

Factors Influencing School Adjustment in International Elementary School Children in U.S.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to better understand the school adjustment process of international elementary students who have moved from other countries to the United States. Much of current research focuses on immigrant and refugee families. However, many elementary-age students move with their families as their parents are international students, scholars, or professors. These moves can be temporary or long-term; regardless, students must adjust to new language, culture, and peers as they enter the American school system. This study utilizes an online questionnaire distributed to international students or their spouses. Parents were asked to answer 66 items that reveal more about the three variables in this measure: school experiences, peer relationships, and social support. Items were gathered from existing scales, and also created after interviews with two professionals who work closely with these international elementary students. Responses included eight participants from five countries who had children in grades Pre-K through 4th. Sample size was relatively small, and there were no significant effects found between parent involvement or social support and school experiences. Data did not fully support the hypothesis that peer relationships and community engagement had a direct positive relation with school experience. However, there was a significant relation found among extracurricular activities and positive peer experiences. There was also a significant relation found among time lived in the U.S. and long-term immigration plan and positive school experiences. Continuation of this research is crucial to best fill this research gap and to inform human service providers and school districts.

Factors Influencing School Adjustment in International Elementary School Children in U.S.

In a world of increasing global connectedness, the education industry continues to be a source of economic and cultural exchange. The number of international students studying in the United States has continued to increase over recent decades. In the 2016-2017 school year, there were a total of 1,078,822 international students studying in the United States (Institute of International Education, 2017). This is about 5.3% of the student population enrolled in the entire country. Along with an overall increase in international students, there has been an increase in graduate level international students as well. In this same report, there are just over 391,000 graduate and post-graduate international students currently studying in the U.S. (Institute of International Education, 2017). At Oklahoma State University, there were 98 different countries represented through 1,682 international students in the Spring of 2018 (Oklahoma State University Office of International Students and Scholars, 2018). About 950 of these students are classified as master's or doctoral students. These students travel to the United States in pursuit of educational attainment, training, and opportunity – and often they also bring with them their spouses and dependent children. As these families move to the United States for long-term or short-term stays, all members of the family must adjust to life in a new culture. The unique status of international students and their families comes with a change in family dynamics, language, and resources (Myers-Wall, Frias, Kwon, Ko & Lu, 2011). Not only do the adults usually have to adjust to a new culture, language, schedule, and environment; but their children must also acclimate to these changes.

Importance of School Adjustment

Perhaps one of the most influential changes to occur in the families of international students is the transition to the American school system. Children from all over the world are

entering the public school system while their parents are studying in the United States. The school environment offers many opportunities for growth in the areas of language acquisition, peer relationships, and cultural exchange. The school can also be a place of overwhelming, new experiences and stress (Candappa & Igbinigie, 2003). A child's transition in school can include both academic and socio-emotional adjustments. Both of these aspects are important in the overall well-being and successful transition in the student's life. Not only is school adjustment an important factor in the overall acculturation process, but school adjustment can also be a predictor for overall social outcomes in the future – not just for international students, but for all students. In general, high academic readiness and low anti-social behaviors during middle childhood are linked to high educational attainment (Magnuson et al., 2016). In the lives of immigrant children, appropriate school adjustment also influences academic achievement and pro-social behaviors into adolescence. A student's transition to school upon moving to the United States has implications beyond their current educational attainment; it will influence both social and educational outcomes in the future as well.

Key Terms and Theoretical Considerations

It is crucial to define the terms that are used in this paper to ensure precise discussion and implications of this study. An *international student* is an individual who has moved to another country to study and pursue educational opportunities in that country. In this study, international students are studying at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma. The term international student refers to the adult university student but may refer to their dependent children who are currently in elementary school as well. There are distinct differences in three terms often used when talking about acculturating groups: adjustment, adaptation, and acculturation. *Adjustment* refers to changes in which individuals become more like their

environment, while *adaptation* generally refers to changes in individuals due to environmental demands (Berry, 1997). Psychological *acculturation* is the long-term process of changes in individuals as they experience contact with a culture group different than their own (Berry, 1997).

Berry proposed four different ways of acculturating based on the non-dominant group's attitudes towards their ethnic culture and mainstream culture: integration, assimilation, segregation/separation, and marginalization (Berry, 1997). These four domains represent the result of whether or not the individuals have the choice to maintain their identity while forming relationship with the larger society – and then if they do have the choice, how they choose to balance those values. In an analysis of immigrant youth settlement, a relation between acculturation and adaptation was found, revealing that how an immigrant youth acculturated influenced their psychological and socio-emotional adaptation – including school adjustment (Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder, 2006). Along with the role of attitudes and characteristics of the immigrants, the responses of the receiving society also play a role in adaptation (Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind & Vedder, 2001). Adaptation and acculturation have a complex relation with each other and with outside factors as well.

Immigrant and Refugee Children

In recent years, literature has continued to grow as researchers seek to understand more of the relation between psychology and culture. There are many studies that have looked at the acculturation process of immigrant and refugee families. Some studies have even looked specifically at school adjustment in immigrant and refugee children and adolescents. While immigrants and refugees have migrated for different reasons than international students, some factors that predict adjustment have implications for this study. For example, to ensure

successful academic and social transitions, children must be able to communicate with language. Among the literature covering immigrant and refugee acculturation, language seems to be the largest influencing factor. Both parents and teachers report that immigrant children's cultural adaptations are impeded due to a lack of language skills (Millar, 2011). Language proficiency even seems to be a bigger factor than cultural background in determining school adjustment in immigrant youth (Calero et al., 2012). These findings imply that early language intervention is crucial to the school adjustment in immigrant children. Language seems to play the same role in the resettlement process of refugee youth as well. Language is the first step needed for educational and social engagement, and perhaps the school's main role in resettlement is to produce literacy (Matthews, 2008). While school can eventually become a place that fosters resilience, language and relationship difficulties can create feelings of isolation, and refugee children report starting school as a difficult experience (Candappa & Igbini, 2003).

Aside from language acquisition, parental attitudes and involvement also predict adaptation in refugee and immigrant children. School adjustment in immigrants can be improved by strengthening the partnership between parents and teachers (Bhattacharya, 2000). Parents can provide encouragement and emphasize the importance of education during the difficult cultural transition. Within refugee child adjustment, the attitude in which parents mediate relocation may be even more important than the relocation process itself (Aronowitz, 1992; Penderson & Sullivan, 1964). Another relevant factor in both the lives of immigrant children and international students is the amount of time spent in the host country. Acculturation is a process that may include some immediate adjustments, but also includes processes that occur over long periods of time. In a study on immigration, for example, adolescents' self-esteem and sense of mastery increased as time in the host country increased (Liebkind, Jasinskaja-Lahti & Solheim, 2004).

Undergraduate International Students

Like immigrant and refugee families, another population that is similar to international students' dependent children that has been studied is undergraduate international students. Many young adults who come to study in the United States experience acculturation stress similar to individuals who are immigrants or refugees. Predictors such as high English proficiency, extended length of stay in United States and increased social support all have a negative relation with acculturative stress (Zhang & Goodson, 2011). Because international students initially migrate temporarily, they tend to focus their concerns on academic achievement rather than prioritizing cross-cultural success or adaptation (Kim, 2001). In this way, the desire to acculturate, along with perceived language proficiency and region of origin (cultural distance from home) significantly predicted adjustment outcomes (Dentakos, Wintre, Chaboshi, & Wright, 2016). Like the length of time that the international student plans to stay in the host country, there is strong evidence that social support can act as a buffer to this acculturation stress (Poyrazli, Kavanaugh, Baker, & Al-Timimi, 2004). Peers play a large role in the social networks of undergraduate international students. Additionally, one study of international students and their spouses found that with a change in environment and a lack of resources, their marriage experienced increased stress as the spouses had to solely rely on one another (Myers-Walls et al., 2011). This reliance on family as sole social support is exacerbated when there is a lack of social support from outside the family. In one study, the lack of social support and the lack of connecting with Americans was due to language barriers (Myers-Walls et al., 2011). Along with the top two factors — language proficiency and social contacts with individuals from the host country — time in host country and region of origin also had effects on the socio-emotional adjustment of international college students in the United States (Zhang & Goodson, 2011).

