IMMIGRANT REFUGEE ADOLESCENTS: THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PEER CONNECTEDNESS, ACADEMIC SELF-EFFICACY, EDUCATIONAL BARRIERS, PARENTAL MONITORING, AND SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

by

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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Title: Immigrant Refugee Adolescents: The Relationships Between Peer Connectedness, Academic Self-Efficacy, Educational Barriers, Parental Monitoring, and School Engagement

Adolescence can be a difficult time for youth, and several additional factors intensify the stress and risk associated with adolescence for refugee youth. Refugee adolescents, for example, often have to learn and speak different languages in different contexts, establish new peer relationships, and adjust to new cultural norms. It is important to understand how such cultural negotiations influence refugee youth's educational experiences because improved educational outcomes for youth are associated with improved health outcomes. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to explore the relationships between peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, educational barriers, and school engagement with a sample of refugee adolescents. Research hypotheses were tested using exploratory factor analysis and bivariate correlational, multiple regression, and MANOVA analyses. Data were collected from a sample of 120 refugee adolescent participants who were between 13-18 years old and arrived in the United States from Bhutan, Burma, Somalia, Congo, Ethiopia, Sudan, or Iraq. Refugee adolescent participants and their families were recruited from Ecumenical Refugee and Immigrant Services (ERIS) and the African Community Center (ACC), which are refugee resettlement agencies located in Denver, Colorado. Language interpreters were

recruited to assist with communication during data collection. Study findings showed that (a) a significant amount of variance in academic self-efficacy was uniquely accounted for by participants' educational barriers, school engagement, and parental monitoring, (b) a significant amount of variance in educational barriers was uniquely accounted for by ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, academic self-efficacy, and school engagement, (c) peer connectedness and educational barriers were positively, rather than inversely, correlated, (d) a significant amount of variance in school engagement was accounted for by educational barriers and academic self-efficacy, and (e) group differences in the level of relationships between variables were found as a function of current geographic location. Research implications include re-evaluating the use of negatively-worded and confusing items within the measures and collaborating with community partners when working with vulnerable populations. Practice implications include involving parents to decrease educational barriers through collaboration and providing educational support to foster success within the school and community.

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CHAPTER I

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

It is estimated that of the nearly 1.1 million new legal permanent residents who arrived to the United States in 2010, 13 percent came with refugee or asylee status (Department of Homeland Security, 2011). As an increasing number of immigrants migrate to the U.S. and raise their families, the number of immigrant children living in the U.S. is also rising. Estimates show that 20% of all children in the U.S. are children of immigrants (Urban Institute, 2009). With such an immigrant population increase, scholars have sought to better understand the influence of factors such as parent migration, residency status, income, family structure, acculturation processes, etc. on refugee immigrant youths' development.

Adolescence can be a difficult time for many youth because it is a developmental period associated with significant changes in family relationship quality (Dishion & Patterson, 2006; Lundell, Grusec, McShane, & Davidov, 2008), and several additional factors intensify the stress and risk associated with adolescence for immigrant refugee youth. For example, immigrant refugee youth often have to learn and speak different languages in different contexts (e.g., at home vs. at school) (Garcia & Saewyc, 2007; Kim & Chao, 2009; Portes & Lingxin, 2002), establish new peer relationships (Garcia & Saewyc, 2007; Portes & MacLeod, 1996), and adjust to cultural norms different from their family and country of origin (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Garcia & Saewyc, 2007). The presence of such stressors, or barriers, may also lead to a decrease in

school engagement (Gonzales et al., 2008) and academic self-efficacy (Barone, 2006; Gonzales et al., 2008; Kim & Chao, 2009) for immigrant refugee adolescents. Indeed, a nationwide evaluation examining the emotional and behavioral health issues among refugee and immigrant children reported that daily challenges caused by poverty, language barriers, and an academic delay with students born in the United States are experienced almost universally (McNeely, Sprecher, & Bates, 2010).

Given that students who experience fewer educational barriers and are more engaged in school are less likely to exhibit disruptive behavior, school violence, substance use, and emotional distress, understanding these influences is critical (Blum & Libbey, 2004; Gonzales et al., 2008). Peer relationships are of increasing importance during adolescence, and they influence many aspects of growth, including educational development, across gender and ethnicity (Brown, Herman, Hamm, & Heck, 2008; Goza & Ryabov, 2009; Reio, Marcus, & Sanders-Reio, 2009; Rosenfeld, Richman, & Bowen, 2000; Ryan, 2000, 2001). Furthermore, scholars suggest that the structural features of peer connectedness affect immigrants' academic outcomes more strongly than those of non-immigrant adolescents (Crosnoe, 2006; Ryabov, 2009). For example, children in immigrant families are often delayed in starting school, and are more likely to repeat classes than children in native born families (The Unicef Innocenti Research Centre, 2010). In fact, in several host countries, elementary school children in immigrant families are two to four times more likely than native born children to repeat a grade (The Unicef Innocenti Research Centre, 2010).

A number of studies have examined mental health and psychiatric outcomes for immigrant adolescents (Gonzalez et al., 2008; Gudino, Lau, & Hough, 2008; Hernandez,

Denton, & Macartney, 2008; Oppendal & Roysamb, 2004; Roussau, Hassan, Measham, & Lashley, 2008; Sam, 2000). With a few notable exceptions (i.e., Ryabov, 2009), however, little to no research has examined the influence of peers on academic outcomes for immigrant refugee adolescents. I conducted a literature review using APA PsycNET and JSTOR search engines, using "peer relationships" or "peers" or "peer connectedness", and "academic" or "school engagement", and "refugees" as keywords between the years of 2000 and 2010. This search yielded only seven peer-reviewed articles related to this topic. The purpose of this exploratory study, therefore, is to explore how peer connectedness, both ethnically similar and dissimilar, and parental connectedness and monitoring impact academic self-efficacy, academic barriers, and academic achievement for refugee adolescents.

In this chapter, I define the constructs of interest for this dissertation study and review the literature related to: (a) specific factors impacting development and health outcomes for refugee adolescents, including historical context, pre-migratory aspects, and the context of reception, and (b) the additional variables impacting school engagement and academic outcomes for immigrant and refugee adolescents, including social agents (i.e. teachers, caregivers, and peers), peer connectedness, and academic self-efficacy. I will describe specific factors that affect the development and health outcomes for refugee adolescents because they provide a better understanding of the additional barriers facing this underserved population. Such barriers include discrimination, extensive trauma, socioeconomic and legal difficulties, and a lack of access to resources, among other risks to development and health outcomes. In addition to social agents, peer connectedness, and academic self-efficacy, the link between each of these barriers and academic

outcomes for refugee adolescents will be explored. I close this chapter by providing my research questions and hypotheses. The Methodology chapter follows and details procedures, participants, measures, and analyses that will be utilized in the study.

Refugee Adolescent Development and Health Outcomes

The number of people leaving their countries of birth to live in the United States has tripled during the past 40 years (Capps, Fix, Murray, Ost, Passel, & Herwantoro, 2005), and the total number of refugees admitted to the United States increased 24 percent from 60,107 to 74,602 during the past year (Department of Homeland Security, 2010). By 2060, another 105 million immigrants are expected to be added to the United States population (Camerota, 2007). With such an immigrant population increase, scholars have sought to better understand the influence of factors such as parent migration, residency status, income, family structure, acculturation processes, etc. on immigrant children's development. Immigrant refugee youth, or those children who have at least one foreign-born parent who is unable or unwilling to return to their home country because of persecution (or well-founded fear of persecution), are a growing population within the U.S. that is often overlooked and underserved by scholars, educators, and service providers.

Refugee youth face multiple barriers to health and psychological well-being that are related to historical patterns of migration to the United States (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001), pre-migratory experiences (Daud, Skoglund, & Rydelius, 2005; Lien, Oppedal, Haavet, Hauff, Thoresen, & Bjertness, 2006; Yakushko, Backhaus, Watson, Ngaruiya, & Gonzalez, 2008), and the context of reception (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, & Aber, 1997; Han, 2008; Hernandez et al., 2008). In particular, refugee children suffer from

socioeconomic barriers, relationship difficulties, and psychosocial symptoms related to their migration experience; such symptoms may include avoidance or irritability, defiance, oppositional behavior and conflict with parents, siblings, or peers (Hodes & Tolmac, 2005; Segal & Mayadas, 2005). This section will describe in detail factors impacting health and psychosocial outcomes for immigrant refugee adolescents, including: (a) a brief historical account of patterns of migration to the United States and pre-migratory experiences, such as exposure to violence and extensive trauma; (b) the context of reception and legal status implications influencing refugees' access to resources, including education, and family functioning; and (c) the resulting access, or lack of access, to health, educational, governmental, and social service resources in the United States.

Historical Context and Pre-migratory Experiences of Immigrant Families

Prior to 1965, social science researchers indicated that for immigrants and their children to assimilate successfully in society, ethnic and cultural values must be abandoned in favor of those of the dominant host culture. This framework, termed "straight-lined assimilation," was developed to explain successful adaptation patterns of twentieth century European immigrants (Portes, Hernandez-Kelly, & Haller, 2005). Consequently, the message that scholars extended to society framed immigrants' success and achievement in a new country as being a guaranteed result of hard work, perseverance, and a little luck; if success was not attained, immigrants only had themselves to blame (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996; Portes et al., 2005). As the influx of immigrants shifted from immigrants of European descent to immigrants from Asian, South and Central American, and African countries following the 1965 Immigration Act,

straight-lined assimilation did not fit the experiences and conditions of migration for these new groups. Currently, the most common reasons for migration include escaping the political situation occurring in the country of origin (including violence that occurs in conjunction with it), reuniting with family members, and improving economic stability and mobility (CILS Data, Portes & Rumbaut, 2002).

Several pre-migratory factors, such as exposure to violence and extensive trauma, may also contribute to an immigrant's reason for leaving their country of origin and subsequent health outcomes. Furthermore, pre-migration factors may influence refugee immigrants' access to resources in the host country, environmental conditions (i.e., unsafe neighborhoods), parenting behaviors, and educational outcomes of immigrant children and adolescents. This evidence is significant for refugee adolescents in light of the strong link between immigrant parental experience and the psychological well-being of their children (Daud et al., 2005; Lien et al., 2006; Yakushko et al., 2008). Extensive trauma experienced prior to migration, which may serve as a reason to migrate, may significantly impact immigrants' physical and mental health. For example, when examining the refugee/asylee immigrant population around the world, researchers have found that, as a result of their trauma history, immigrants arriving as refugees undergo greater stress severity than non-refugee immigrants (Daud et al., 2005; Lien et al., 2006; Yakushko et al., 2008). Refugees may have witnessed or experienced physical injury, rape, or torture for many years, and experienced psychological trauma through relocation to refugee camps (Yakushko et al., 2008). As a result, they may experience posttraumatic stress, symptoms of depression, long term fatigue, and grieve multiple losses of family

members and friends, among other consequences. Such stressors, in turn, affect the psychological well-being of their children (Daud et al., 2005; Lien et al., 2006).

Such psychological costs, in turn, may negatively affect immigrant parents' ability to attend to their children's needs and engage in a broad range of parenting responsibilities, including forming healthy, protective relationships with their children. In one recent study in Sweden, for example, children of refugee parents who experienced torture exhibited more symptoms of anxiety, depression, posttraumatic stress, somatization, attention deficits and behavioral disorders than children of similar ethnic background whose parents had not been exposed to torture (Daud et al., 2005). These experiences can pose specific challenges for refugee youth and their families in the resettlement context, such as the ability to create a safe environment in the home and heal from trauma (Khanlou, 2008). Such psychologically damaging pre-migratory barriers, in turn, may translate to poorer academic outcomes for refugee children by interfering with concentration, attention, motivation, and other skills necessary for educational success. In addition to trauma experienced prior to migration, several additional barriers, such as restrictions based on legal status and subsequent access to resources, are experienced by immigrant refugees after arriving to the United States.

Context of Reception Implications for Refugees: Legal Status

Reasons for migration and assigned immigrant status upon arrival to the host country directly influence immigrant families' access to resources, functioning, and health outcomes. Furthermore, immigrants' reasons for leaving their country of origin and pre-migratory experiences are closely tied to their context of reception and status when arriving to the host country. Once arriving in the United States, immigrants and

refugees are often denied opportunities because of the color of their skin, the accent with which they speak, or the clothing they wear (Segal & Mayadas, 2005). Such discrimination occurs at school and in their classrooms, thus negatively impacting academic outcomes for refugee adolescents. This section will provide information related to the implications of the context of reception and legal status for immigrant refugees' initial resettlement, and how these factors translate to psychosocial and academic outcomes for refugee adolescents.

Legal status refers to the federal government granting legal permanent residence, the right to stay in the country indefinitely, and the right to seek employment and benefits. Legal status, therefore, allows for immigrants to access resources, such as choice of school system, government assistance, health insurance, and medical and mental health services. Individuals who relocate in search of better living conditions, but who have not been authorized by the government are classified as *undocumented*. Undocumented status is given when an immigrant enters the country legally with a temporary visa and stays past the approved timeframe, or enters without government inspection. A significant number of barriers are associated with undocumented status, such as restricted access to medical care, health insurance, employment, and mental health services, in addition to living under a constant fear of being deported (Perez, 2009). *Asylee/refugee status* generally refers to migration because the person is fleeing a state of turmoil in the country of origin because of a civil war or government corruption. Asylee/refugee immigrants are unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin due to persecution, or fear of persecution (Yakushko et al., 2008). Although asylee/refugee

immigrants typically have access to socioeconomic resources, this access may be limited and temporary, forcing immigrants to quickly establish themselves in the host country.

Access to Resources and Refugee Adolescents' Health Outcomes

Available health, employment, and educational resources strongly affect how well immigrant and refugee families adjust to living and thriving in a new country. For example, when an immigrant or refugee family arrives to the host country with limited resources, or lack of human capital to cover living costs, the family could easily fall into poverty (Hernandez et al., 2008). In fact, the baseline basic budget poverty rate for children of immigrant families is 34.1%, compared to the official poverty rate of 20.7% for all families (Hernandez et al., 2008). Furthermore, children of low-income immigrants are at an increased risk for living in overcrowded housing (i.e., as defined by one or more persons per room), which in turn can lead children living in high-risk environments associated with poorer mental health and academic outcomes. Poverty and a lack of human capital, more broadly, are associated with (a) low parental monitoring of immigrant children and adolescents, (b) living in environments of high risk, and (c) maladaptive internalizing behaviors (i.e. social inversion, avoidance of activities in school and peer involvement) and externalizing behaviors (aggression, risky sexual behavior, drug use) exhibited by children and adolescents (Dishion, French, & Patterson, 1995; Dishion & Stormshak, 2007; Hammen & Randolph, 2003).

A lack of capital and resources, consequently, may force a refugee family to live in an unsafe neighborhood that has a high rate of poverty and unemployment, potentially exposing immigrant children to violence, gang-related activities, and deviant peers (Dishion & Patterson, 2006; Dishion & Stormshak, 2007). Such conditions are

significantly associated with poor academic and behavioral outcomes for immigrant children (Brooks-Gunn et al., 1997; Han, 2008). That is, adolescents from a low socioeconomic background are more likely to have poorer quality schooling, fewer career role models, and less financial support for postsecondary options than higher socioeconomic adolescents (Ali, McWhirter, & Chronister, 2005). Successful integration and upward mobility are made difficult, and immigrant adolescents are challenged with the often negative example of low school engagement and performance by their native-born peers (Han, 2008; Bankston & Zhou, 1997). Because of a lack of human capital and parental guidance, immigrant children and adolescents may engage in a number of at-risk behaviors, such as law violations, delinquency, and substance use (Dishion & Stormshak, 2007; Hinshaw & Anderson, 2003).

In addition to refugee youth becoming at risk for behavioral problems, Motti-Stefanidi (2008) added that governmental policies and the economic situation of many immigrant families puts them at high risk for social exclusion, contributing to their lack of access to resources upon arrival. Indeed, political relationships between the United States and other nations greatly impact different economic, political, and social outcomes for immigrants. For example, during the 1980s, Cuban immigrants in the United States were more socioeconomically successful than immigrants of Mexican descent largely because the United States government gave more than twenty years of political and financial support for Cuban assimilation and economic success (Pedraza-Bailey, 1985). Concurrently, the United States policy never made a commitment to the welfare and assimilation of Mexican immigrants, resulting in few opportunities for Mexican immigrants to obtain steady employment and upward mobility (Pedraza-Bailey, 1985).

The research investigating the influence of a lack of resources and presence of barriers on educational outcomes is relatively sparse. Ali et al. (2005), however, found that environmental support, particularly from siblings and peers, is associated with the educational self-efficacy beliefs for lower socioeconomic adolescents. Several scholars suggest that future research should explore the role of peer support in the formation of educational self-efficacy (Ali et al., 2005; Ryan, 2000, 2001).

Summary

One of the most common reasons for migration includes escaping the political situation occurring in the country of origin, which may be tied to extensive trauma experienced prior to migration. Such trauma may considerably impact immigrant refugees' physical and mental health, and in turn, greatly influence the development and psychosocial and academic outcomes for children of refugee parents. This evidence serves as a significant developmental barrier for refugee adolescents, in light of the strong link between immigrant parental experience and the psychological well-being of their children. Furthermore, the limited and temporary access to socioeconomic resources (for those who have them) forces asylee/refugee immigrants to quickly establish themselves in the new host country. If not, the abrupt cut off from resources may force refugee parents to concentrate their energy in meeting basic needs for their family, significantly impacting the parent-adolescent relationship and the strength of the family system. Given that a limited access to socioeconomic resources may lead to parenting limitations, unsafe environmental factors, and negative adolescent psychosocial outcomes, it is apparent that pre-migratory factors, legal status, context of reception, and access to

resources are highly influential on health outcomes for immigrant refugee families, including refugee adolescents.

Because adolescence is a period that is marked by a shift in the quality of relationships from family members to peers, peer connectedness is of significant importance in this study. The following section will review how peer connectedness, in addition to the barriers described above, impacts the psychosocial and academic outcomes for immigrant refugee adolescents.

Immigrant Refugee Adolescents' Academic Outcomes

In addition to pre-migratory conditions, the context of reception, refugee/asylee legal status, and a limited and temporary access to resources, several additional factors influence the academic outcomes of refugee adolescents. Adolescence is a developmental period characterized by physical, social, cognitive, and environmental changes; amidst the complex transition from childhood to adulthood, adolescents must make decisions about their dedication to school and academics (Ryan, 2000). Academic engagement and outcomes are critical to study because most opportunities in society are linked to success in school (Ryan, 2000; Fine, 1991; Prinstein & Dodge, 2008). Knowing more about school engagement and achievement outcomes for adolescents has far-reaching consequences, and contributes to understanding adolescents' life trajectories (Ryan, 2000; Fine, 1991). Information in this section addresses the importance of school engagement and academic outcomes, along with several factors which contribute to school engagement for refugee adolescents, including (a) the impact of social agents, such as caregivers, teachers, and peers; (b) peer connectedness, including deviant peer groups, prosocial peer groups, and the aspects of ethnic identity and acculturation of

peers within the peer group; and (c) the mediating role of academic self-efficacy in the link between peer relationships and academic outcomes for adolescents.

School Engagement and Future Psychosocial Outcomes

School engagement includes a student's affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses related to attachment, sense of belonging, or involvement in school (Brewster & Bowen, 2004). For example, students are considered disengaged from school when they demonstrate attendance problems, such as cutting class or receiving unexcused absences (Brewster & Bowen, 2004). Engagement and motivation essentially require a state of emotional well-being, which, for refugee immigrants, may be compromised by internal factors (i.e. trauma) and environmental components (i.e. unsafe neighborhoods) (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Thijs & Verkuyten, 2008). Students who experience fewer educational barriers and feel engaged in school are less likely to exhibit disruptive behavior, school violence, substance use, and emotional distress (Blum & Libbey, 2004; Gonzales et al., 2008). Indeed, the life prospects for high school dropouts are dismal in a struggling economy. Specifically, high school dropouts are more likely to experience unemployment, to engage in delinquency or criminal activity (Stormshak & Dishion, 2007), and to suffer mental health consequences (Brewster & Bowen, 2004). Several aspects of school engagement, such as problem behavior and affect, have been found to be particularly relevant for the academic achievement of ethnic minority and immigrant youth (Brewster & Bowen, 2004; Han, 2008). For example, Han (2008) examined predictors of academic outcomes and social relationship problems for immigrant families. She found that family educational background, parental involvement, and school and neighborhood environments were important in explaining higher rates of risk for

academic failure for adolescents in immigrant families as compared to those in native-born families. Such outcomes indicate the importance of gaining a better understanding of the environmental and social agents that influence school engagement and academic outcomes for refugee adolescents.

Social Agents and Academic Outcomes: Teachers and Caregivers

Social agents, such as teachers, caregivers, siblings, and peers, serve as powerful influences on school engagement and academic outcomes for adolescents (Ryan, 2001). Indeed, direct links have been found between parental and teacher support and positive educational outcomes (Brewster & Bowen, 2004; Rosenfeld et al., 2000), as well as between peer group interactions and academic development for adolescents (Crosnoe, 2006; Goza & Ryabov, 2009; Ryan, 2001). Only a few studies, however, examined the effects of peers on academic outcomes for adolescents from immigrant families (e.g., Ryabov, 2009). Given adults' influence as social agents, this section will review literature pertaining to the impact of teachers and caregivers on school engagement and academic outcomes for adolescents.

There are strong links between the degree to which caregivers are involved in, and promote, their children's education and academic outcomes (Adams, Ryan, Ketsetzis, & Keating, 2000; Brewster & Bowen, 2004; Falbo, Lein, & Amador, 2001; Han, 2008). Support from caregivers (e.g. monitoring homework completion, reinforcing the value of education, etc.) helps direct children and adolescents towards positive behavior and engagement in school (Brewster & Bowen, 2004; Ryan, 2000). In other words, the involvement of parents and caregivers in their children's academic development may

serve as a protective factor for school dropout, delinquency, and truancy (Dishion & Stormshak, 2007).

Researchers who have examined ethnic minority groups, however, have found variation in the relationship between parental involvement and academic outcomes ethnic minority adolescents. For example, McNeal (1996) found that while parental discussion of educational importance was significantly related to the academic achievement of African American and White students, the same could not be said for Latino or Asian students (as cited in Brewster & Bowen, 2004). Similarly, with regards to children of immigrant families, contextual factors are extremely influential on the academic outcomes (Han, 2008). In particular, family background, i.e. parental education and socioeconomic status, has been found to have the most influence in explaining the differences in academic achievement between children in immigrant families and their native-born peers (Han, 2008). Furthermore, Han's findings revealed that not all children from immigrant families with low-income and parental education suffer from poorer academic outcomes; parenting practices and involvement serve as mediating factors to academic achievements of these children (Han, 2008).

