gardner, 2005).

Authoritative: Authoritative parents that are warm, responsive, demanding and involved with their children (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009).

Authoritarian: Authoritarian parents are highly controlling and demanding (Keshavarz & Baharudin., 2009).

Permissive: Permissive parents are warm, high nurturance, responsive and low in parental control (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009).

Collectivistic: Collectivistic is to have interdependent relationships with others (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009)

Individualistic: Individualistic is to strongly stress the importance of independence from others (Keshavarz & Bauarudin, 2009)

European Americans: A European American is a resident of the United States who has origins in any of the original people of Europe (Dictionary.com, 2010).

Demandingness: Demandingness is when parents make their children become part of the family whole by their demands, supervision, and confront the child when they disobey (Darling, 1999).

Responsiveness: Responsiveness refers to which parents encourage individuality, self-regulation, and self-assertion by being supportive in their children's decisions (Darling, 1999)

Nondirective: When someone is being nondirective they are refraining from interpretation or explanation but encourages the person (Dictionary.com, 2010).

Coercive: Coercive is to dominate or control (Dictionary.com, 2010)

Limitations of the Study

One limitation to this review is the limited research available on Hmong-American parenting styles as much of the studies have the Hmong people fall into the generalized group of "Asians." Another limitation is that parenting styles of the Western culture may not reflect that of other ethnic cultures. There is also lack of access to the research on Hmong-American parenting styles because a small number of studies have been conducted solely on this issue due to the fact that this is a newer "issue." The Hmong people have also only lived in the United States for at most fifty years, but they are a group of people that have just started to surface in research. The current research on Hmong-American parenting styles may not yet have been conducted or published.

Chapter II: Literature Review

The Hmong were an agrarian group of people that farmed the undesirable highlands where they lived in Southeast Asia and survived by raising small livestock that included chickens, pigs, and some cattle. They relied primarily on immediate family members for labor to attend to the agricultural fields, which as a result required larger families (Faruque, 2002). The majority of adults and children's time was spent farming and cultivating their family's fields.

As a patriarchal society, the father was the head of the household and had authority over his entire family and responsibility for their welfare. The women were expected to attend to the needs of their husbands and children. The children, under complete compliance to their parents, were to care for their younger sibling(s), attend to menial household chores, and help with the farming (Lo, 2001).

Following World War II and the reemergence of the French's colonial power in Southeast Asia after the Japanese were expelled, the conflict in the region only intensified and expanded to absorb the Hmong into it (Lo, 2001). In 1960, the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) began recruiting the Hmong for military operations in Northern Laos. The CIA handpicked General Vang Pao to lead the United States-supplied and trained Hmong military forces, which consisted of approximately 35,000 soldiers. The Hmong were responsible for defending against the North Vietnamese intrusion into Laos, disrupting the flow of weapons and supplies through the Ho Chi Minh Trail into South Vietnam and rescuing American pilots whose aircrafts were shot down over Laos (Lo, 2001).

In 1975, the United States withdrew from Southeast Asia and stopped supplying and supporting the Hmong's war effort in Laos. While General Vang Pao and other Hmong military leaders and officers were airlifted out of Laos and into Thailand, the rest of the Hmong were left

to defend for themselves or surrender to the Communist Pathet Lao and Vietnamese forces (Hillmer, 2010). The Hmong who surrendered faced arrest, imprisonment in re-education camps and/or execution. Those who fled and attempted to escape or hide were hunted down. This retaliation against the Hmong people, both military and civilian, was the result of their support for the United States military forces during the Vietnam War (Lo, 2001).

From the 1970's and well into the 1980's, a large number of Hmong resided in the refugee camps of Thailand for months and even years waiting for the opportunity to resettle in another country or approval to return to Laos (Hillmer, 2010). In 1975, the Refugee Assistance Act of 1975 allowed the first wave of approximately 3,500 Hmong people into the United States (Lo, 2001). In the early 1980's, approximately 50,000 Hmong people had settled in the United States. Several other Hmong people resettled in France, Australia, and Canada (Faruque, 2002). The 2000 US Census counted 170,049 people who identified as Hmong in the United States (Reeves & Bennett, 2004). The states with the largest Hmong population are California with 41,133 individuals, Minnesota with 26,234 individuals and Wisconsin with 19,349 Hmong people (Yau, 2005).

Even with the influxes of Hmong refugees and immigrants into the United States, many Americans were and are still unaware of who the Hmong people are and their history. Just as it was in Laos, when Hmong parents worked their agricultural fields or raised their livestock because they were responsible for their families' livelihood. They brought this attention to what was necessary in order to be successful in the United States. Hmong parents soon realized what role an education would play in their families' economical and social success, and parents strongly encourage their children to do well in school and go on to attain a higher education.

The purpose of this study is to examine Hmong-American parenting styles and to see if it affects Hmong-American students' academic achievement and success. The topics that will be covered in this review are the four different parenting styles: authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and neglectful; the parenting styles within the Hmong culture and Hmong-American children's academic achievement and success. Diana Baumrind's research on parenting styles have been done to study how parents try to control and socially expose their children in society. Each of the different parenting styles reflect the different views parents have on parental values, practices and behaviors (Darling, 1999).