The Present Study

Review of literature reveals a clear connection between migration (temporary or permanent) and socio-emotional adjustment in individuals. It is clear that immigrants, refugees, and international students are influenced by many factors, including language acquisition and social support as they enter new cultural contexts. But how do these populations differ from the children of international students here in the United States? Immigrant and refugee families migrate for different reasons than international students, and often times refugee families are moving away from previous trauma (Kim, 2015). These families migrate with permanency in mind. However, this is not usually the case for international students and their families. The school adjustment process might look different in the lives of families who are only planning to stay at their exchange university for 1-4 years. Acculturation is a long-term process, so this cultural exchange may look very different for international students' children (Dentakos et al., 2016). Similarly, although studies on single, undergraduate international students do have some relevant implications that are discussed above, this population also differs from international students' children in acculturative stress and motivation. Elementary school students move to the United States as dependents with their parents, and do not "choose" to move on their own as most international undergraduate students do. Families who move are also more likely to form new family orientations as a their employment status and program of study are often more open-ended as graduate students (Myers-Walls et al., 2011).

Additionally, the information available on immigrant families comes from studies that take place in immigrant-receiving locations all across the world. Likewise, studies that include international students' children take place in locations around the world such as Spain and Australia (Calero et al., 2012; Millar, 2011). This study seeks to understand the factors that

influence school adjustment in the population of international students' children in Midwestern United States. It is very clear that language acquisition is an influencing factor in any transition of this nature. So, this study particularly seeks to understand how the status as international student families affects the dynamics of acculturation, particularly by viewing the socio-emotional factors through school adjustment.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study seeks to understand how the status as international student families affects the dynamics of acculturation, particularly by viewing the socio-emotional factors through school adjustment. To fill this research gap, this study was designed by the following research questions:

- a) What is the relation of the children's school adjustment with their peer experiences and community engagement?
- b) How is the children's school adjustment influenced by their family's circumstances, like their parents' school involvement and their parents' support systems?
- c) Are school adjustment and peer experiences influenced by how long the family has been living in the United States or plans to live in the United States?

After review of literature, three hypotheses are stated below:

1. Positive peer relationships and high community engagement are positively related to positive school experiences of elementary school children.
2. Children are influenced by their family's experiences; they have more positive school experiences when their parents are more involved in their school and feel that they have social support.

3. Because acculturation is a long-term process, families who have lived in the United States longer and plan on staying in the United States longer have better experiences in school and peer groups.

Methods

Procedures

Data was collected through an online questionnaire that was designed to measure aspects of school adjustment. All research procedures were approved through the Institutional Review Board at Oklahoma State University. The online questionnaire link, information, and flyer were given to the Programs Coordinator at a local community resource center. The coordinator distributed the survey link via email to residents living in Family and Graduate Student Housing at Oklahoma State University. Participants followed this link on a computer or smartphone. Upon opening the survey, the participants were given a Participant Information form, which listed the purpose of the study, any risks and benefits involved, information on compensation, contact information of the researchers, and rights to confidentiality. Participants were informed that by continuing the survey, they were giving their informed consent. The survey typically took participants about 15 minutes to complete. After completion of the last survey question, participants were forwarded to a Debriefing Screen, which thanked them for their participation and displayed the contact information of three different local counseling services. This information was provided in the case that any participant experienced significant stress while answering the survey questions. After completion, participants were given the option to fill out another survey to redeem a \$10 gift card as compensation. Gift cards were mailed to participants who chose to complete this option.

Participants

The participants in this study were selected from a pool of residents living in Family and Graduate Student Housing (FGSH) at Oklahoma State University. An email was sent to all residents living in FGSH containing a link to the questionnaire. A flyer was also distributed within a local international church. To be eligible to participate, individuals must have been at least 18 years old, and have had moved to the United States from another country. Additionally, participants had to have had a least one school-aged child (4-12 years old). Parents were asked to complete the questionnaire about their child. If the parent had more than one school-age child, then they were asked to complete the survey in reference to their youngest school age-child. Eight participants from five different countries were included in the responses. The countries represented in the responses included: China, Egypt, India, Kenya, and Nepal. Parents responded about children in grades Pre-K through 4th grade. Complete demographics of the participants are seen in Tables 5-12 in Appendix A.

Materials

This study used an online survey software, Qualtrics, to distribute the surveys and collect the data. Access to Qualtrics and the analysis software, SPSS, were provided through Oklahoma State University.

Questionnaire. The questionnaire designed for this study used multiple existing scales from other studies, as well as new sets of questions to assess social adjustment in school. The questionnaire contained 66 items that were intended to measure Language Acquisition, School Experiences, Peer Relationships, and Perceived Social Support. Items in this questionnaire were derived from multiple sources.

School Experiences. In the current study, a *School Experiences* variable was created using 18 items from the Fast Track Project's *School Adjustment Parent Report* (CPPRG, 1997). Two subscales were identified in the Fast Track questionnaire, including *Parent-Teacher Contact* and *Total Academics Friends and General Concerns*. In a control group, Cronbach's alpha for these subscales is .70 and .83 respectively (CPPRG, 2017). Higher scores reveal better school adjustment. Questions from this report focused on child's attitudes towards school, teacher and peer relationships, and discipline occurrences in school. Items included questions like, "This past school year has been especially difficult for my child" and "My child got along well with other kids at school this past year." Parents were asked to respond with their agreement to these statements on a scale from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree").

Other items used to compute the *School Experiences* variable included measurements from the *Health and Behavior Questionnaire for Middle Childhood* (MacArthur HBQ) (Armstrong, Goldstein, & The MacArthur Working Group on Outcome Assessment, 2003). These 8 items asked parents about their child's attitudes towards school, including questions like, "To what extent does your child seem excited about school" or "To what extent does your child seem frustrated about school?" These items were answered on a scale from 1 ("Not at all") to 4 ("Quite a bit"). Higher scores reflect better school adjustment. In the MacArthur HBQ Manual, a large study found the School Engagement subscale has the mother's coefficient of .90 and father's of .85 (Hyde, Klein, Essex, & Clark, 1995). Some items were reverse coded in the scoring process. To create the final *School Experiences* variable, a mean was computed among the two measures (Fast Track and MacArthur HBQ. Cronbach's alpha for the composite variable was .90. Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for School Experiences Variable

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
School Experiences	8	3.12	4.44	3.96	.52
Valid N	8				

Peer Relationships. In this study's questionnaire, the Peer Relationships variable also used 13 items from the *Health and Behavior Questionnaire for Middle Childhood (MacArthur HBQ)* (Armstrong et al., 2003). The variable was designed to measure the quality and extent of current peer relationships. These questions asked parents to identify their child with the statements by choosing whether the statement was 1 ("Not at all like"), 2, ("Very little like"), 3 ("Somewhat like"), or 4 ("Very much like") their child. Statements included, "My child has lots of friends at school" and "My child is not chosen as a playmate." Together, these school functioning and peer relations domains "conceptualize social and school adjustment as the degree to which children demonstrate competence and engagement with the academic and non-academic aspects of school" (Armstrong et al., 2003). Higher scores reflect better adjustment. In the HBQ MacArthur Manual, the Cronbach α coefficient were computed for the different subscales (and defined separately for mother versus father respondents). The α coefficients were relatively high for each set of items, for both mother and father. In the MacArthur HBQ report, the Peer Acceptance and Rejection subscale has the mother's coefficient of .89 and father's of .86; the Bullied by Peers has the mother's coefficient of .78 and the father's of .73 (Hyde et al., 1995). In the current study, the 11 items from these two subscales were combined to create the

Peer Relationships variable, shown in Table 2. Some items were reverse coded in analysis. The Cronbach's alpha for this variable is .89.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Peer Relationships Variable