In addition to the influence of parents and caregivers, teachers also serve as important social agents who impact academic achievement and school engagement (Brewster & Bowen, 2004; Stanton-Salazar, 2001). In some cases, teacher support, or the degree to which teachers listen to, encourage, and respect students, has been found to be an important factor in affective and behavioral aspects of school engagement: even more so than parental support (Brewster & Bowen, 2004). Stanton-Salazar (2001) asserted that support from teachers and other adults at school becomes more important for the

academic success of ethnic minority students, given that such support is considered harder to obtain. Peer group influence, however, is arguably the most influential social agent for the development and academic outcomes of adolescents (Ryan, 2000, 2001; Prinstein & Dodge, 2008).

Social Agents and Academic Outcomes: Peers

In addition to teachers and caregivers serving as influential social agents, a remarkably strong association exists between an adolescent's behavior and the behavior of their peers (Prinstein & Dodge, 2008). Because adolescence is a period that is marked by a shift in the locus of relationships from family members to peers, peer connectedness is a primary concern in this study (Cobb, 2004; Ryan, 2000). In particular, friendships provide security and social support, help develop social problem-solving skills, and may prepare children for romantic relationships in the future (Cobb, 2004). Some relationships, such as those involving bullying and victimization, can also create a significantly negative impact on development (Thijs & Verkuyten, 2008). This section describes how school engagement and academic outcomes for immigrant refugee adolescents may be influenced by deviant and pro-social peers, ethnic identity, and acculturation on school engagement.

Broadly, adolescents' experiences with peers occur on several different levels: general interactions, relationships, and groups (Rubin, Bukowski, & Parker, 1998). Peer relationships refer to the interactions of people of approximately the same age and status (Siegler, Deloache, & Eisenberg, 2006), while a peer group can be defined as a small, relatively intimate group of peers in which regular interaction occurs (Ryan, 2000). Over the last several decades, research examining peer interactions, relationships, and groups

has focused on measuring concepts of popularity and social status, or sociometrics (Ryan, 2000). Findings revealed that adolescents tend to choose peer groups and engage in peer relationships with those who value the same characteristics and have the most similar identity (Ryan, 2000). As demonstrated by measurements of social interactions among adolescent peer groups, individual characteristics including attractiveness, social competence, aggression, shyness, temperament, and early experiences result in several common sociometric status categories, e.g. popular, average, controversial, neglected, and rejected (Bierman, Smoot, & Aumiller, 1993; Cobb, 2004; Ryan, 2000). Although being popular may appear to be a better status than a status of rejected or neglected, popularity is also associated with higher levels of aggression, and is connected to poor academic outcomes (Ryan, 2000). However, other statuses such as rejected and neglected may be linked to more negative consequences, such as higher levels of anxiety, loneliness, and humiliation, and expectations of further rejection.

How peer groups influence adolescent development and school engagement has not been well studied. A lack of attention to peer influence may be due to conceptual and methodological issues involved in studying peer groups, as well as a lack of connection among the vast and divergent theories explaining and examining peer influence (Brown, Bakken, Ameringer, & Mahon, 2008; Ryan, 2000). For example, the discrepancy among peer group study findings may be because of the reliance on adolescents' perception of their friends' behavior (i.e. perceived reports), which is not necessarily accurate (Ryan, 2000). Inconsistencies in results may also be due to a dependence on short-term longitudinal designs, consisting of two time points, to predict changes in student outcomes, and an examination of pairs or crowds of adolescents rather than peer groups

(Ryan, 2000). Given the strong influence of peers on academic outcomes, resolving these methodological issues and understanding how peer influence occurs for immigrant refugee adolescents is critical.

Despite diverging theories and findings, peer influence has consistently been found to be multidirectional; that is, peers may encourage helpful and harmful behavior depending on a multitude of contextual factors (Prinstein & Dodge, 2008; Ryan, 2001). In fact, recent literature has revealed that several factors can modify the effects of peer influence on individuals' response and behavior, including openness to influence, the salience of peers who influence, relationship dynamics, and the ability and opportunity to perform behaviors (Prinstein & Dodge, 2008). The following sections provide an overview of how the presence or absence of such factors may result in different peer compositions for refugee adolescents.

Deviant and Prosocial Peer Associations. Association with deviant peers consistently has been linked with negative academic and health outcomes for adolescents, such as delinquency, drug use, antisocial behavior, truancy, dropout, and deviancy training (Dishion & Dodge, 2005; Dishion et al.,1995; Dishion & Patterson, 2006; Dishion, Piehler, & Myers, 2008; Dishion & Stormshak, 2007). Researchers have proposed several theories to understand how and why youth emulate the deviant behavior of their peers (Dishion & Dodge, 2005; Dishion, Poulin, & Burraston, 2001; Prinstein & Dodge, 2008). For example, some theories posit that conforming to deviant behaviors is dictated by adolescents' specific desire to be a part of an admired group of peers and maintain a positive self-image (Blanton & Burkley, 2008; Prinstein & Dodge, 2008), while other theories suggest that such conformity is due to a developmental adaptation

that emerges from the school and family contexts (Dishion, Piehler, & Myers, 2008). Dishion et al. (2008) reviewed empirical support for three hypotheses explaining the development of peer influence, and found that (a) adolescents are more prone to joining deviant groups when experiencing weaker peer relationships; (b) youth who exhibit deviant behavior early in development tend to have fewer prosocial interpersonal skills as adolescents; and (c) deviant behavior is influenced by the intrinsically reinforcing mechanism of connecting with others around the sharing of deviant values, thoughts, and experiences.

Context plays an essential role in understanding the development of deviant peer groups, as adolescents, especially immigrant refugee youth, are embedded in a number of surrounding environmental systems (i.e. family, school, neighborhood, regulating policies, attitudes and beliefs, etc) (Bronfenbrenner, 1986, 1989). For example, a high proportion of ethnic minority youth reside in neighborhoods characterized by violence, deviant adult associations, inadequate resources, substandard housing, and inappropriate parental supervision and monitoring (Bumpass & Lu, 2000; Smith, 2009). Ethnic minority youth also often attend schools that are poorly funded and lack the resources and staff to support adolescents' language, learning, and cultural needs (Eamon & Mulder, 2005). Growing up in these high risk environments has been linked to deviant peer association and later delinquency and substance use (Dubow, Edwards, & Ippolito, 1997). For ethnic minority youth, child rearing practices have little influence on adolescent antisocial behavior, emphasizing the importance of understanding peer influence (Eamon & Mulder, 2005; McLeod & Nonnemaker, 2000). In regard to immigrant refugee adolescents, negative acculturation experiences may increase

immigrant refugee adolescents' risk for poor mental health outcomes, including psychological distress, lower self-esteem, and high rates of substance use (Berry et al., 2006; Garcia & Saewyc, 2007; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). Results of research on links between acculturation and health and psychosocial outcomes, however, are inconclusive, which will be discussed in a later section.

Despite findings that suggest a negative influence of peers on adolescents' academic outcomes, peer support has been found to positively impact health and academic outcomes for adolescents as well (Allen & Antonishak, 2008; Carter, Cushing, Clark, & Kennedy, 2005; Rosenfeld et al., 2000). Allen and Antonishak (2008) argue that peer influences do not solely occur in groups of maladjusted adolescents, and are not always negative in nature; the process of values transmissions among peers is normative and can be adaptive. Specifically, several researchers demonstrated that peers positively influence academic motivation, engagement (Rosenfeld et al., 2000), and degree completion (Reio et al., 2009). Rosenfeld et al. (2000), for example, found that high school students who perceive high supportiveness from friends have better attendance; spend more hours studying; avoid problem behavior; have higher school satisfaction; self-efficacy and engagement; and obtain better grades. Friendships were also found to be positively associated with attaining a General Education Diploma (Reio et al., 2009). Ryan (2001) also found that students' peer groups accounted for change in students' engagement (i.e. enjoyment of school) and achievement over time. That is, when students were members of a peer group that consisted of high achieving individuals, their level of achievement declined less over time than among students who were members of less achievement-oriented peer group.

Peer support is important for promoting positive mental health development among refugee adolescents, and for protection from risky behaviors that are associated with negative, long-term mental health outcomes (Oppedal, Roysamb, & Heyerdahl, 2005; Oppedal, Roysamb, & Sam, 2004; Portes et al., 2005; Roussau et al., 2008). Further key protective and compensatory factors that reduce immigrant adolescents' risk include the retention of culture of origin values, beliefs, and practices as well as bicultural competencies (Bankston & Zhou, 1997; Berry et al., 2006; Crosnoe, 2006; Gonzales et al., 2008). Specifically, immigrant adolescents' bilingual abilities, connection with peers from both cultures (i.e., culture of origin and host culture), and exploration of their culture of origin are linked to more positive academic and health outcomes (Gonzales et al., 2008; Kim & Chao, 2009; Mitchell, 2005; Han, 2008; Plunkett, Behnke, Sands, & Choi, 2009; Portes & Hao, 2002). Gonzales et al. (2008), for example, found that Mexican American adolescents who preserved their traditional Mexican cultural values had a stronger sense of academic engagement and decreased externalizing behaviors. It is interesting to note that with the increased number of multiethnic schools, results of research examining peer groups have suggested that ethnicity often serves as a reference of a peer group (Hamm, 2000; MacLeod, 2004; Way & Chen, 2000). Given the connection between peer groups and academic outcomes, as well as the discrimination and stereotyping of ethnic minority youth, it is important to understand the factors that determine the peer groups of adolescents of different ethnicities (Brown et al, 2008; Ryabov, 2009).

Ethnic Identity. Although scholars discus the importance of understanding the role and effects of caregivers and teachers on adolescents' development, including ethnic

identity development, few researchers have studied the impact of ethnically similar and dissimilar peer relationships on academic outcomes for immigrants and ethnic minorities (Scales & Gibbons, 1996; Brewster & Bowen, 2004). To date, the empirical and theoretical literature on peer connectedness among ethnic minority and immigrant refugee youth is too limited to provide solid evidence of which factor will be most salient in influencing academic outcomes (Brown et al., 2008). Of the few studies that have been conducted on this topic, however, the findings are mixed.

Brown et al. (2008) conducted a study utilizing peer- and self-ratings to assess the likelihood that that ethnic minority adolescents associate with ethnically defined peer groups, as opposed to peer groups defined otherwise. Interestingly, results of the peer-ratings suggested that many adolescents do not routinely associate ethnic minority peers with ethnically oriented crowds, and results of the self-ratings supported that minority students do not typically identify as a member of such ethnically-defined peer groups. Identification as an ethnic minority, however, was a highly salient factor in self-image for a number of minority youth, regardless of peer group identification. Brown et al. (2008) identified several factors that might influence an ethnic minority adolescent to join an ethnically oriented peer group: (1) extrinsic ethnic markers, which are beyond an individual's control, such as refugee adolescents whose families do not use English as their primary language; (2) the absence of distinctive individual characteristics, or behaviors unrelated to ethnicity; and (3) salience of ethnicity, or engaging in behaviors that call attention to their choosing of friends that are ethnically similar (Brown et al., 2008).

Some findings have indicated that engaging in ethnically-similar peer groups may have negative implications for the development of ethnic minority adolescents (e.g., source of peer pressure and stereotyping; Brown et al., 2008), yet more studies support that engaging in ethnically-similar peer groups serves as a protective factor for ethnic minority and immigrant refugee adolescents (Brown et al, 2008; Carter, 2003; Epstein, 2007; Steinberg, 2004). For example, Brown et al. (2008) reported that an ethnically-similar peer connectedness contributed to healthy identity and social development for Asian and Latino adolescents. Results from a study conducted by Carter (2003) aligned with this notion; he found that African-American and Latino students who identified as having ethnically-similar peer groups valued behaviors conducive to academic success, such as studying hard, getting good grades, and making the honor roll. Given that refugee adolescents may also identify as ethnic minorities, these findings suggest that support from ethnically similar peers may also be important.

Only a few studies examine the effect of peer social capital on psychosocial outcomes for adolescents from immigrant families (Gibson, Gándara, & Koyama, 2004; Oppedal et al., 2005; Oppedal et al., 2004; Rousseau et al., 2008; Stanton-Salazar, 1997). Of these key studies, peer relationships with ethnically similar peers have been found to decrease psychological adjustment risk. For example, Rousseau et al. (2008) found that in comparisons of second-generation Filipino and Caribbean adolescent immigrants with non-immigrant adolescents living in Quebec, second-generation immigrant adolescents reported lower levels of problem behavior and increases in immigrant adolescents' problem behavior were associated with their increased perceptions of racism and decreased collective self-esteem. These findings have been replicated in another cultural

context, as Oppedal and colleagues found similar results across multiple studies in Norway (Oppedal et al., 2005; Oppedal et al., 2004).

The structural features of peer networks may affect immigrants' academic outcomes more strongly than those of native adolescents (Ryabov, 2009). Several scholars state that patterns of peer influence are likely to vary across cultures and within cultures, which holds important implications for refugee adolescents (Bukowski, Velasquez, & Brendgen, 2008). That is, refugee adolescents who come from collectivistic cultures may feel different pressures to conform than adolescents from individualistic cultures. Because ethnic minority adolescents are often socioeconomically disadvantaged, experts suggest that ethnic social capital may be especially beneficial for the educational outcomes of these adolescents (Bankston, 2004; Lin, 2001; Ryabov, 2009). Indeed, Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) hypothesized that immigrant children may experience increased chances of economic success when they develop in social environments with greater amounts of ethnic social capital, or resources available in an ethnically similar community (as cited in Goza & Ryabov, 2009).

A number of studies also suggest that engaging in ethnically dissimilar peer groups bodes well for adolescent development and academic outcomes (Hamm et al., 2005). For example, Hamm et al. (2005) found that Latino and African American youth who endorsed cross ethnic friendships more frequently had higher academic achievement levels. Furthermore, in other empirical findings, ethnic minority youth who reported fewer ethnically-dissimilar relationships tended to be assigned to lower academic tracks (Mickelson, 2001; Moody, 2001). Indeed, experts argued that immigrants who become multicultural and engage both in their culture of origin and host culture will have the best

psychosocial outcomes (Portes & Zhou, 1993; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Goza & Ryabov, 2009). That is, theory and empirical findings suggest that refugee adolescents who engage in both ethnically similar and ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness will experience more educational success than those who only engage with one group or the other. This concept aligns closely with the idea of biculturalism, which will be discussed in the following section.

Acculturation. In exploring the influence of peers on academic outcomes for immigrant refugees, the notion of acculturation must be also examined to provide context for what happens with refugees, and why negotiating school is challenging. Broadly, acculturation refers to changes that take place as a result of interactions with culturally dissimilar people, groups, and social influences (Gibson, 2001; Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, 2010). Researchers who examine acculturation typically focus on immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, who are settling in their new homeland (Schwartz et al., 2010). Factors that contribute to acculturation include: (a) attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors towards immigrants; (b) immigration policy and social and economic issues within local, state, and federal levels; (c) the number of ethnically similar and other ethnic minority individuals within the community (Berry et al., 2006; Oppendal et al., 2005). Furthermore, the acculturation experience tends to be more challenging when a large cultural gap exists between an immigrant's country of origin and the host country (Ward, 2001; Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001) (Oppedal et al., 2005; Schwartz et al., 2010). For example, individuals who come from cultures that focus on the well-being of the family, nation, or religion may find it more difficult to acculturate to a Western host culture that focuses on the needs of the individual person.

Given the greater influx of immigrants and refugees who arrive from more collectivistic cultures, the cultural values gap between many migrants and the societies that receive them has widened (Schwartz et al., 2010).

Acculturation was originally studied as a one-dimensional process, following straight-line assimilation theory (Berry et al., 2006; Portes & Zhou, 1993). That is, acculturation was viewed as being on one continuum, with retention of the culture of origin on one end, and acquisition of the host culture on the other end. With the newer wave of immigrants in recent decades, a two-dimensional acculturation model, following segmented assimilation theory, was developed to study an immigrant's retention of their culture of origin and acquisition of host culture as separate dimensions (Berry, 1980; Oppedal et al., 2004; Schwartz et al., 2010). The two dimensions intersect to create four acculturation profiles: integration, or biculturalism (high ethnic-high host); separation (high ethnic-low host); assimilation (low ethnic – high host); and marginalization (low ethnic-low host). Several criticisms of this model, however, have emerged from scholars (Rudmin, 2003; Schwartz et al., 2010). Specifically, arbitrary cut points between high and low acquisition make comparisons across studies difficult (Schwartz et al., 2010). Furthermore, given the theoretical rules of the classification system, all four categories are utilized when in actuality they may not all exist for a given population (Schwartz & Zamboanga, 2008; Schwartz et al., 2010). The existence of the category "marginalization", in particular, has been questioned (i.e., Del Pilar & Udasco, 2004).

Given the limitations of the bidimensional model of acculturation, several scholars have proposed multidimensional models (Oppedal et al., 2004; Sam & Oppedal, 2002; Schwartz et al., 2010). For example, Oppedal and colleagues proposed a

theoretical framework in which acculturation is conceptualized in terms of a developmental process for immigrants and refugees (Oppedal et al., 2004; Sam & Oppedal, 2002). From this perspective, acculturation, rather than being a process that runs parallel to development, is an integral part of it, and culture domains are measured independently and analyzed separately (Oppedal et al., 2004). Furthermore, different environmental contexts require different cultural skills and knowledge for positive development during adolescence; therefore, acculturation to different settings should be studied independently (Oppedal et al., 2004; Schwartz et al., 2010). Schwartz et al. (2010) proposed a multidimensional acculturation model with six components: the practices, values, and identities of both the receiving culture and the culture of origin. The authors note that acculturation is likely not a singular progression, and these processes may all change at different rates. They highlight that this approach to acculturation would allow scholars to examine the extent to which cultural identity, a higher order construct, and cultural practice, values, and identifications are uniquely associated with psychosocial and health outcomes (Schwartz et al., 2010). Given the theoretical support for multidimensional acculturation, this conceptualization appears important in considering the peer connectedness for refugee adolescents.

During adolescence, increased interaction with ethnically similar and dissimilar peers within both the culture of origin and host culture contexts are sources of identity exploration and acquisition of new cultural knowledge and skills (Cobb, 2004; Oppedal et al., 2004; Oppedal et al., 2005). While it is clear that retention of ethnic values, practices, traditions, and beliefs is found to serve as a protective factor for immigrant adolescents (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Hernandez et al., 2005), adapting to hosting

culture is favorable for adjustment within host socioculture as well (Oppedal et al., 2004). That is, host culture plays an important role in gaining acceptance in school, and succeeding on the future job market (Oppedal et al., 2004; Oppedal et al., 2005). For immigrant adolescents, the social support of peers and teachers has proven to be an important source of protection against negative psychosocial and health outcomes (Scales & Leffert, 1999; Oppedal & Roysamb, 2004). Because of the common use of one- or two-dimensional acculturation models scholars have noted inconsistent findings with regards to the role of acculturation on health outcomes. It is unclear as to whether it is a high or low level of host culture acculturation that is protective to mental health for immigrant adolescents (Rogler, Cortes, & Malgady, 1991; Schwartz et al., 2010). Indeed, more empirical research is needed concerning the complexity of acculturation, and its relationship to health and academic outcomes (Schwartz et al., 2010).

Overall, given the significant influence of peers on academic outcomes, scholars purport that educators should pay more attention to peer networks (Ryabov, 2009; Ryan, 2000). The effects of peer experiences are not fixed, and vary as a function of person-related and peer-related characteristics (Bukowski et al., 2008). Specifically, experts have found a number of factors that mediate and moderate the relationship between peer influence and psychosocial outcomes, such as levels of friendliness, self-esteem, and self-efficacy (Bukowski et al., 2008; Cohen & Prinstein, 2006). The next section will review the mediating role of self-efficacy between adolescents and academic outcomes, as established through many empirical studies.

Self-Efficacy and Academic Outcomes

In relation to academic outcomes for adolescents, a body of research reveals that academic self-efficacy, or an individual's beliefs in his or her ability to produce desired academic results, consistently predicts academic achievement (Bandura, 1977, 1982; Bong, 2008; Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007; Thomas, 2005; Wigfield, Byrnes, & Eccles, 2006; Zimmerman, 2000). Specifically, students who demonstrate greater self-efficacy are more likely to put forth the necessary effort and persist longer when facing academic challenges (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007). Academic self-efficacy has been reported to promote academic achievement directly and indirectly by increasing prosocial behavior (Bandura 1996), mediating the relationship between victimization and achievement (Thijs & Verkuyten, 2008), and predicting deep learning, as opposed to surface learning (Liem, Lau, & Nie, 2008). Academic self-efficacy, therefore, will be included as a construct in the proposed study because it has been shown to predict behavior.

The link between parents and academic self-efficacy, and educators and academic self-efficacy, has been examined thoroughly in youth academic outcomes literature (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996; Bandura, Caprara, Barbaranelli, Gerbino, & Pastorelli, 2003; Zimmerman, 2000). The connection between peer influence and academic self-efficacy, however, has been examined to a lesser extent. Conceptually, a high sense of academic self-efficacy fosters pro-social behavior, which builds peer acceptance; in turn, peer rejection fosters emotional and behavioral problems, leading to lower academic self-efficacy (Bandura et al., 1996). Schunk and Hanson's (1985) findings align with this notion, indicating that youth who observe peers perform an academic task are more likely to believe that they can also succeed at that task, and

therefore experience an increase in academic self-efficacy. In a study examining how self-efficacy perceptions contribute to significant psychosocial outcomes over a two-year period of adolescent development, findings suggested that adolescents who perceived themselves to be capable of self-regulating actions in the face of peer pressure achieved higher grades, indicating a long-term impact of academic self-efficacy on academic outcomes (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli, & Cervone, 2004).

A study conducted by Ali et al. (2005), examined the relationships between contextual support, perceived barriers, and educational self-efficacy and outcome expectations for a group of adolescents with lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Contrary to previous studies which found mother and father support to be significant predictors of academic outcomes, Ali et al. (2005) found that peer support accounted for a significant amount of variance in educational self-efficacy. This finding suggests that peer support is an important predictor for lower socioeconomic adolescents, and may be particularly significant for refugee adolescents, given that they often fall into a lower socioeconomic bracket (Hernandez et al., 2008). Consistent with adolescent development theories, peers may serve as sources of academic self-efficacy because they are more accessible role models, and may be perceived to be better sources of than parents (Ali et al., 2005; Ryan, 2000). Such findings indicate that attention to building support from peers to strengthen academic self-efficacy may be of particular value for refugee adolescents.