Parenting Styles

Research on parenting styles have shown that it is related to a variety of outcomes in the lives of children such as psychological problems and academic performances (Turner, Chandler, & Heffer, 2009). Parents express their attitudes towards their children by the different parenting style they epitomize and use. The values, behaviors and standards set forth by parents are conveyed to their children through the different parenting styles (Kim & Chung, 2003). Diana Baumrind defines parenting style as standards and demands set by parents for their children that include their responses to and communication with their children (Pong, Hao & Gardner, 2005). Chen, Liu, and Li (2000) write that children who receive parental warmth from their parents will allow them to develop feelings of security, confidence, trust and positive orientation towards others. The authors state that parents who are viewed as warm and responsive will have children who will develop cooperative behaviors and will have social competence (Chen et al., 2000). In contrast, children who have parents who show hostility and neglect are more incompetent and have deviant behavior such as aggression and other adjustment problems (Chen, et al., 2000).

Authoritarian Parenting. Authoritarian parents are controlling and demanding (Pong, et al., 2005). Parents of this style of parenting are also strict. They expect obedience from their children and assert power when their children misbehave (Spera, 2005). Authoritarian parents express what they want from their children through rules and orders, and do not communicate to their children the reason behind these rules. For example, authoritarian parents might say to their children, "You better do well in school... because I said so" (Spera, 2005, p. 134). Authoritarian parents do not show or offer much affection, praise and/or rewards. They do not compromise with their children and expect their children to accept their word for what is right (Brown & Iyengar, 2008). Children who have parents who are authoritarian are more withdrawn, mistrusting and unhappy (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009). These children also tend to be self-oriented and have negative attitudes towards the world, which may lead to deviant behaviors and problems adjusting to change (Chen, Dong, & Zhou, 1997). The philosophy of these parents is "It's my way or the highway" (Turner et al., 2009, p. 337). According to a study done by Coplan, Hastings, Lagace-Seguin, and Moulton (2002), children of authoritarian parents have lower self-esteem and are less spontaneity.

Authoritative Parenting. Authoritative parents are warm, responsive, demanding and involved with their children (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009). They set clear limits for their children, but they also show the children respect and allow them to be independent (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009). Parents using this style set high but realistic goals for their children and provide them with support to reach those goals (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009). Research has shown that inductive reasoning and rational guidance from parents will allow children to be more pro-social and have better behavior (Chen et al., 1997). A study done by Kaufmann, Gesten, Santa Lucia, Rendina-Gobioff and Gadd (2000) identified that when compared to the other three

types of parenting styles, authoritative parenting is positively related to a child's healthy adjustment and reduces maladjustment.

Several of Baumrind's studies (1966, 1968, 1971, as cited in Brown & Iyengar, 2008) found a positive correlation between authoritative parenting and academic performance (Turner, Chandler & Heffer, 2009). In a study done by Baumrind (1991, as cited in Turner et al., 2009), she found that children ages four to fifteen years old were more motivated, more competent and more achievement oriented if they had parents who were authoritative. Baumrind stated that authoritative parenting is associated with academic performance, whereas authoritarian and permissive parenting were negatively related with grades (Turner et al., 2009).

Permissive Parenting. Parents who are permissive are described as warm, high nurturance, responsive but lack parental control and expect few mature behaviors from their children. Permissive parents are lenient towards their children's impulses, desires and actions. These parents have few demands and allow their children do whatever they want. Children who are raised by parents who use this particular parenting style have high involvement in delinquency and low psychological functioning (Kim & Chung, 2003). When compare with academic success, this parenting style is seen as unsuccessful because it does not allow children to develop the self-direct abilities they need to be successful in school (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009).

Neglectful Parenting. The before mentioned parenting styles were Baumrind's parenting styles, but researchers Maccoby and Martin (1983, as cited in Garcia and Garcia, 2009) reviewed Baumrind's original parenting styles and suggested an additional parenting style based on parental responsiveness and parental demandingness. Soon after their research, neglectful parenting was added to Baumrind's parenting style typology. Neglectful parents lack

demandingness and responsiveness. These types of parents are usually not involved in their children's activities and are also nondirective and coercive (Pong, Hao & Gardner, 2005).

Research has shown that neglectful parenting has a negative effect on the outcome of students' grades and participation in school (Pong et al., 2005).

Parenting Styles within the Hmong Culture

When studying the different parenting styles, it can be concluded that parenting styles are seen as a key influential source of children's emotional and social competency. The culture that a family is immersed in also impacts the parents' parenting styles (Sung, 2010). Chen et al. (1997) and Chao (1994, 1995, 2001) have consistently found that when compared to European-American parents, Chinese and other Asian parents are more controlling, which would make them more authoritarian and less authoritative. Although, their parents are viewed as more authoritarian, Asian children have been found to perform just as well or slightly better than their European-American peers academically (Chao, 1994).