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Peer Relationships	8	1.55	3.64	3.10	.67
Valid N	8				

Social Support. The third variable computed was labeled *Social Support* and was intended to measure the parents' perceived social support from family. These 4 items were included after research revealed the importance of social support to the family in the transitional process as a whole. This measure used items from the *MSPSS Scale* to calculate the perceived social support from family (Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet & Farley, 1988). Participants were asked to agree or disagree on a scale from 1 ("Very Strongly Disagree") to 7 ("Very Strongly Agree"). A sample question from this subscale is "I can talk about my problems with my family." Higher scores reflect more perceived social support. In multiple studies including various participant demographics, the MSPSS was found to have excellent internal reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of .91 (Dahlem, Zimet & Walker, 1991). The items focusing on family were chosen to give insight to both spouse and grandparent support, which is relevant to this participant population. Cronbach's alpha for the current study was initially .27. Because the item: "I get the emotional help and support I need from my family" significantly lowered scale reliability, that item was

dropped and the alpha for this variable is .50. The low Cronbach's alpha could be due to the 7-point Likert scale used that did not provide enough variance in answer choices (especially in this small sample size). Descriptive statistics are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Social Support Variable

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social Support	8	5.33	7.00	6.29	.55
Valid N	8				

Additional questions. The remaining 23 items on the questionnaire, including language acquisition and demographic questions, were designed after interviews with two professionals. The author conducted interviews with an elementary school counselor and an English Language Learner Coordinator for a local school district. Both of these professionals work closely every day with students who have moved from another country and are entering the school system in the United States. Most of the children who are from other countries attend the same elementary school. In 2016, the enrollment for this school included 19.1% English Language Learning students, compared to 5% district-wide and 8.7% state-wide (Office of Educational Quality and Accountability [OEQA], 2017). For perspective, the school's ethnic makeup is the following: 61% Caucasian, 7% Black, 9% Asian, and 16% Hispanic. For a comparison to schools city-wide, the district's ethnic makeup is: 79% Caucasian, 4% Black, 4% Asian, and 9% Hispanic (OEQA, 2017).

Interviews with these professionals revealed typical signs of adjustment, and factors that contribute to a more positive adjustment process. Among many aspects of adjustment that were discussed, the professionals elaborated on social support for the family, extracurricular involvement in the children, school involvement with the parents, and inclusion. The remaining 23 items in the questionnaire include all demographic and circumstantial questions that reflect the knowledge shared in these two professional interviews. These items were used to create independent categorical variables unique to this population. For example, one item sought to understand more about the makeup of the international students' peer groups, "Where are most of your child's friends from?" Another example of an item derived from these interviews is: "How often does your child attend programs at the OSU Family Resource Center?" This item was used in analysis to measure attendance at afterschool programs. More questions derived from these interviews that were used as categorical variables include: "How long has your family been living in the United States?" and "How long does your family plan to stay in the United States?" There were two continuous independent variables computed from the following two items: "I feel involved in my child's school (attend meetings, conferences, and events at school.)" and "What activities does your child participate in outside of school?" *Parent Involvement* was computed as a continuous variable by using a five-point Likert Scale and *Extracurricular Activity* was computed as a continuous variable by taking the sum of six items asking about involvement in extracurricular activities.

One item in the questionnaire included an open-ended question: "Please describe anything else you would like to share about your family's move to the United States or your child's transition to a new school." For more information on the content of these interviews, contact the author. A list of all survey questions is available in Appendix B.

Results

The current study hypothesized that positive peer relationships and involvement in community are related to positive school experiences and also that when parents feel supported and are involved with school, then children's school experiences are more positive. Furthermore, it was hypothesized that children have better school and peer experiences the longer their families have lived and plan on living in the United States.

Reliability Analysis

First, Cronbach's alpha was computed for each of the three variables: School Experiences, Peer Relationships, and Social Support. Cronbach's alpha for the *School Experiences* variable was .90. Alphas for the *Peer Relationships* and *Social Support* variables were .89 and .50, respectively.

Correlations among Continuous Variables

Pearson's r data analyses were conducted to determine any bivariate correlations among all dependent variables and continuous independent variables. One-tailed tests were run among the three dependent variables: *School Experiences*, *Peer Relationships*, and *Social Support*. Correlations among these variables were non-significant, as seen in Table 4.

Table 4

Correlations among Dependent Variables

		School Experience	Peer Relationships	Social Support
School Experience	Pearson Correlation		.10	.25
	<i>p</i> (1-tailed)		.42	.28
	<i>N</i>	8	8	8
Peer Relationships	Pearson Correlation	.10		-.21
	<i>p</i> (1-tailed)	.41		.31
	<i>N</i>	8	8	8
Social Support	Pearson Correlation	.25	-.21	
	<i>p</i> (1-tailed)	.28	.31	
		8	8	8

One-tailed Pearson's *r* correlations were also computed between each dependent variable and the *Extracurricular Activity* independent variable. There was a marginally significant relationship between extracurricular activities and school experiences, $r = .59$, $n = 8$, $p = .06$. Trends showed that children who were involved in more activities outside of school had more positive school experiences, as seen in Figure 1.

There was no significant relation found between extracurricular activities and peer relationships, $r = .39$, $n = 8$, $p = \text{n.s.}$ or between extracurricular activities and social support, $r = .03$, $n = 8$, $p = \text{n.s.}$ Analyses were also conducted using each of the dependent variables and the independent variable *Parent Involvement*. No significant correlations were found between parent

involvement and school experiences, $r = -.47$, $n = 8$, $p = \text{n.s.}$, peer relationships, $r = .12$, $n = 8$, $p = \text{n.s.}$, or social support, $r = .05$, $n = 8$, $p = \text{n.s.}$

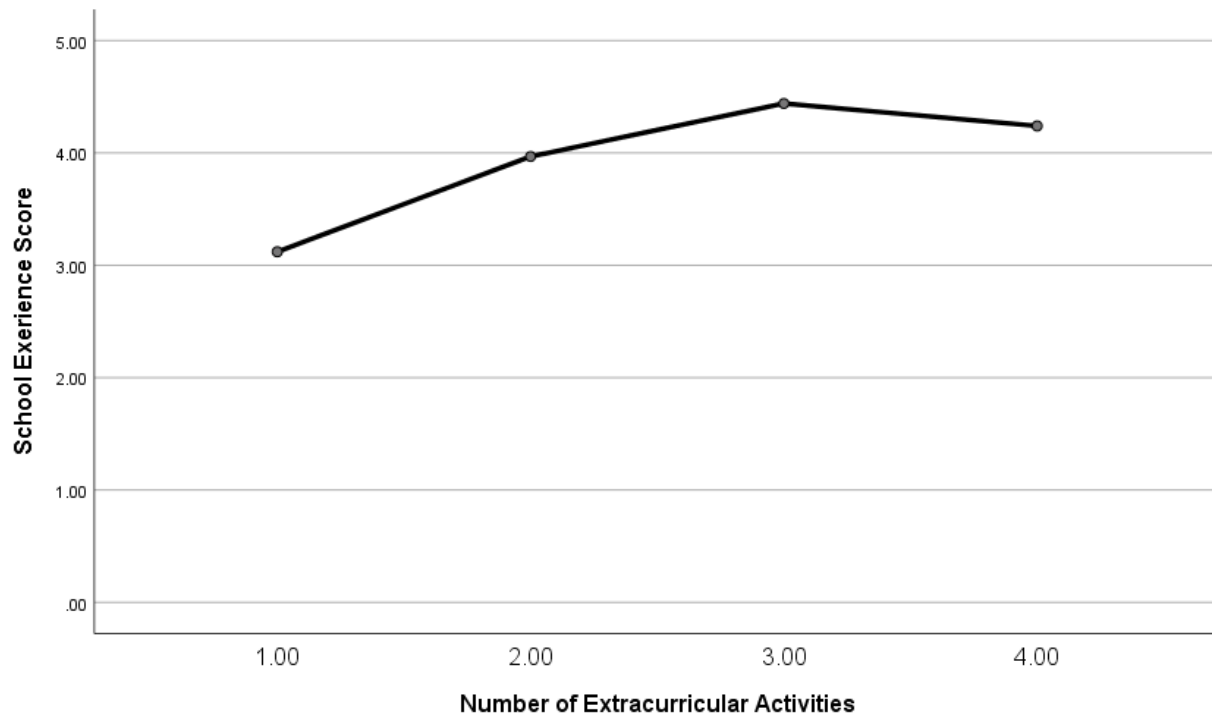


Figure 1. Correlation of Extracurricular Activities and School Experience.