Furthermore, another study examined academic achievement in the context of victimization for ethnic minority adolescents, and found academic self-efficacy to be a mediating component (Thijs & Verkuyten, 2008). They reported that adolescents'

academic self-efficacy is negatively affected by peer rejection, and diminishes emotional well-being and academic achievement (Thijs & Verkuyten, 2008). The association between academic self-efficacy and academic achievement was weaker among ethnic minority populations, suggesting that other factors may hold greater influence on educational outcomes for this population. Overall, it is evident that school related self-efficacy is an important predictor of academic outcomes.

Summary

Even though the complex process of peer influence is not yet well understood, experts agree that an adolescent's behavior is strongly associated with the behavior of their peers. Indeed, peer group influence is arguably the most influential social agent for the development and academic outcomes of adolescents, and may encourage helpful and harmful behavior depending on a multitude of contextual factors. Positive peer support, however, is crucial for promoting positive mental health development and protecting adolescent immigrants from long-term, harmful psychosocial outcomes. Other protective factors include the retention of culture of origin values, beliefs, and practices as well as bicultural competencies. Overall, peer support has been found to positively impact health and academic outcomes for adolescents, although with regards to children of immigrant families, contextual factors are extremely influential on the academic outcomes (Han, 2008). In regard to the impact of peers' ethnicity, few researchers have studied the impact of ethnically similar and dissimilar peer relationships on academic outcomes for immigrants and ethnic minorities. Of these key studies, scholars have generally found that peer relationships with ethnically similar peers decreases psychological adjustment risk, and that engaging in ethnically dissimilar peer groups bodes well for adolescent

development and academic outcomes as well. Furthermore, many findings suggest that academic self-efficacy consistently predicts academic achievement. Peer support has been found to account for a significant amount of variance in academic self-efficacy for adolescents, and may be particularly significant for refugee youth. Consistent with adolescent development theories, peers may serve as sources of academic self-efficacy because they are more accessible role models, and may be perceived to be better sources of than parents. In sum, adolescence is a developmental period marked by experimentation with, and formation of, various peer relationships. Consequently, it is important to devote more scholarly attention to peer connections, and how the quality of peer support influences immigrant refugee health outcomes.

One of the most common reasons for migration includes escaping the political situation occurring in the country of origin, which may be tied to extensive trauma experienced prior to migration. Furthermore, the limited and temporary access to socioeconomic resources (for those who have them) forces asylee/refugee immigrants to quickly establish themselves in the new host country. Researchers have examined health outcomes for refugee adolescents by exploring the psychological effects of pre-migratory factors, refugee/asylee status, context of arrival, and access to resources, few researchers have examined the relationships among refugee adolescents' peer relationships, parental connectedness and monitoring, academic self-efficacy, academic barriers, and school engagement. Indeed, immigrant adolescents often have poorer mental health outcomes than non-immigrant adolescents, and frequently experience depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, externalizing behavior, and substance abuse. In addition to such contextual barriers specific to refugees, peer connectedness significantly impact academic

outcomes for adolescents, yet this relationship has not been examined for immigrant refugee adolescents.

Study Purpose

The purpose of this study was to utilize a non-experimental, correlational design to examine how peer connectedness, including ethnically similar and ethnically dissimilar relationships, impacts parental connectedness and monitoring, refugee youth academic self-efficacy, academic barriers, and school engagement. Refugee adolescents are an underserved, overlooked population, and little to no research on the influence of peer connectedness of refugee adolescents exists in the literature. A greater understanding of the connection between refugee adolescents' peer relationships and their academic outcomes represents an important direction for enriching our knowledge in this area. That is, findings of the current study will contribute to the literature and inform interventions in several ways.

First, this information will allow those involved in refugee adolescents' immediate environments (e.g., parents, teachers, social service providers) to understand how to better serve this population and positively influence their educational success and development. Second, given that this is the first time the associations between refugee adolescents' peer relationships and academic outcomes have been explored, the proposed study will provide new normative data for instruments utilized in the study, and may yield important information to expand future research. Third, by revealing the role of ethnically similar and ethnically dissimilar peer relationships for refugee youth, study findings may contribute to the literature by identifying peer targets for health and education interventions.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The aim of this study was to explore the relationship between peer connectedness and academic outcomes for refugee adolescents. I analyzed the data collected to answer the following research questions:

Research Question 1: Is there a significant correlation between immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness and parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, and educational barriers, and school engagement? *Hypothesis*: I hypothesized that there is a significant positive correlation between immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness and parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, and school engagement, and a significant inverse relationship with educational barriers.

Research Question 2: Do immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, educational barriers, and school engagement account for significant and unique variance in academic self-efficacy?

Hypothesis: I hypothesized that immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, educational barriers, and school engagement would account for significant and unique variance in academic self-efficacy.

Research Question 3: Do immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic

self-efficacy, and school engagement account for significant and unique variance in educational barriers?

Hypothesis: I hypothesized that immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, and school engagement would account for significant and unique variance in educational barriers.

Research Question 4: Do immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, and educational barriers account for significant and unique variance in school engagement?

Hypothesis: I hypothesized that immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, and educational barriers would account for significant and unique variance in school engagement.

Research Question 5: Does the relationship between immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, educational barriers, and school engagement differ as a function of current geographic location?

Hypothesis: I hypothesized that current geographic location group differences would be present with regards to the relationships among ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, educational barriers, and school engagement.

Research Question 6: Does the relationship between immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, educational barriers, and school engagement differ as a function of sex?

Hypothesis: I hypothesized that sex differences would be present with regards to the relationships among ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, educational barriers, and school engagement.

CHAPTER II

METHODS

Participants

Immigrant Adolescents

Study participants were immigrant refugee adolescents receiving services from Ecumenical Refugee and Immigrant Services (ERIS) and the African Community Center (ACC), which are non-profit agencies addressing the needs of immigrant refugee families living in Denver, Colorado. Immigrant refugee adolescents were defined as having at least one parent who migrated to flee a state of turmoil in their country of origin, because of a civil war or government corruption (Yakushko et al., 2008). Inclusion criteria were male and female adolescents who: (a) identify as an immigrant refugee, (b) are between the ages of 13- and 18 years, (c) volunteer to participate and have permission of a guardian to do so, and (d) have completed at least one academic term at a school in Denver or Aurora, Colorado. The countries from which present study participants migrated are representative of those countries from which ERIS refugee families migrated in 2009 (see Table 1).

Adolescent participants (N = 116) included 55 (47.4%) females and 60 (51.7%) males; one participant did not identify sex. Given that many of the adolescent participants were born and raised in a refugee camp, some identified their culture as the culture of the country in which the refugee camp was located. For example, many of the adolescent participants arrived to the United States from the same refugee camp in Jhapa, Nepal, and lived at the camp for the same amount of time; yet, some identified as Bhutanese, and others identified as Nepali.

Table 1

Ecumenical Refugee and Immigrant Services: Families' Country of Origin, 2009

Country of Origin	Number of Families
Bhutan	225
Iraq	119
Burma	103
Somalia	92
Eritrea	51
Ethiopia	16
Vietnam	13
Iran	13
Russia	8
Afghanistan	4
Congo	2
Sudan	2
Liberia	1
TOTAL	649

Ethnic self-identification, therefore, included 37 adolescents who identified as Bhutanese or Nepali (31.9%), 18 as Karen or Thai (15.5%), 21 as Somali or Kenyan (18.1%), 14 as Iraqi or Syrian (12.1%), 11 as Congolese (9.5%), 7 as Sudanese (6.0%), 5 as Ethiopian (4.3%), and 1 as Rwandan (0.9%) (Table 2). For the purposes of this

document, each participant's ethnic identity will be referred to as the country of origin (e.g., Bhutanese, Karen, Somali, and Iraqi).

Table 2

Participant Demographics

	N	*%*	*M*	*SD*
Sex	-	-	-	-
Male	60	51.7	-	-
Female	55	47.4	-	-
Not reported	1	0.9	-	-
School year	-	-	9.8	1.8
5th	1	0.9	-	-
6th	3	2.6	-	-
7th	6	5.2	-	-
8th	18	15.5	-	-
9th	18	15.5	-	-
10th	27	23.3	-	-
11th	23	19.8	-	-
12th	19	16.4	-	-
Not reported	1	0.9	-	-
Age	-	-	15.8	1.8
13	17	14.7	-	-
14	11	9.5	-	-
15	26	22.4	-	-
16	16	13.8	-	-
17	14	12.1	-	-
18	32	27.3	-	-
Not reported	0	0.0	-	-
Country of Origin	-	-	-	-
Bhutan/Nepal	37	31.9	-	-
Burma/Thailand	18	15.5	-	-
Iraq/Syria	14	12.1	-	-
Somalia/Kenya	21	18.1	-	-
Congo	11	9.5	-	-
Ethiopia	5	4.3	-	-
Sudan	7	6.0	-	-
Rwanda	1	0.9	-	-
Not reported	2	1.7	-	-
Length of Time in the U.S.	-	-	27.7	24.4
4-6 months	14	12.4	-	-
7-12 months	18	16.0	-	-

Table 2 (continued)

	N	%	*M*	*SD*
13-18 months	16	14.2	-	-
19-24 months	17	15.0	-	-
25-30 months	24	21.2	-	-
31-36 months	12	10.6	-	-
37+ months	21	18.6	-	-
Not reported	3	2.6	-	-
Length of Time in School	-	-	25.8	23.8
4-6 months	21	18.6	-	-
7-12 months	17	14.7	-	-
13-18 months	15	12.9	-	-
19-24 months	11	9.6	-	-
25-30 months	20	17.3	-	-
31-36 months	11	9.5	-	-
37+ months	18	15.8	-	-
Not reported	3	2.6	-	-
Average Grades	-	-	1.8	0.7
“A”s	38	32.8	-	-
“B”s	60	51.7	-	-
“C”s	11	9.5	-	-
“D”s	1	0.9	-	-
Not Reported	6	5.2	-	-
Number of People in Home	-	-	6.0	1.9
1-3	6	5.2	-	-
4-6	72	62.6	-	-
7-9	33	28.7	-	-
10-12	4	3.4	-	-
Not reported	1	0.9	-	-
Number of Children in Home	-	-	4.0	9.2
0	3	2.6	-	-
1-3	75	62.6	-	-
4-6	35	30.2	-	-
7-9	3	2.6	-	-
10-12	1	0.9	-	-
Not Reported	1	0.9	-	-
Number of Adults with Jobs in Home	-	-	1.5	3.8
0	38	32.8	-	-
1	35	30.2	-	-
2	31	26.7	-	-
3+	4	3.5	-	-
Not Reported	2	1.8	-	-
Total	116	100	-	-

Language Interpreters

The current study also included volunteer young adult individuals, who were recruited from ACC, to assist with language translation needs. Interpreters provided language interpretation during the initial meeting of families and adolescents, during the informed consent procedures, and during survey administration. Interpreter inclusion criteria were individuals who: (a) volunteered as a language interpreter for ACC, (b) spoke fluently the native language of at least one of the refugee adolescent participants, and (c) volunteered and gave consent to participate. A total of nine interpreters assisted with this study, with one interpreter recruited for every major language spoken by the potential participants (i.e., Nepali, Karen, Karenni, Burmese, Somali, Swahili, French, Arabic, and Oromo).

Measures

This section is a description of study constructs and measures. Table 3 provides a summary of measurement information. All measures are included in Appendix D.

Demographics

An original demographic questionnaire was used to gather adolescents' demographic information including birth year sex, country of origin, length of time in the United States, grade level and length of time attending school in the United States, number of people living in the household, employment status of those living in the household, number of children living in the household, and estimated grades, which was indicated by responding to a forced-choice question. The demographic questionnaire is included in Appendix D.

Table 3

Description of Study Constructs and Measures

Construct	Measure	# Items	Variable Type
Ethnically Similar Peer Connectedness	Measure of Adolescent Connectedness (MAC)	11	Continuous
Ethnically Dissimilar Peer Connectedness	Measure of Adolescent Connectedness (MAC)	11	Continuous
Educational Barriers	Perceived Educational Barriers (PEB)	18	Continuous
Academic Self-Efficacy	Children School-Related Self Efficacy Scale (CSES)	30	Continuous
School Engagement *(composite score)*	Research Assessment Package for Schools - Student Report (RAPS-SM)	5	Continuous
	Measure of Adolescent Connectedness (MAC)	6	Continuous
Parental Monitoring	Child and Family Center Student Survey (CFCSS)	10	Continuous

Ethnically Similar Peer Connectedness

Ethnically similar peer connectedness was measured using the "peers" and "friends" subscales of the Hemingway Measure of Adolescent Connectedness (MAC,

Karcher, 2006). The items from this measure were empirically derived, and the measure was developed with ethnically and economically diverse adolescent samples. The full measure includes 78 items and 15 subscales, including connectedness to religion, romantic partners, mother, father, and children from other cultures. The "friends" and "peers" subscale items were used for the purposes of measuring ethnically similar peer connectedness for the current study, comprising 11 items total. The "peers" subscale (5 items) measures the degree to which adolescents feel they fit in with their peers, their sense of belonging in the school in general, and feelings of acceptance. The "friends" subscale (6 items) asks about how much time adolescents spend with their friends, how much they trust their friends, and how actively they communicate with friends about personal issues.

Connectedness with ethnically similar peers included asking participants, "How TRUE about you is each sentence?" for 11 MAC items. Examples of MAC items used to assess ethnically similar peer connectedness included, (1) "I have friends who are from my culture that I'm really close to and trust completely," (2) "My friends who are from my culture and I talk openly with each other about personal things," (3) "I get along well with other students who are from my culture in my classes," (4) "I rarely fight or argue with kids from my culture at school," (5) "I am liked by my classmates who are from my culture," and (6) "I get along well with the other students in my classes who are from my culture." Response options included, (1) "Not at all," (2) "Not really," (3) "Sort of," (4) "True," and (5) "Very True." Total ethnically similar peer connectedness scores were calculated by summing and then taking the mean of the 11 MAC items, with higher mean scores indicating a stronger connection to and acceptance from ethnically similar peers.

Prior estimates of reliability using an ethnic minority adolescent participant sample were moderately strong for the "friends" subscale (α = .71), and moderately strong for the "peers" subscale (α = .71). With a mixed ethnic U.S. sample (i.e., African American, Caucasian, and Latina/o), Karcher and Sass (2010) reported invariance of the factor structure for the MAC subscales across gender and ethnicity. Validity evidence for the MAC is presented by Karcher and colleagues (e.g., Karcher, 2006; Karcher & Lee, 2002), illustrating adequate to strong validity and reliability with ethnically diverse youth samples (e.g., α = .66, Karcher, 2006; α = .94, Karcher & Sass, 2010). An ERIS staff member reviewed each item and confirmed that the items were well-worded and appropriate for the population. The internal consistency reliability of the ethnically similar peer connectedness items with the present study sample was moderately strong (α = .83). Given that two subscales of the MAC were utilized to measure ethnically similar peer connectedness, two factors were expected with the present sample (Karcher, 2006).

Ethnically Dissimilar Peer Connectedness

Ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness was measured using the "peers" and "friends" subscales of the Hemingway Measure of Adolescent Connectedness (MAC, Karcher, 2006). The items from this measure were empirically derived, and the measure was developed with ethnically and economically diverse adolescent samples. The full measure includes 78 items and 15 subscales, including connectedness to religion, romantic partners, mother, father, and children from other cultures. The "friends" and "peers" subscale items were used for the purposes of measuring ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness for the current study, comprising 11 items total. The "peers" subscale (5 items) measures the degree to which adolescents feel they fit in with their peers, their

sense of belonging in the school in general, and feelings of acceptance. The "friends" subscale (6 items) asks about how much time adolescents spend with their friends, how much they trust their friends, and how actively they communicate with friends about personal issues.

Connectedness with ethnically dissimilar peers included asking participants, "How TRUE about you is each sentence?" for 11 MAC items. Examples of MAC items used to assess ethnically similar peer connectedness include, (1) "I have friends that I'm really close to and trust completely who are not from my culture," (2) "My friends who are not from my culture and I talk openly with each other about personal things," (3) "I get along well with other students who are not from my culture in my classes," (4) "I rarely fight or argue with the other kids who are not from my culture at school," (5) "I am liked by my classmates who are not from my culture," and (6) "I get along well with the other students who are not from my culture in my classes." Response options included, (1) "Not at all," (2) "Not really," (3) "Sort of," (4) "True," and (5) "Very True." Total ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness scores were calculated by summing and then taking the mean of the 11 MAC items, with higher mean scores indicating a stronger connection to and acceptance from ethnically dissimilar peers.

Prior estimates of reliability using an ethnic minority adolescent participant sample were moderately strong for the "friends" subscale ($\alpha = .71$), and moderately strong for the "peers" subscale ($\alpha = .71$). With a mixed ethnic U.S. sample (i.e., African American, Caucasian, and Latina/o), Karcher and Sass (2010) reported invariance of the factor structure for the MAC subscales across gender and ethnicity. Validity evidence for the MAC is presented by Karcher and colleagues (i.e., Karcher, 2006; Karcher & Lee,

2002; Karcher & Sass, 2010), illustrating adequate to strong validity and reliability with ethnically diverse youth samples (e.g., α = .66, Karcher, 2006; α = .94, Karcher & Sass, 2010). An ERIS staff member reviewed each item and confirmed that the items were well-worded and appropriate for the population. The internal consistency reliability of the ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness items with the present study sample was moderately strong (α = .81).

Number of Peer Interactions

The number of ethnically-similar peers and ethnically dissimilar peers with which participant adolescents interact was measured with four open-ended choice questions. These questions were added to gain an understanding of how much refugee adolescents interact with ethnically similar peers as opposed to ethnically dissimilar peers. These questions were, (1) "How many of your friends outside of school are from your culture?", (2) "How many of your friends outside of school are not from your culture?", (3) How many of your friends at school are from your culture?", and (4) "How many of your friends at school are not from your culture?" Participants responded by filling in a number. Higher numbers indicated the perception of having many friends, while lower numbers indicated the perception of having fewer friends.

Academic Self-Efficacy

Six distinct domains of academic self-efficacy were measured using a total of 30 items from six subscales of the Children's School-Related Self Efficacy Scale (CSES, Bandura, 2006). The CSES was chosen because its language level appeared appropriate for the present study sample, which includes many immigrant refugee adolescents who are still learning English as a second language. The CSES consists of nine subscales and

a total of 44 items that measure a student's confidence in the following domains: academic skills (e.g., learning math), self-regulated learning (e.g., taking good notes), enlisting in social resources (e.g., getting teachers to help), self-regulation (e.g., resist peer pressure to drink alcohol), and self-assertion (e.g., express opinions when others disagree). The six CSES subscales used for the present study and number of items from each subscale that I used included: Enlisting in Social Resources (4 items); Academic Achievement (9 items); Self-Regulated Learning (10 items); Self-Regulatory Efficacy (8 items); Self-Assertive (4 items); and Enlisting Parent and Community Support (4 items) (Bandura, 2006). The remaining three subscales, including Leisure Time Skills and Extra-Curricular Activities, Meet Others' Expectations, and Social were not included because the scale content was not relevant to the present study sample. I deleted 16 items from these six subscales because the items included complex language structure that participants likely would not understand and were irrelevant to study objectives.

Academic self-efficacy, therefore, was measured using the remaining 30 items from the six selected CSES subscales. Adolescents were prompted with, "How well can you do these things?" for CSES items such as the following, (1) "Get another student to help me when I get stuck on schoolwork," (2) "Learn science," (3) "Finish my homework assignments by deadlines," (4) "Do regular physical education activities," (5) "Work well in a group," and (6) "Express my opinions when other classmates disagree with me." Item response options ranged along a 5-point scale anchored by "Not well at all" (1) to "Very well (5)." Total academic self-efficacy scores were calculated by summing and then taking the mean of the 30 CSES items, with higher mean scores indicating a stronger sense of academic self-efficacy. Researchers with a similar participant sample found

high internal validity and reliability using the original 44-item measure (i.e. ethnic minority adolescents; Edman & Brazil, 2009, Thijs & Verkuyten, 2008). In addition to the translation procedures described elsewhere, an ERIS staff member reviewed each item and confirmed that the items were well-worded and appropriate for the population. The reliability estimates for the 30-item academic self-efficacy measure with the present study sample was moderately strong ($\alpha = .80$).

Educational Barriers

Educational barriers were measured using 18 items from the Likelihood subscale of the Perceptions of Educational Barriers measure (PEB; McWhirter, Crothers, & Rasheed, 2000). The PEB was empirically derived, and developed with ethnically and economically diverse samples of adolescents (McWhirter et al., 2000). The full measure includes 84 items and three subscales: (a) "Likelihood" of encountering each of 28 potential barriers to pursuing postsecondary education, (b) the "Magnitude" of those 28 barriers, and (c) the estimated "Difficulty" of overcoming each of the 28 barriers (for a total of 84 items). I used only 18 of 28 items from the "Likelihood" subscale to measure Educational Barriers. I removed ten of the 28 items because the items were worded using complex language structure and were irrelevant to study objectives. An ERIS staff member reviewed each item and confirmed that they were relevant to study participants. Although ten items were removed from the PEB Likelihood subscale, it was anticipated based on previous empirical research using the PEB that six distinct factors would be measured by the Likelihood subscale, which were: Financial, Relational, Ability, Preparation/Motivation, Demographic, and Separation (McWhirter, Torres, Valdez, & Salgado, 2007). Adolescents were prompted with the question, "How likely is it that this

will be a barrier for you?" for PEB items such as the following, (1) "Not enough money," (2) "Family responsibilities," (3) "None of my friends are doing what I'm doing," (4) "Parents don't support what I'm doing," and (5) "School too stressful." Item responses ranged along a 4-point scale anchored by (1) "Not at all likely" to (4) "Very likely." Total academic barriers scores were calculated by summing and then taking the mean of the 18 PEB items, with higher mean scores indicating higher anticipated barriers to their postsecondary pursuits. Validity data are reported in McWhirter, Rasheed & Crothers, and evidence of reliability with U.S. ethnic minority and Chilean adolescent samples has been reported (McWhirter, 1997; McWhirter et al., 2007; McWhirter & McWhirter, 2008). The reliability estimate for the reduced, 18-item PEB Likelihood subscale with the present sample was strong ($\alpha = .86$).