Parenting styles of Hmong families can be viewed as strict, restrictive and/or more controlling, which would suggest Hmong parents are more authoritarian (Supple & Small, 2006). The authors (Supple & Small, 2006) identified Hmong American parents as being more restrictive and autocratic towards their children and believe in control strategies that are geared towards physical punishments, verbal warnings and "one-way communication" from the parent to the child. Hmong parents are viewed as authoritarian because of experiences that were related to being a refugee in Thailand and United States (Supple & Small, 2006). These life-threatening experiences can cause parents to become more protective and strict with their children (Supple & Small, 2006).

Sung (2010) states in her research that when Asian immigrants arrive in the United States, they do not all acculturate into other cultures in the same way. First generation Asian families tend to have a more difficult time acculturating because they want to maintain certain traditional values and habits. Keshavarz and Baharudin (2009) refer to the importance of culture when they look at parenting styles and behaviors of parents. They wrote in their research, "In non-Western, collectivistic cultures, parents may engage in behaviors that are consistent with authoritarian parenting styles without espousing beliefs or attitudes that are typical of authoritarian Western parents" (p. 68)

Keshavarz and Baharudin (2009) also state that parenting styles may differ from one culture to another depending on whether they are an individualistic or a collectivistic culture: how each individual looks at themselves in regards to his/her relation to other members in his/her society (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009). Collectivistic culture is defined as having interdependent relationships with others, while individualistic cultures strongly stress the importance of independence from others (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009).

A collectivistic group of people act in certain ways to keep the group consistent and members of the group encouraged to obey and respect their parents, family and larger social groups. In a collectivistic culture, parents strongly encourage certain values that are important to the entire culture such as helpfulness, conformity and social convention (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009). Lamborn and Moua (2008) describe the family ecologies model, which emphasizes that parenting strategies are closely linked with cultural values. The ecologies model helps ethnic minority families adjust into a new society by allowing others to understand how these families live within their cultural and social environments (Lamborn & Moua, 2008). This model also helps teach children to be positive about their ethnic identity so that they can be

bicultural while also attempting to acculturate into the mainstream culture (Lamborn & Moua, 2008).

The model has three dimensions: interdependence, family obligations and ethnic pride. Interdependence is a collectivistic cultural belief that parents teach their children to be dependent on the immediate family and to be involved with their extended family. Family obligations entail for children to demonstrate respect for and to their elders and to take some level of responsibility for their family. This is significant because the children of some families may take on parental roles such as caring for younger siblings or contributing to assist with the financial needs of their families. The last dimension is ethnic pride, which involves parents teaching to their children cultural practices and encouraging biculturalism (Lamborn & Moua, 2008). Lamborn and Moua (2008) go on to identify the Hmong people as a strong collectivistic group of people because most Hmong identify with an authoritarian parenting style. Authoritarian parenting style in a collectivistic culture teaches that individuals must suppress their own wants and needs and consider others' wants and needs first (Keshavarz & Baharudin 2009). Lamborn and Moua's (2008) study on Hmong American adolescents' perceptions of their parents concluded that many of the teens in the study rated their parents as encouraging, interdependent and respectful while also urging them to become independent.

On the other hand, individualistic cultures stress the importance of emotional independence, assertiveness, autonomy and the need for privacy (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009). It would be accurate to consider and identify the Western culture as an individualistic culture, and when referring to the Western culture, it is defined as a modern culture that exists in Western Europe and North America (Dictionary.com, 2010). The Western culture promotes individualistic ideals by using reasoned control and promotes the open expression of warmth and

intimacy and also frequent praise of their children (Xu, Farver, Zhang, Zeng, Yu, & Cai, 2005). When Western culture and parenting styles are studied, authoritative parenting is considered to be more consistent because it displays parental warmth, autonomy granting and democratic decision making, which promotes individualism and independence (Xu et al., 2005).

When compared to European-American adolescents, Hmong-American adolescents describe their parents as more restrictive, less open to their input, highly engaged in control attempts, and less warm and supportive (Supple & Small, 2006). The following is a quote from a young Hmong-American woman:

“The kind of physical affection and words of praise that many American parents express are unknown in my family. My parents seldom converse with my sisters, brothers, and me....They never tell us they love us, nor do they congratulate us when we accomplish something. They believe strongly that people should not show their feelings and emotions (Chan, 1994, as cited in Supple & Small, 2006, p. 1217).”

Disagreements amongst researchers do exist in regards to Baumrind's parenting styles. Some researchers wonder if Baumrind's parenting styles reflect that of other ethnic groups, especially Asian cultures (Pong, Johnston & Chen, 2010). Chao (1994) states that scoring high on authoritarian and controlling has a different meaning for Asians than for European-Americans because of the different cultural ideals and perspectives. Wu and Qi (2004) add that Asian parents are seen as less involved in their children's education, less expressive when it comes to affectionate feelings towards their children, hold higher academic expectations and expect their children to behave and to be obedient. These characteristics align with a parenting style identified by Chao that may reflect more of what Asian parents practice. This parenting style is

referred to as “child training” or “guan,” which involves parental guidance and monitoring of children’s behaviors (Pong et al, 2010).