ANOVAs Comparing Group Means

School experiences. Analysis were conducted to determine whether group means differed within the three dependent variables. One-way ANOVAs were run to compare the *School Experiences* means among groups. There was not a significant effect of country of origin on school experiences, $F(4, 3) = .70$, $p = \text{n.s.}$ A comparison among gender revealed that there was no significance in school experiences between genders, $F(1, 6) = .64$, $p = \text{n.s.}$ When using “length of time in the United States” as an independent variable, there was a significant effect on time on school experiences, $F(4, 3) = 9.58$, $p = .05$. In other words, the longer a child had been

living in the United States, the more positive school experiences they had. See Figure 2 to examine this relation.

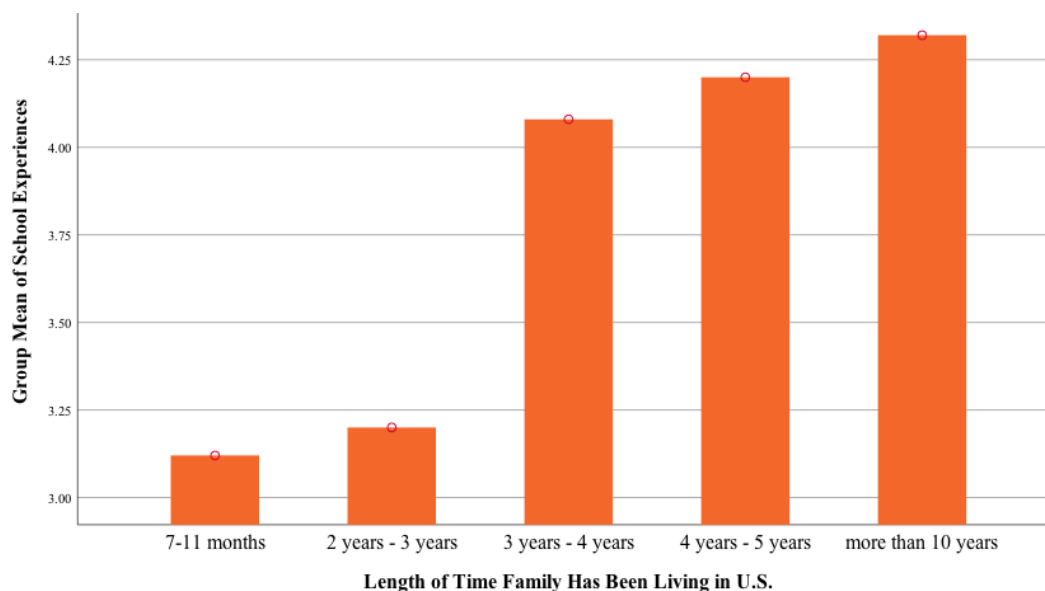


Figure 2. ANOVA of School Experience and Time Living in U.S.

There was not a significant effect of after school program attendance on school experience, $F(2, 5) = .9, p = \text{n.s.}$ Analysis revealed that there was no significance between school experiences and peer groups' countries of origin, $F(2, 5) = 1.4, p = \text{n.s.}$ School experiences were also significantly impacted by the family's long-term immigration plans, or length of time the family was planning to stay in the United States, $F(3, 4) = 15.7, p = .01$. Families who were only planning to stay in the United States for "less than one year" or "2-5 years" had lower group means for school experiences. Figure 3 reveals this effect.

To examine whether there were differences in school experiences as a function of peer relationships, a categorical variable including *high* and *low* peer relationships was computed by using a mean split in the *Peer Experiences* variable. The categories *high* and *low* reflected quality of peer relationships. ANOVA showed that children with high-quality peer relationships

have significantly better school experiences than children with low quality peer relationships, $F(1, 6) = 6.22, p = .05$. See Figure 4 for this distribution.

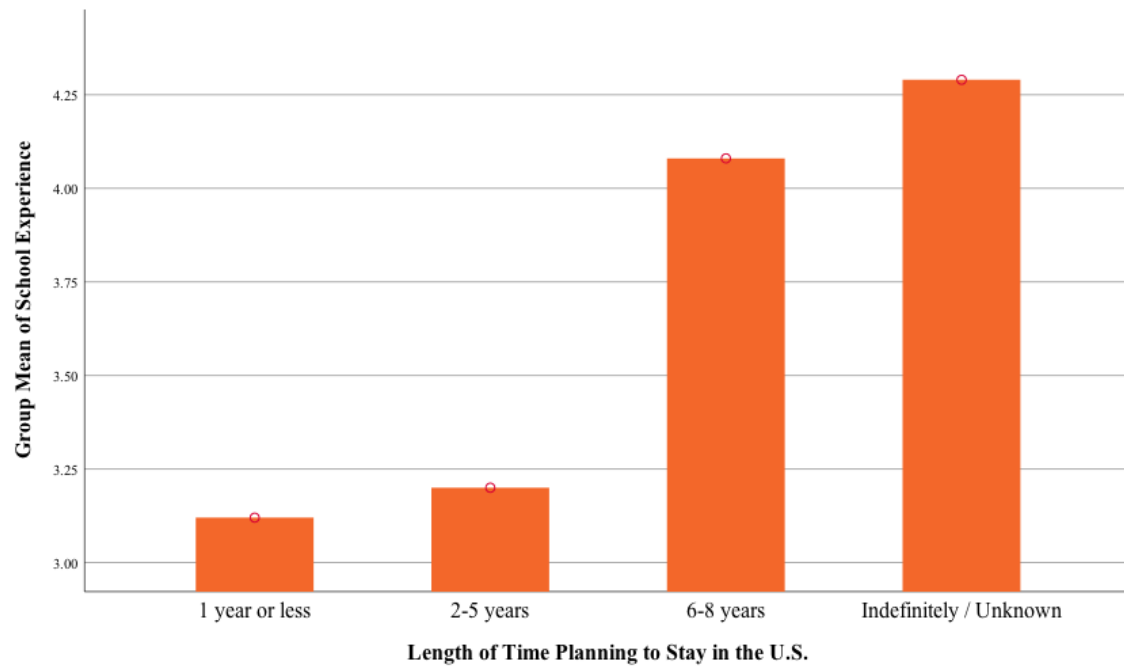


Figure 3. ANOVA of School Experience and Length of Time Planning to Stay in U.S.