School Engagement

School Engagement was measured using the School subscale (6 items) of The Hemingway Measure of Adolescent Connectedness (MAC, Karcher, 2006) and the Ongoing Engagement sub-domain (5 items) of the Engagement subscale of the Research Assessment Package for Schools - Student Report (RAPS-SM, Skinner, Wellborn, & Connell, 1990). The RAPS-SM Ongoing Engagement subscale was selected upon on the recommendation of committee members. The two scales were summed in order to measure school engagement in a more holistic manner, rather than by measuring the construct solely based on an adolescent connectedness measure. Additionally, the MAC and RAPS-SM subscales were highly correlated (.78), supporting the summing of the subscales to measure school engagement. An ERIS staff member reviewed each item and confirmed that they were relevant to study participants.

The School subscale of the MAC consists of 6 items and measures the importance adolescents place on school and the degree to which adolescents become actively involved in being successful in school. Adolescents were prompted with the question, "How TRUE about you is each sentence?" for 6 MAC items. Items include, (1) "I work hard at school," (2) "I enjoy being at school," (3) "I get bored at school a lot," (4) "I do well in school," (5) "I feel good about myself when I am at school," and (6) "Doing well in school is important to me." Response options included, (1) "Not at all," (2) "Not really," (3) "Sort of," (4) "True," and (5) "Very True." Total School subscale scores were calculated by summing and then taking the mean of the 6 MAC items, with higher mean scores indicating a stronger connection to and investment in school. Prior estimates of reliability with samples of ethnically diverse youth were moderately strong for the "school" subscale ($\alpha = .72$) (Karcher, 2006).

The full RAPS-SM measure consists of 84 items and three subscales: (a) Engagement, (b) Beliefs about Self, and (c) Experience of Interpersonal Support. The Engagement subscale is comprised of two sub-domains: (1) Ongoing Engagement and (2) Reaction to Challenge. I used only the Ongoing Engagement sub-domain to measure school engagement. Adolescents were prompted with the question, "How TRUE about you is each sentence?" for the RAPS-SM Ongoing Engagement items: (1) "I work very hard on my schoolwork," (2) "I don't try very hard in school," (3) "I pay attention in class," (4) "I often come to class unprepared," and (5) "It is important to me to do the best I can in school." Response options included, (1) "Not at all," (2) "Not really," (3) "Sort of," (4) "True," and (5) "Very True."

Total school engagement scores were calculated by finding the sum score of the MAC school subscale and the RAPS-SM ongoing engagement subscale, with higher scores indicating stronger sense of school engagement. Prior estimates of reliability ethnically diverse adolescents (i.e., African American, Hispanic, and Euro-American) were adequate for the Ongoing Engagement subscale ($\alpha = .68$) (Institute for Research Reform and Education, 1998). The total reliability estimate of school engagement for the present study was moderately strong ($\alpha = .78$). The reliability estimate for the MAC "school" subscale items with the present study sample was moderately strong ($\alpha = .73$). The reliability estimate for the RAPS-SM "ongoing engagement" subscale items with the present study sample was moderate ($\alpha = .45$).

Parental Monitoring

Parental Monitoring was measured using the 10-item parental monitoring subscale of the Child and Family Center Student Survey (CFCSS, Stormshak, Caruthers, & Dishion, 2006). The CFCSS parental monitoring subscale is an expanded version of the monitoring scale from the Community Action for Successful Youth scale (CASEY; Metzler, Biglan, Ary, & Li, 1998) and measures the degree to which adolescents perceive their parents to monitor their behaviors and activities. Adolescents were asked, "How TRUE about you is each sentence?" for CFCSS items such as the following, (1) "At least one of my parents knows what I do during my free time," (2) "At least one of my parents knows if I do something bad outside of the home," (3) "At least one of my parents knows where I am afterschool," and (4) "At least one of my parents has a pretty good idea about my interests, activities, and whereabouts." Response options included, (1) "Not at all," (2) "Not really," (3) "Sort of," (4) "True," and (5) "Very True." Total parental

monitoring subscale scores were calculated by summing and then taking the mean of the 10 CFCSS items, with higher mean scores indicating a stronger degree of parental monitoring. Validity data for this measure are provided by Community Action for Successful Youth (CASEY; Metzler et al., 1998) and by studies conducted by the Child and Family Center, located in Eugene, Oregon (e.g., Fosco, Stormshak, Dishion, & Winter, 2006; Stormshak, Caruthers, & Dishion, 2006) with samples of ethnically diverse adolescents. Prior estimates of reliability were strong for the "parental monitoring" subscale for adolescents ($\alpha = .82$; Fosco et al., 2006). The reliability estimate of parental monitoring with the present study sample was strong ($\alpha = .89$).

Procedures

I collaborated with Ecumenical Refugee and Immigrant Services (ERIS), African Community Center (ACC), and Lutheran Family Services (LFS), located in Denver, Colorado, to recruit adolescent refugee participants and language interpreter participants to carry out this study. I have been working as an ERIS volunteer for four years and developed strong, trusting, collaborative relationships that facilitated the completion of this dissertation study. ERIS connected me to ACC and LFS, the other two refugee resettlement agencies in Denver, Colorado, to recruit additional participants. I gained support and permission to conduct this dissertation study, and to access the arrivals archives of current from the directors of ERIS and ACC. The LFS director provided me with a letter in support for this dissertation study, and helped me to access language interpreters and connect with community members affiliated with the agency (see Appendix A).

Recruitment

After gaining permission and support from ERIS and ACC, a convenience sampling technique was used to recruit adolescent refugee participants by obtaining a list of all refugee families who, (a) presently receive services from ERIS or ACC, and (b) have an adolescent child between the ages of 13 and 18 years living in the household. ERIS, ACC, and LFS administration and staff members referred those who are eligible to serve as language interpreters to the primary investigator. Given that refugee families live in close proximity to each other (i.e., in groups in apartment complexes), I went door-to-door to obtain parental consent and adolescent assent. A recruitment script (Appendix B) was used to obtain participant consent. Consent and assent forms are included in Appendix C. Consent form content included: (1) a brief description of the study, (2) eligibility criteria for participation, (3) the approximate duration of time it should take to complete the survey, (4) information about compensation, (5) a clear statement about the distinction of the current study from services at ERIS and ACC, (6) contact information for the primary researcher, and (7) the option of two different dates and times to complete the survey if he/she chooses to participate. A language interpreter accompanied me to assist with communicating about the study and consent/assent, if necessary.

I went door-to-door at a later time to collect the consent forms from those who chose to participate in the proposed study. At that time, participants were given an informational handout that told them the study location and on what day and at what time to arrive for study participation (Appendix C). Because the day and time of arrival was based on the preference indicated on the consent form, the informational handout was completed when consent forms were collected. In the case that a potential participant

requested to sign the consent/assent forms immediately rather than wait for me and language interpreter to return the following week, I respected and accommodated this request. This flexibility and accommodation was made in the best interest of the family.

For their study participation, adolescents were given a $5.00 department store gift certificate. All participants were invited to attend a one-day "celebration" sponsored by ERIS and ACC in June, 2011 at the Denver City Park. The all-day celebration included food, games, and small prizes. At the request of ERIS, ACC, and LFS, language interpreters were paid with $25.00 department store gift certificates for each half day worked.

Language Interpreter Training

Prior to recruitment, the primary investigator held a two-hour training session for participating language interpreters to ensure fidelity and standardization of the consent process and oral administration of the measures. The purpose of the training was to provide the participating language interpreters with information about the study goals (i.e., to determine if ethnically similar and ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness are related to academic outcomes for immigrant refugee adolescents) and to review the recruitment and survey administration scripts, including guidelines regarding how to clarify or explain survey items (Appendix B). Participating language interpreters were provided with copies of the survey administration script and required to practice administration during the training session. During the training session, the primary investigator addressed any questions or concerns that arose. The survey administration script included an explanation that participants' identifying information is not linked to their survey responses. Language interpreters were trained to not pressure participation,

and to communicate to participants that they can stop at any time without negative effects on the relationship with ERIS or ACC.

Data Collection

Study surveys were administered to participating adolescents in person at a designated location, typically at or near the participant's residence. For example, if four participants were recruited from one apartment complex, the survey was administered to all four participants at the same time in one of the participant's apartments, or in the community room located in the apartment complex. The survey took 20 to 60 minutes to complete. Per the suggestion of ERIS, ACC, and LFS staff and administration, questionnaires were administered orally to refugee adolescent participants by participating language interpreters. The primary investigator was available during survey administration to answer questions and address concerns. A laminated card with visual images ranging from a full glass of water to an empty glass of water was provided to assist with understanding the Likert-type scales. In the case that a potential participant requested to complete the survey immediately after signing the consent/assent forms, the primary investigator accommodated this request and the participant completed the measure at home, with the primary investigator and a translator available for any questions. This flexibility and accommodation was made in the best interest of the family. All data were stored in a locked file cabinet in an ERIS facility, and only the primary researcher had access to the key to minimize loss of confidentiality. To collect information as anonymously as possible, the first page of the survey containing identifying information was removed and stored in a separate file cabinet. All data were destroyed after it was analyzed by the primary researcher.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

A power analysis using G*Power 3.1.2 software indicated that the minimum sample size needed for the present study with a moderate effect size ($f^2 = .15$) was 68, with a statistical significance of .05. The minimum sample size was set originally at 100, with a target sample size of 125. A total of 120 participants completed the survey. Upon review of the surveys, four surveys were identified on which participants gave the same response to all items. These participants' data were eliminated completely from the data set for a final sample size of $N = 116$. SPSS for Windows 15.0 was used to analyze the data.

Data were screened for data coding errors and missing data. Missing data were handled following recently established guidelines by Schlomer, Bauman, and Card (2010). Study procedures resulted in little missing data (i.e., 0.004 percent); therefore, missing data were almost negligible, classified as missing at random (MAR; Munro, 2005), and no data imputations were done.

A total of four data outliers were found for the study variables parental monitoring and academic self-efficacy. The presence of these outliers did not significantly skew the respective variables. For each outlier, the participant score value was a valid report and not mistakenly entered into the data set; therefore, the four outliers were included in all analyses (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010). School engagement scores, however, included a fifth extreme outlier and was moderately skewed (i.e., -1.51). While conducting the hypothesis tests, I explored the effects of removing the extreme school

engagement score outlier and transforming the variable to reduce skewness (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010). Removing the extreme school engagement outlier reduced skewness to a value within a normal range (i.e., -.51). The extreme outlier was removed for all analyses. The data were examined to assure that statistical test assumptions required for this study were met. Descriptive statistics, frequency distributions, box plots, bivariate correlations, and histograms of each study variable were observed, and all statistical assumptions were met. Descriptive statistics for each study variable are provided in Table 4.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Study Variables

	N	*M*	*SD*	Score Range
Ethnically similar peer connectedness	111	3.47	.99	1-5
Ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness	116	3.15	1.00	1-5
Parental monitoring	115	3.85	0.87	1-5
Academic self-efficacy	110	3.92	0.63	1-5
Educational barriers	112	2.38	1.05	1-5
School engagement	115	4.22	0.62	1-5

Note. Ethnically similar peer connectedness = Measure of Adolescent Connectedness (MAC); Ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness = Measure of Adolescent Connectedness (MAC); Parental monitoring = Child and Family Student Survey (CFSS); Academic self-efficacy = Child Self-Efficacy Scale (CSES); Educational barriers = Perceived Educational Barriers (PEB); School engagement = Composite of the Measure of Adolescent Connectedness (MAC) and the Research Assessment Package for Schools – Student Survey (RAPS-SM).

Measurement Analyses

Measurement Reliability. Internal consistency reliability with this study sample was calculated for each study variable. Reliability coefficients ranged from .78 to .89 (see Table 5).

Table 5.

Measure Reliability Coefficients Calculated with Present Study Sample of Refugee Adolescents

Measure	Variable Name	*Cronbach's Alpha*
Measure of Adolescent Connectedness (MAC)	Ethnically-similar Peer Connectedness	.83
Measure of Adolescent Connectedness (MAC)	Ethnically-dissimilar Peer Connectedness	.81
Child and Family Center Student Survey (CFCSS)	Parental Monitoring	.89
Children's Self-Efficacy Scale (CSES)	Academic Self-Efficacy	.80
Perceived Educational Barriers (PEB)	Educational Barriers	.86
Measure of Adolescent Connectedness (MAC)	School Engagement and Research Assessment Package for Schools—Student Report (RAPS)	.78

Exploratory Factor Analyses (EFAs). Exploratory factor analyses (EFAs) were conducted for each study measure because the samples with which the measures have been used and psychometric data collected did not include refugee adolescents. EFAs were used, specifically, to estimate the factor structure of each measure for the present

sample of refugee adolescents. I followed recommendations provided by Mertler and Vannatta (2010) to conduct the EFAs.

A principal axis factor analysis with direct oblimin rotation was run for each of the instruments (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010). In accordance with recently established EFA guidelines and best practices, the following steps were taken to determine for the current sample which measurement items were appropriate to retain for each study construct (Cabrera-Nguyen, 2010; Costello & Osbourne, 2005; Worthington & Whittaker, 2006). First, the initial number of factors was determined by observing: (a) eigenvalues greater than one (i.e., Kaiser's rule); (b) the scree plot; and (c) factors with three or more items. Second, items with a communality coefficient value of less than .20 and items with cross-loading values of .32 or greater on at least two factors were removed. The factor analysis was re-run after every item removal. If more than one factor emerged as a result of the EFA, then subscales were created. EFA procedures yielded one factor for each of the following variables: ethnically similar peer connectedness; ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness; parental monitoring; and school engagement. EFA procedures yielded two factors for academic self-efficacy and educational barriers.

Ethnically similar peer connectedness. Ethnically similar peer connectedness was measured using two of the MAC subscales, including the five-item MAC "peers" subscale and the six-item "friends" subscale (Karcher, 2006). The factor loading range for the factor derived from the ethnically similar peer connectedness measure with this study sample was .58 to .89.

Several steps were taken to conduct the EFA. (1) The original 11 items were first submitted for an exploratory factor analysis with principal axis factoring and direct oblimin rotation without specifying a factor solution. Results revealed four factors with Eigenvalues greater than 1.0 and accounting for 48.52% of the total variance. Inspection of the pattern matrix for the four factors revealed several items with cross-loading values of .32 or greater on at least two factors, and was determined to be an untenable solution. Inspection of the communalities indicated several items with a communality coefficient value of less than .20, and one factor included fewer than three items. (2) As a result, I again conducted a principal axis factor analysis. This analysis procedure revealed three factors with Eigenvalues greater than 1.0. This three factor solution accounted for 46.95% of the total variance. Inspection of the pattern matrix for the three factors revealed several items with cross-loading values of .32 or greater on at least two factors, and was therefore determined to be an untenable solution. Inspection of the communalities indicated one item with a communality coefficient value of less than .20. (3) Subsequently, I conducted another principal axis factor analysis. Two factors emerged with Eigenvalues greater than 1.0, and with a total variance explained of 43.85%. Yet again, this analysis revealed two items with a communality coefficient value of less than .20, and two cross-loaded items in the pattern matrix. (4) As a result, I conducted another principal axis factor analysis, and this solution revealed the strongest and most interpretable factor solution; a one-factor solution, with each item having an Eigenvalue greater than 1.0, was determined to be the most tenable, and accounted for 50.20% of the variance in ethnically similar peer connectedness.

A total of six of the original 11 items were dropped according to the established guidelines described previously (Cabrera-Nguyen, 2010; Costello & Osbourne, 2005; Worthington & Whittaker, 2006), and were: "Spending time with friends from my culture is not important to me," "I have friends from my culture that I'm really close to and trust completely," "My classmates from my culture often bother me," "I like pretty much all of the kids from my culture in my grade," "I am liked by my classmates who are from my culture," and, "I rarely fight or argue with kids from my culture at school." Given that two MAC subscales were used to measure ethnically similar peer connectedness (i.e., peers and friends), the present one-factor EFA results with the present study sample do not support two distinct subscales as originally defined by the MAC author (Karcher, 2006). Karcher (2006), however, did not report EFA data.

Ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness. Ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness was measured using two of the MAC subscales: the five-item MAC "peers" subscale and the six-item "friends" subscale (Karcher, 2006). The factor loading range for the factor derived from the ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness measure with this study sample was .65 to .81.

Several steps were taken to conduct the EFA. (1) The original 11 items were first submitted for an exploratory factor analysis with principal axis factoring and direct oblimin rotation without specifying a factor solution. Results revealed four factors with Eigenvalues greater than 1.0 and accounting for 48.0% of the total variance. Inspection of the pattern matrix for the four factors revealed several items with cross-loading values of .32 or greater on at least two factors, and was determined to be an untenable solution. Inspection of the communalities indicated one item with a communality coefficient value

Table 6

Derived Factors for Ethnically Similar Peer Connectedness

Item Stem: How TRUE about you is each sentence?	*Factor Loading*	*Mean*	*SD*
4. I spend as much time as I can with my friends from my culture.	.89	3.47	1.19
3. Spending time with my friends from my culture is a big part of my life.	.71	3.48	1.30
5. My friends from my culture and I spend a lot of time talking about things.	.68	3.28	1.26
8. I like working with my classmates from my culture.	.64	3.66	1.19
9. I get along well with the students from my culture in my classes.	.58	3.61	1.27
Eigenvalue = 2.97%; variance = 50.20%			

of less than .20, and two factors included fewer than three items. (2) As a result, I again conducted a principal axis factor analysis. This analysis procedure revealed three factors with Eigenvalues greater than 1.0. This three factor solution accounted for 44.42% of the total variance. Inspection of the pattern matrix for the three factors revealed one item with cross-loading values of .32 or greater on at least two factors, and was therefore determined to be an untenable solution. Inspection of the communalities indicated two items with a communality coefficient value of less than .20, and one factor included less than three items. (3) Subsequently, I conducted another principal factor analysis. Two factors emerged with Eigenvalues greater than 1.0, and with a total variance explained of 55.40%. Yet again, this analysis revealed one factor with less than two items in the

pattern matrix. (4) As a result, I conducted another principal axis factor analysis, and this final solution revealed the strongest and most interpretable factor solution; a one factor solution, with each item having an Eigenvalue greater than 1.0, was determined to be the most tenable, and accounted for 52.13% of the total variance in ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness.

Seven of the original 11 items were dropped according to the established guidelines described previously (Cabrera-Nguyen, 2010; Costello & Osbourne, 2005; Worthington & Whittaker, 2006) and were: "Spending time with friends who are not from my culture is not important to me," "My classmates who are not from my culture often bother me," "like pretty much all of the other kids who are not from my culture in my grade," "I like working with my classmates who are not from my culture," "I get along well with the other students who are not from my culture in my classes," "I am liked by my classmates who are not from my culture," and "I rarely fight or argue with the other kids who are not from my culture at school." Given that two MAC subscales were used to measure ethnically similar peer connectedness (i.e., peers and friends), the one-factor EFA results with the present study sample do not support two distinct subscales as originally defined by the MAC author (Karcher, 2006). Karcher, however, did not report EFA data (Karcher, 2006).

School engagement. School engagement was measured using the six-item MAC "school" subscale (Karcher, 2006) and five-item RAPS-SM "ongoing engagement" subscale (Skinner, Wellborn, & Connell, 1990). Upon committee recommendation, the two scales were summed to measure school engagement. Summing the two scales was

Table 7

Derived Factors for Ethnically Dissimilar Peer Connectedness

Item Stem: How TRUE about you is each sentence?	*Factor Loading*	*Mean*	*SD*
13. I have friends who are not from my culture that I'm really close to and trust completely.	.81	3.16	1.34
14. Spending time with my friends who are not from my culture is a big part of my life.	.73	3.14	1.30
15. I spend as much time as I can with my friends who are not from my culture.	.69	3.18	1.29
16. My friends who are not from my culture and I spend a lot of time talking about things.	.65	3.12	1.11
Eigenvalue = 2.55%; variance = 52.13%			

supported by a correlation of r = .78 between the two scales. The factor loading range for the factor derived from the school engagement measure with this study sample was .52 to .69.

Several steps were taken to conduct the EFA. (1) The original 11 items were first submitted for an exploratory factor analysis with principal axis factoring and direct oblimin rotation without specifying a factor solution. Results revealed three factors with Eigenvalues greater than 1.0 and accounting for 43.70% of the total variance. Inspection of the pattern matrix for the three factors revealed three items with cross-loading values of .32 or greater on at least two factors, and was determined to be an untenable solution. Inspection of the communalities indicated two items with a communality coefficient value of less than .20, and one factor included fewer than three items. (2) As a result, I

again conducted a principal axis factor analysis. This analysis procedure revealed three factors with Eigenvalues greater than 1.0. This two factor solution accounted for 42.90% of the total variance. Inspection of the communalities indicated one item with a communality coefficient value of less than .20, and solution was therefore determined to be untenable. (3) Subsequently, I conducted another principal axis factor analysis, and this solution revealed the most interpretable factor solution. This one factor solution, with each item having an Eigenvalue greater than 1.0, was determined to be the most tenable, and accounted for 37.94% of the total variance in school engagement.

Five items were dropped according to the established guidelines above (Cabrera-Nguyen, 2010; Costello & Osbourne, 2005; Worthington & Whittaker, 2006) and were: "I get bored at school a lot," "Doing well in school is important to me," "I work very hard on my schoolwork," "I don't try very hard in school," and "I often come to class unprepared." Given that two subscales were used to measure ethnically similar peer connectedness (i.e., the MAC School subscale and the RAPS-SM Ongoing Engagement subscale), the present one-factor EFA results with the present study sample do not support two distinct subscales as originally defined by the authors (Karcher, 2006; Institute for Research Reform and Education, Inc., 1998). The original MAC and RAPS-SM authors, however, did not report EFA data (Karcher, 2006; Institute for Research Reform and Education, Inc., 1998).

Parental monitoring. Parental monitoring was measured using the 10-item CFCSS (Stormshak, Caruthers, & Dishion, 2006). Pattern coefficients ranged from .58 to .82. No items were dropped according to the established guidelines described previously (Cabrera-Nguyen, 2010; Costello & Osbourne, 2005; Worthington & Whittaker, 2006)

Table 8

Derived Factors for School Engagement

Item Stem: How TRUE about you is each sentence?	*Factor Loading*	*Mean*	*SD*
5. I feel good about myself when I am at school.	.69	4.08	.95
2. I enjoy being at school.	.66	4.15	.93
11. It is important to me to do the best I can in school.	.63	4.66	.69
1. I work hard at school.	.60	4.28	.83
4. I do well in school.	.58	4.01	.96
9. I pay attention in school.	.52	4.15	.99
Eigenvalue = 2.89%; variance = 37.94%			

because all items loaded onto one factor. The original ten items were first submitted for an exploratory factor analysis with principal axis factoring and direct oblimin rotation without specifying a factor solution. Results revealed one factor with Eigenvalues greater than 1.0 and accounting for 46.4% of the total variance in parental monitoring.