Many Asian parents are viewed as authoritarian parents because the “child training” parenting style has similar traits of the authoritarian parenting style such as demand for obedience, directiveness and certain standards of conduct that parents expect their children to follow (Pong et al., 2000). Although Chinese and other Asian parents are viewed as being more power-assertive and controlling when compared to Western parents, in the Asian culture, these characteristics are mostly associated with care, concern and involvement (Chen et al., 2000). This particular parenting style identified by Chao measures a different type of parent responsiveness that includes involvement, investment and support of the child rather than the emotional demonstrativeness that includes kissing, hugging or praising of the child (Chao, 2001).

This idea of parenting style in the Asian culture allows for the parents to become authority figures and gives them an important role as parents (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009). Parents have the role of teaching their children the right behavior and attitudes, but they are also responsible for teaching their children about religion and culture, which is significant in the Asian culture (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009). Authoritative parenting styles may bring a closeness between parents and their children, and this “child training” technique may reflect more of the qualities that highlight parental respect, which is also very important in the Asian culture (Chao, 2001).

Xu et al. (2005) state in their study that the values of collectivism and conformity to the norm was connected to the authoritarian parenting style, and they also found that it was linked to the authoritative parenting style. The results of this study support the “child training” parenting style that Chao (1994) believes Asian families practice. Chao’s (1994) study reveals that Asian

parents not only value child obedience and parental control, which are characteristics of authoritarian parenting, but they also encourage parental acceptance and responsiveness, which are characteristics of authoritative parenting.

Parenting Styles Effects on Academic Achievements

When Hmong families arrived in the United States and first enrolled their children into the school systems of their new communities, their children lacked the academic and education background because education was not an option for many families back in Laos and Thailand (Vang, 2005). For many Hmong children, this may have been the first time for them in a school setting or in the classroom. Some schools that were enrolling these Hmong students also faced many problems due to there not having been in place the appropriate placement or instructional methods that would meet the students' needs (Vang, 2005). Schools began thinking that Hmong students would continue to demonstrate poor academic achievement and success and that they were not college material. The language barrier was identified as the primary obstacle that would hinder them from being academically successful (Vang, 2005).

Soon after the annual increase in enrollment of Hmong students in school districts with a Hmong population, the American education system identified Hmong students as Limited English Proficient (LEP). Students were placed in English as a Second Language classes (ESL) so that they could learn the English language (Vang, 2005). Public school administrators believed that many of the Hmong students would not make it onto college, and so they made sure students took classes in high school that would prepare them for the workforce after they earned their high school diplomas (Vang, 2005).

As for the parents of these Hmong students enrolled in these school systems, many of them had never had a formal education themselves and so lacked the educational background to

provide the necessary support for their children at home (Vang, 2005). Some Hmong parents still believed that once their children were at school, it was the sole responsibility of the schools' staff to have complete authority and oversight of their children's education (Vang, 2005). Although some Hmong children struggled academically due to their limited English and lack of educational support at home, most of them possessed the same goal as their Caucasian counterparts: to pursue a higher education (Vang, 2005).

Parenting styles contribute to the academic achievement and success of students because it affects their development of autonomy and maturity (Vang, 2005). An authoritative parenting style correlates the most with academic achievement and success because it helps children build better social attitudes and behaviors with others (Vang, 2005). In one study, researchers found that the authoritative parenting style was positively consistent with European-American students' grades but was not that to the grades of Asian students (Dornbusch, Ritter, Roberts & Fraleigh, 1987, as cited in Chao, 2001). The researchers stated that European-American children would benefit more from parents who were authoritative; whereas, authoritarian parenting styles would better benefit Asian children (Chao, 2001). Vang (2005) stated that children who were refugees have better experiences with academic achievement and success because of hard work, discipline, parental pressure to maintain family pride, honor and their family's expectations. This clearly fits in with the parenting style of Hmong-American parents being identified as authoritarian as in accordance with Baumrind's parenting styles (Supple & Small, 2006).

When reviewing recent Hmong-American students' academic achievement and success, Vang (2005) states that their grade point averages (GPAs) are slowly declining at the secondary education level as compared to the primary education level. At one time, being academically successful for Hmong-American students meant achieving high grades, maintaining high scores

on standardized tests and graduating on time. There was also a time when Hmong-American students would not accept any grades other than an "A." The average GPAs for Hmong students declined from the ninth grade to the twelfth grade. The average GPAs for Hmong ninth graders was 3.75, 3.07 for tenth graders, 2.96 for eleventh graders and 3.05 for twelfth graders (Yang, 1995, as cited in Vang, 2005).

Supple and Small's (2006) study comparing authoritative parenting with Hmong-American students versus European-American students concluded that self reported GPAs of the European-American students were significantly higher than those of the Hmong-American students. The parenting styles of Hmong-American parents may not be the only contributing factor for the decline of Hmong students' academic performance. Other reasons that may have contributed to this include poor school attendance or truancy, lack of attention for their falling grades, poor behaviors and credit deficiencies (Vang, 2005). Lee (2001) states in her research that Hmong American adolescents fall into two categories when they acculturate into the Western culture: those that are high-achieving model minorities and those who are delinquents, truants and gang members. When research had been conducted on Southeast Asian groups, the second-generation children were more at risk when it came to the issues of dropping out of school, truancy and other forms of resistant behavior (Rumbaut, 1995; Zhou & Bankston, 1998, as cited in Lee, 2001).