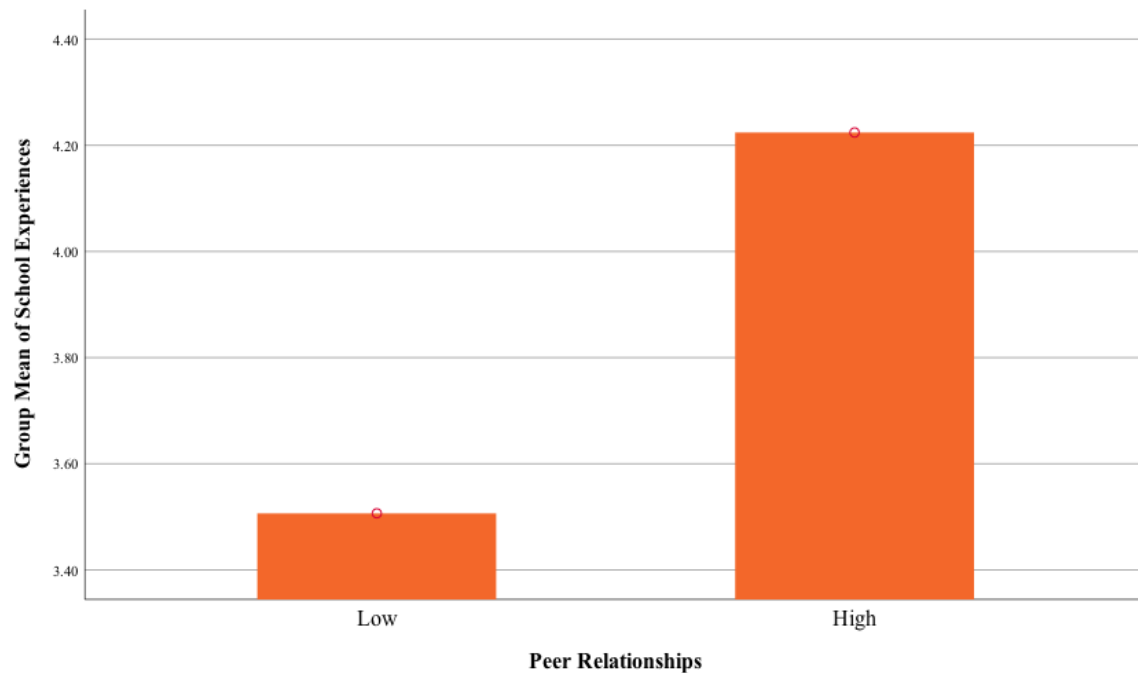


Figure 4. ANOVA of School Experience and Quality of Peer Relationships

Peer relationships. Next, ANOVAs were conducted to determine if there were any significant differences between the categorical groups and *Peer Relationships*. There was a significant effect of country of origin on peer relationships, $F(4, 3) = 9.48, p = .05$. Figure 5 shows the difference among country of origin. In this sample, there was not a significant effect of gender on peer relationships, $F(1, 6) = .79, p = \text{n.s.}$ When looking at length of time in the United States, there was a significant effect of time on peer relationships, $F(4, 3) = 18.78, p = .02$. Generally, the quality of peer relationships increased the longer the families had been living in the United States. This data trend is displayed in Figure 6. Analysis of community center attendance did not indicate any significant effect on peer relationships, $F(1, 6) = .93, p = \text{n.s.}$ There was a marginally-significant effect of the family's immigration plan on the child's peer relationships, $F(3, 4) = .34, p = .08$. This data trend revealed that the longer a family planned on living in the U.S., then generally the children had higher quality peer relationships. The countries of origin within the child's peer groups did not have a significant effect on the child's peer relationships, $F(2, 5) = .53, p = \text{n.s.}$

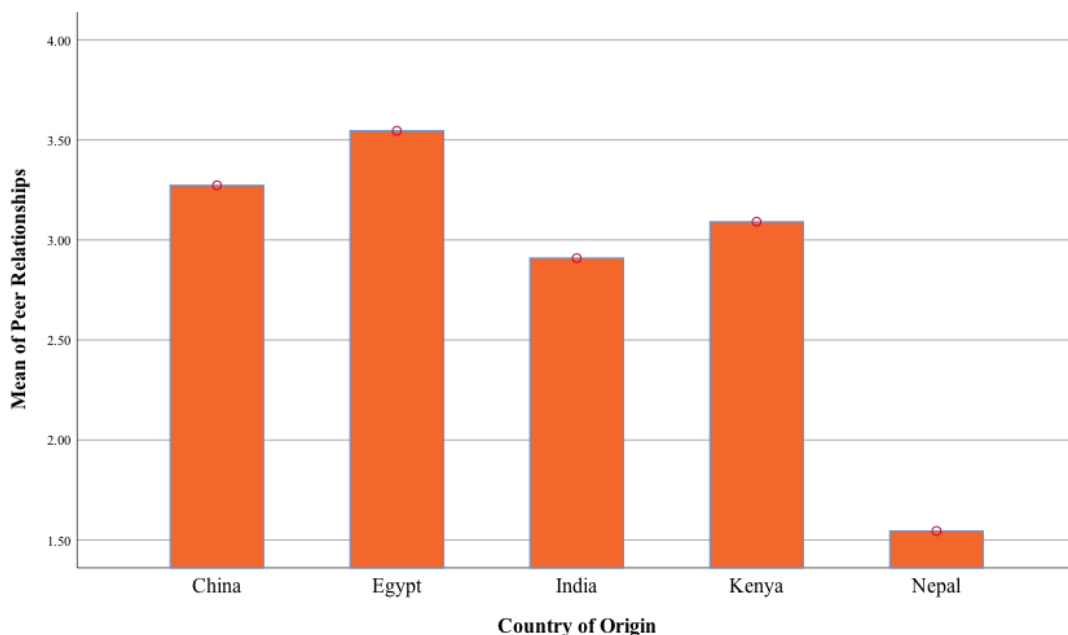


Figure 5. ANOVA of Peer Relationships by Country of Origin

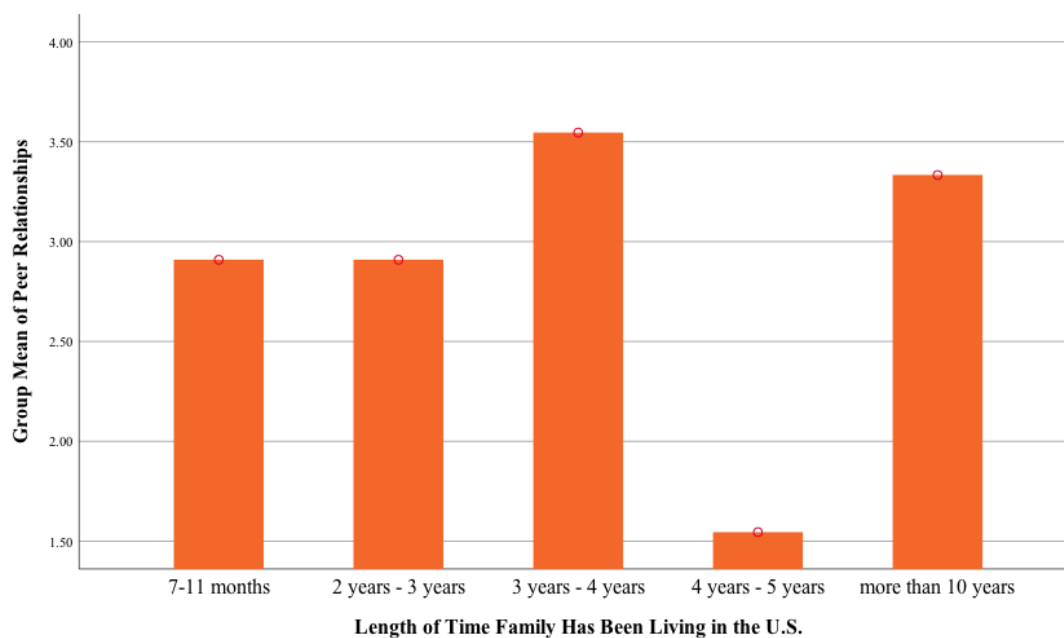


Figure 6. ANOVA of Peer Relationships and Time Living in U.S.

Social support. Lastly, group means were compared among the *Social Support* variable. It is important to note that this variable refers to the parents' perceived social support from their family. There was not a significant effect of country of origin on social support, $F(4, 3) = 4.56, p = \text{n.s.}$ Neither was there a significant effect of child's gender on social support, $F(1, 6) = .34, p = \text{n.s.}$ There was no significance between length of time in the United States and social support, $F(4, 3) = .37, p = \text{n.s.}$ When analyzing social support, there was a significant effect of attendance at after school programs, $F(1, 6) = 5.92, p = .05$. The graphing of means suggests that parents of children who attend these after school programs "almost everyday" have higher perceived social support than parents of children that attend these afterschool programs "not at all" (see Figure 7).