Academic self-efficacy. Academic self-efficacy was measured using 30 items from six of nine CSES subscales (Bandura, 2006). Two factors were derived from the academic self-efficacy measure with this study sample (see Table 10). The total variance accounted for by the two-factor solution was 55.80%, with the first and second factors accounting for 35.88% and 19.92% of the variance, respectively. Item communalities ranged from .45 to .98. Items on the first factor had positive coefficients ranging from .62 to .98. Items on the second factor had positive coefficients that ranged from .45 to .71.

Table 9

Derived Factors for Parental Monitoring

Item Stem: How TRUE about you is each sentence?	*Factor Loading*	*Mean*	*SD*
17. At least one of my parents knows where I go and what I do afterschool.	.82	3.98	1.22
18. At least one of my parents knows what I am doing when I am away from home.	.75	4.02	1.08
12. At least one of my parents knows what I do during my free time.	.73	3.73	1.24
19. At least one of my parents knows where I am afterschool.	.69	4.04	1.05
21. At least one of my parents has a pretty good idea about my interests, activities, and whereabouts.	.68	3.83	1.25
15. At least one of my parents knows how I do in different subjects at school.	.65	3.72	1.23
20. At least one of my parents has a pretty good idea about my interests, activities, and whereabouts.	.65	3.51	1.32
13. At least one of my parents knows who I hang out with during my free time.	.62	3.72	1.28
14. At least one of my parents knows if I do something bad outside of the home.	.62	3.79	1.25
16. At least one of my parents knows where I go when I'm out with friends at night.	.58	3.98	1.35
Eigenvalue = 5.16%; variance = 46.4%			

Several steps were taken to conduct the EFA. (1) The original 30 items were first submitted for an exploratory factor analysis with principal axis factoring and direct oblimin rotation without specifying a factor solution. Results revealed nine factors with Eigenvalues greater than 1.0 and accounting for 59.58% of the total variance. The pattern matrix could not be examined because the matrix was not generated. Inspection of the factor matrix for the nine factors revealed several items with cross-loading values of .32 or greater on at least two factors, and was determined to be an untenable solution. Inspection of the scree plot indicated that Eigenvalues visibly tapered off in the range of two to four factors. (2) As a result, I again conducted a principal axis factor analysis, but given the results above the analysis was conducted with a restriction on the number factors sought, set at four factors. This analysis procedure revealed four factors, as pre-determined in the input, with Eigenvalues greater than 1.0 and accounted for 48.10% of the total variance. Inspection of the pattern matrix for the four factors revealed two items with cross-loading values of .32 or greater on at least two factors, and was therefore determined to be an untenable solution. Inspection of the communalities indicated four items with a communality coefficient value of less than .20. (3) Subsequently, I conducted another principal factor analysis. Three factors emerged with Eigenvalues greater than 1.0, and with a total variance explained of 53.55%. However, this analysis revealed one factor including fewer than three items. (4) After conducting another factor analysis, two factors emerged with Eigenvalues greaer than 1.0, and with a total variance explained of 53.28%. The results reflected one item with a communality coefficient value of less than .20. (5) As a result, I conducted another principal axis factor analysis, and this final solution revealed the strongest and most interpretable factor solution; a two

factor solution, with each item having an Eigenvalue greater than 1.0, was determined to be the most tenable, and accounted for a total of 55.80% of the variance in academic self-efficacy.

Of the 30 items, 16 items were dropped according to the established guidelines described previously (Cabrera-Nguyen, 2010; Costello & Osbourne, 2005; Worthington & Whittaker, 2006) and were: "Get teachers to help me when I get stuck on schoolwork," "Get another student to help me when I get stuck on schoolwork," "Get adults to help me when I have problems with other classmates," "Get a friend to help me when I have problems with other classmates," "Learn social studies," "Learn to use computers," "Take good notes during class," "Always concentrate during class," "Organize my school books and papers," "Not skip school when I feel bored or upset," "Say what I think when other classmates disagree with me," "Control my temper," "Tell others to stop annoying me or hurting my feelings," "Stand up for myself when I am not being treated fairly," "Ask my brother(s) and sister(s) to help me with a problem," and, "Ask my parents to help me with a problem."

Given that six CSES subscales were used to measure academic self-efficacy (i.e., Enlisting Social Resources, Academic Achievement, Self-Regulated Learning, Self-Regulatory Efficacy to Resist Peer Pressure, Self-Assertive Efficacy, and Enlisting Parental and Community Support), the present two-factor EFA results with the present study sample do not support six distinct subscales as originally defined by the CSES author (Bandura, 2006). The items comprising the first factor are associated with resisting peer pressure, and the items comprising the second factor appear to be associated with the ability to learn and develop good study habits. The name of the first

derived factor, therefore, was labeled "resist peer pressure self-efficacy," and the name of the second derived factor was labeled "academic self-efficacy."

Educational barriers. Educational barriers were measured using the 18-item PEB (McWhirter et al., 2000). Two factors were derived from the educational barriers measure with this study sample of refugee adolescents (see Table 11). The total variance accounted for by the two-factor solution was 43.90%, with the first and second factors accounting for 34.66% and 9.24% of the variance, respectively. Item communalities ranged from .34 to .87. Items on the first factor had positive coefficients ranging from .34 to .87. Items on the second factor had positive coefficients that ranged from .49 to .70.

Several steps were taken to conduct the EFA. (1) The original 18 items were first submitted for an exploratory factor analysis with principal axis factoring and direct oblimin rotation without specifying a factor solution. Results revealed four factors with Eigenvalues greater than 1.0 and accounting for 51.13% of the total variance. Inspection of the factor matrix for the four factors revealed two items with cross-loading values of .32 or greater on at least two factors, and was determined to be an untenable solution. (2) As a result, I again conducted a principal axis factor analysis. This analysis procedure revealed three factors, with Eigenvalues greater than 1.0 and accounted for 46.08% of the total variance. Inspection of the pattern matrix for the three factors revealed one item with cross-loading values of .32 or greater on at least two factors, and was determined to be an untenable solution. (3) Subsequently, I conducted another principal factor analysis. When doing this, two factors emerged with Eigenvalues greater than 1.0, and with a total variance explained of 46.51%. However, this analysis revealed one factor including

Table 10

Derived Factors for Academic Self-Efficacy

Item Stem: How well can you do these things?	*Factor Loading*	*Mean*	*SD*
Factor 1: Resist Peer Pressure Self-Efficacy			
21. Resist pressure to smoke cigarettes	.98	3.90	1.68
23. Resist pressure to take drugs	.97	3.94	1.68
22. Resist pressure to drink alcohol	.97	3.83	1.71
20. Resist pressure to join a gang	.93	3.86	1.61
24. Resist pressure to have sex	.91	3.77	1.62
19. Resist pressure to do things in school that can get me into trouble	.62	3.63	1.41
Eigenvalue = 5.02%; variance = 35.88%			
Factor 2: Academic Self-Efficacy			
12. Finish my homework when it is due	.71	4.15	.92
8. Learn reading and writing	.64	4.25	.83
13. Make myself study when I would rather play	.64	3.70	1.12
6. Learn science	.62	4.10	.95
5. Learn math	.60	4.10	1.01
16. Use the library	.52	3.69	1.02
18. Remember information that was said in class, or in a book	.50	3.87	.86
10. Learn a foreign language	.45	3.44	1.22
Eigenvalue = 2.79%; variance = 19.92%			

fewer than three items. (4) After conducting another factor analysis, two factors emerged with Eigenvalues greaer than 1.0, and with a total variance explained of 44.01%. The results reflected one item with cross-loading values of .32 or greater on at least two factors, and was determined to be an untenable solution. (5) As a result, I conducted another principal axis factor analysis, and this final solution revealed the strongest and most interpretable factor solution. This two factor solution, with each factor having an Eigenvalue greater than 1.0, was determined to be the most tenable, and accounted for a total of 43.90% of the variance in educational barriers. Of the 18 items, six items were dropped according to the established guidelines described previously (Cabrera-Nguyen, 2010; Costello & Osbourne, 2005; Worthington & Whittaker, 2006) and were: "Teachers don't support me," "Social class discrimination (classism)," "Not being prepared enough," "Pressure from my boy/girlfriend," "Sex discrimination," and, "Racial/ethnic discrimination."

The one-factor EFA results with the present study sample do not support the six distinct subscales found within the PEB Likelihood subscale in prior research (i.e., McWhirter et al., 2007). The items comprising the first factor appear to be associated with barriers to doing well in school despite motivation, and the items comprising the second factor appear to be associated with a draw to invest energy in areas other than school (i.e., friends, earning an income, not being a "school type," family responsibilities). The first derived factor, therefore, was labeled "educational barriers," and the second derived factor was labeled "outside interests barriers."

Table 11

Derived Factors for Perceived Educational Barriers

Item Stem: How much is this a barrier to you doing well in school right now?	*Factor Loading*	*Mean*	*SD*
Factor 1: Educational Barriers			
15. School too stressful	.87	2.45	1.42
14. Parents don't support me	.86	2.05	1.55
17. Parents don't have access to the information I need	.71	2.34	1.47
18. Lack of English language skills	.66	2.81	1.49
13. Lack of study skills	.63	2.44	1.38
16. Others don't think I can do it	.48	2.28	1.30
4. Having to work while going to school	.48	2.28	1.63
5. Not fitting in at school	.34	2.51	1.59
Eigenvalue = 4.16%; variance = 34.66%			
Factor 2: Outside Interests Barriers			
2. Not smart enough	.70	2.46	1.34
3. Friends don't support my plans	.60	2.17	1.18
1. Not having enough money	.56	2.78	1.39
9. Family responsibilities	.49	2.87	1.60
Eigenvalue = 1.11%; variance = 9.24%			

Descriptive Data

Descriptive data about friendships as reported by participants are presented in Table 12. Descriptive data were gathered to assess the validity of participants' responses

to ethnically similar and ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness items. That is, if participants reported having no ethnically similar friends or no ethnically dissimilar friends, then those participants would not be able to answer questions related to connectedness to such friends. All participants endorsed at least one ethnically similar and at least one ethnically dissimilar friend. Given the large standard deviation value for each "number of friends" item, results were examined after removing 12 participants who endorsed more than 50 friends in at least one of the categories. Results after removing the 12 participants reflected little to no difference in correlations among variables, amount of total variance and unique variance accounted for by each variable, and in group differences based on sex and current geographic location. These 12 participants, therefore, were included in subsequent analyses.

Table 12

Refugee Immigrants' Number of Friends

	n	*M*	*SD*
Ethnically similar peers, in school	116	15.26	21.95
Ethnically similar peers, outside school	116	13.13	23.14
Ethnically dissimilar peers, in school	115	17.02	35.94
Ethnically dissimilar peers, outside school	116	10.48	29.14

Correlational Analyses

This section summarizes correlational data analysis results used to answer research question 1.

Research Question 1

Is there a significant correlation between immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, educational barriers, and school engagement? I hypothesized that the following variables would be significantly and positively correlated: immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, and school engagement. I also hypothesized that the following variables would be significantly and inversely correlated: participants' self reported educational barriers and ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, academic self-efficacy, school engagement, and parental monitoring.

Results from a series of bivariate correlation calculations partially supported Hypothesis 1. Bivariate correlations showed no multicollinearity among study variables (i.e., each correlation combination was less than .80) (see Table 13). As hypothesized, significant, positive correlations were identified between ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, academic self-efficacy, parental monitoring, and school engagement (Table 13). As hypothesized, significant, inverse relationships were identified between educational barriers and academic self-efficacy, parental monitoring, ethnically similar peer connectedness, and ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness (Table 13). In contrast to my hypothesis, resist peer pressure self-efficacy and outside interest barriers were not significantly correlated with any other variable. The resist peer pressure self-efficacy and outside interest barriers variables, therefore,

were dropped from subsequent analyses because the assumption of linearity for Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression, Multiple Regression, and MANOVA was not met.

Table 13

Sample Means, Standard Deviations, Ranges, and Pearson Product Correlations

Variables	Range	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. ETH SIM PEER	1-5	3.47	.99	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. ETH DISSIM PEER	1-5	3.63	.59	.16	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. PARENT MONIT	1-5	3.85	.87	.33**	.24*	-	-	-	-	-
4. RES PRESSURE	1-5	3.92	0.63	- .04	.03	.05	-	-	-	-
5. ACA SELF-EFF	1-5	3.83	1.48	.18	.11	.51**	-.05	-	-	-
6. EDU BARRIERS	1-5	2.38	1.05	.29**	.27**	.07	-.12	-.07	-	-
7. OUT INTERESTS	1-5	2.57	0.98	.02	-.09	-.07	-.12	-.02	.44*	-
8. SCH ENGAGE	1-5	4.22	.62	.18	.14	.51**	.12	.63**	.10	-.05

Note. 1. ETH SIM PEER = Ethnically similar peer connectedness; 2. ETH DISSIM PEER = Ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness; 3. PARENT MONIT = Parental monitoring; 4. RES PRESSURE = Resist peer pressure self-efficacy; 5. ACA SELF-EFF = Academic self-efficacy; 6. EDU BAR = Educational barriers (1); 7. OUT INTERESTS = Outside Interests Barriers; 8. SCH ENGAGE = School engagement. *p <.05. **p <.01.

Multiple Regression Analyses

Research Question 2

Do immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, educational barriers, and school engagement account for significant and unique variance in academic self-efficacy? I hypothesized that immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, educational barriers, and

school engagement would account for significant and unique variance in academic self-efficacy. Multiple Regression analysis was used to test Hypothesis 2.

The assumptions for Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression were tested by examining the normality of the variables, the linearity between the predictor and criterion variables, and the homoscedasticity of errors. The normal distribution of criterion variables were determined by: (a) the roughly normal distribution of errors observed in the P-P plots, (b) the normal curves for each variable observed in the histograms, and (c) the observed skew values for each variable (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010). Examination of scatterplots showed no significant violation of linearity, with the exception of the excluded variables. The homoscedasticity assumption was not violated, as determined by observing: (a) an equal spread of errors above and below the regression line, (b) the model residual scatterplots, (c) the values for the Durbin Watson test, which fell between 1.5 and 2.5, and (d) the values for Cook's Distance of each variable, which were less than 1, signifying no severe or influential outliers (Pedhazur, 1997). In sum, all OLS assumptions were satisfied.

Hierarchal block entry method is used when prior research and theory are used to inform variable entry (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010). Present study variable entry was informed by prior research and segmented assimilation theory (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010; SAT, Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). The first block entered into the OLS analyses comprised parental monitoring, educational barriers, and school engagement. These variables have all been linked empirically with prior research and shown to impact adolescents' academic self-efficacy (Liem, Lau, and Nie, 2008; Majer, 2009; Rosenfeld et al., 2000; Ryan, 2001, Wentzel & Caldwell, 1997). The second block entered into the

OLS analyses comprised ethnically similar peer connectedness and ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness. The second block study variables are linked theoretically by SAT. SAT purports that it is important to immigrant adolescent development and well-being that they experience connectedness to ethnically similar and ethnically dissimilar peers.

OLS results partially supported Hypothesis 2. The linear combination of variables was significantly related to refugee adolescents' academic self-efficacy, $F(5, 93) = 19.137$, $p < .05$, $R^2 = .481$, $MSR = 4.079$. These results indicated that approximately 48% of the variance in academic self-efficacy could be accounted for by the model. Squaring the partial correlations for each of these effects gave the unique percentage of variance accounted for by each variable (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010). The partial correlations revealed that educational barriers (15.7%, $b = -.169$, $SE = .047$, $p < .05$), parental monitoring (24.3%, $b = -.290$, $SE = .066$, $p < .05$), and school engagement (45.4%, $b = .519$, $SE = .099$, $p < .05$) each significantly accounted for unique variance in academic self-efficacy (Table 14). Contrary to hypothesis 2, ethnically similar peer connectedness and ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness did not account separately for variance in academic self-efficacy (Table 14). All tolerance values were above .20, signifying that multicollinearity did not impact the results (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010).

Research Question 3

Do immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, and school engagement account for significant and unique variance in educational barriers? The third hypothesis was that immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring,

Table 14

Regression Coefficients for Model Predicting Refugee Adolescents' Academic Self-Efficacy

Variable	*M*	*SD*	*B*	*SE*	*t*	*B*	*Sr*	*P*
Ethnically similar peer connectedness	3.51	.96	.020	.053	.377	.030	.027	*Ns*
Ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness	3.12	.99	.020	.050	.409	.031	.030	*Ns*
Parental monitoring	3.89	.85	.219	.066	3.343	.290	.243	.00
Educational barriers	2.35	1.07	-.101	.047	3.343	-.169	-.157	.03
School engagement	4.28	.54	.616	.099	6.239	.519	.454	.00

Note. SE = standard error; *sr* = semipartial correlation; *ns* = not significant

academic self-efficacy, and school engagement account for significant and unique variance in educational barriers. Multiple Regression analysis was used to test Hypothesis 3.

The assumptions for Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression were tested by examining the normality of the variables, the linearity between the predictor and criterion variables, and the homoscedasticity of errors. All OLS assumptions were satisfied. The first block entered into the OLS analyses comprised parental monitoring, educational barriers, and school engagement. The second block entered into the OLS analyses included ethnically similar peer connectedness and ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness.

OLS study results partially supported hypothesis 3. The linear combination of variables was significantly related to adolescent refugee educational barriers, $F(5, 93) = 4.155$, $p < .05$, $R^2 = .139$, $MSR = 4.113$. This indicated that approximately 13.9% of the

variance in educational barriers could be accounted for by the model. Squaring the partial correlations for each of these effects gave the unique percentage of variance accounted for by each variable (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010). The partial correlations revealed that ethnically similar peer connectedness (24.6%, $b = .291$, $SE = .111$, $p < .05$), ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness (21.1%, $b = .236$, $SE = .105$, $p < .05$), academic self-efficacy (20.2%, $b = -.470$, $SE = .218$, $p < .05$), and school engagement (19.6%, $b = .518$, $SE = .248$, $p < .05$) each significantly accounted for unique variance in educational barriers (Table 15). Contrary to hypothesis 3, parental monitoring did not account separately for variance in educational barriers (Table 15). All tolerance values were above .20, signifying that multicollinearity did not impact the results (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010).

Table 15

Regression Coefficients for Model Predicting Refugee Adolescents' Educational Barriers

Variable	*M*	*SD*	*B*	*SE*	*t*	*B*	*Sr*	*p*
Ethnically similar peer connectedness	3.51	.96	.291	.111	2.621	.261	.246	.01
Ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness	3.12	.99	.236	.105	2.255	.217	.211	.03
Academic self-efficacy	3.92	.64	-.470	.218	-2.157	-.281	.-.202	.03
Parental monitoring	3.89	.85	-.039	.150	-.262	-.031	-.025	*ns*
School engagement	4.28	.54	.518	.248	2.092	.261	.196	.04

Note. *SE* = standard error; *sr* = semipartial correlation; *ns* = not significant

Research Question 4

Do immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, and educational barriers account for significant and unique variance in school engagement? The fourth hypothesis was that immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, and educational barriers account for significant and unique variance in school engagement. Multiple Regression analysis was used to test Hypothesis 4.

The assumptions for Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression were tested by examining the normality of the variables, the linearity between the predictor and criterion variables, and the homoscedasticity of errors. All OLS assumptions were satisfied. The first block entered into the OLS analyses comprised parental monitoring, educational barriers, and academic self-efficacy. The second block entered into the OLS analyses were ethnically similar peer connectedness and ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness.

OLS study results partially supported hypothesis 4. The linear combination of variables was significantly related to school engagement, $F(5, 93) = 15.804$, $p < .05$, $R^2 = .430$, $MSR = 2.619$. These results indicated that approximately 43.0% of the variance in school engagement could be accounted for by the model. Squaring the partial correlations for each of these effects gave the unique percentage of variance accounted for by each variable (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010). The partial correlations revealed that educational barriers (16.0%, $b = .087$, $SE = .041$, $p < .05$) and academic self-efficacy (47.6%, $b = -.479$, $SE = .077$, $p < .05$) each significantly accounted for unique variance in

school engagement (Table 16). Contrary to hypothesis 4, parental monitoring, ethnically similar peer connectedness, and ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness did not account separately for variance in school engagement (Table 16). All tolerance values were above .20, signifying that multicollinearity did not impact the results (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010).

Table 16

Regression Coefficients for Model Predicting Refugee Adolescents' School Engagement

Variable	*M*	*SD*	*B*	*SE*	*t*	*B*	*Sr*	*p*
Ethnically similar peer connectedness	3.5	.96	-.013	.047	-.286	-.024	-.022	*ns*
Ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness	3.12	.99	.002	.044	.052	.004	.004	*ns*
Academic self-efficacy	3.93	.64	.479	.077	6.239	.569	.476	.00
Educational barriers	2.35	1.07	.087	.041	2.092	.172	.160	.04
Parental monitoring	3.89	.85	.101	.060	1.665	.158	.127	*ns*

Note. *SE* = standard error; *sr* = semipartial correlation; *ns* = not significant

MANOVA Analyses

Research Questions 5 and 6

Do the levels of relationships between immigrant refugee adolescents' ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, educational barriers, and school engagement differ as a function of sex groups? The fifth hypothesis was that group differences will be present with regards to the relationships among ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, educational barriers, and school engagement as a function of sex. The sixth hypothesis was that

group differences will be present with regards to the relationships among ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, educational barriers, and school engagement as a function of current geographic location. A two-way MANOVA was conducted to test Hypotheses 5 and 6.

MANOVA model assumptions were tested including linearity, homogeneity of variance, and independence of error, and normality (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010). First, examination of scatterplots showed no significant violation of linearity. Second, homogeneity of variance and covariance was checked using the Box M test. The value was 60.507, $p > .05$, signifying that the homogeneity assumption was met. Third, the residuals of each criterion variable were plotted in a scatterplot as well as examined in a histogram to test for the independence of error. The errors were observed to be distributed evenly in space but were not related, signifying that no systematic relationships were present. Finally, most of the criterion variables followed a multivariate normal distribution for sex groups based on observation of the roughly normal distribution of errors observed in the P-P plots, normal curves observed in the histograms, and observed skew values.