In Lee's (2001) study, some of the students she interviewed informed her that when they came home from school, family obligations usually came before homework, which would affect their grades because it would result in incomplete assignments or projects. For example, a student explained that after school, he would go straight to work, and then he would go home to

help out his mom with the household chores. Once all the chores were done, he would often be too tired to do his homework (Lee, 2001).

Hmong students' grades would also start to suffer due to truancy. Lee (2001) noticed that students would skip class often because they could not understand the materials assigned to them by the teachers. One student, who became a chronic truant and was suspended from school because of his involvement in a fight, told Lee (2001), when asked why he skipped school so much, that he started skipping classes because it was a way for him to avoid being embarrassed because he did not understand the materials in the classrooms.

Another possible contributing factor to the decline of Hmong-American students' levels of academic achievement and success could be due to changes and transformations of their personal ideals and values in association with the surround environment(s). For instance, Hmong-American children becoming more "Americanized" because they found themselves being around and interacting with other groups of American youths adopting many aspects of these other cultures. These changes would then lead to cultural clashes and rifts within these Hmong-American students' families and ultimately have a negative effect on their education. It is the general accepted understanding that in order for Hmong-Americans students to be successful in school, they would have to acculturate and accommodate into the mainstream culture without completely assimilating into it. This will allow for students to transform and yet preserve their Hmong culture (Vang, 2005).

Lamborn and Moua's (2008) study concluded that when it came to the academics of Hmong-American children, Hmong-American parents have extremely high expectations. They would expect their children to always do well in school and then automatically attend college after high school. These expectations are conveyed through conversations with their children as

well as supporting them with their education through giving them advice and monetary support (Lamborn & Moua, 2008). Chao (2001) explained in her research that although Asian Americans use more authoritarian parenting styles as a method of discipline, it did not have a negative effect on the children's academic achievement and success as predicted by other studies. When Chao (2001) studied Asian adolescents' school performance, parental control was positively correlated with academic achievement and success.

Although there may be a decline in Hmong-American students' GPA at the secondary education level, Vang (2005) did state that for those Hmong-American students who did well academically in school, they possessed and conveyed the following seven characteristics: (a) a relationship with their parents that is mutual; (b) the ability to talk about their academics with parents who will then listen to them; (c) parents who give advice and guidance; (d) a goal and a plan for their future after graduating from high school; (e) access to certain resources such as technology, teachers/counselors, extra-curricular activities, and role models (f) coping skills on how to deal with academic, social, and economic problems when it arises; (g) and a positive self-esteem (O'Reilly, 1998, as cited in Vang, 2005). This goes to show that family, language, environment and culture play important roles in the academic achievement and success of Hmong-American students.

Education is one of the most valued elements for success that Hmong-American parents hope for their children to be successful with, and for them, the typical way in which to demonstrate this was to graduate from high school and then going onto earn a college degree. Parents will support their children's education through encouragement, financial assistance, and spiritual and emotional healing. Hmong-American parents will also encourage their children through telling them stories about life struggles from Laos and Thailand and stressing the need

for an education (Lor, 2008). A college student stated how the value of an education was ingrained her:

"[My parents] were always telling, how, now that we are in the United States and that we have the opportunity to get an education, we should take advantage of it, something that you could not have even if they wanted to back in Laos. So yes, they have always pounded that unto me. Go to school, go to school, and do well. It was always something like that that came up. To me, education was second nature because of that" (Lor, 2008, p. 40)

This quote would suggest that even as first generation Hmong refugees or immigrants having just newly arrived in the United States, Hmong-American parent knew how imperative it would be for an individual to becoming successful by having attained an education. So, this is why Hmong parents constantly embedded the importance of education into their children.

Wu and Qi's (2004) study clearly states that Asian American parents expected their children to pursue a post secondary education. This study noted that 93% of Asian-American parents expected their children to attain at least a 4-year college degree in the future as compared to 74% of European-American parents, 73% Hispanic parents, and 79% African-American parents. Wu and Qi's (2004) study also showed that a two-year college was not acceptable for most of Asian-American parents. This way of thinking is commonly expressed by Hmong-American parents to their children, and it generally under the perceived context that it is what is best for their children. Wu and Qi (2004) did conclude that all Asian-American parents expect their children to earn a higher educational degree.

A study conducted by Steinberg, Dornbush, & Brown (1992, as cited in Chao 1995) suggests there may also be an assumption that if Asian parents are more authoritarian, then they

will be less involved in their children's education. Even if Hmong-American parents are viewed as authoritarian and are limited with their involvement with their children's education due to mainly the language barrier. Instead they would find other ways to assist their children succeed in school because even with their own limited or lack of an education or understanding of the language, they realized the importance of an education is in the United States. Because Asian parents are viewed as more authoritarian, they may not show support in ways such as praising their children or directly helping their children with their homework. They will however offer indirect support such as controlling their children's time outside of school, providing a desk or study area at home, assigning extra homework problems or purchasing workbooks, hiring tutors, monitoring their child, and providing a home that is nurturing and stable so their children can focus on education (Chao, 1995).

There is no doubt that most Hmong-American parents understand the importance of encouraging their children to do well in school, but the gender of their children does determine how they go about this. Hmong parents are generally more lenient on their sons than their daughters. According to Vang (2004-2005), Hmong-American parents highly support their daughters to pursue a higher education, but when it comes to choosing a college, they want their daughters to attend an institution close to home. The reason for this is so that they can keep an eye on their daughters to ensure that they do not go out too late or spend too much time having fun and socializing and not enough on their studies. Because Hmong males have been considered to either be or become the head of their household, and Hmong women are expected to be the homemakers and mothers, many Hmong-American girls have encountered difficulties with the transition between the Hmong and American cultures (Vang, 2004-2005). Below is

how Vang (1999, as cited in Vang, 2004-2005) describes the conflict of Hmong-American girls between the two cultures:

"If they are unable to complete their high school due to early marriage and pregnancy, they may find themselves in poverty. If they will eventually acculturate to American society, the traditional division of labor in the home will erode. If Hmong girls are expected to do household chores and duties and work outside the home, the traditional division of labor will be a major problem among Hmong in the future (p. 9-10)."

Marriage is also perceived as a necessity in the Hmong culture. Hmong parents typically want to make sure that their daughters will make good wives and good daughter-in-laws, and so some Hmong parents still do not completely support their daughters pursuing a college education. This is due to the perception that if the daughters are highly educated, then they may be "too old" to marry after they have earned their college degrees (Vang, 1999, as cited in Vang, 2004-2005).

Even though this may be the common cultural perceptions of some Hmong parents about their daughters, it does not generally affect Hmong-American daughters and their pursuit of an education. Lee (2001) wrote in her article that after-school programs were usually full of Hmong-American female students, and they would work really hard with their studies to becoming academically successful students. In Lee's (2001) research, the Hmong-American students who had the highest ambitions to be academically successful were female students.

With the increasing numbers of female Hmong-American students earning college degrees, they are persistently breaking away from the traditionally and culturally accepted perception of what is expected of Hmong females. Vang (2004-2005) states that roughly one-third of Hmong-American educators are Hmong-American women. This illustrates that more Hmong-American women are recognizing that education can serve as a platform for social and

cultural change and stability to shift away from the traditional Hmong cultural perception of what an ideal Hmong female should be (Vang, 2004-2005).

As stated earlier, for many of the Hmong of Laos, the conclusion of the Vietnam War in Southeast Asia meant the end of a way of life, but it would also bring about a new episode in their ever changing existence as an ethnic minority group. It would be first as refugees but then as immigrants, but the Hmong who found themselves resettled in the United States soon discovered the complicatedness of having to acculturate into a Western society as a group of people with very limited to no previous exposure to it. Yet, the abundance of new economic and social opportunities were soon realized and recognized, and for most Hmong-American parents, one such valued opportunity was the access to a quality education, which for many Hmong, had not been available to them in Laos or Thailand. Hmong-American parents' realization of this newfound opportunity for their children brought about encouragement and pressure they put on their children to challenge themselves and academically succeed in school. The manner in which Hmong-American parents are viewed as being more authoritarian would have a unique effect on their children's academic success and progress.

The different parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and neglectful have all been recognized as having roles in how children develop psychologically and academically. It is believed that children whose parents are more authoritative will develop feelings of security, confidence, trust, and positive orientation towards others as they grow up and become members of society. Those children whose parents are authoritarian, permissive and neglectful will be more incompetent and have troubled behaviors such as aggression towards others. These children may also show signs of adjustment problems. Even though there have been much research done on parenting styles throughout the years, there is still the question whether or not

these four different parenting styles reflect that of other ethnic cultures. Researchers, such as Chao (1994, 1995, 2001) have argued that Baumrind's parenting styles only reflects European-American parents and not Asian parents. She claims that even though Asian parents are identified as having an authoritarian parenting style according to Baumrind's parenting style typology, Asian parents show they love and care in a different way which she calls it "child training" or "guan."

Chapter III: Literature Review Analysis

Research has shown that parenting styles play a part in the different aspects of children's lives, and this is especially true with their academics. This research looked at how parenting styles of Hmong-American parents affect and contribute to Hmong-American students' academic achievement and success. This chapter will discuss the results of the research that was found through literature reviews. Critical analysis of the current research and recommendations for future research will also be discussed in this chapter. The literature review in this research was limited due to the limited information available about the Hmong people and parenting styles identified with Hmong-American parents.

Summary

In order for the researcher to discuss the three types of parenting styles identified by Diane Baumrind and whether parenting styles of Hmong-American parents affected their children's academic achievement and success, the researcher must provide context and examine the history of the Hmong people and who they are.

The Hmong people are a group of people who arrived in the United States from Southeast Asia as refugees shortly after the end of the Vietnam War and later as immigrants. Once having arrived, they had difficulties acculturating to the new cultures and adjusting to the different lifestyles in the United States. Many Hmong parents soon recognized that one of the only ways to becoming economically and socially successful in the United States was to acquire an education. Because of this, Hmong parents would go onto to urge and pressure their children to do well in school and expect them to go beyond a secondary education.

Regardless of the difficulties that the Hmong people have faced since seeking refuge or immigrating to the United States, many of them have gone onto accomplish a number of feats.

When looking at Hmong-Americans and their academic achievement and success in the United States, Vang (2005) reported that more than 170,000 Hmong-Americans have earned a doctoral degree in different educational subjects, and several thousands have received their master's degree in a professional field. According to the Hmong Issues 2000 Conference (as cited in Vang, 2005) more than 10,000 Hmong-Americans graduated with a bachelor's degree and several thousands are still enrolled in a college or university throughout the United States. It is also now common that for those Hmong-American students enrolled in colleges or universities, they will see more Hmong professors in the classrooms (Vang, 2005).

Diana Baumrind has defined parenting style as standards and demands set by parents for their children and the responses to and communication with their children (Pong, Hao and Gardner, 2005). These parenting styles are authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009). Authoritarian parenting are controlling and demanding (Pong et al.). Authoritative parents are usually warm, responsive, demanding and involved with their children (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009). The last parenting style identified by Baumrind is permissive. Permissive parents show warmth, high nurturance, responsive but lack parental control. These parents want to be more of a friend to their child than a parent (Keshavarz & Baharudin). After reviewing Baumrind's parenting styles, a later study done by Maccoby and Martin (1983, as cited in Garcia and Garcia, 2009) came up with a fourth kind of parenting style, neglectful. Neglectful parenting was soon added to Baumrind's parenting style typology. Neglectful parents are low on demandingness and responsiveness and are less engaged in with their children (Pong et al.). After studying each of these parenting styles, researchers have concluded that authoritative parenting style positively correlates with academic success of students (Turner, Chandler & Heffer, 2009).

When we look at parenting styles and how it can be a factor in children's academics, researchers conclude that Hmong-American parents have an authoritarian parenting style because of some of the characteristics that they display such as being strict, restrictive or having more control (Supple & Small, 2006). However, characteristics of authoritative parenting are also present in Hmong-American parents when it comes to their children's academics (Lamborn & Moua, 2008). The way Hmong-American parents help their children succeed may appear different than how European-American parents help their children succeed. For instance, instead of sitting next to their children and helping them with homework, Hmong-American parents may monitor their children's extracurricular activities outside of school or purchase workbooks for them to do at home to help them with particular subjects (Lamborn & Moua, 2008).

Some researchers (Chao, 1994, 1995, 2001; Pong et al., 2010) who study parenting styles argue that Baumrind's parenting styles are not apparent in and applicable to other ethnic cultures and especially in the "Asian" culture. Chao (1994) identifies a parenting style that she believes is practiced by Asian parents but it is not necessarily an authoritarian parenting style. This parenting style is referred to as "child training" or "guan," which involves parental guidance and monitoring of children's behavior (Pong et al., 2010). This particular parenting style is different from both authoritarian and authoritative, but it reflects more of the qualities that are important in the Asian culture and that is respecting the elders.

A comparison of Hmong-American students' GPAs to European-American students GPAs show that Hmong-American students' GPAs are declining more at the secondary level, but parenting styles of Hmong-American parents may not be the only reason for Hmong-American students' decline in their academic performance. Other reasons may be due to poor attendance or truancy, failing grades, poor behaviors and credit deficiencies (Vang, 2005). Even if Hmong-

American students' GPAs are lower than their European-American peers, their parents have the same expectations of them and that is to succeed in high school and go on to attend college and become successful.

Critical Analysis

While gathering resources and information on the subjects of Hmong-American parenting styles and their effects on Hmong-American children's academic achievement and success, it was evidently apparent that there is a limited amount of research on these topics. One reason for this is the short period of time in which the Hmong have even relevant population of interests for these studies and researches. Keep in mind that the Hmong's history in the United States only go back about five decades at its earliest origin, and the majority of the research specifically pertaining to Hmong-Americans on this topic cover only approximately thirty years.

Another reason for this dilemma can be attributed to the generalization of the different subgroups of Asian populations in the category of "Asians," "Asian-Americans" or "Asian Culture." Much of the research on Asian-Americans and parenting styles were directed towards mainly the Asian culture or population as a generalized whole and very little specifically about Hmong-Americans. There is also very limited discussion of how or if the parenting styles of Hmong-American parents have changed or progressed through the different generations as the acculturation and assimilation into the mainstream cultures took place.

Research supported Chao's (1994, 1995, 2001) study that Baumrind's parenting styles may not reflect the parenting styles of other ethnic cultures. For example, Keshavarz and Baharudin (2009) say parenting styles differ from one culture to another based on an individualistic or a collectivistic cultural point of view. In an individualistic culture, parents encourage independence. Whereas in a collectivistic culture, parents encourage

interdependence. Keshavarz and Baharudin's (2009) research helped to explain why many of the Asian parents were being identified as having an authoritarian parenting style. Although research and studies do mention and touch upon individualistic and collectivistic characteristics, there is little information of how and whether or not Hmong-American parents' culturally confined perception of academic and social achievement and success for their children change with the how they have had time to adjust to their surroundings. For instance, whether or not they have become more acceptance of their children making their own decisions concerning their education and career paths. More research is also needed to make out the effects of how or whether or not the manner in which Hmong-American children who have become much more integrated or even almost completely assimilated into mainstream American culture effect the parenting styles of Hmong parents.

Most of the research reviewed in this study stated that authoritarian parenting style is negatively associated with academic success, which may be true for European-American children but not necessarily the case for specifically Hmong-American children. Although this parenting style may not directly correlate with Hmong-American students' academics, it may be related to certain psychological or developmental problems. For instance, when Hmong-American children are under constant pressure to do well academically in school, and if they fail to meet certain expectations and goals of their parents, they may develop sense of disappointment or failure that then lead problems or rifts between the parents and their children. Once again, this is due to the limited research regarding the negative aspects of the authoritarian parenting style and how they relate to the development of Hmong-American children.

It must also be taken into consideration that parenting styles can differ from one parent to the other in Hmong-American families. As a traditionally patriarchal culture, where the males

are the authority figures, one would assume that Hmong fathers are more authoritarian than Hmong mothers. A minimum amount of information was found regarding the maternal and paternal parenting styles of Hmong-American parents, and their relationship to how Hmong-American students perform academically.

There also needs to be more research conducted on how parenting styles of Hmong-American parents affect their sons and daughters academically. There was very little research found regarding Hmong-American adolescent females and their academic success, but nothing was mentioned about how Hmong-American adolescent males performed academically with authoritarian parents. Vang (2004-2005) states in his research that girls are encouraged to go onto college but are also expected to choose a college close to home. It would be constructive to see how Hmong-American parents' common expectations and viewpoints of their daughters and sons' roles inside and outside the family or home have changed and progressed over their time in the United States.

Limitations

One obvious limitation to this review is the limited amount research available specifically pertaining to Hmong-Americans and the topics of parenting styles and Hmong-American children's academic achievement and success. Another limitation is that parenting styles of the Western culture may not reflect upon of other ethnic cultures. A third limitation is that there are also limited amount of peer reviewed journals concerning the Hmong-Americans in the United States. I would also like to see more research about Hmong-American student's academic achievement and success and how teachers and counselors are assisting them succeed in the classroom in addition to what the students receive from their parents. There is limited to no

research about how Hmong-American parents' parenting styles have changed if at all while having lived in the United States for the last fifty years.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Chapter two of the literature review shows evidence that Hmong-American parents value education and want their children to be economically and socially successful. The literature review also points out that parenting style of Hmong-American parents play a minimal role in their children's academic achievement and success. Hmong-American students' overall GPAs are lower than that of the European-American students, but other factors, as stated in chapter two, indicate that there are other contributors to the declining of grades.

As a result of the information given about Hmong-American parenting styles and their children's academic achievements, teachers and counselors need to be familiar with aspects of the Hmong culture and the parenting styles of Hmong parents so that to assist Hmong-American children and engage with Hmong-American parents. This would be beneficial for educators to understand because parenting styles may be defined differently from one culture to another. If staff members become more culturally aware, then they may have a better relationship with their Hmong students and their parents.

The researcher has identified several limitations to this study. First of all, there are limited peer reviewed journals on the Hmong people in the United States. Secondly, information on Hmong-American parenting styles was also limited. And with the nature of how Hmong-Americans are just a small ethnic minority group of the United States diverse population and along with their general categorization as "Asians" or "Asian-Americans," the overall amount of research specifically on Hmong-Americans is limited.

Future research should look more into authoritarian parenting styles of Hmong-American parents and why Hmong-American students are still able to do well in school versus Caucasian students. This research can help educators attain a better understanding as to why Hmong-American parents push their children so adamantly when it comes to their children's education. Another recommendation for future research is to study Hmong-American parents' parenting styles to identify if any or to what extent changes have occurred since they first arrived in the United States. Have Hmong-American parents changed their parenting styles from what researchers recognize as authoritarian parenting to more of an authoritative parenting style?

When looking at Hmong-American student's academic achievement and success compared to European-American students, Hmong-American students' GPA's are significantly lower, but parenting styles of Hmong-American parents play a small role in that. Additional research could further look into other reasons such as poor attendance or truancy, falling grades, poor behaviors and credit deficiencies as to why these factors play such an influential role in the decline of Hmong-American students' academics in the secondary education levels.

Another recommendation for research is to look at how the Asian parenting style of "child training" or "guan" relates to that of Hmong parents. The review identified that Hmong-American parents and other Asian groups display similar parenting styles, but it would be beneficial for researchers to specifically study the Hmong parents and their child rearing practices in detail.

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