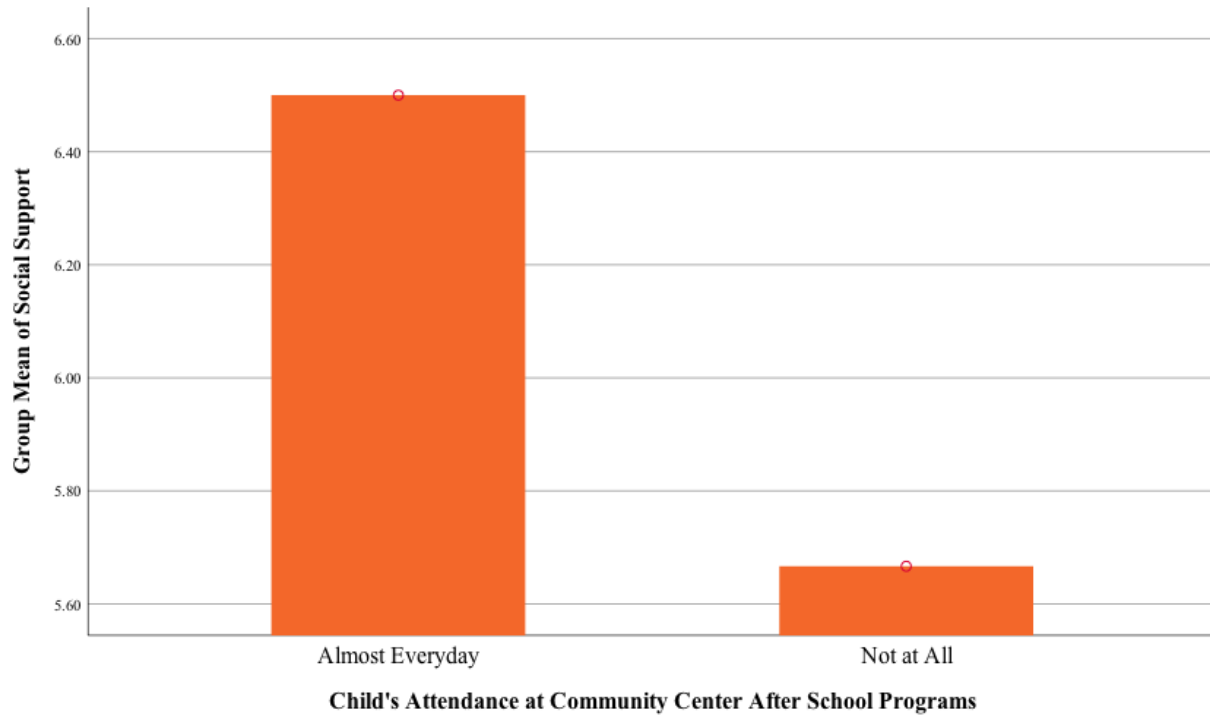


Figure 7. ANOVA of Social Support and After School Program Attendance

The parent's long-term immigration plans did not have a significant effect on social support, $F(3, 4) = .34, p = \text{n.s.}$, and neither were there significant differences in social support between the countries of origin of the child's peer groups (i.e., the where the children's friends are from), $F(2, 5) = 2.95, p = .14$.

New categorical variables were also computed by using a mean split of the original dependent variables (*School Experiences*, *Peer Relationships*, and *Social Support*) and then creating *high* and *low* categories. Chi-Square tests of Independence were then conducted to test relationships among categories, however data trends were no different from the analyses of variance.

Discussion

First, it is important to consider the small sample size in this study. With this limited number of responses, generalizations really cannot be made about populations as a whole. Many

of the non-significant results could be due to the limited statistical power of this sample size, and even the significant results should be interpreted with caution considering the limited representation. This is especially true for the analyses containing “country of origin,” as this specific data cannot yet be generalized and is not supported by current literature. So, the significance of the impact of country on peer relationships cannot be generalized to all populations from China, Egypt, India, Kenya, or Nepal.

The first research question addressed the variables of school experience, peer relationships, and community engagement. Community engagement encompasses several components, but measures of extracurricular activity and after school program attendance were tested. Regarding extracurricular activities, data revealed that the more activities children were involved in outside of school, the more positive school experiences they had. Endeavors like sports, music, or religious activities may give children more opportunities to develop language skills, create friendships, and develop confidence that transfers into their environment at school. Extracurricular activities also give children a chance to be integrated and included into social groups (Pomohaci & Sopa, 2017). Extracurricular activities were not significantly related to peer relationships or the parents’ perceived social support. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the parents are not actually involved in the outside activities, or even that the significance of extracurricular activities is less about peer relationships and more about the other factors like language acquisition, confidence, and inclusion. Data did not reveal a significant correlation between school experiences and peer relationships, and this could be due to small sample size.

When looking at the effect of after school program attendance, the only significant relationship was with parents’ social support. Many of the families who attend this specific after school program are from other countries, and other events and programs are offered to create

community for the children and families. Possibly, parents who send their children to these programs after school also attend other events like neighborhood gatherings, dinners, and celebrations. It is speculated that all of these community gatherings create a sense of social support, even if it is not from family but from friends and neighbors. Lastly, data revealed the children who were in the *high* category in peer relationships also scored higher on school experiences. This finding corresponds with much of the current literature claiming that friendships and social contact are influencing factors on acculturation. Other studies have underscored the influence of both family and community networks in immigrant children's school adjustment (e.g., Portes & MacLeod, 1996; Zhou & Bankston, 1994).

The next research question discussed school adjustment in relation to the family's circumstances, including the parent's extent of school involvement and the parent's perceived social support. Data did not reveal that parent involvement had any significant impact on school experiences (or peer relationships and social support). This could be due to small sample. However, "parent involvement" could also be impacted by other factors within this specific population, like language barriers and differing cultural backgrounds regarding the school system. Perhaps the parents in this study have different beliefs, attitudes, and expectations about parent involvement with teachers and at school. This is addressed in a recent study on immigrant children and their parents, which found that parents became more involved as time went on in the host country; it also found that parents whose first language was not English were disadvantaged in their involvement (Turney & Kao, 2009). The current study did not reveal a significant trend between parents' social support and children's school experiences, which could be due to the very limited scope of "social support" that the items measured. Parents may have

different perceptions of social support depending on which group they are being asked about – family or friends.

The last research question sought to explore how school adjustment and peer relationships were influenced by the amount of time the families had already been living in the United States and how long the families planned on staying in the United States. When international graduate students move to study in the U.S., they may be moving for only one year as visiting professors or researchers, for a four-year doctoral program, or they may be moving for a job or studies with less defined timelines. Children who had been living in the United States for longer had more positive school experiences and more positive peer relationships. This finding is supported by literature that discusses acculturation as a long-term process (Poyrazli et al., 2004; Liebkind et al., 2004). Parents were also asked about their plan to stay in the United States, or their long-term immigration plans. The parents who indicated that they were staying “Indefinitely” or “Unknown” had children with more positive school experiences. This is seen in other studies of immigrants, refugees, and undergraduate international students. Those who have permanency in mind may be more motivated to acculturate, and in turn, have better school experiences. For undergraduate international students, the desire to acculturate, even in temporary immigration, played a role in positive adjustment outcomes (Dentakos et al., 2016). The hypothesis that children’s peer experiences and community engagement influence their school experiences is not fully supported by this data. While extracurricular activity alone did have an effect on school experience, involvement in community as a whole did not have significant effect on school experience. It was also hypothesized that parents’ involvement and perceived social support had a positive relation with children’s school experience. This study does not support this hypothesis because no data trends indicated that involvement or social

support directly influenced the level of school experiences. Data from this study do support the last hypothesis, that children who have been living in the United States or who plan to live in the United States for a longer period of time have more positive school experiences and peer relationships. All three of these hypotheses encompass many complex factors that could each be examined separately in further studies.