The criterion variables did not follow a multivariate normal distribution for the current geographic location groups. Although the MANOVA analysis is generally robust to mild violations of normality, results utilizing these variables were interpreted with caution. Another important consideration is the adequate sample size ($n = 116$) and roughly equal cell sizes for sex (males = 60, females = 55), increasing confidence in the robustness of the multivariate solution against violation of the multivariate normality and

homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices assumptions (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2001). The sample sizes within the current geographic location were more uneven, however, with 75 participants in the Denver school district, 31 participants in the Aurora school district, 6 participants in the Cherry Creek school district, and 3 participants in an unknown school district. These grossly different geographic location sample sizes could be problematic when testing for group differences. Given the presupposition of hypothesis 6, namely that current geographic location would affect peer connectedness and academic outcomes, the small group of participants attending school in the Cherry Creek district (n = 6) or an unknown district (n = 3) were not included in the MANOVA analysis. In other words, the two geographic location groupings that were entered into the MANOVA analysis were Denver school district (n = 75) and Aurora school district (n = 31). Even with an unequal sample size, the solution is considered robust as long as the smallest group sample size is at least 20 (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2001).

MANOVA study results partially supported hypothesis 5 and 6. Wilk's lambda was used as the test of multivariate significance. An overall multivariate effect was found ($F[4, 80] = 3.36$, $p=.01$, $\eta^2 = .14$). No significant interaction of sex and school district was found ($\Lambda = .96$, $F[6, 80] = .56$, $p= .75$, $\eta^2 = .04$). There was no significant main effect for sex ($\Lambda = .94$, $F[6, 80] = .88$, $p=.52$, $\eta^2 = .06$) and there was a significant main effect for school district ($\Lambda = .73$, $F[12, 160] = 2.31$, $p= .01$, $\eta^2 = .15$) (Table 17). The dimension reduction analysis was examined to determine how much of the total variance was accounted for by school district differences, revealing that school district accounted for 81.35% of the total variance in the criterion variable composite. Given that only one root accounted for the total composite variance (i.e., accounting for 100% of the

total variance), the standardized discriminant function coefficients (*SDFC*) used to weight the multivariate composite was examined to determine what was most important in forming the function that discriminated the school district differences. *SDFC* observations revealed that ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness (*SDFC* = -.81) was most important in forming the function that discriminated the school district groups; no other variable significantly contributed to the function.

In sum, there were no sex differences in levels of ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, academic self-efficacy, parental monitoring, educational barriers, and school engagement, but there were differences based on geographic location groupings. Ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness was the variable that contributed the most to the function that discriminated current geographic location differences.

Summary

Study results generally supported Hypotheses 1-4, and 6. Most study variables were significantly related to one another as hypothesized. OLS results revealed that educational barriers, school engagement, and parental monitoring each accounted for unique variance in academic self-efficacy. Ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, academic self-efficacy, and school engagement each significantly accounted for unique variance in educational barriers. Multiple regression analysis also revealed that educational barriers and academic self-efficacy each accounted significantly for unique variance in school engagement. MANOVA results revealed no significant differences between variables when comparing groups by sex, although significant differences were observed between variables when comparing

Table 17

Table of Univariate Between-Subjects Effects for School District

Source	Variables	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F*	*p*	Partial η^2	Observed Power
Corrected model	Ethnically similar	2.10	4	.526	.65	.63	.03	.21
	Ethnically dissimilar	12.58	4	3.15	3.36	.01	.14	.83
	Academic self-efficacy	.315	4	.079	.19	.94	.01	.09
	Educational barriers	5.87	4	1.47	1.23	.31	.06	.37
	Parental monitoring	1.54	4	.38	.53	.71	.02	.17
	School Engagement	1.22	4	.304	1.02	.40	.05	.31
Intercept	Ethnically similar	195.23	1	195.23	242.07	.00	.74	1.00
	Ethnically dissimilar	96.65	1	96.65	103.15	.00	.55	1.00
	Academic self-efficacy	220.49	1	220.49	532.76	.00	.86	1.00
	Educational barriers	93.83	1	93.83	78.58	.00	.48	1.00

Source	Variables	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F*	*p*	Partial η^2	Observed Power
	Parental monitoring	195.53	1	195.53	270.17	.00	.76	1.00
	School Engagement	271.72	1	271.72	908.56	.00	.91	1.00
Sex	Ethnically similar	.01	1	.01	.02	.90	.00	.05
	Ethnically dissimilar	.25	1	.25	.27	.60	.00	.08
	Academic self-efficacy	.01	1	.01	.02	.88	.00	.05
	Educational barriers	1.56	1	1.56	1.30	.26	.02	.20
	Parental monitoring	.54	1	.54	.75	.39	.01	.14
	School Engagement	.48	1	.48	1.60	.21	.02	.24
School district	Ethnically similar	1.63	2	0.82	1.01	.37	.02	.22
	Ethnically dissimilar	12.51	2	6.26	6.68	.00	.14	.91
	Academic self-efficacy	.31	2	.16	.38	.69	.01	.11
	Educational barriers	3.66	2	1.83	1.53	.22	.04	.32

Source	Variables	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F*	*p*	Partial η^2	Observed Power
	Parental monitoring	.42	2	.21	.29	.75	.01	.09
	School Engagement	.72	2	.36	1.21	.30	.03	.26
Interaction	Ethnically similar	.31	1	.31	.37	.54	.00	.09
	Ethnically dissimilar	.05	1	.05	.05	.83	.00	.06
	Academic self-efficacy	.01	1	.01	.03	.87	.00	.05
	Educational barriers	.01	1	.01	.01	.93	.00	.05
	Parental monitoring	.74	1	.74	1.02	.32	.01	.17
	School Engagement	.32	1	.32	1.08	.30	.01	.18
Error	Ethnically similar	68.55	85	.81				
	Ethnically dissimilar	79.65	85	.94				
	Academic self-efficacy	35.18	85	.41				
	Educational barriers	101.51	85	1.19				

Source	Variables	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F*	*p*	Partial η^2	Observed Power
	Parental monitoring	61.52	85	.72				
	School Engagement	25.42	85	.30				
Total	Ethnically similar	1211.28	90					
	Ethnically dissimilar	957.13	90					
	Academic self-efficacy	1422.00	90					
	Educational barriers	625.17	90					
	Parental monitoring	1421.83	90					
	School Engagement	1669.31	90					
Corrected Total	Ethnically similar	70.66	89					
	Ethnically dissimilar	92.23	89					
	Academic self-efficacy	35.50	89					
	Educational barriers	107.37	89					

Source	Variables	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F*	*p*	Partial η^2	Observed Power
	Parental monitoring	63.05	89					
	School Engagement	26.64	89					

groups by current geographic location. Although MANOVA analyses are generally robust to mild violations of normality, results utilizing these variables are interpreted with caution in the Discussion section provided that the multivariate normality assumption was violated for all variables.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

The present study was an investigation of the relationships among ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, educational barriers, and school engagement for refugee immigrant adolescents. Study findings support, and extend to refugee adolescents, prior research showing significant relationships between peer connectedness, school engagement, parental monitoring, educational barriers, and academic self-efficacy for youth (Ali, McWhirter, & Chronister, 2005; Blum and Libbey, 2004; Gore, 2006; Karcher, Davis, & Powell, 2002; Karcher & Finn, 2005; Majer, 2009; Multon, Brown, & Lent, 1991; Mistry, Tan, Benner, & Kim, 2009; Mounts, 2001; Tasopoulos-Chan, Smetana, & Yau, 2009). Study contributions include psychometric measurement data for several instruments not previously used with refugee youth and data on the influence of peer connectedness on academic outcomes for refugee adolescents, an area previously unexamined empirically by scholars. In this chapter, I discuss the clinical and research implications of the present study findings and study strengths and limitations.

Measurement

Based on the EFA analyses conducted with the present study sample, factor solutions for ethnically-similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, and school engagement matched the one-factor solutions identified by the original measure authors (MAC, Karcher, 2006; RAPS-SM, Skinner, Wellborn, & Connell, 1990; CFSS, Stormshak, Caruthers, & Dishion, 2006).

The two-factor solutions for the academic self-efficacy (i.e., resist peer pressure self-efficacy and academic self-efficacy) and educational barriers (i.e., outside interests barriers and educational barriers) measures, however, did not match what the original measure authors intended theoretically (CSES, Bandura, 2006; PEB, McWhirter, 2000). The academic self-efficacy two-factor structure in the present study may have been related to participants' expressed confusion about the meaning of items that included the phrase, "resist peer pressure." For example, in response to the stem, "How well can you do these things?", six items included content such as, "Resist peer pressure to take drugs," "Resist peer pressure to have sex," and "Resist peer pressure to join a gang." Consequently, participants may have responded similarly to these self-regulation items and in a way that was not intended by the original authors. The lack of significant correlations between resist peer pressure self-efficacy and other variables may have been related to participants' confusion about negatively worded items (e.g., "Not skip school when I feel bored or upset"). I observed a number of participants marking "1"s (i.e., "Not well at all") for these items, and when I clarified what they were indicating by marking "1," many participants erased and re-marked "5"s (i.e., "Very well") for these items. It is possible that I did not address all participants' confusion, and so they responded inaccurately on these items, which in turn may have affected the EFA results.

Perceived educational barriers may have resulted in a two-factor structure with the present study population because of the unique contextual factors experienced by refugee adolescents. That is, the first factor appeared to be associated with barriers to doing well in school despite motivation. For example, item content included parents not having educational resources, school being too stressful, and having a lack of study skills.

The second factor appeared to be associated with barriers to investing energy in school, such as wanting to fit in with friends, earning an income, not being a "school type," and having family responsibilities. The outside interest barriers item stem was, "How much is this a barrier to you doing well in school right now?" Items included, "not smart enough," "friends don't support my plans," "not having enough money," and "family responsibilities." Perhaps, given their socioeconomic disadvantage, refugee adolescents needed to invest energy in other areas of life that non-refugee adolescents do not. For example, many participants endorsed having to work a part-time job, take care of younger siblings, take family members to appointments (and translate languages at times), and complete homework in an overcrowded home with minimal resources. These additional responsibilities may, in turn, separate for participants the idea of barriers specific to the school context and other contextual barriers.

Resist peer pressure self-efficacy and outside interest barriers were not correlated with any other study variable, which is an important finding. These results may suggest that the academic and more interpersonal aspects of these refugee adolescents' lives are more separate than they are for other adolescents. Such disconnection may be associated with parents' and family members' lack of time and knowledge to be more involved with school affairs, the cultural differences that separate refugee adolescents' experiences at home and school (e.g., cultural values, speaking different languages at school versus home, etc.), cultural meanings and roles ascribed to school and work, and geographic isolation from non-refugee peers who can provide educational and social capital for refugee adolescents, including bridging the divide between adolescents' academic and personal lives. A second possible explanation may be that refugee adolescents

conceptualize confidence, academic efficacy, and their ability to succeed as something internal; that is, their success is reliant on their own motivation, skill, and internal strength and should not be affected by contextual factors. It is also possible that participants were considering current circumstances in comparison to their circumstances in their country of origin before migrating to the United States, and therefore under-endorsed the barrier items used in this study (Parke & Buriel, 2006). That is, refugee adolescents likely dealt with more significant and diverse barriers when living in a refugee camp than the types of barriers they face in their current living situation or that were listed on the barrier measure.

Academic Self-Efficacy

Findings reflected that a significant amount of variance in academic self-efficacy is uniquely accounted for by each of the following: educational barriers, school engagement, and parental monitoring (48%). These findings are concurrent with prior research documenting that academic self-efficacy is related to school engagement for ethnic minority youth (Liem, Lau, and Nie, 2008; Majer, 2009), to parental monitoring for white and ethnic minority youth (Mounts, 2001; Tasopoulos-Chan, Smetana, & Yau, 2009), and inversely related to educational barriers for white, ethnic minority, and youth from low-income families (Ali, McWhirter, & Chronister, 2005; Blum & Libbey, 2004; Mistry, Tan, Benner, & Kim, 2009). Present study participants reported high academic self-efficacy (M=3.92, SD=.64); high school engagement (M=4.2, SD=.62); moderately high parental monitoring (M=3.85, SD=.87); and moderate experiences of educational barriers (M=2.38, SD=1.05). These participant scores are generally similar to the school engagement and parental monitoring scores endorsed by U.S. adolescent participant

samples (Brewster & Bowen, 2004; Dishion & Stormshak, 2007; Rosenfeld et al., 2000).

Despite moderately high endorsement of educational barriers, participants still reported fairly high academic self-efficacy, school engagement, and parental monitoring. Such elevations may suggest that this population is extremely resilient, given their perceived ability to engage and do well in school regardless of the many unique stressors refugee adolescents face. Another potential explanation for participants' high endorsement of positive academic outcomes may be that the present study measures included did not accurately capture refugee adolescents' struggles and/or the constructs intended, especially given the small amount of total variance accounted for by educational barriers (14%). Present study participants may have endorsed fewer educational barriers than what has been documented with other samples because youth were comparing their current barriers encountered with those that they encountered in their country of origin, far more severe barriers including war, poverty, instability, violence, etc.

Ethnically similar peer connectedness and ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness were not significantly related to academic self-efficacy and did not account for significant variance in academic self-efficacy. These findings are inconsistent with prior findings supporting a relationship between peer connectedness and (a) academic self-efficacy (Ali et al., 2005; Rosenfeld et al., 2000); (b) academic achievement (Newgent, Lee, & Daniel, 2007; Wentzel & Caldwell, 1997); and (c) GED completion (Reio, Marcus, & Sanders-Reio, 2009). Present study participants reported feeling less connected to ethnically dissimilar peers (M=3.15) than to ethnically similar peers (M=3.47). Participants may have thought of academic self-efficacy as an

individual/internalized construct; one that is not influenced by peer support, but rather hard work, motivation, and ability. It also may be that the different peers with which participants were connected may not have been models of academic success or provided the social and academic capital necessary for being successful in school. For example, refugee adolescent participants lived in two primary geographic regions that were delineated by socioeconomic affluence. As will be discussed further in this section, one region comprised more impoverished neighborhoods in Aurora (i.e., a city adjacent to Denver) and the second region comprised mostly lower-risk neighborhoods in the Denver area. Many refugee adolescent participants, therefore, may have attended more impoverished schools because of the neighborhoods in which they lived and have been surrounded by peers who may have been struggling in school or less engaged. As a result, it is plausible that study participants did not see their peer groups as a source of academic self-efficacy. Finally, the discrepancies in the present findings may also simply be due to differences in the samples from previous studies.

Educational Barriers

A significant amount of variance, although only 14%, in educational barriers was uniquely accounted for by ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, academic self-efficacy, and school engagement. No researchers explored these relationships for refugee adolescents, yet it seems plausible that these factors would account for some variance in perceived educational barriers. More variance may not have been accounted for because, as discussed previously, participants' did not see peers as a source of academic self-efficacy or had enough connection to peers and resources to be more engaged in school.

Contrary to study hypotheses, however, peer connectedness and educational barriers were positively, rather than inversely, correlated. Moreover, data showed that refugee adolescents were more connected to ethnically similar peers (M=3.47) than to ethnically dissimilar peers (M=3.15). Such findings may be related to the quality of participants' peer relationships. These findings may suggest that refugee adolescents are embedded in neighborhoods and peer groups that are higher risk. Greater connectedness to these peers may be directly associated with greater educational barriers; that is, youth participants may see the lack of peer success in school, peer delinquency, peer cultural struggles, peer poverty, etc. as contributing to a context deprived of educational supports and presenting some educational barriers. The direction of the relationship between peer connectedness and educational barriers may have been inversed if participants felt connected to peers who were academically engaged, successful and who had access to resources. Similarly, it is possible that participants' experience of educational barriers interfered with their ability to connect with peers. For example, if students did not have high enough grades they may not have been allowed by their families or school officials to participate in organized sports activities, field trips, and other extracurricular activities that provide opportunities for peer connection. Furthermore, refugee adolescents are expected to contribute to their families by means of time and energy, and simultaneously are negotiating a new culture and often times dealing with discrimination. Because refugee adolescents may be most connected to ethnically-similar peers who are at a similar acculturation level and just as economically disadvantaged, it is possible that refugee adolescents experience internal and external conflict about how to stay connected

with their culture, communities, and succeed in a new country (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Garcia & Saewyc, 2007).

Study findings may also be better explained with the inclusion of several mediating factors, such as socioeconomic status and experiences of discrimination and acculturation. Prior studies that explored the relationship between psychosocial or socioeconomic barriers and academic outcomes and found an inverse relationship between educational barriers and peer connectedness measured several mediating variables including adolescents' perceptions of family economic stress, depression, and contextual characteristics (i.e., child, family, school, and neighborhood; Han, 2008; Mistry et al., 2009). Such factors may explain the inverse relationship between peer connectedness and educational barriers in the present study.

School Engagement

A significant amount of variance in school engagement was accounted for by educational barriers and academic self-efficacy (43%). Academic self-efficacy and school engagement also were found to be highly correlated (r=.60). The present study findings align with prior research examining school engagement and academic outcomes for ethnic minority adolescents (Majer, 2009; Multon et al., 1991; Thijs & Verkuyten, 2008), including Chinese-American adolescents (Mistry et al., 2009) and immigrant adolescents in Singapore (Liem, Lau, & Nie, 2008). As students engage in school activities and feel more connected, they have more opportunities for successful skill development, positive encouragement, vicarious learning, and achievement opportunities – all of which contribute to self-efficacy development (Bandura, 1977, 1982; Bong, 2008). Similarly, the more efficacious refugee adolescents feel in the school

environment, the more they will likely initiate involvement in school activities and foster school relationships. The relationship between school engagement and self-efficacy is stronger for high school students because of the developmental transition from childhood to adulthood with regards to identity formation and increases in autonomy. Indeed, researchers found that age served as a moderator for such outcomes, indicating that academic self-efficacy had a greater impact on academic performance for high school students than for elementary school students (Multon et al., 1991). Youths' perception of economic barriers was also found to impact school engagement, academic achievement, and positive attitudes about education (Mistry et al., 2009).

Peer connectedness and parental monitoring did not account for a significant amount of variance in school engagement, although parental monitoring was highly correlated with school engagement (r =.51). These present study results contrast with previous findings indicating that positive peer support influences academic achievement (Goza & Ryabov, 2009; Ryan, 2000), and that ethnically similar peer connectedness positively impacts school engagement (Gonzales et al., 2008). Given that refugee adolescents reported moderate connectedness to ethnically similar (M=3.47) and ethnically dissimilar peers (M=3.15) and reported strong engagement in school, (M=4.2), a potential mediating factor, such as socioeconomic status and more specific peer relationship qualities, may explain the lack of correlation between peer connectedness and school engagement. Refugee adolescents, for example, may have limited access to peer networks that encourage school engagement. Refugee adolescents may instead be exposed to and have time to engage with peers who struggle with the same socioeconomic barriers as themselves, cultural conflicts, and academic difficulties. Such

peers may offer companionship and camaraderie, but may not necessarily be a source of academic support.

The strong correlation between parental monitoring and school engagement (r = .51) is similar to research suggesting that higher levels of parental monitoring predict higher academic achievement (Mounts, 2001). In fact, results reflected a stronger connection between parental monitoring and academic self-efficacy for 13- and 14-year-olds (n = 28; r = .81; p = .01) than their 17- and 18-year-old counterparts (n = 46; r = .56). Significant correlations between peer connectedness and academic outcomes, in fact, were not present for 13- and 14-year-old participants, yet were moderately strong for 17- and 18-year-old participants (i.e., r = .52, p = .02 for academic self-efficacy; r =.49, p = .04 for school engagement). T-tests conducted between age groups provide further support for these differences between 13-14 year olds and 17-18 year olds (i.e., t = - 2.37, p = .02 for school engagement; t = - 2.20, p = .03 for educational barriers). The connection between parental monitoring and academic outcomes, as well as the connection between peer connectedness and academic outcomes for 15- and 16-year-olds, falls in between the correlations calculated for 13- and 14-year-olds and 17- and 18-year-olds. These study findings suggest that similar to U.S. White and ethnic minority adolescents, the relationship between parental monitoring and academic outcomes changes with age, with the impact of peers increasing as refugee adolescents become older (Brown et al., 2008; Ryan, 2000).

Even though peer connectedness was not found to be correlated with academic outcomes for 13- and 14-year-old participants, parental monitoring was correlated with academic outcomes and peer connectedness for 15- to 18-year-olds, albeit to a lesser

degree than their younger counterparts. Additionally, parental monitoring was found to be related to peer connectedness for 17- and 18-year-olds, suggesting the importance of parental influence even as these older refugee adolescents become more connected to peers and experience an increase in independence. The importance of parental monitoring, as supported by these findings, may be even more important for refugee adolescents than for other adolescents, given the additional changes undergone by refugee adolescents (e.g., constant adjustment to their new environment) (Portes & Rumbaut, 2005). In relation, Mounts' (2001) found that higher levels of parental monitoring resulted over time in lower levels of adolescent drug use and delinquent behavior and higher levels of adolescent school engagement and academic outcomes. It is important in future research to examine whether drug use and delinquent behavior, as well as educational barriers and academic self-efficacy, mediate the relationship between parental monitoring and school engagement. Inclusion of such mediators will help to identify proximal and distal targets for prevention and intervention.

Sex and Current Location

There were no group differences on any study variables as a function of sex. There were significant group differences for study variables as a function of current geographic location (i.e., current school district), although these results must be considered in light of multivariate normality limitations. Given that researchers have not previously examined academic outcomes for refugee adolescents and a limited number of studies include academic outcomes for ethnic minority adolescents, sex and current geographic location comparisons are limited. One notable study conducted by Wissink et al. (2009), which examined how friendships impact psychosocial outcomes for immigrant

adolescents in the Netherlands, revealed that (a) boys reported more contact with their friends; (b) girls reported a higher quality of friendships; (c) girls perceived their friends as less deviant than boys; and (d) boys had higher self-esteem. Present study findings did not reveal sex differences in peer connectedness as did Wissink et al. (2009), which may be the result of using different measures of peer connectedness and different immigrant samples. There is a dearth of research in this area and it is difficult to draw conclusions. Several factors, however, may have contributed to the lack of significant sex differences in study variables. First, the diverse representation of ethnic backgrounds and the diverse number of community members per ethnic background may have contributed to a lack of power to detect sex differences. That is, perhaps a more homogenous sample may have yielded sex differences. Alternatively, the shared experiences of male and female participants may have outweighed any differences in terms of how they connect with their peers and perform academically.

The relationships between ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, academic self-efficacy, educational barriers, parental monitoring, and school engagement significantly differed as a function of current geographic location. Moreover, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness was most important in forming the function that discriminated the school district groups. A primary difference between the two school districts was the affluence of the schools and student population. Additional access to resources and programs supporting interactions with students of different cultural backgrounds, therefore, may have contributed to the differences found as a function of current geographic location. For example, a non-profit organization located in the more affluent school district provides all refugee students with

a small supply of new, brand-name clothes, yet there is not a comparable agency that provides such resources for refugee students residing in the less affluent school district. Equitable allocation of additional resources such as these may decrease the educational barriers for refugee adolescents, as well as the economic gap between refugee adolescent students and other students at school. Another socioeconomic factor influencing the opportunity for peer connectedness is time. More affluent adolescents may have more time to connect with peers because they do not have to work (at home or elsewhere) to support their families. Those who are more affluent also have more opportunities to engage in prosocial and organized interactions that, in turn, facilitate positive, deeper peer connections.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationships between peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, educational barriers, and school engagement with a sample of 120 refugee adolescents. Data were collected with 120 refugee youth participants at one time point. Research hypotheses were tested using exploratory factor analysis and bivariate correlational, multiple regression, and MANOVA analyses.

EFA analyses revealed that ethnically-similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, parental monitoring, and school engagement matched with the one-factor solutions found by the original measure authors. Differences in factor structure may have been related to participants' understanding of some measurement items and unique sample characteristics and experiences. Overall, study hypotheses were generally supported. Study findings showed that (a) a significant amount of variance in

academic self-efficacy was uniquely accounted for by educational barriers, school engagement, and parental monitoring; (b) a significant amount of variance in educational barriers was uniquely accounted for by ethnically similar peer connectedness, ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness, academic self-efficacy, and school engagement, (c) peer connectedness and educational barriers were positively, rather than inversely, correlated, (d) a significant amount of variance in school engagement was accounted for by educational barriers and academic self-efficacy, and (e) group differences in the level of relationships between variables were found as a function of current geographic location, and were not found as a function of sex.

Study findings for most research questions were concurrent with extant research with adolescents. Those study findings that did not match previous research may have been better explained with the inclusion of mediating variables such as depression, contextual characteristics (i.e., child, family, school, and neighborhood), drug use, delinquent behavior, and socioeconomic status as well as inclusion of moderating variables specific to refugee adolescents.

Qualitative Observations

The present study data collection process allowed for several important investigator observations regarding contextual factors that influenced study findings. Broadly, such observations include participant differences based on ethnic backgrounds and social inequity and injustices experienced by refugee families. It is important to note that despite these additional risks and hardship, refugee adolescents demonstrate profound strength and tremendous resilience. They have developed several coping strategies and life skills that foster their adaptation in completely unfamiliar environments (Porterfield et al., 2010). Information included in this section is vital to

understanding the experience of refugee adolescent participants and the results of the present study.

Overall, data collection revealed that Somali and Congolese communities were less economically successful (i.e., living in lower-income areas, fewer resources) and the Bhutanese community was more economically successful. For example, present data showed that 59.4% of the total number of Somali and Congolese participants (*n*=32) indicated that no adults in the family were currently employed, as opposed to 13.5% of the total number of Bhutanese participants (*n*=37). Several reasons may account for these differences. First, the Bhutanese community is the largest refugee group living in Denver, Colorado, and Somali and Congolese communities are among the smaller groups in Denver (see Table 1). Second, as supported by participant adolescent and parent statements, the Congolese and Somali communities are not as "close-knit" of a community as the Bhutanese community. For example, Somali and Congolese participants often did not know where other families from their culture were living, while Bhutanese participants were often able to refer me to other Bhutanese families from their culture living within the same apartment building, or to another apartment complex within close proximity. Third, given the sociopolitical history of the United States, Somali and Congolese families face the additional barrier of racial discrimination (Brown et al., 2008; Goza & Ryabov, 2009). As reported by several participants and their families, they experienced being treated as "less than" African Americans (Kao, 2001), while Bhutanese families may experience the "model minority" stereotype in the United States (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2010). That is, refugees from Somalia and Congo may experience the additional barrier of stereotype threat, or being at risk of confirming as a

self-characteristic a negative stereotype about their cultural group as Africans living in the United States (Claude & Aronson, 1995). Stereotype threat, in fact, has been found to have a negative impact on academic performance for African Americans (Claude & Aronson, 1995). Finally, the role of education and parent involvement in adolescents' academic lives varied by culture. Several participants reported, for example, that in Nepal (where the camp for Bhutanese refugees is located), students were physically punished by teachers and principals for obtaining low grades on tests. Even though such punishment may have instilled fear and test-taking anxiety, several participants stated that the punishment instilled discipline and a desire to do well in school. These contextual factors are important when considering present study results and when conducting future research with this population. Such cultural experiences may account for a greater amount of variance in school engagement, educational barriers, and academic self-efficacy, along with other psychosocial outcomes.

Another observation I made was the social injustice and inequity experienced by refugee families post-arrival in the United States, as well-documented in previous research (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, & Aber, 1997; Han, 2008; Hernandez et al., 2008; Hodes & Tolmac, 2005; Segal & Mayadas, 2005). I noticed, for example, that many families had few amenities and yet owned items likely beyond their economic means (e.g., flat-screen televisions). Investment in such items is not uncommon among immigrant refugee families because of the pervasive emphasis on material goods, entertainment, etc. in U.S. culture as well as the fact that such expensive items are often families' only source of entertainment and 'escape' from daily hardships. Such observations highlight the economic injustice experienced by refugee families. That is,

families may not realize they are now in debt and are responsible for making monthly payments to cover the cost of the television (American Psychological Association, 2010; Hernandez et al., 2008). Additionally, when a language interpreter asked at the end of the consent form explanation if the parent had any questions, parents sometimes asked for other resources, such as getting bus tokens for the month because they never came in the mail; finding their child a summer job; or finding a scholarship opportunity for their child. These participant questions draw attention to the additional struggles faced by refugee families. Some refugee families were living in horrific conditions and placed in the some of the more dangerous areas in Denver (i.e., higher rates of crime, higher rates of poverty, and low-income housing). In fact, one housing complex had an unsecured wood sheet laid over a large hole in the floor of the second level. Construction equipment and rusty metal beams were abandoned in the middle of the courtyard, with no fencing or barriers in place, and children were running around barefoot among the construction (Note: I reported these conditions to the Colorado Department of Human Services Refugee Services Program Director and the area was improved within a few weeks). Such conditions reflect the additional economic, cultural, and resource injustices and hazards experienced by refugee adolescents, and illustrate the immensity of barriers that must be overcome to achieve academic success and psychosocial well-being.

Study Strengths and Limitations

There are several study strengths and limitation to consider when interpreting the study results. Present study results extend research on the academic outcomes and psychosocial development of refugee adolescents in several ways. First, the contribution of these dissertation study variables to the academic outcomes of refugee adolescents has

not been examined empirically. Second, data were collected with a community-based sample of refugee adolescents, which strengthens the ecological validity and community utility of study findings. Third, new psychometric data were collected for study measures with a sample of refugee adolescents. More broadly, CBR allowed for access to an underserved, marginalized population that is rarely accessed in research. A large part of this access may be credited to utilizing 18- to 22-year-old young adults instead of older adults to translate verbally research documents and surveys. These young adult translators were likely viewed as non-threatening and elicited more honest and valid answers because adolescent participants were more comfortable with language interpreters closer to their own age and generation. Professional adult interpreters may have been perceived as judging responses to value-laden items, such as, "Resist peer pressure to have sex," or "Skip school when bored or upset," and participants may have been more guarded given that the refugee communities are small. Additional ecological strengths of the present study include having a diverse participant sample in terms of ethnic background: Bhutanese, Karen, Burmese, Chin, Iraqi, Congolese, Somali, Ethiopian, and Eritrean. Lastly, the number of participants in the study (n=116) ensured adequate power; assumptions of analyses were met; and treatment implementation reliability was ensured, given that the interpreters were trained.

Present study results must be considered in light of several limitations across (a) design, (b) measure administration, (c) psychometric and cultural barriers, and (d) statistical and construct validity. First, study limitations include the use of a correlational research design, which does not allow for causal conclusions to be drawn. Also, because a convenience sampling method was utilized, the ecological validity of the present study

may have been decreased. Given the small population and exploratory nature of the study, convenience sampling was chosen in order to recruit enough participants for valid conclusions.

Second, with regards to measure administration limitations, it is important to note that participants knew the language interpreters at times. Although every effort was made to avoid close relationships between the interpreters and participants, some relationship with language interpreters and participants existed at times, given that the refugee community is relatively small in Denver, Colorado. To compensate for this limitation, language interpreters were trained not to view the participant's answers while reading the items to reduce the likelihood of potential bias. Additionally, interpreters and myself sometimes did not identify participants' confusion with the measures early enough in the assessment process, and most likely not at all for some participants. We cheeked in regularly with participants to ask if they understood the items, although it is likely that we did not address every participant's confusion. Furthermore, limitations were present in the context in which participants' completed the surveys. Because there were no more than one or two rooms in a home at times, avoiding parents potentially overhearing the translation of items was difficult in such situations, and may have affected the responses of the adolescent participants. To avoid this limitation, adolescent participants were asked not to voice their responses and to mark their answer silently when their parents were within close proximity. Finally, the results indicate that the instruments may not have measured what was intended theoretically. Only 14% of the total variance in educational barriers, for example, was accounted for by the other variables measured in the current study.

Third, with regard to psychometric limitations, this study was seriously limited by the adaptations made to each instrument. Cultural adaptations to each measure were carefully considered by myself, ERIS staff, and the dissertation chair and committee members. A number of items were removed from each original measure because they were not relevant to the present study population, and additional items were removed during the factor analyses for most variables. Although culturally appropriate and necessary, such adaptations may have reduced the validity and reliability of the original instruments, and reduced the generalizability of the present findings. In relation, the cultural and language barriers between the research team and associated with study instrumentation limit the validity of study findings. Some participants may have over-reported academic self-efficacy, under-reported educational barriers, or over-reported school engagement, regardless of anonymity. Some of the refugee adolescents' cultural backgrounds involve shame if not doing well in school (e.g., Bhutanese culture), and a few participants asked if they "did well" on the survey. Such beliefs and comments indicate that these participants may not have fully understood the purpose of the study, which may have influenced their responses. To compensate for these cultural and language barriers, interpreters were trained to remind participants of the importance of being honest, of asking questions or clarification, and the confidentiality of their responses.

Finally, potential statistical and construct validity limitations were present in the current present study. A potential statistical limitation includes a threat to multivariate normality, which may have impacted the MANOVA results. Given that the measures utilized in the present study have not been validated specifically with refugee

adolescents, another potential threat to validity includes unreliability of measures for the specific present population. The inclusion of several mediators may have resulted in clearer findings, such as family economic stress, adolescents' perceptions of financial constraints, adolescents' depression, child and family characteristics, school characteristics, and neighborhood characteristics (Han, 2008; Mistry et al., 2009). Finally, there were random irrelevancies in setting, given that surveys were often administered in a family's home (i.e., different environmental impacts).

Construct validity threats of the present study includes mono-operational bias, given that only self-report surveys were used; potential evaluation apprehension; and potential experimenter expectancies. Refugee youth participants found negatively worded items confusing (e.g., "I don't try very hard in school"; "Spending time with friends who are from my culture is not important to me"). To compensate for this threat, factor analyses were conducted for each of the variables in order to remove problematic items before data analysis. In addition to the language and cultural differences related to method limitations outlined above, other ecological validity threats include potential inaccuracy due to lack of English skills. For example, some of the participants may have reported understanding English better than they actually did, and while encouraged to ask questions and request clarification when necessary, may not have done so. Data also were collected via self-report from adolescent participants; no additional types of data from other sources were collected and would have strengthened assessment of study variables. Finally, participants may have been apprehensive to respond honestly on study measures because of concern about being evaluated by the research team or their families and peers finding out how they responded on study measures.

Study Implications

Research

The present study findings bring to light several implications and recommendations for future research. Primarily, this dissertation study provides the first empirical data regarding the associations between the present study variables with a sample of refugee adolescents. Based on the reliability and EFA results, it is important for researchers to use measure items that are worded clearly and with few negatively worded items. For example, many participants did not understand the term and words, "resist peer pressure," "bother," and "discrimination." Similarly, future researchers should create measures that may also better capture the connection between academic and home lives of refugee adolescents (e.g., separation or biculturality). Second, compensation for refugee adolescent participants may not have been appropriate. Some participants did not recognize major department stores (i.e., Target, Kohl's) and may not have been able to use the gift cards provided as compensation. Furthermore, many participants did not have the financial means to use public transportation to access major department stores. Given these barriers, cash may have been a more appropriate form of compensation.

The present study also highlights the vitality of developing a trusting and collaborative relationship with community agencies in order to access vulnerable and underserved populations, such as refugee youth and their families. Given that the foundation of data collection relied on community-based research (CBR) principles, strong relationships within the refugee community were built before data collection began. The strength and significance of these collaborative relationships was reflected in

the fact that 98% of potential participants agreed to participate in the study. This high percentage of recruitment may also illustrate the desire of refugee families to be helpful and to engage and connect with others, given that many families and adolescents appeared to enjoy the visit and the opportunity to share their thoughts and opinions. As requested by refugee resettlement agency staff and clients, research findings will be presented to agency administrators, public and charter schools with a high concentration of refugee students, and to the Colorado Department of Human Services. Given the success of the present study in terms of working collaboratively with a higher-risk and underserved population using CBR principles, I strongly recommend the practice of community-based research methods to conduct research with vulnerable and marginalized populations. In addition to developing community relationships prior to conducting research with refugee families, I recommend spending time volunteering within the community and getting to know individual refugee families before attempting to access this population. Learning more about refugee families, the context of their arrival, the intimate struggles they face in their new host country, and the intricacies of living biculturally on an individual level can not only allow for access to working with refugee families, but provide rich and important qualitative information to provide more valid conclusions when conducting research.

The present study findings shed some light on the relationships between peer connectedness, academic self-efficacy, parental monitoring, educational barriers, and school engagement, although I take great caution with interpreting the findings given the measurement limitations. Recommendations related to the consideration of new and different constructs to include in future research include (a) constructing or using other

measures to find out if the constructs utilized in the current study are even valid for this community as construed by U.S. scholars, (b) gathering psychometric data on other instruments used in other cultural contexts that measure the constructs utilized in the current study, (c) examining potential mediators and moderators of the study relationships, (d) understanding participants' subjective experiences, and (e) exploring how relationships among study variables change over time for refugee adolescents. In regard to potential mediators and moderators, present study results indicated that a significant but small amount of variance in educational barriers was accounted for by peer connectedness, academic self-efficacy, and school engagement. Exploring the influence of socioeconomic status, discrimination, acculturation, and contextual characteristics (e.g., child, family, school, neighborhood) may result in more variance accounted for in educational barriers. Such potential mediating mechanisms may include emotional resources, length of time in the host country, family characteristics, school and neighborhood characteristics, and community support.

Qualitative observations of participants' subjective experiences are important to examine empirically because adolescents who experience further social inequity and added economic, cultural, and resource injustices must overcome an immensity of barriers to be academically successful. For example, researchers might examine the impact of generational status on the relationship between SES and academic self-efficacy for refugee adolescents across ethnic groups (Majer, 2009). Furthermore, given the broad differences between cultures within the refugee community, researchers should aim to recruit larger samples of refugee adolescents from each country of origin to gain a better understanding of ethnic group differences. It has been suggested repeatedly that research

on cross-ethnic comparisons in adolescent outcomes is needed because it provides critical information for understanding cultural variations in adjustment (Wissink et al., 2009). Finally, examining developmental outcomes over time through longitudinal research would provide an opportunity to understand the impact of trauma and displacement on refugee adolescents' developmental capacities (Portlander et al., 2010).

Practice

The present study findings offer evidence for providers serving refugee adolescents, including refugee resettlement agency staff members, teachers, case managers, parents, and mentors. Such evidence may help clinicians better serve refugee adolescents and positively influence their educational success and development. The following practice implications and recommendations include: (a) creating supportive programming to foster peer mentorship; (b) involving parents to decrease educational barriers through collaboration; and (c) implementing school-based interventions to increase academic self-efficacy and school engagement.

Prior research findings suggest that attention to building and accessing support from similar age role models, such as peers, may be of particular value for refugee adolescents (Ali et al., 2005; Karcher, Davis, & Powell, 2006). For example, Kao (2001) found that when peer groups influence educational achievement, they tend to support positive educational goals (e.g., staying in high school), and noted that peer modeling is far more impactful than other influences on student academic performance. In contrast, present study results reflected the possibility that refugee adolescents are embedded in neighborhoods and peer groups that are higher risk, resulting in a positive correlation between educational barriers and peer connectedness. Greater connectedness to these

peers may be directly associated with greater educational barriers. The direction of the relationship between peer connectedness and educational barriers may have been inversed if participants felt connected to peers who were academically engaged, successful and who had access to resources. Prior research was conducted with white and ethnic minority youth rather than refugee adolescents, which may account for this discrepancy in findings. Present findings, therefore, may support the importance of providing programming to increase prosocial peer support for refugee adolescents and assist youth with negotiating acculturation processes. Refugee adolescents live biculturally. It is important that school and family contexts support youth with finding pride in their ethnic and national identities and positive connections with ethnically-similar peers. For example, establishing a peer-mentoring program with young adult refugees who have succeeded in school and are from the same cultural background as refugee adolescents may improve academic and psychosocial outcomes for refugee adolescents. By building this type of support, self-efficacy beliefs may be strengthened and influence academic and psychosocial outcomes (Ali et al., 2005). Given that ethnically dissimilar peer connectedness was the only significant variable contributing to the group differences found as a function of current geographic location, programs facilitating intercultural friendships and understanding may positively impact refugee adolescents as well (Konan, Chatard, Selimbegovic, & Mugny, 2010).

Present study findings support the importance of involving parents to decrease educational barriers and increase academic self-efficacy for refugee adolescents. Given that refugee adolescents reported that their parents monitor their behavior (*M*=3.85), and that parental monitoring accounted for significant and unique variance in academic self-

efficacy, a more collaborative model involving parents and family members in school activities may positively impact academic outcomes for refugee adolescents. Results underscore the importance of engaging parents in the learning community in a way that is ecologically valid and culturally inclusive; families who feel a part of their adolescents' education are more likely to communicate concerns, make suggestions, volunteer, and help their adolescent with homework (Dishion et al.,1995; Dishion & Patterson, 2006; Dishion, Piehler, & Myers, 2008; Dishion & Stormshak, 2007). This model, in turn, may relieve some stress for teachers both inside and outside the classroom (Hoyt, 1995; Porterfield et al., 2010). Regular communication with families also could help teachers connect their lessons to their students' lives and interests (Hoyt, 1995). Such communication could be established through collaborative homework assignments translated into native languages and home-school journals to provide a less intimidating way of sharing information and discussing issues. Overall, providing a variety of ecologically valid methods to collaborate will foster connections between parents, teachers, and students will make it easier to involve parents in their children's education.

Study results also indicate that refugee adolescents would benefit from school-based interventions aimed at decreasing educational barriers and increasing self-efficacy and school engagement, as evidenced by significant relationships among these variables and qualitative observations. Because refugee families are socioeconomically marginalized, basing interventions in the school may help to reduce barriers to academic self-efficacy and school engagement. For example, testing modifications (e.g., extended time), tutoring, after-school homework assistance may be appropriate school-based intervention for refugee adolescents (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2010). Because school

engagement accounted for significant variance in academic self-efficacy, results suggest that students may benefit from feedback on their performance before they can realistically assess their ability to achieve academic goals (Gore, 2006). Teachers, therefore, should devise interventions and classroom strategies in a matter that foster educational self-efficacy to increase educational success (Majer, 2009). As illustrated in prior studies, teachers who were optimistic about the children's life possibilities and racial–ethnic interactions were more likely to have students who reflected those attitudes, reflecting the importance of role-modeling for teachers and parents (Smith et al., 2003). On a broader level, supporting positive relationships within community, family, and school contexts would be of great benefit for refugee adolescent development (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2010).

Summary and Conclusions

Notwithstanding limitations, the present study uniquely examined the relationships between peer connectedness, parental monitoring, academic self-efficacy, educational barriers, and school engagement for refugee adolescents. Given that these relationships have not been examined for refugee youth prior to the present study, findings were compared to previous studies which examined these variables for white, ethnic minority, and immigrant adolescents, as summarized in a previous section. Data collection for the present study revealed that Somali and Congolese communities were less economically successful (i.e., living in lower-income areas, fewer resources), than the Bhutanese community because of several contextual factors and additional barriers. Results also reflected the social injustice and inequity experienced by refugee families post-arrival in the United States, as evidenced in the observed living conditions and lack of resources. Strengths of the present study include established ecological validity and

community utility, and new normative data for psychometric instrumentation, given that the measured variables have not previously been examined for refugee adolescents. Cultural and language barriers, mono-operational bias, and potential evaluation apprehension were limitations with the study. Research implications and recommendations gleaned from the present study include considering other means of participant compensation for refugee adolescents, re-evaluating the use of negatively-worded and confusing items within the measures, and collaborating with community partners when working with vulnerable populations. Further quantitative and qualitative investigations exploring the academic and psychosocial outcomes for refugee adolescents are needed. Practice implications include involving parents to decrease educational barriers through collaboration, and providing educational support and accommodations to foster success within the school and community.

APPENDIX A

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Ecumenical Refugee and Immigrant Services

ECUMENICAL REFUGEE AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES, INC.
1600 Downing St #400 • Denver, CO 80218 • (303) 860-0128 • Fax (303) 860-1015 • www.ersden.org

October 7, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to confirm that Ecumenical Refugee and Immigrant Services is collaborating with the research project to be conducted by Laura Ramzy, M.A., and Ellen McWhirter, Ph.D., of the University of Oregon. The title of the project is, "Immigrant Refugee Adolescents: The Impact of Peer Composition on Academic Barriers, Academic Self-Efficacy, and School Engagement." Specifically, we are aware that Ms. Ramzy will be contacting our clients to seek their consent in study participation; that she will be working with several language interpreters staffed by ERIS; and that she will administer surveys to those who agree to participate in the study to collect information about peer relationships and academic outcomes. We will release contact information for our clients to Ms. Ramzy for the purposes of the study.

Laura Ramzy and Dr. Ellen McWhirter are responsible for the contents of the survey and for
supervising the language interpreters who will aide in translation as needed. We will seek active consent from parents/guardians and assent from all participating adolescents, as this is consistent with our agency policies.