Insight from Open-ended Question

After reviewing previous research, it is clear that the transition to life in a new country is influenced by so many different factors (Zhang & Godson, 2011). The questions in this survey give insight into the specific transition into school, which can be influenced by other factors in one's environment. Through an open-ended question at the end of the study, participants in this study had the chance to express other thoughts they had about their transition to the United States. Through these answers, the author found more insight beyond the variables in the survey. Several participants decided to share more about their children; one shared about why the transition was easy, one shared about their children's friends, and another shared about the difficulty of the adjustment process.

In two of these answers, opposing views were shared. Essentially, one parent revealed that their child's transition to school was "easy" because their child knew how to speak English well enough to communicate and because the educational system in their country was harder. On the other hand, the other parent shared that it was hard for their child to transition to a new school because their child "needs time to adapt to new environment[s]" including teachers, friends, and facilities. Both of these responses correspond with current literature that discusses the importance of language acquisition in the adjustment process and the initial stress which can be caused by a new school environment (Calero et al., 2012; Candappa & Igbini, 2003).

Language acquisition was also the focus of another parent's response, revealing that the first few weeks involved "some communication problem[s]" but that their child then developed English language skills and even a U.S. accent in pronunciation. Lastly, another parent shared thoughts concerning peer relationships, stating that they hope the child "can have more friends from other countries." This insight emphasizes the complex dynamic of peer groups in this transitional process. Social contact with individuals in the host country has been identified as a top factor in socio-emotional adjustment (Zang & Godson, 2011). Each aspect of adjustment revealed in these open-ended responses could be explored individually to reveal relation of factors.

Limitations

This study was limited during recruitment, and had a small sample size. By increasing the sample size, the findings would become more generalizable. Much of the data analysis revealed non-significant effects; however, data trends indicate that with a larger sample size, relationships may be significant. Other methods of recruitment would be beneficial. For example, holding an initial information meeting or gaining permission to survey parents through an elementary school might increase sample size. Having the survey translated into other languages would expand the opportunity to reach more participants by ensuring that non-English speaking parents are also included in the sample demographics. Furthermore, while the study was intended to recruit participants from different regions of the world, the small sample size did not reflect this. A larger sample size would also allow for a more accurate representation of newly arrived international students rather than families who have been living in the United States for several years. For proper generalization and recommendation, a larger sample size is necessary. Another important limitation to consider is that the *Social Support* variable mostly referred to social

support from family. It cannot be assumed that this correlates with social support from others as well. Other items assessing social support specifically aside from family need to be included.

Recommendations for future research. Among adjustments to increase sample size, future studies could choose to address these research questions from a qualitative approach. Like the professionals interviewed in this study, teachers and parents have valuable perspectives to share through interviews or focus groups. The open-ended responses all revealed unique factors to be explored in depth. Further, some of the most compelling data in this study resulted from the categorical items concerning *time*. Both items (asking about time spent in U.S. already and about how long the family is planning to stay) could be developed further. In this study, the item addressing long-term immigration plans included the options “Indefinitely” and “Unknown” as the same category. These are clearly different plans with different intentions; and therefore, possibly different acculturation motivations. Future studies that choose to focus on the impact of time in host country and also the impact of long-term immigration plans could reveal findings that benefit families and community partners who are all apart of this transition. It would be interesting to study how long-term immigration plans (whether the family is visiting for just one year or hopes to move permanently) influence the child's school and peer experiences. Much of the literature on undergraduate international students emphasizes that stress and adjustment can differ depending on acculturative motivation and time spent in host country (Kim, 2001). It is possible that acculturative motivation differs for families depending on immigration plans. Perhaps the biggest suggestion for future research is to increase sample size to further examine school experience. Accurate generalizations made in addressing the proposed research questions could guide teachers and community partners to better support children and families during their transition to the United States. It is important to continue to strive to fill this

gap in literature to better assist children as they experience acculturative stress in this adjustment process.

Conclusion

As mentioned before, there is clearly a gap in research to understand and address the school adjustment of dependent children of international students. It is important to recognize the differences in this population from immigrant or refugee families and emphasize the importance of filling this research gap. Data analysis only supported the hypothesis that time lived and planning to live in the United States does have a positive relation with positive school experience. Both of these factors alone deserve attention in further research to better understand acculturation motivation in this unique population. Although no significance was found between school experiences and parental involvement or social support, a larger sample size would more accurately reveal these trends. In researching school experiences and community involvement, analysis highlighted the important role that extracurricular activities and positive peer relationships play in positive school adjustment. Studies like this that seek to understand factors that contribute to school adjustment have the potential to be extremely beneficial to children and families as they move to the United States. Continuation of this research is crucial to best inform policy-makers, school districts, and human service providers as they work to assist families and children in this school adjustment and acculturation process.

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Appendix A

Table 5

Country of Origin

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
China	3	37.5	37.5	37.5
Egypt	2	25.0	25.0	62.5
India	1	12.5	12.5	75.0
Kenya	1	12.5	12.5	87.5
Nepal	1	12.5	12.5	100.0
Total	8	100.0	100.0	

Table 6

Child Grade

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Pre-k	1	12.5	12.5	12.5
Kindergarten	2	25.0	25.0	37.5
1st	2	25.0	25.0	62.5
2nd	1	12.5	12.5	75.0
3rd	1	12.5	12.5	87.5
4th	1	12.5	12.5	100.0
Total	8	100.0	100.0	

Table 7

Length of Time Living in U.S.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	7-11 months	1	12.5	12.5	12.5
	2 - 3 years	1	12.5	12.5	25.0
	3 - 4 years	2	25.0	25.0	50.0
	4 - 5 years	1	12.5	12.5	62.5
	10+ years	3	37.5	37.5	100.0
	Total	8	100.0	100.0	

Table 8

Parent Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	2	25.0	25.0	25.0
	Female	6	75.0	75.0	100.0
	Total	8	100.0	100.0	

Table 9

Parent Age

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
How old are you?	8	18	50	37.38	10.113
Valid N (listwise)	8				

Table 10

Long-Term Immigration Plan (Length of Time)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 year or less	1	12.5	12.5	12.5
	2-5 years	1	12.5	12.5	25.0
	6-8 years	2	25.0	25.0	50.0
	Indefinitely / Unknown	4	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	8	100.0	100.0	

Table 11

Child Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	3	37.5	37.5	37.5
	Female	5	62.5	62.5	100.0
	Total	8	100.0	100.0	

Table 12

Language Spoken in Home

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	English	1	12.5	12.5	12.5
	Arabic	2	25.0	25.0	37.5
	Chinese	3	37.5	37.5	75.0
	Other	2	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	8	100.0	100.0	

Note. Other = Nepali and Telugu.

Appendix B

Survey Questions

DEMOGRAPHICS / QUESTIONS FROM INTERVIEW

What country did you move from?

- Afghanistan
- Algeria
- Angola
- Argentina
- Australia
- Bahamas
- Bangladesh
- Belarus
- Belgium
- Benin
- Bolivia
- Botswana
- Brazil
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Chile
- China
- Colombia
- Congo (Brazzaville)
- Congo (Kinshasa)
- Costa Rica
- Denmark
- Dominica
- East Timor
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- El Salvador
- Estonia
- Eritrea
- Ethiopia
- Finland
- France
- Gabon
- Germany
- Ghana
- Greece
- Guatemala
- Guyana

- Hong Kong
- Hungary
- Iceland
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran
- Iraq
- Ireland
- Italy
- Ivory Coast
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Jordan
- Kenya
- Kuwait
- Lebanon
- Libya
- Lithuania
- Macau
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Malaysia
- Mali
- Marshal Islands
- Mauritania
- Mexico
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar
- Namibia
- Nepal
- Netherlands
- Netherlands Antilles
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Norway
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Papua New Guinea
- Peru
- Philippines
- Portugal
- Qatar
- Romania

- Russia
- Rwanda
- Saudi Arabia
- Senegal
- Serbia
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- Singapore
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- South Africa
- South Korea
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Taiwan
- Thailand
- Togo
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom
- Uzbekistan
- Venezuela
- Vietnam
- Yemen
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe
- Other -

How long have you been living in the United States?