Sincerely,

Ferdi Mevlani
Executive Director, Ecumenical Refugee and Immigrant Services
303.860.0128, ext. 1132
ferdi@ersden.org

African Community Center

ECDC/AFRICAN COMMUNITY CENTER
Refugee Youth Outreach Program

850 Holly Street ⋄ Denver, CO 80220
(Tel) (303) 399-4500 ⋄ (Fax) (303) 399-4502
www.acc-den.org

January 24, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to confirm that ECDC/African Community Center is collaborating with the research project to be conducted by Laura Ramzy, M.A. and Ellen McWhirter, Ph.D. of the University of Oregon. The title of the project is, "Immigrant Refugee Adolescents: The Impact of Peer Composition on Academic Barriers, Academic Self-Efficacy, and School Engagement." Specifically, we are aware that Ms. Ramzy will be contacting our clients to seek their consent in study participation; that she will be working with several language interpreters referred by African Community Center; and that she will administer surveys to those who agree to participate in the study to collect information about peer relationships and academic outcomes. We will release contact information for our clients to Ms. Ramzy for the purpose of this study.

Laura Ramzy and Dr. Ellen McWhirter are responsible for the contents of the survey and for supervising the language interpreters who will aide in translation as needed. We will seek active consent from parents/guardians and assent from all participating adolescents, as this is consistent with our agency policies.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Gueddiche
Director, African Community Center
303-399-4500 ext. 13
jennifer@acc-den.org

Lutheran Family Services

REFUGEE & ASYLEE PROGRAMS

LUTHERAN FAMILY SERVICES of Colorado

Services that heal, strengthen, and provide hope

LSA LIRS

www.lfsco.org

February 22, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

Lutheran Family Services of Colorado's Refugee & Asylee Programs supports the research project to be conducted by Laura Ramzy, M.A. and Ellen McWhirter, Ph.D. of the University of Oregon. The title of the project is, "Immigrant Refugee Adolescents: The Impact of Peer Composition on Academic Barriers, Academic Self-Efficacy, and School Engagement." Because LFS of Colorado's program evaluation and research consent policies are under currently review, we regret not being provide contact release forms of our clients for this study. Nevertheless, LFS wishes to extend its support for the project.

LFS of Colorado began serving refugees in 1978 and is the largest refugee resettlement agency in the Rocky Mountain West, welcoming 1241 refugees, asylees and secondary migrants to Colorado in federal fiscal year 2010. Our services for refugee youth include case management and afterschool academic enrichment programming. Ms. Laura Ramzy's project addresses a critical subject area that is presently under-researched. Understanding that Ms. Laura Ramzy and Dr. Ellen McWhirter are responsible for the contents of the survey, we hope to be able to consider its findings to inform future programming.

Please accept our best wishes for a successful project.

Sincerely,

James Horan
Division Director
Refugee & Asylee Programs

Metro Denver
1600 Downing St., Suite 600
Denver, CO 80218
PHONE 303-980-5400
FAX 303-980-8588

Southern Colorado
108 East St.Vrain, Suite 14
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
PHONE 719-227-7571
FAX 719-227-7592

Northern Colorado
800 8th Ave., Suite 225
Greeley, CO 80631
PHONE 970-353-5267
FAX 970-353-5284

Eastern Colorado
104 East Kiowa Ave.
Fort Morgan, CO 80701
PHONE 970-867-4388
FAX 970-867-5237

APPENDIX B

SCRIPTS

Recruitment Script for Parents, Guardians, and Potential Participants

Your child is (you are) being asked to participate in a study about friendships and how he/she does (you do) in school. This study is being conducted by Laura Ramzy, M.A., a graduate student from the University of Oregon, Department of Counseling Psychology and Human Services. She wants to learn about refugee adolescents' friendships after they move to the United States, and how that is related to their confidence in how well they can do in school, the problems they might have with doing well in school, and their grades in school. The purpose of this study is to contribute a greater understanding of the specific challenges facing refugee adolescents experience in their friendships and in school.

If you allow your child to participate/decide to participate, then your child (you) will be asked to complete some questionnaires about their (your) friendships and how they (you) are doing in school. The questionnaire will be given in the common area room of your apartment complex, and should take about an hour to complete. His/her (Your) name will not be placed on any of the forms, except the first page of the questionnaire, which will be separated from the rest of the questionnaire. I would like your contact information (phone #, mailing address) to send you specific information for a Day Camp at Denver City Park that will be held for study participants in June. Your child doesn't (you don't) need to answer any questions that makes them (you) feel uncomfortable, and can ask questions at any time. Your child will also receive pizza and a gift certificate for $5.00 for participating in this project.

Participation in this study is free and voluntary. Deciding not to participate will NOT affect the services you or your family receives from the Ecumenical Refugee and Immigrant Services agency, or your relationship with the University of Oregon. The results of the study will be confidential. ERIS staff will not have access to your child's answers to the survey, and the information will have code number instead of using names. Laura will keep all completed surveys in a locked file cabinet and room. Once the study is completed, the surveys will be destroyed.

If you have any questions about this research project, please contact Human Subject Compliance at (541) 346-2510 or Dr. Ellen McWhirter, (541) 346-2443, Faculty Advisor, at the Department of Counseling Psychology and Human Services, 5251 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403.
(Review consent/assent forms)

Survey Administration Script

Thank you for coming to participate in this study today! Laura Ramzy, who is leading the study, is a graduate student from the University of Oregon. She is asking you to participate in this study because you are a refugee teenager. Laura hopes to learn more about refugee teenagers and their relationships with other young people. The information from this study will help case managers, teachers, and community members learn about how to be helpful to teenagers like you.

The survey that you will be completing will ask you to answer some questions about your feelings, behaviors, activities, and attitudes towards relationships with other refugee kids, relationships with other American kids, and how you are doing at school. These forms should take about an hour to complete, but you will have as much time as you need to answer each question. You will receive a gift certificate of $5.00 for completing the survey, and pizza and an invitation to participate in a Day Camp at City Park in June.

The questions on the survey are about things you might talk about at school or home. We don't think the questions will make you uncomfortable, but if you experience some uncomfortable feelings when you answer some of the questions, you can skip those questions or stop taking the survey. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer, and may stop at any time. The language translator and Laura will answer questions for you at any time. Participation is voluntary and will not make any difference in your school grades, your family's relationship with ERIS, or the University of Oregon.

All information that you provide will be kept confidential. This means your answers will not be shared with anyone. Your parents will not be able to look at your answers and Laura will take the page with your name on it off the survey when you are done so that your name will not be on any of the forms. Your identity will be kept confidential, and Laura will keep all completed surveys in a locked file cabinet and room. Once the study is completed, the surveys will be destroyed.

Thank you again, your thoughts and feelings are highly valued!

(Administer Survey)

APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORMS

Parent Consent Form

January 2010 IRB protocol # X134-11

Dear Parent,

***Your child is invited to participate in a research study led by Laura Ramzy, who is working with African Community Center, Lutheran Family Services, and Ecumenical Refugee Services.**

- She is a graduate student from the University of Oregon, Department of Counseling Psychology and Human Services.
- She wants to learn about refugee adolescents' friendships after they move to the United States, and how that is related to their confidence in how well they can do in school, problems they experience with doing well in school, and their grades.

***In order to participate, your son or daughter will have to complete a short survey**.

- The survey is about their relationships with other refugee kids, relationships with other American kids, and how he/she is doing at school.
- We don't think the questions will make your child uncomfortable, but if your child feels uncomfortable when answering some of the questions, he/she can skip those questions or stop taking the survey.
- A language interpreter will be available to read the questions out loud.
- The language interpreter and Laura will answer questions for anyone at any time.
- The survey will be given in the common area room of your apartment complex
- It should take about an hour to complete, but your child can take longer if needed.
- Your child will receive a $5.00 gift certificate for completing the survey, pizza, and an invitation to participate in a Day Camp at City Park in June.

*** Participation is voluntary. It will not make any difference in:**

- your child's school grades;
- your family's relationship with African Community Center/Lutheran Family Services/Ecumenical Refugee and Immigration Services;
- or the University of Oregon.

*** All of this information will be kept completely confidential.**

- African Community Center/Lutheran Family Services/Ecumenical Refugee and Immigration Services staff will not have access to your child's answers to the survey.
- The information will use code numbers instead of names. That also means that you will not be able to look at your child's answers, because your child's name will not be on any of the forms.
- Laura will keep all completed surveys in a locked file cabinet and room.
- Once the study is completed, the surveys will be destroyed.

*** We cannot allow your son or daughter to participate unless you sign this form giving your permission. We will also ask your son or daughter to sign a form if they would like to participate.**

*** Please keep a copy of this letter.**

- If you have any questions about this research project, please contact Laura Ramzy (440-669-8371, or lramzy@uoregon.edu) or Ellen McWhirter (541-346-2443, or ellenmcw@uoregon.edu).

- If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's rights as a research participant in this study, you can also contact: Office for the Protection of Human Subjects, 5237 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403, (541) 346-2510, human_subjects@orc.uoregon.edu**.**

_____ *(check here)* I give permission to have my child, _____
(child's name)
participate in this study.

Print Name: _____

Sign Name: _____ Date: _____

_____ will participate on the following day (please check ONE):
(child's name)

_____ (today)

_____ Saturday, February 5, 2011, at 10am

_____ Sunday, February 6, 2011, at 3pm

If changes in dates have to be made to the day/time, Laura should contact you (please check one or both):

_____ by phone

_____ at your doorstep

Assent Form

January 2010 IRB protocol # X134-11

Dear Student,

***You are invited to participate in a research study led by Laura Ramzy, who is working with African Community Center, Lutheran Family Services, and Ecumenical Refugee and Immigration Services.**

- She is a graduate student from the University of Oregon, Department of Counseling Psychology and Human Services.
- She wants to learn about refugee adolescents' friendships after they move to the United States, and how that is related to how well they can do in school, and problems they experience with doing well in school.

***In order to participate, you will have to complete a short survey**.

- The survey is about your relationships with other refugee kids, relationships with other American kids, and how you are doing at school.
- We don't think the questions will make you uncomfortable, but if you do feel uncomfortable when answering some of the questions, you can skip those questions or stop taking the survey.
- A language interpreter will be available to read the questions out loud.
- The language interpreter and Laura will answer questions for you at any time.
- The survey will be given in the common area room of your apartment complex
- It should take about an hour to complete, but you can take longer if needed.
- You will receive a $5.00 gift certificate for completing the survey, pizza, and an invitation to participate in a Day Camp at City Park in June.

*** Participation is voluntary. It will not make any difference in:**

- your school grades;
- your family's relationship with African Community Center/Lutheran Family Services/Ecumenical Refugee and Immigration Services;
- or the University of Oregon.

*** All of this information will be kept completely confidential.**

- African Community Center/Lutheran Family Services/Ecumenical Refugee and Immigration Services staff will not have access to your answers to the survey.

- The information will have a code number instead of using names. That also means that your parents will not be able to look at your answers, because your name will not be on any of the forms.
- Laura will keep all completed surveys in a locked file cabinet and room.
- Once the study is completed, the surveys will be destroyed.

*** Please keep a copy of this letter.**

- If you have any questions about this research project, please contact Laura Ramzy (440-669-8371, or lramzy@uoregon.edu) or Ellen McWhirter (541-346-2443, or ellenmcw@uoregon.edu).
- If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you can also contact: Office for the Protection of Human Subjects, 5237 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403, (541) 346-2510, human_subjects@orc.uoregon.edu**.**

I, (please print name) _____, would like

to participate in this research project.

Sign Name: _____ Date: _____

Consent Form

January 2010 IRB protocol # X134-11

Dear Student,

***You are invited to participate in a research study led by Laura Ramzy, who is working with African Community Center, Lutheran Family Services, and Ecumenical Refugee and Immigration Services.**

- She is a graduate student from the University of Oregon, Department of Counseling Psychology and Human Services.
- She wants to learn about refugee adolescents' friendships after they move to the United States, and how that is related to how well they can do in school, and problems they experience with doing well in school.

***In order to participate, you will have to complete a short survey**.

- The survey is about your relationships with other refugee kids, relationships with other American kids, and how you are doing at school.
- We don't think the questions will make you uncomfortable, but if you do feel uncomfortable when answering some of the questions, you can skip those questions or stop taking the survey.
- A language interpreter will be available to read the questions out loud.
- The language interpreter and Laura will answer questions for you at any time.
- The survey will be given in the common area room of your apartment complex, or a room at the African Community Center.
- It should take about an hour to complete, but you can take longer if needed.
- You will receive a $5.00 gift certificate for completing the survey, pizza, and an invitation to participate in a Day Camp at City Park in June.

*** Participation is voluntary. It will not make any difference in:**

- your school grades;
- your family's relationship with African Community Center/Lutheran Family Services/Ecumenical Refugee and Immigration Services;
- or the University of Oregon.

*** All of this information will be kept completely confidential.**

- African Community Center/Lutheran Family Services/Ecumenical Refugee and Immigration Services staff will not have access to your answers to the survey.
- The information will have a code number instead of using names. That also means that your parents will not be able to look at your answers, because your name will not be on any of the forms.
- Laura will keep all completed surveys in a locked file cabinet and room.
- Once the study is completed, the surveys will be destroyed.

*** We cannot allow you to participate unless you sign this form giving your permission.**

*** Please keep a copy of this letter.**

- If you have any questions about this research project, please contact Laura Ramzy (440-669-8371, or lramzy@uoregon.edu) or Ellen McWhirter (541-346-2443, or ellenmcw@uoregon.edu).
- If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you can also contact: Office for the Protection of Human Subjects, 5237 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403, (541) 346-2510, human_subjects@orc.uoregon.edu**.**

_____ *(check here)* I, _____ , would like to participate in
(your name)
participate in this study.

Print Name: _____

Sign Name: _____ Date: _____

_____ will participate on the following day (please check ONE):
(your name)

_____ (today)

_____ Saturday, February 5, 2011, at 10am

_____ Sunday, February 6, 2011, at 3pm

If changes in dates have to be made to the day/time, Laura should contact you (please check one or both):

_____ by phone

_____ at your doorstep

Informational Handout

January 2010 IRB protocol # X134-11

Dear Student,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in Ms. Laura Ramzy's study about friendships and how you do in school! Please come to the common area downstairs as it says below. If for some reason you can't come on this date, please let Ms. Ramzy know by calling African Community Center (303.399.4500). We'll try to reschedule you for another day.

You do not need to bring anything with you on the day you take the survey. It will take about an hour, and we will serve pizza afterward, and you will be given a $5.00 gift certificate.

Based on your preference indicated on the consent form, here is all of the information you will need the day you take the survey:

Where to go: _____

What day: _____

What time to arrive: _____

APPENDIX D

INSTRUMENTS

Survey

Code Number: _____

Instructions: For each question, please write neatly in the space provided.

1. What is your full name? _____

2. What is the best way to reach you in a few months in order to send you information about the Day Camp?

_____

3. What is your telephone number? _____

Code Number: _____

Instructions: For each question, please check the correct answer or write in the space provided.

4. What is your sex? Male □ Female □

5. How old are you? _____

6. In what month and year were you born? _____
month / year

7. In what city and country were you born?

_____
Country *City*

8. How long have you lived in the United States? _____
months / years

9. What is the name of your school? _____

10. What grade are you in? _____

11. How long have you been going to school in the United States? _____
months / years

12. Are your grades mostly: A's □ B's □ C's □ D's □ F's □

13. How many people live in your apartment with you? _____
    a. How many are adults? _____
    b. Of those adults, how many have a job right now? _____
    c. How many are kids, or under age 18? _____

14. What youth programs are you participating in? (check as many as apply)
    □ ACC Soccer program
    □ ACC Scholarship program
    □ ACC Afterschool program
    □ CAO (Colorado African Organization)
    □ Mercy Housing Afterschool Program
    □ Lutheran International Kids Success
    □ Newcomer Center, South High School
    □ Newcomer Center, Merrill Middle School
    □ Place Bridge Academy
    □ Emily Griffith English Classes
    □ Parent workshops/trainings

15. (If involved in more than one program) Did you have to choose an ACC program over a school program? □ Yes □ No

16. (If involved in more than one program) Did you have to choose an school program over a ACC program? □ Yes □ No

Code Number: _____

1. How many of your friends outside of school are from your culture? _____

2. How many of your friends outside of school are not from your culture? _____

3. How many of your friends at school are from your culture? _____

4. How many of your friends at school are not from your culture? _____

Instructions: Please use this survey to tell us about yourself. CIRCLE the number that best describes how true that statement is for you or how much you agree with it. If a statement is unclear to you, ask for an explanation. If it still unclear, put a "?".

How TRUE about you is each sentence?

	Not at all	Not True	Sort of True	True	Very True
1. Spending time with friends from my culture is not important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have friends from my culture that I'm really close to and trust completely.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Spending time with my friends from my culture is a big part of my life.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I spend as much time as I can with my friends from my culture.	1	2	3	4	5
5. My friends from my culture and I spend a lot of. time talking about things	1	2	3	4	5
6. My classmates from my culture often bother me.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I like pretty much all of the kids from my culture in my grade.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I like working with my classmates from my culture.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I get along well with the students from my culture in my classes.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I am liked by my classmates who are from my culture.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I rarely fight or argue with kids from my culture at school.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Spending time with friends who are not from my culture is not important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I have friends who are not from my culture that I'm really close to and trust completely.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Spending time with my friends who are not from my culture is a big part of my life.	1	2	3	4	5

Code Number: _____

How TRUE about you is each sentence?

	Not at all	Not True	Sort of True	True	Very True
15. I spend as much time as I can with my friends who are not from my culture.	1	2	3	4	5
16. My friends who are not from my culture and I spend a lot of time talking about things.	1	2	3	4	5
17. My classmates who are not from my culture often bother me.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I like pretty much all of the other kids who are not from my culture in my grade.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I like working with my classmates who are not from my culture.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I get along well with the other students who are not from my culture in my classes.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I am liked by my classmates who are not from my culture.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I rarely fight or argue with the other kids who are not from my culture at school.	1	2	3	4	5

Instructions: These questions are designed to help us get a better understanding of the kinds of things that are difficult for students. Please answer the question by circling the best response.

How well can you do these things?

	Not well at all	Not Very Well	Sort of Well	Well	Very Well
1. Get teachers to help me when I get stuck on schoolwork.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Get another student to help me when I get stuck on schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
3. Get adults to help me when I have problems with other classmates	1	2	3	4	5
4. Get a friend to help me when I have problems with other classmates	1	2	3	4	5
5. Learn math	1	2	3	4	5
6. Learn science	1	2	3	4	5
7. Learn social studies	1	2	3	4	5
8. Learn reading and writing	1	2	3	4	5
9. Learn to use computers	1	2	3	4	5
10. Learn a foreign language	1	2	3	4	5
11. Take good notes during class	1	2	3	4	5
12. Finish my homework when it is due	1	2	3	4	5
13. Make myself study when I would rather play	1	2	3	4	5

Code Number: _____

How well can you do these things?

	Not well at all	Not Very Well	Sort of Well	Well	Very Well
14. Always concentrate during class	1	2	3	4	5
15. Organize my school books and papers	1	2	3	4	5
16. Use the library	1	2	3	4	5
17. Not skip school when I feel bored or upset	1	2	3	4	5
18. Remember information that was said in class, or in a book	1	2	3	4	5
19. Resist pressure to do things in school that can get me into	1	2	3	4	5
*20. Resist pressure to join a gang	1	2	3	4	5
21. Resist pressure to smoke cigarettes	1	2	3	4	5
22. Resist pressure to drink alcohol	1	2	3	4	5
23. Resist pressure to take drugs	1	2	3	4	5
24. Resist pressure to have sex	1	2	3	4	5
25. Say what I think when other classmates disagree with me	1	2	3	4	5
26. Control my temper	1	2	3	4	5
27. Tell others to stop annoying me or hurting my feelings	1	2	3	4	5
28. Stand up for myself when I am not being treated fairly	1	2	3	4	5
29. Ask my brother(s) and sister(s) to help me with a problem	1	2	3	4	5
30. Ask my parents to help me with a problem	1	2	3	4	5

Instructions: This is a list of potential **barriers** that young people sometimes encounter in school. Please answer the question by circling the best response.

How much is this a barrier to doing well in school right now?

	Not at all	**Maybe**	**Somewhat**	**Probably**	**Definitely**
1. Not enough money	1	2	3	4	5
2. Not smart enough	1	2	3	4	5
3. Friends don't support my plans	1	2	3	4	5
4. Having to work while going to school	1	2	3	4	5
5. Not fitting in at school	1	2	3	4	5
6. Teachers don't support me	1	2	3	4	5
7. Social class discrimination (classism)	1	2	3	4	5
8. Not being prepared enough	1	2	3	4	5
9. Family responsibilities	1	2	3	4	5

Code Number: _____

How much is this a barrier to doing well in school right now?

	Not at all	Maybe	Somewhat	Probably	Definitely
10. Pressure from my boy/girlfriend	1	2	3	4	5
11. Sex discrimination	1	2	3	4	5
12. Racial/ethnic discrimination	1	2	3	4	5
13. Lack of study skills	1	2	3	4	5
14. Parents don't support me	1	2	3	4	5
15. School too stressful	1	2	3	4	5
16. Others don't think I can do it	1	2	3	4	5
17. Parents don't have access to the information I need	1	2	3	4	5
18. Lack of English language skills	1	2	3	4	5

Instructions: Please use this survey to tell us about yourself. CIRCLE the number that best describes how true that statement is for you or how much you agree with it. If a statement is unclear to you, ask for an explanation. If it still unclear, put a " ?".

How TRUE about you is each sentence?

	Not at all	Not really	Sort of True	True	Very True
1. I work hard at school.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I enjoy being at school.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I get bored at school a lot.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I do well in school.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I feel good about myself when I am at school.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Doing well in school is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I work very hard on my schoolwork.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I don't try very hard in school.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I pay attention in class.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I often come to class unprepared.	1	2	3	4	5
11. It is important to me to do the best I can in school.	1	2	3	4	5

Code Number: _____

How TRUE about you is each sentence?

	Not at all	Not really	Sort of True	True	Very True
12. At least one of my parents knows what I do during my free time.	1	2	3	4	5
13. At least one of my parents knows who I hang out with during my free time.	1	2	3	4	5
14. At least one of my parents knows if I do something bad outside of the home.	1	2	3	4	5
15. At least one of my parents knows how I do in different subjects at school.	1	2	3	4	5
16. At least one of my parents knows where I go when I'm out with friends at night.	1	2	3	4	5
17. At least one of my parents knows where I go and what I do afterschool.	1	2	3	4	5
18. At least one of my parents knows what I am doing when I am away from home.	1	2	3	4	5
19. At least one of my parents knows where I am afterschool.	1	2	3	4	5
20. At least one of my parents has a pretty good idea about my plans for the coming day.	1	2	3	4	5
21. At least one of my parents has a pretty good idea about my interests, activities, and whereabouts.	1	2	3	4	5

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