- 0-2 months
- 3-6 months
- 7-11 months
- 1 year – 1.5 years
- 1.5 years – 2 years
- 2 years – 3 years
- 3 years – 4 years
- 4 years – 5 years
- 5 years – 6 years
- 6 years – 7 years
- 7 years – 8 years
- more than 8 years

- more than 10 years

How many parents are currently living in your home?

- 1 parent
- both parents

How many parents in your home are currently students or employees at Oklahoma State University?

- 1 parent
- both parents

How old are you?

- *insert age

What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Other

Do grandparent(s) live in your home?

- Yes
- No

Altogether, how long do you plan on staying in the United States?

- 1 year or less
- 2-5 years
- 6-8 years
- indefinitely / unknown

For the following questions in this survey, please answer about your child's experiences. If you have more than one child, choose to answer about your youngest child that is in elementary school (at least 4 years old).

What grade is your child in?

- Pre-k
- Kindergarten
- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th
- 5th
- 6th
- Older than 7th grade

What is your child's gender?

- Female

- Male
- Other

What activities does your child participate in outside of school? (check all options that apply)

- Sports
- Music lessons
- Art lessons
- Religious activities
- Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts
- Other activities:
- No activities outside of school

How often does your child attend programs at the OSU Family Resource Center?

- Almost every day
- A few times a week
- Not at all

Where are your child's friends from?

- Most of my child's friends are from the United States
- Most of my child's friends are from our home country
- Most my child's friends are from other countries
- My child has equal amounts of friends from different countries
- Other:

My child cries when they have to go to school

- 1 - Never
- 2 - Rarely
- 3 - Sometimes
- 4 - Very often
- 5 - Always

I feel involved in my child's school (attend meetings, conferences, and events at school)

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Indifferent
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

Did your child speak English before moving the the United States?

- 1 – No English at all
- 2 - A little bit of English
- 3 – Some English
- 4 - Quite a bit of English
- 5 – Fluent in English

What language does your family speak at home most of the time?

- English
- Arabic
- Chinese
- Korean
- French
- Spanish
- Hindi
- Two languages equally
- Other

Do you feel that your child's inability to communicate in English has had an effect on their experience at school?

- 1 - Not at all
- 2 - A little
- 3 - Somewhat
- 4 - Quite a bit

Does your child speak English now?

- 1 – No English at all
- 2 - A little bit of English
- 3 – Some English
- 4 - Quite a bit of English
- 5 – Fluent in English

How often do you attend the Adult-Child Literacy night classes offered at Will Rogers Elementary?

- Never
- About a few times per year
- About once a month
- Weekly

SCHOOL EXPERIENCES VARIABLE

Child's School Experiences: To what extent does your child seem...

Excited about school?

- 1 - Not at all
- 2 - A little
- 3 - Somewhat
- 4 - Quite a bit

Upset about school?

- 1 - Not at all
- 2 - A little

- 3 - Somewhat
- 4 - Quite a bit

Distressed about school?

- 1 - Not at all
- 2 - A little
- 3 - Somewhat
- 4 - Quite a bit

Eager about school?

- 1 - Not at all
- 2 - A little
- 3 - Somewhat
- 4 - Quite a bit

Frustrated about school?

- 1 - Not at all
- 2 - A little
- 3 - Somewhat
- 4 - Quite a bit

Happy about school?

- 1 - Not at all
- 2 - A little
- 3 - Somewhat
- 4 - Quite a bit

Irritable about school?

- 1 - Not at all
- 2 - A little
- 3 - Somewhat
- 4 - Quite a bit

Interested in school?

- 1 - Not at all
- 2 - A little
- 3 - Somewhat
- 4 - Quite a bit

Please express whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:

This past school year has been especially difficult for my child.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree

- 5 – Strongly Agree

My child had an easy time handling the new academic demands made on him/her.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

My child got along well with other kids at school this past year.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

My child stayed out of trouble with teachers and the staff at the school.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

My child had a good year at school.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

School work was really hard for my child this past year.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

Other kids tried to make my child do things that he/she should not do.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

My child got into some trouble this year by breaking school rules.

- 1 – Strongly disagree

- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

My child liked the new things about school this past year.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

My child did not do as well as he/she should have in academics this past year.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

My child did not have as many friends at school this past year.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

Teachers were constantly on my child because he/she broke some rules.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

It was hard for me to adjust to my child's school situations this past year.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

I adjusted well to the many changes at my child's school.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

My child's school caused me a lot of hassles (minor problems) this past year.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

I keep up on what is going on with my child at school.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

I have a lot of contact with my child's school teachers.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

I worry a lot about the bad things that my child could get into at school.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

My child needs more support to help learn English

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

The school system in the United States is similar to the school system in my home country.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Unsure
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

PEER RELATIONSHIPS VARIABLE

Child's Experiences with Peers - The following questions ask about your child's experiences with peers. For each question, think about how much it is like your child. Please choose the answer you agree with. My child...

Has lots of friends at school

- 1 - Not at all like
- 2 - Very little like
- 3 - Somewhat like
- 4 - very much like

Is often left out by other children

- 1 - Not at all like
- 2 - Very little like
- 3 - Somewhat like
- 4 - very much like

Is refused by other children to play

- 1 - Not at all like
- 2 - Very little like
- 3 - Somewhat like
- 4 - very much like

Gets along well with peers of the same sex

- 1 - Not at all like
- 2 - Very little like
- 3 - Somewhat like
- 4 - very much like

Is not chosen as a playmate

- 1 - Not at all like
- 2 - Very little like
- 3 - Somewhat like
- 4 - very much like

Is picked on by other children

- 1 - Not at all like
- 2 - Very little like
- 3 - Somewhat like
- 4 - very much like

is actively disliked by other children, who reject him/her from their play

- 1 - Not at all like
- 2 - Very little like
- 3 - Somewhat like

- 4 - very much like

Is liked by other children who seek him/her out for play

- 1 - Not at all like
- 2 - Very little like
- 3 - Somewhat like
- 4 - very much like

Is avoided by other children

- 1 - Not at all like
- 2 - Very little like
- 3 - Somewhat like
- 4 - very much like

Is teased and ridiculed by other children

- 1 - Not at all like
- 2 - Very little like
- 3 - Somewhat like
- 4 - very much like

Gets along well with peers of the opposite sex

- 1 - Not at all like
- 2 - Very little like
- 3 - Somewhat like
- 4 - very much like

Is not much liked by other children

- 1 - Not at all like
- 2 - Very little like
- 3 - Somewhat like
- 4 - very much like

Is pushed or shoved around by other children

- 1 - Not at all like
- 2 - Very little like
- 3 - Somewhat like
- 4 - very much like

SOCIAL SUPPORT VARIABLE

We are interested in how you feel about the following statements. Read each statement carefully. Indicate how you feel about each statement.

My family really tries to help me

- 1 - Very Strongly Disagree
- 2 - Strongly Disagree

- 3 - Mildly Disagree
- 4 - Neutral
- 5 - Mildly Agree
- 6 - Strongly Agree
- 7 - Very Strongly Agree

I get the emotional help and support I need from my family

- 1 - Very Strongly Disagree
- 2 - Strongly Disagree
- 3 - Mildly Disagree
- 4 - Neutral
- 5 - Mildly Agree
- 6 - Strongly Agree
- 7 - Very Strongly Agree

I can talk about my problems with my family

- 1 - Very Strongly Disagree
- 2 - Strongly Disagree
- 3 - Mildly Disagree
- 4 - Neutral
- 5 - Mildly Agree
- 6 - Strongly Agree
- 7 - Very Strongly Agree

My family is willing to help me make decisions

- 1 - Very Strongly Disagree
- 2 - Strongly Disagree
- 3 - Mildly Disagree
- 4 - Neutral
- 5 - Mildly Agree
- 6 - Strongly Agree
- 7 - Very Strongly Agree

OPEN-ENDED QUESTION

Please describe anything else you would like to share about your family's move to the United States or your child's transition to a new school: