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**Asian American Adolescents: The Correlation of
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ASIAN AMERICAN ADOLESCENTS: THE CORRELATION OF PARENT-
ADOLESCENT INTERACTION WITH ADOLESCENTS' ACADEMIC
ACHIEVEMENT AND RELATED CORRELATIONS

By

Mary Elizabeth Hoffman

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ABSTRACT

ASIAN AMERICAN ADOLESCENTS: THE CORRELATION OF PARENT- ADOLESCENT INTERACTION WITH ADOLESCENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND RELATED CORRELATIONS

By

Mary Elizabeth Hoffman

This secondary data analysis proposed that parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' academic achievement correlated, in that, certain sub-correlations existed within that relationship of interaction and academic achievement. The sub-correlations were between parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' self-esteem, their self-esteem and adolescents' academic motivation, and their academic motivation and their academic achievement. The sample was 158 Asian American adolescents from Michigan obtained from 13,000 Adolescents Speak: A Profile of Michigan (Keith & Perkins, 1995). Parent-adolescent interaction significantly effected adolescents' self-esteem. Their self-esteem did not impact adolescents' academic motivation. That motivation significantly influenced adolescents' academic achievement.

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DEDICATION

To Mary and Vince.

Mom, you motivated me to move forward and reminded me that my education would be the one thing I could always call my own that no one could ever take away from me. With you I am strong.

Dad, you taught me the value of learning about our world through research. You were my first teacher showing me how writing is not only a challenging yet important skill to learn, but also an accomplishment in art. GOYA!

Thank you to you both for all of your support, love, and guidance.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Americans are of many different cultures. Among other things, cultures define how parents interact with their children and how people value children, family, and education. For instance, certain Asian American values include respect for authority and parental wishes, diligence, and achieving long-term goals (Slaughter-Defoe, Nakagawa, Takanishi, & Johnson, 1990). Because of such ethnic diversity each culture has something valuable to teach other cultures, thereby enriching the life of every American (Asian American Association, 1996).

The majority of research on American children and their development is based on data collected from middle-class Caucasian children by middle-class Caucasian researchers (Stafford & Bayer, 1993). Considering the variety of different ethnic backgrounds in the U.S., these studies are an inaccurate representation of American child development. Researchers and practitioners have not been able to fully capitalize on the rich diversity that exists in the United States. Asian Americans, for example, are actually a heterogeneous group of different cultures (e.g., Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Vietnamese). Individually, these populations are dispersed throughout various regions

of the U.S. Collectively, however although, Asians are one of the smallest American minority groups, their population growth is the fastest and the largest, proportionally, compared to other American ethnic minority groups. The Asian American population increased by 141 percent between 1970 and 1980 and by 99 percent from 1980 to 1990, reaching a total of 7,273,662 people. It is projected that by the year 2000, this population will reach 10 million, about 4% of the U.S. population (Asian American Association, 1996).

The need for research that includes and focuses upon issues confronting American ethnic minority groups, especially Asian American adolescents, is a strong reason for this investigation to be done. Studies on Asian American adolescents are sparse (Lorenzo, Pakiz, Reinherz, and Frost, 1995). Researchers who have done research on Asian American youth have noted the lack of information available. In a recent review of literature on Asian American adolescents and their educational attainment, Sue and Okazaki (1990) noted the absence of empirical research on Asian Americans and other ethnic groups. They concluded that there was an imperative need for research to be done on Asian American adolescents in order to understand their educational attainment and their overall development in American society. Hwang, Saenz, and Aguirre (1997) noted a

significant increase in the amount of research done on Asian Americans in the last decade. Yet, they simultaneously recognized that, despite the amount of attention given to this minority group, the knowledge on Asian Americans is incomplete. The majority of the studies have only focused on the socioeconomic adjustments of this group in American society.

This preliminary study focuses on Asian American parent-adolescent interaction, adolescents' self-esteem, adolescents' academic motivation, and adolescents' academic achievement. A critical initial investigation, such as this, on the unique developmental characteristics of Asian Americans, broadens the spectrum of the information available on this American ethnic minority group.

This investigation is expected to reveal, on a preliminary basis, certain facts about Asian American adolescents in terms of their relationships with their parents and how that relates to the adolescents' academic achievement through a series of correlations.

Statement of Researchable Problem

The purpose of this human ecological study was to investigate the correlation between parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' academic achievement in Asian American communities. More specifically, this secondary

data analysis sought to find whether an interrelation matrix existed within parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' academic achievement. The inquiry examined the correlation between parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' self-esteem, and the effect this interaction had on adolescents' self-esteem. Secondly, it investigated the correlation between adolescent's' self-esteem and adolescents' academic motivation, and whether self-esteem affected academic motivation. Lastly, the correlation between adolescents' academic motivation and adolescents' academic achievement was examined, along with the effect the academic motivation had on academic achievement. The definitions of this study's variables and the research hypotheses are as stated on the next page.

Measurement Variables

Twenty-seven items from the Search Institute's Profile of Student Life: Attitude and Behavior Questionnaire (ABQ) were grouped into eight different measures in order to take an inventory of parent-adolescent interaction, adolescents' self-esteem, adolescents' academic motivation, adolescents' academic achievement, teacher-adolescent interaction, and adult-adolescent interaction. Through this inventory of variables, an understanding of the series of correlations

between parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' academic achievement was then obtained.

Independent variable.

Parent-adolescent interaction. This variable was defined as the amount of respectful, accepting, and concerned treatment an adolescent receives from his or her parents (Coopersmith, 1967). Positive parent-adolescent interaction was characterized as the parents' support and encouragement for the adolescent in time of need or crisis (Coopersmith, 1967). Parent-adolescent interaction was measured using thirteen items, which were grouped into three scales.

The first scale (Scale A) centered on parents' support for their adolescents' academic achievement. It measured how frequently parents spoke with their adolescents about school performance, helped their adolescents with schoolwork, and participated in or attended school events. Scale A was made up of four items, which are listed in Table 1.

The second scale, Scale B, was made up of five items that focused on the relationship quality between adolescents and their parents. This quality included how happy the relationship was, and how much love and support adolescents observed being directed toward them from their

Table 1 Survey Items of the Independent Variable: Parent-Adolescent Interaction

PARENT-ADOLESCENT INTERACTION:

Scale A. PARENTAL SUPPORT FOR ADOLESCENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT:

25) How often does one of your parents help you with your school work? Very often, often, sometimes, seldom, or never.

26) How often does one of your parents talk to you about what you are doing in school? Very often, often, sometimes, seldom, or never.

27) How often does one of your parents ask you about homework? Very often, often, sometimes, seldom, or never.

28) How often does one of your parents go to meetings or events at your school? Very often, often, sometimes, seldom, or never.

Scale B. QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ADOLESCENTS AND PARENTS:

39) My family life is happy. Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree.

44) There is a lot of love in my family. Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree.

46) I get along well with my parents. Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree.

53) My parents give me help and support when I need it. Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree.

59) My parents often tell me they love me. Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree.

Scale C. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN ADOLESCENTS AND PARENTS:

48) I have lots of good conversations with my parents. Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree.

55) My parents are easy to talk to. Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree.

96) How many times in the last month have you had a good conversation with one of your parents that lasted 10 minutes or more? None, once, twice, 3 times, or 4 or more times.

139) If you had an important concern about drugs, alcohol, sex or some other serious issue, would you talk to your parent(s) about it? Yes, probably, I'm not sure, probably not, or no.

parents. The five items that made up this scale are listed in Table 1 on page 6.

The third scale, Scale C, examined the manner of communication in parent-adolescent interaction. Adolescents reported whether it was easy for them to talk to their parents. They spoke of how frequently they had quality conversations with their parents and whether they felt comfortable speaking with their parents about such topics as drugs, sex, alcohol, or other serious issues. The four items of Scale C are provided in Table 1 on page 6.

Dependent variables.

Adolescents' self-esteem. The evaluation adolescents make and customarily maintain with regard to themselves defines adolescents' self-esteem (Coopersmith, 1967). Self-esteem indicates to what extent adolescents measure their personal capability, personal significance, success, and self-worth. Positive self-esteem refers to positive self evaluations adolescents make and is linked to self-respect, superiority, pride, self-acceptance and self-love. Negative self-esteem is an adolescent's negative self-evaluation. This negative self-appraisal is analogous with inferiority, timidity, self-hatred, and lack of personal acceptance and self-love (Coopersmith, 1967).

The self-esteem variable was gauged by six items, five of which appear in the Rosenberg (1965) self-esteem measure. The adolescents rated themselves according to how much they liked themselves. They disclosed their good qualities, the self-pride they had, and their strength in decision making. Table 2 lists these items.

Adolescents' academic motivation. This variable is defined as the extent to which adolescents were curious about and found schoolwork interesting. This led to their desire to succeed academically (Harter, 1988). Four questions, in Table 2, measured academic motivation. The items gauged the hours per week the students claimed to do homework and their regularity of going to school and skipping classes. They divulged whether they cared about school, putting in their greatest effort to do their best.

Adolescents' academic achievement. Adolescents' academic achievement was the actual level of adolescents' academic performance in school (Harter, 1988). This variable was measured by the item, in Table 2, which revealed the grades the students self reported.

Control variables.

Two influential variables of self-esteem, teacher-adolescent interaction and adult-adolescent interaction, were included in these analyses to determine the extent to

Table 2 Survey Items of the Dependent Variables: Adolescents' Self-Esteem, Adolescents' Academic Motivation, & Adolescents' Academic Achievement.

ADOLESCENTS' SELF-ESTEEM:

- 40) I have a number of good qualities. Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree.
- 42) On the whole, I like myself. Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree.
- 45) At times, I think I am no good at all. Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree.
- 47) All in all, I am glad I am me. Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree.
- 51) I feel I do not have much to be proud of. Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree.
- 56) I am good at making decisions. Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree.

ADOLESCENTS' ACADEMIC MOTIVATION:

- 22) In an average week, about how many hours do you spend doing homework? 0 hours, 1-2 hours, 3-5 hours, 6-10 hours, or 11 hours or more.
- 29) At school I try as hard as I can to do my best work. Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree.
- 33) I don't care how I do in school. Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree.
- 37) During the last four weeks, how often have you gone to school and skipped a class when you were not supposed to? Not at all, 1 or 2 times, 3-5 times, 6-10 times, 11-20 times, or more than 20 times.

ADOLESCENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT:

- 24) What kinds of grades do you earn in school? Mostly A, about half A and B, mostly B, about half B and half C, mostly C, about half C and half D, mostly D, or mostly below C.

which adolescent interaction predicted self-esteem and the other outcomes when the effects of the two variables were partialled out.

Teacher-adolescent interaction. This variable is defined as the amount of respectful, accepting, and concerned treatment adolescents obtained from their teachers. Two items measured this interaction, addressing whether the adolescents felt their teachers cared about them and whether the teachers paid attention to their students. The survey items are included in Table 3.

Adult-adolescent interaction. This variable is the amount of respectful, accepting, and concerned treatment adolescents received from adults other than their parents. Two items, listed in Table 3, measured adult-adolescent interaction by identifying, from the adolescents' self report, the number of times in the last month they had a good conversation with an adult other than their parent(s). Also examined was the number of adults, aside from their parent(s), adolescents felt comfortable to go to for help if they had an important question about life.

These are the 3 sets of hypotheses devised for this study.

Table 3 Survey Items of the Control Variables: Teacher-Adolescent Interaction, and Adult-Adolescent Interaction.

TEACHER-ADOLESCENT INTERACTION:

31) My teachers really care about me. Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree.

34) My teachers don't pay much attention to me. Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree.

ADULT-ADOLESCENT INTERACTION:

97) How many times in the last month have you had a good conversation with an adult (not a parent) that lasted 10 minutes or more? None, once, twice, 3 times, or 4 or more times.

98) If you had an important question about your life, how many adults do you know (not counting your parents) to whom you feel comfortable going for help? None, 1, 2, 3 to 4, 5 or more.

Research Hypotheses

H01: Adolescents' self-esteem is unaffected by parent-adolescent interaction.

HA1: Adolescents' self-esteem is affected by parent-adolescent interaction.

H02: Adolescents' academic motivation is unaffected by the adolescents' self-esteem.

HA2: Adolescents' academic motivation is affected by adolescents' self-esteem.

H03: Adolescents' academic achievement is unaffected by adolescents' academic motivation.

HA3: Adolescents' academic motivation is affected to adolescents' academic achievement.

The model developed for this study (Figure 1) physically displays the direction of the investigation among the eight variables.

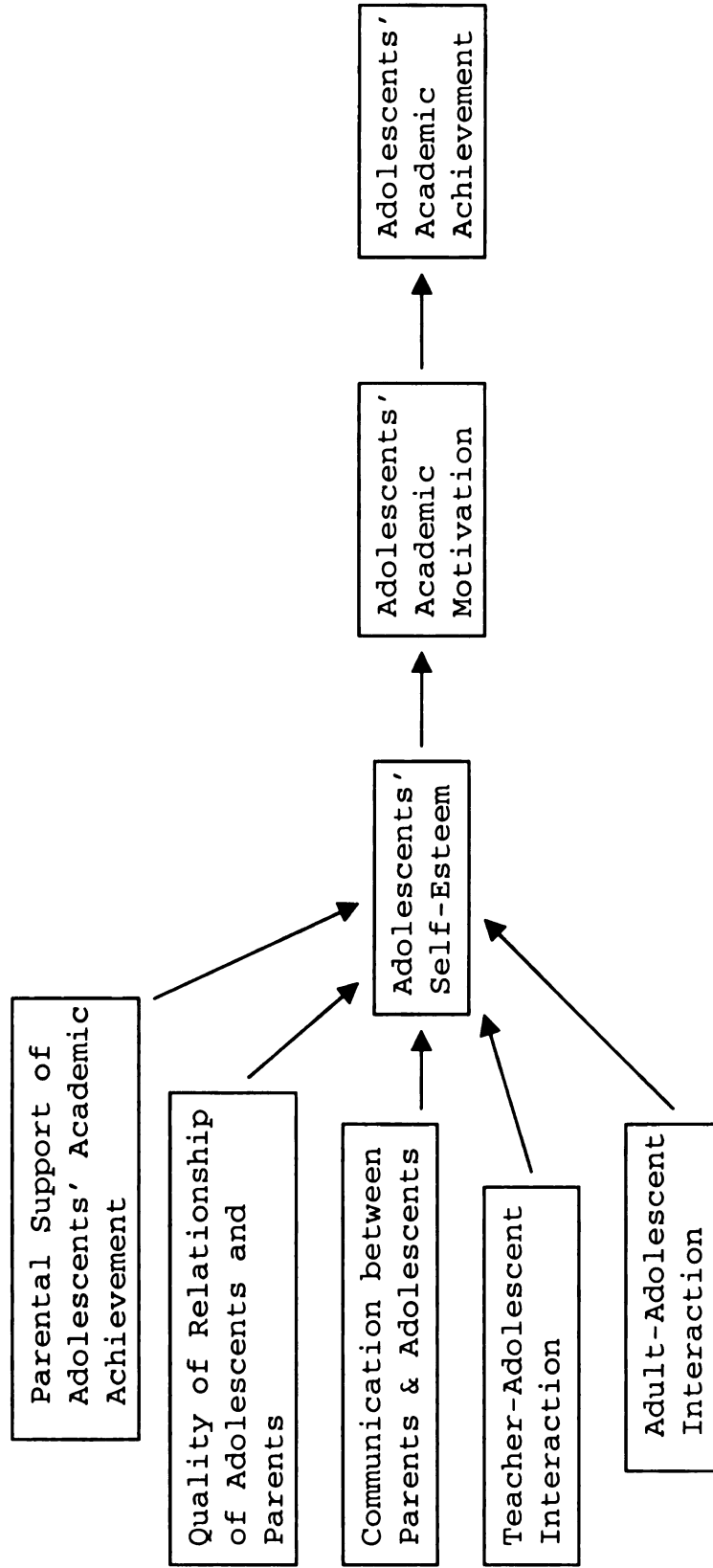


Figure 1 Model of the Correlation of Parent-Adolescent Interaction with Adolescents' Academic Achievement and Related Correlations

Chapter II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This literature review explains why this study on Asian American adolescents is necessary. It discusses the immense and ever expanding cultural diversity in the United States. It notes the lack of research available on Asian Americans and the complexity of doing such research when considering the heterogeneous make up of this minority group. The review gives a general overview of current research on parent-adolescent interaction and the Asian American perspective on this type of interaction. The importance of academic achievement for Asian Americans is critiqued, along with an elaboration on the concept of Asian Americans as the "model minority" because of their high rate of success academically and otherwise. Social capital and self-esteem are defined within the context of this study. Lastly, Stanley Coopersmith and Susan Harter's research on parent-adolescent interaction, adolescents' self-esteem, adolescents' academic motivation, and academic achievement are examined and shown to be foundational for the propositions of this research.

Cultural Diversity in the U.S.

In the United States, ethnic diversity is extensive. This country has always been proud of its status as the

nation of immigrants. With the immigrants' search for new beginnings in the "land of opportunity" comes national renewal and rebirth (Martin & Midgley, 1994).

For native-born Americans, there is a conflict. There are those who wish to restrict and reduce immigration and those who celebrate and embrace maintaining or increasing immigration to the U.S. This dispute is because of the rise of both legal and illegal immigration. Approximately 1 million people are immigrating to America per year (Martin & Midgley, 1994). In terms of their education, skills, and ethnic origins, today's immigrants differ from native-born Americans. These newcomers are mostly from Latin American and Asia (Martin & Midgley, 1994). Compared to native-born Americans, most of who have graduated from high school or college, today's immigrants are 50 percent less likely to have completed high school. On the other hand, they are also more likely to have advanced college degrees compared to native-born Americans. Anti-immigrationists argue that today's immigrants will become liabilities to the country in the future considering their low incomes, high unemployment, and dependence on public assistance (Martin & Midgley, 1994).

Heterogeneity of Asian Americans

Despite the fact that immigrants to the U.S. come from all countries and, therefore, a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds, America's population is divided by Census statistics into only four groups: Asian American, non-Hispanic White, Black, and Hispanic (Asian-American Demographics, 1991). As can be imagined, these four groups, individually, are made up of a number of different cultures (Asian-American Demographics, 1991). Often studies generalize about American ethnic minority groups, such as Asian Americans, with only a mention of the different ethnic groups that make up the populace and not taking that diversity into consideration when performing the research or interpreting the results.

A number of different cultures make up the Asian American population. According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census (Asian-American Demographics, 1990), Asian Americans are divided into nine different ethnic groups: Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Hawaiian, Indian, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, and Vietnamese. There are differences among these various Asian cultures in terms of cultural values, English language proficiency, educational attainment, and socialization practices (Alva, 1993). For instance, some researchers reported a significant difference in academic

achievement among Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian students, even though they all come from Southeast Asia. Yet, others like to base these differences on socioeconomic status rather than cultural differences (Asakawa & Csikszentmihalyi, 1998).

Lee (1994), in her study on Asian American adolescents, reported that the youth of her sample did not identify themselves as belonging to one large Asian American group. They divided themselves into several different Asian sub-groups. Each of these sub-groups behaved and performed differently in school and interacted differently with their families. Lee discovered that the Asian students from China, Hong Kong, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Taiwan reflected a panethnic identity, which meant they referred to one another as Asian or Asian American. Yet, at the same time, these individuals divided themselves into three different identity groups: Asian, Asian new wave, and Asian American. Koreans separated themselves completely from these other Asian groups. They did not refer to themselves as Asian or Asian American, rather only as Korean. The Koreans formed their own student organization. They purposefully only associated with other Koreans and with Caucasian students. They specifically

believed themselves to be superior to Southeast Asians, who they often referred to as "welfare sponges" (Lee, 1994).

A more accurate way of researching Asian Americans would be to divide them into smaller groups (e. g., East Asian, Southeast Asian). As Lee (1994) showed, the various ethnic divisions within an American ethnic group need to be taken into consideration when doing research. Otherwise, there is the strong possibility of an investigation's results being over-generalized and inaccurate when applied to everyone within a particular American ethnic minority group.

Lack of Research on Asian Americans

Ironically, despite the heterogeneity of the American populace, the majority of the research available on American adolescents is based on data collected from middle-class Caucasian American adolescents. Greenberger and Chen (1996) asserted that much of the research released before their work was based on samples consisting mainly of Caucasian Americans. To understand the similarities and differences across ethnic contexts, considering the increasing diversity of the American population, they discussed the importance of theory development and research (Greenberger & Chen, 1996). McKinney and his colleagues noted the conspicuous absence of longitudinal studies on

the normative development of American ethnic minority children. Also, they criticized the disregard for the inherent heterogeneity within the different minority groups when they are studied (McKinney, Abrams, Terry, & Lerner, 1994).

Some research that does exist is prefaced with the affirmation that Asian American adolescents are not sufficiently studied or understood (Lorenzo et al, 1995). Sue and Okazaki (1990), in their review of Asian Americans' educational attainment, found an absence of research exploring the discrepancies between the academic achievement of Asian Americans and other American ethnic groups.

In spite of the fact that Asian Americans are considered a "model" minority, a topic discussed in further detail later on, Kao (1995) explained that there is little research on the mechanisms of the academic success of Asian Americans. She believed the lack of research is because Asian Americans' academic success is not a problem in need of a solution. Kao claimed that the few studies done on Asian American adolescents' school performance have been based on the narrow motivation to try and decipher the key to their success. Also the samples in research on academic

achievement have not included a national representation of the Asian American populace.

Comparison of Asian American and Caucasian American
Adolescents

In looking at studies that compared Asian American adolescents to their Caucasian American peers, there were unexpected differences. In one particular investigation (Lorenzo et al., 1995), Asian American youth exhibited less delinquent and aggressive behavior than their Caucasian counterparts. Asian American adolescents were less likely in school to act out or to use foul language with their teachers or peers. They were less disruptive in class and less likely to use abusive substances. Yet, at the same time they were revealed to be more withdrawn, anxious, and depressed, and to have more social problems. Coinciding with the fact that they were more withdrawn than the Caucasian adolescents, Asian American students were engaged in fewer after school activities (e.g., sports, and clubs). They spent less time with their classmates and had fewer close friends in contrast to the Caucasian students (Lorenzo et al., 1995). They expressed dissatisfaction with the amount of social support available to them, such as positive feedback and people with whom they could confide. When asked about role models, only 52 percent of the Asian

Americans mentioned having role models, who were most frequently teachers rather than their parents. Seventy-four percent of the Caucasian students had role models and the majority were identified as being their parents (Lorenzo et al., 1995).

<In terms of their education, Asian American adolescents valued education more and claimed it as being more important than the Caucasian adolescents did (Lorenzo et al., 1995). They were also noted for being happier when studying and enjoying it more than their Caucasian peers (Asakawa & Csikszentmihalyi, 1998). Caucasian Americans scored significantly lower in mathematics and English than Asian Americans (Lorenzo et al., 1995). This was true even though the Asian Americans claimed to receive less praise from their parents than did their Caucasian peers. Young Asian Americans often expressed the harsh criticism and lack of warmth and acceptance they received from their parents (Greenberger & Chen, 1996).

The differences shown between Asian Americans and Caucasian Americans support the importance of doing studies on all American ethnic groups because each group has different and similar issues. For instance, Asian American adolescents have different issues surrounding their

relationship with their parents compared to Caucasian American adolescents.

Academic Achievement and the "Model" Minority

Asian Americans are considered a model minority for several different reasons. The American Enterprise (1991) published statistics released by the U.S. Bureau of Census, the Population Reference Bureau, and the U.S. National Center for Educational Statistics. According to these statistics, in the late 1980s Asian Americans had the highest median family income and the lowest unemployment rate compared to Non-Hispanic Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics. They also had the largest percentage of individuals who were 25 years or older with four or more years of college. Asian Americans had the highest percentage of 1980 high school seniors who had earned baccalaureates by 1986. They had the highest percentage of living in married-couple families and, in reverse, had the smallest percentage of persons aged 15 or older who were divorced. Finally, teen births, as a percentage of all births within the ethnic group, were the lowest for Asian Americans compared to the other three ethnic groups (Asian American Demographics, 1991).

This study specifically focuses on Asian Americans' "model" minority status, scholastically. Even though Asian

Americans make up a small portion of America's population, they are over-represented in academic success. This is seen in their school grades, scores on achievement tests, rates of acceptance at the highest ranking American colleges, and the numbers who graduate from high school and college (Chen & Stevenson, 1995). Asian Americans are, overall, looked upon as academic successes in the United States because of their value of education and determination for academic success (Lee, 1994). Asian American students have the highest grade point average compared to African Americans, Caucasian Americans, and Hispanic Americans (Asakawa & Csikszentmihalyi, 1998).

Researchers have come up with many different possible reasons for Asian Americans being, overall, academically successful. It was stated in several studies that Asian Americans promote high levels of education and academic achievement to compensate for anticipated discrimination they expect to encounter in the employment arena (Kao, 1995). Also educational attainment is considered highly influential on the opportunities of upward mobility, both educationally and noneducationally (Sue & Okazaki, 1990). The voluntary minority.

According to Ogbu (1995), African Americans and Hispanic Americans often perform in opposition to their

Asian American peers because they operate from a different view point on education in terms of what it can do for their future. As explained by Ogbu (1995), there are voluntary and involuntary American minorities. The voluntary minorities are those who chose freely to come to the United States. The involuntary minorities are those who were brought to the country against their will or without their consent.

The voluntary minorities, such as Asian Americans, were thought by Ogbu (1995) to view themselves as visitors to the U.S. where they must live by their host's rules. They experience the cultural and language barriers they encounter as obstacles they need to face and overcome in order to succeed in America (Ogbu, 1995). Involuntary American minorities (e.g., African Americans and Hispanic Americans) do not believe that, for themselves, there is the possibility for social mobility because of the constant economic and social discrimination they experience in the United States (Ogbu, 1995). In contrast to voluntary minorities, they reject the dominant American culture and develop an opposing culture. They do not pursue education successfully because they view schooling as a threat to their own cultures and identities (Ogbu, 1995). If Ogbu's theoretical categorization of American minorities is true,

it would explain, at least to an extent, why Asian Americans are viewed as an American model minority.

Cultural influences.

The roles of cultural influences and traditions in the Asian and Asian American value of education and their contribution to Asian American academic success must not be overlooked. Such cultural influences are the significance of interdependency, the precedence of the parent-child relationship, and the imperative value of hard work. All of these Asian influences can be traced back to the belief system, Confucianism.

In contrast to the United States, which values independence, Asian people are interdependent. For instance, parents raise and support their children until they are fully capable of taking care of themselves. Often Asian children remain, if they are not married, with their parents long after they have reached adulthood. These roles reverse when parents age. It is then the children's responsibility to support their parents (Lin & Liu, 1993).

In American culture, priority is with the husband and wife relationship. In Asia, precedence is placed on the relationship of parent and child, which in most of the Asian nations, specifically focuses on the mother and child relationship (Han & Washington, 1989). Because of the

strong bond between parent and child and living in an interdependent context, parents are expected to invest everything they have into their children. The children are expected to succeed academically and socially to meet the expectations of others and more specifically those of their parents (Asakawa & Csikszentmihalyi, 1998).

Finally, one last Asian cultural influence is the belief that if people work hard enough, they can achieve the goals they set for themselves. This is the reason Asian American adolescents are taught to study as hard as they can. The more devoted they are to their education, the greater academic success they will have. In the U.S., it is often believed an individual has to be intelligent (i.e., have a high I.Q.) in order to do well academically. If an individual is not endowed with the gift of intelligence, it is understood that it will be very difficult for that person to succeed no matter how hard he/she works (Asakawa & Csikszentmihalyi, 1998).

American and Asian Values

As just learned, Asian and American values often conflict with one another. Asian Americans are under simultaneous pressure from the demand to conform to American values and to contradictory traditional Asian values (Feldman & Rosenthal, 1990). They have to balance

the internalization of certain American values while maintaining Asian values (Lin & Liu, 1993). Though there is some internalization of contemporary American family values, Asian Americans have found it important to maintain their traditional Asian values of family, marriage, and education (McAdoo, 1993). It has been a problem, specifically for Asian American youth, to acclimate to American norms and simultaneously perceive themselves as connected to their parents' value system (Rick & Forward, 1992). Being Asian and American also puts a strain on Asian American familial relations across generations (Lin & Liu, 1993).

Even when this continual internal conflict of Asian Americans is taken into consideration, research has shown that Asian American students, when compared to Caucasian American adolescents, perform better academically and exhibit less delinquent behavior (Feldman & Rosenthal, 1990). Thus, as already stated, they are often viewed as the "model" minority because of their academic achievement and upward mobility in American society collectivism (Lorenzo et al., 1995). Often, Asian Americans perceive upward mobility in all arenas of American society to be affected by the influences of their high academic achievement. Also, their limitations in English language

proficiency, discrimination, or cultural conflicts are considered influences in increasing their valuation of education and determination for academic success (Sue & Okazaki, 1990). Again the importance of understanding which contemporary American values Asian Americans may have adopted and which traditional ethnic values they have maintained supports the need to do this investigation.

Confucian influence.

The three formerly mentioned Asian cultural influences stem from a basis of Confucianism. There is a lack of mention of Confucianism in the research on Asian Americans and their academic success. Confucianism is a religion and value system combined into one. Confucianism has influenced, in one way or another, all the religions of Asia (Taoism, Legalism, Monism, Buddhism, and Shamanism). Because of this influence, and because it is still a major belief system itself, Confucianism has a strong impact on the structure and function of the Asian family and community even today. The value of interdependency, mentioned earlier, stems from Confucianism. Family cohesion and continuity are the foundation, in Asian culture, for maintaining the human community and state. Confucian beliefs place an enormous importance on education for all

people no matter what their socioeconomic status (Park & Cho, 1995).

Understanding these Asian values of the parent-child relationship, interdependency, diligent work and study, with Confucianism as the source of these values, can aid in understanding the importance of Asian American academic achievement and the role of the parents in Asian American adolescents' academic success, among other things. The following section discusses parent-adolescent interaction and specifically examines Asian-American parent-adolescent interaction.

Parent-Adolescent Interaction

Several studies, done recently, have shown the importance of parent-child interaction in its effects on children's self-esteem and academic achievement. For instance Sutherland (1991) did research on the impact parental involvement with children had on children's academic achievement. Sutherland reported that families who are oriented toward high academic success, and who pass that orientation on to their children, are extraordinarily successful families. She had evidence supporting her claim that high levels of drug and alcohol abuse, suicides, and illegitimate pregnancies of American youth were the results of minimal interaction and attention from their parents.

Majoribanks' study (1992) examined "family social capital" (parents' interaction with their children), "family human capital" (i.e., parents' level of education), and "family educational capital" (i.e., parental aspirations for their children and parental academic socialization). Majoribanks based his study on Coleman's idea of the breakdown of family background (explained more extensively later on). He operated on the assumption that family human capital and family social capital are essential for the educational growth and success of children. Yet, no matter how strong the family human capital may be, if the family social capital is not strong, the children's educational outcome will not be successful (Majoribanks, 1992).

Majoribanks' study associated these three types of capital with children's academic achievement, and underscored the importance of understanding and examining the family context (which includes the interaction between parent and child) in order to understand the development of children (including adolescents' self-esteem and adolescents' academic achievement) (Majoribanks, 1992).

Buri and his colleagues (Buri, Murphy, Richtmeier, & Komar, 1992) had a more focused study than Majoribanks. Buri et al. examined social capital alone rather than the

three different forms of capital, measuring how, within the relationship of parent and child (social capital), parents' nurturance of their children significantly impacted the children's self-esteem. It was concluded that the consistency of the mothers' and fathers' exhibition of nurturance, acceptance, affection, support, and attention for their children significantly and positively related to the self-esteem of various children, adolescent, and early adult age groups.

These three studies showed the significance of the parent and child relationship in terms of its impact on children's self-esteem and academic achievement. As we will see later, their results and conclusions coincide with the results of this investigation's correlation between parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' academic achievement.

Parent-adolescent interaction in Asian American context.

Recent literature reveals several different understandings of the interaction between Asian American parents and their children. One is that the premiere relationship in the Asian and Asian American community is the parent-child relationship, with particular emphasis on the mother and child bond (Han & Washington, 1989).

Han and Washington (1989) declared that the bond between parent and child is stronger in Asian culture than in American culture. They discussed the immense sacrifices parents, in the Asian tradition, make for their children so the children can do their best academically and otherwise. Children repay their parents with their success. Children have a respectful obligation towards their parents to be prosperous in society. This respect and obligation toward their parents continues after the parents die (i.e., familial piety). The parent-adolescent interaction is portrayed in a very positive manner, reflecting the mutual sacrifice parents and their children make for each other (Han & Washington, 1989).

Greenberger and Chen (1996) characterized the parent-adolescent relationship differently. Based on data they collected from Asian American adolescents in high school and college, the stereotypical perception of the Asian American family is not accurate. It is typically thought that Asian American families are more "tightly knit" than other American families. Yet, from the viewpoint of the Asian American adolescents in Greenberger and Chen's study, the family context has less cohesion and greater conflict. Asian American parents were described as being less understanding of their children. They did not express

positive feelings towards them. Instead of striving to meet certain goals from the motivation of parental support and love, Asian American adolescents felt more prone to meet parental expectations and standards in order to receive their approval. A justification could be made, from the parental aspect, that the critiquing of their children and the high standards they set for their children conform to culturally sanctioned ways of behaving. It is important to remember that the accomplishments of the children significantly impact the status of, and give credit to, the family and community in Asian culture (Greenberger & Chen, 1996).

This portion of the literature review highlights several different aspects of the Asian and Asian American parent-child relationship. First, their children's success in society is what parents want most in life. Asian parents pass on to their children the value of school success as the single most important task. Adolescents are taught the importance of working and studying hard especially in the American society where they can be easily discriminated against for being a minority. Parents give everything they can for their children to succeed and the children return that investment through their achievements in society. As a result, parents create a home environment that is most

likely to promote and support studying. The parents' strong investment in their children reciprocates to the extent that the children strive not to disappoint their parents. That, in turn, means high achievement in school.

Often the Asian and Asian American parent-child relationship, as just described, is perceived as the sort of positive and loving relationship that is frequently lacking in the average American family. Yet, as expressed by some Asian American adolescents, the relationship between parent and child is not as it appears. To be able to lead a more successful life in society, children are not always supported and loved, as thought to be true in Asian/Asian American families. Rather, some adolescents perceive themselves as being pushed into being successful. Asian parental behavior has been interpreted, by some, as being authoritarian; meaning the demand of unquestionable obedience from the children to parents (Asakawa & Csikszentmihalyi, 1998). It has also been criticized for being permissive, emphasizing children reflecting substantial self-control with minimal parental involvement (Asakawa & Csikszentmihalyi, 1998).

Putting such critiques aside, the reciprocity of the parent-child relationship and the importance of children meeting the expectations of those in their community are

linked to the Asian concept of interdependency. Persons' behaviors are intertwined with and impact all others. That interdependency is, likewise, the reason for the parents' social status being dependent on the academic success of their children. The parents put all of themselves into their children and, as a result, their children's fruition in society is a reflection of the parents' efforts and commitment.

Overall, in terms of education, due to beliefs and values which stem from Confucianism, Asian American children have the primary obligation and task to study their hardest in school and succeed. There are high parental expectations of academic achievement. Parental status and self-esteem is based on the success of their children rather than on their personal societal success. As a result there is extensive parental control of after school time and parental prioritization of education in the family (Asakawa & Csikszentmihalyi, 1998).

Adolescents' Self-Esteem

Global and specific self-esteem.

Self-esteem is a broad concept. The majority of research available on self-esteem studies global self-esteem, which is defined as an individual's positive or negative attitude toward the self as a whole. In the last

decade, the importance of studying specific self-esteem has arisen. There has been an emphasis on what is described as the multi-dimensionality of self-esteem. This refers to the idea that no longer is self-esteem only the one concept of global self-esteem; it can also be divided into more specific facets of self-esteem. Specific self-esteem refers to each of these different facets of global self-esteem. It was discovered that global self-esteem is more strongly affective by nature and has the tendency to be associated with the overall psychological well being of a person. Specific self-esteem is more judgmental and evaluative. It has a cognitive component and is strongly associated with behavior and the outcomes from behavior (Rosenberg, Schooler, Schoenbach, & Rosenberg, 1995).

As for their relationship with one another, specific self-esteem (e.g., academic self-esteem) has greater affect on global self-esteem than global self-esteem has on specific self-esteem. The effect of specific self-esteem on global self-esteem differs in its strength according to how the behavior or role is personally valued. For example, the strength of the effect a person's academic self-esteem has on his or her global self-esteem depends on the extent to which that individual values academic achievement. In studies of these two forms of self-esteem with the involved

behavior, specific self-esteem, rather than the global self-esteem, influenced the behavior. Global self-esteem, not specific self-esteem, was then impacted by the behavior (Rosenberg, et al., 1995). In using the same example as above, a person's academic self-esteem influences his/her academic performance. The academic performance then influences his/her global self-esteem.

Rosenberg and his colleagues revealed an important fact about self-esteem. First, self-esteem is multifaceted. It is important to recognize this fact and take it into consideration when doing research on self-esteem. If research is being done on a type of behavior and the relationship it has with self-esteem, the type of self-esteem being studied needs to be identified. It needs to be specified whether global or specific self-esteem is being analyzed in the study. For this study, global self-esteem was used. Considering that self-esteem and its relationship with academic motivation was being analyzed, it might have been more beneficial if Rosenberg's concept of specific self-esteem had been applied in the investigation along with global self-esteem.

Coopersmith's definition of self-esteem.

Coopersmith (1967) also studied self-esteem. As will be elaborated later on in this literature review, this

study bases its definition of self-esteem on Coopersmith's concept. Coopersmith (1967) defined self-esteem as an evaluative attitude a person has of himself as an object. He emphasized that the amount of "respectful, accepting, and concerned treatment a person receives from the important people in one's life has an extensive effect on his/her self-esteem." Parents and teachers were included as being such important people.

Theoretical Perspectives

This study focuses on four variables: parent-adolescent interaction, adolescents' self-esteem, adolescents' academic motivation, and adolescents' academic achievement. The human ecological perspective for this study operates on the idea that the family is a system. A system consists of a set of objects. Each object has certain attributes. These objects have relationships with one another. In terms of the family as a system, the objects are the parents and children. The characteristics of the family members are the attributes, which include such dimensions as personality, age, and roles. The relationships between the objects, that is, between family members (e.g., between parents and their children) are what make the family (Schiamberg, 1988). This study seeks to examine the impact of the relationship between objects

(parent-adolescent interaction) on the objects' outcome (adolescents' academic achievement). This is done specifically by examining the impact of the objects' relationships with the objects' attribute (adolescents' self-esteem), and the objects' attribute with the objects' performance outcomes (academic motivation and academic achievement).

Social capital.

The parent-child relationship and interaction could be referred to as a form of social capital. Social capital is a human ecological and economic term. Economist G. Loury originally defined it as the effects of one's social position in the facilitation of the attainment of market-valued characteristics known as human capital (as cited in Bump, 1996). Through his pioneer work, J. S. Coleman later added to Loury's definition to include the resources that exist in a social structure (Bump, 1996). He expressed, in particular, the crucial role of parental involvement in children's educational outcomes (Woolcock, 1997).

Ecologically, (Coleman's modified) definition of social capital is the resources that exist within a person's social structure. Such resources include social relationships and networks, norms, and values (as cited in Bump, 1996).

Referring to the idea of social capital, in this discussion the family is the social structure in which there are social resources. The family is a major resource of social capital and makes a critical impact on children's development of human capital. One specific type of social resource is the relationship between parent and child (Bump, 1996). Parent-adolescent interaction is one of the focal variables of this study and is the one type of social capital examined. Its impact on adolescents' self-esteem is the first correlation in the series of relationships that specifically define how parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' academic achievement relate to one another.

Coleman (as cited in Majoribanks, 1992) analyzed the importance of family, especially the relationship between parent and child. He specifically suggested that the family background could be broken into two components. The first component, social capital, related to the strength of the relationships between parents and children. Human capital, the second component, measured mostly through the parents' education, provided the potential for a learning environment for children.

Coleman (as cited in Majoribanks, 1992) stressed that family social capital gives children the exposure to the adults' human capital, so children can learn and develop.

The physical presence of adults in the family and the attention adults give to the children are forms of family social capital. Coleman proposed that if social capital from the family and community were to shrink, academic achievement and other forms of child development would depreciate.

Considering how important the parent-child relationship is in Asian and Asian American families, it is a striking example of how a resource of social capital influences Asian American adolescents' development of human capital, namely self-esteem, academic motivation and achievement (Bump, 1996).

Stanley Coopersmith.

This study was also based on theoretical perspectives put forth by Stanley Coopersmith (1967) and Susan Harter (1988). Coopersmith (1967) defined self-esteem as an evaluative attitude one has of oneself as an object. Coopersmith (1967) found that self-esteem is based, first and foremost, on the amount of "respectful, accepting, and concerned treatment" one receives from the significant individuals in one's life. For adolescents, such significant individuals include parents, teachers, and other notable adults who interact with them. Coopersmith also expressed the importance of how parents create a

structure or set of guidelines, which their children follow for their own benefit in development. He demonstrated in his research that social capital, such as parent-child interaction, has a direct relationship with children's self-esteem. This outlook was the basis for this investigation, which examines the "goodness of fit" of Coopersmith's model for Asian Americans. It was important to examine whether parent-adolescent interaction relates to adolescents' self-esteem as Coopersmith (1967) described.

Susan Harter.

Similarly, Harter (1988) explored the relationship between children's self-esteem and their academic motivation and academic achievement. Harter (1988) postulated that adolescents' self-esteem is determined by the strength with which adolescents believe in their own competence in areas where success is deemed important and by the amount of acceptance and support they receive from others. Harter hypothesized that adolescents' self-esteem leads to the development of their mood, whether it be happy or depressed, which then influences the motivation adolescents have academically. From her inquiry, it was found that adolescents with high self-esteem had cheerful/happy moods. Such positive mood resulted in high energy and motivation to engage in age appropriate

activities (e. g., studying). To Harter, these results meant that self-esteem does not stand alone. Instead self-esteem is related to both motivational and emotional systems which launch adolescents into developing a broader and more refined set of skills, which is ever widening.

In its entirety, Harter's study, from which the idea of this thesis also stems, explored several topics related to adolescents' development. The process of self-evaluation was contemplated. It was discovered that children evaluated their performance in five different categories: scholastic competence, athletic competence, popularity, behavioral conduct, and physical appearance. Children ages 8 and older were found to base their judgement of their self-worth, namely self-esteem, on their internalization of the attitudes others held toward them and the degree to which they felt competent in the areas in which success was deemed important. Finally, Harter concluded that children's sense of self-esteem (global self-esteem) has a significant relationship with their emotional life that in turn influences the children's motivation. That motivation leads to further development, academically and in other arenas (Harter, 1988). This study examines the "goodness-of-fit" of Harter's (1988) theory of self-esteem, academic

motivation, and academic achievement with Asian American adolescents.

The family is developed into an organized model defined as a system. The family can then be clearly understood in terms of how it operates as a system composed of different components. The model describes how these components interact with one another. The family is then defined, more precisely, as a social structure. The relationships between family members (i.e. the components) are resources for the members, and are defined as a form of social capital. With the use of Coopersmith's research, the specific type of social capital, parent-adolescent interaction, is proven to have an imperative relationship with adolescents' self-esteem. Harter's work proves the crucial correlation between adolescents' self-esteem with academic motivation and the necessary association with that motivation and academic achievement. These theoretical perspectives combined lead to the statement of the researchable problem.

This study could provide the opportunity to develop a preliminary Asian American model on parent-adolescent interaction with adolescents' academic achievement. The model could be applied and examined for its validity within the individual Asian American groups making up the ethnic

minority group. The model may be applied to other cultural contexts to examine how it compares in contexts other than Asian. After applying the model, it might be found that what was learned about the Asian American minority, as a whole, might not completely represent what occurs in the individual Asian American groups. The similarities and differences among Asian Americans and between Asian American and other American ethnic groups could be applied to improve and modify the already established theories on the beneficial types of parent-adolescent interaction, adolescents' self-esteem, and academic achievement.

Conclusion

This review of literature supports and promotes the objectives of this investigation. The extensiveness of cultural diversity in the U.S. contradicts the lack of research done on the multi-ethnic groups that exist in America. The description of Asian American adolescents and their relationship with their parents showed how complex and intertwined parents' lives are with their children. A comparison with their Caucasian American peers revealed distinct differences between these two different ethnic groups. There was the discussion of Asian Americans' high rates of success in the United States and as a result their being labeled a "model" minority. The rationalization for

their academic success because of Asian cultural traditions and values was discussed. The issue of self-esteem being both global and multi-faceted was explained and shown how it applies to this study. The concept of social capital and Harter and Coopersmith's studies on parent-adolescent interaction, adolescents' self-esteem, adolescents' academic motivation and achievement were argued for being the foundation from which this study was developed.

Chapter III

METHOD

This study was completed using secondary data. It focuses on the relationship between parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' academic achievement in the Asian American community. It was done in such a way as to understand whether a certain series of relationships between several different variables would lead to the parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' academic achievement correlation. The series of relationships were as follows:

1) parent-adolescent interaction with adolescents' self-esteem, 2) adolescents' self-esteem with adolescents' academic motivation, and 3) adolescents' academic motivation and adolescents' academic achievement. The analysis further sought to find if there existed a particular direction of influence from one variable to the next. Namely, it was postulated parent-adolescent interaction would affect adolescents' self-esteem, adolescents' self-esteem would affect adolescents' academic motivation, and adolescents' academic motivation would affect adolescents' academic achievement.

Sample

The data used for this secondary analysis was obtained from the study, 13,000 Adolescents Speak: A Profile of Michigan Youth (Keith & Perkins, 1995). The sample consisted of 158 Asian American adolescents (Cambodian, Hmong, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, and Vietnamese). Of these adolescents, 78 were female and 80 were male. They ranged in age from 12 to 17, in school grades seven, nine, eleven, and twelve. They were selected from 43 middle and high schools in 36 different communities (Perkins, 1995).

The age and grade representation was not evenly distributed. Seventeen years old was the age most highly represented at 24 percent. Twelve years old showed the lowest representation at 9 percent. Ninth grade, with 27.2 percent, was the most highly represented grade. Seventh and eleventh grade had similar representation with 26.6 percent. Twelfth graders were least represented at 4.4 percent. Approximately 17 percent of this sample were adopted. Eighty-four percent of the adolescents lived with both of their parents.

Geographically, the sample represented urban, suburban, and rural areas. Of the total sample, approximately 35 percent of the subjects lived in urban areas (medium size and large cities) and 47 percent in

suburban areas (towns and small cities). Analyzing the adolescents' educational goals revealed 91 percent intended to continue their education in college, graduate school, or a professional school. Refer to Table 4 for a complete listing of the sample's characteristics.

Measures

The Search Institute of Minneapolis, Minnesota developed and refined a survey, entitled the Search Institute's Profile of Student Life: Attitude and Behavior Questionnaire (ABQ). Keith and Perkins used this 152-item inventory in their profile of Michigan youth. A copy of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix A. The survey covers several different aspects of an adolescent's life. Adolescents described their experiences at school, their religious practices, and the relations they have with their parents, teachers, and other adults in their community. They expressed their opinion of themselves. The ABQ examined their use of substances (e.g., alcohol and drugs) and the activities the adolescents participated in outside of school. The questionnaire did not contain variables that were specifically defined as parent-adolescent interaction, adolescents' self-esteem, adolescents' academic motivation, and adolescents' academic achievement. However, there were a series of different questions, that when combined were

Table 4 Demographic Characteristics of Sample

Gender:	Number	Percentage
Female	78	49.4
Male	80	50.6
Adopted:	Number	Percentage
Yes	21	13.3
No	131	82.9
Not Sure	5	3.2
Lived with 2 Parents:	Number	Percentage
Yes	133	84.2
No	25	15.8
Lived with Single Parent:	Number	Percentage
Yes	19	12
No	134	84.8
Parents Divorced or Separated:	Number	Percentage
Yes	23	14.6
No	131	82.9
Not Sure	3	1.9
Age:	Number	Percentage
12 years old	14	8.9
13 years old	27	17.1
14 years old	25	15.8
15 years old	22	13.9
16 years old	32	20.3
17 years old	38	24.1
School Grade:	Number	Percentage
7th	42	26.6
8th	8	5.1
9th	43	27.2
10th	16	10.1
11th	42	26.6
12th	7	4.4

Table 4 (cont'd) Demographic Characteristics of Sample

Size of Inhabiting City:	Number	Percentage
Farm	4	2.5
In the country, not a farm	12	7.6
American Indian Reservation	2	1.3
Small Town (under 2500 people)	11	7.0
Town (2500 to 9,999)	24	15.3
Small City (10,000 to 49,999)	49	31.2
Medium Size City (50,000 to 250,000)	26	16.6
Large City (over 250,000)	29	18.5

Educational Plans:	Number	Percentage
Quit School ASAP	4	2.6
High School	6	3.8
Trade or Vocational School	4	2.6
College	71	45.5
Graduate or Professional School	71	45.5

Father's Education:	Number	Percentage
Completed Grade School or Less	3	1.9
Some High School	5	3.2
Completed High School	32	20.4
Some College	15	9.6
Complete College	44	28.0
Graduate or Professional School	38	24.2
Don't Know/Doesn't Apply	20	12.7

Mother's Education:	Number	Percentage
Completed Grade School or Less	4	2.6
Some High School	9	5.8
Completed High School	40	25.6
Some College	27	17.3
Complete College	30	19.2
Graduate or Professional School	24	15.4
Don't Know/Doesn't Apply	22	14.1

used to measure those specific variables for this study. This meant several different questions from the original study were selected to assess each of this study's variables.

Procedure

All participants of Keith and Perkin's study were administered the ABQ during the spring and fall of 1993 and the early months of 1994 (Keith & Perkins, 1995). Data collection for this survey was administered to the adolescents in their respective schools by their teachers. All participants completed the survey during one specifically selected class period. Written permission was obtained from the adolescents' parents as was verbal consent from the students. Students were guaranteed their anonymity and that there was no penalty were the students to withdraw from doing the questionnaire at anytime (Perkins, 1995).

With the use of the data collected by Keith and Perkins (1995), it was hypothesized that this study would reveal that the interaction between most Asian American parents and their adolescents is strong and positively impacts children's self-esteem. It was argued that the adolescents' positive self-esteem would encourage the adolescents to have a strong level of academic motivation,

which would lead to higher academic achievement. Refer to Figure 1 on page 13 for the model that visually expresses what the study hypothesized.

The research questions addressed in this investigation are as follows.

1. Does parent-adolescent interaction affect adolescents' self-esteem?
2. Does adolescents' self-esteem affect adolescents' academic motivation?
3. Does adolescents' academic motivation affect adolescents' academic achievement?

In order to obtain the necessary information for this analysis, a series of steps were taken in the research process. The original data from Keith and Perkins (1995) was collected from adolescents who identified themselves as being either White, Hispanic, African American, Asian American, or American Indian. This study specifically investigated Asian American adolescents. Therefore, it was necessary to first isolate the data from the Asian Americans adolescents. Frequencies were run to determine the sample size. Survey items were selected from the ABQ in accordance with their measurement of one of the six variables: parent-adolescent interaction, teacher-adolescent interaction, adult-adolescent interaction,

adolescents' self-esteem, adolescents' academic motivation, and adolescents' academic achievement.

After selecting the items according to which variable they measured, certain items were re-coded so that the items' responses measured from highest to lowest. The items, for each variable, were then summed together and tested for their reliability. In other words, the items were tested to see if they measured, as a combination, not individually, the variable they were selected and thought to measure. For instance, a reliability analysis was done to see if the questions selected to measure self-esteem ✓
were internally consistent.

After determining the reliability, frequencies were run for each of the six variables, which gave the mean, ✓ standard deviation, and mode of the variables. Descriptive statistics were done to determine how much of the sample was eliminated due to missing data.

✓ Bivariate correlations identified if the correlations between parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' self-esteem, teacher-adolescents interaction and adolescents' self-esteem, adult-adolescent interaction and adolescents' self-esteem, adolescents' self-esteem and adolescents' academic motivation, and adolescents' academic motivation and adolescents' academic achievement were

significant. An alpha level of .01 was used for all statistical tests. Only the correlations at that alpha level were considered significant for this particular study. In other words, the power of tests used in this study was at 90 percent or higher. If there were significant correlations between the variables, path analysis was then applied, which revealed the direction of the influence within each correlation.

Chapter IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine the possible correlation between parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' academic achievement in the Asian American community. Specifically, this was done by investigating a series of correlations that, step by step, precisely defined the parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' academic achievement correlation. These relationships were between: a) parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' self-esteem, b) adolescents' self-esteem and adolescents' academic motivation, and c) adolescents' academic motivation and adolescents' academic achievement. As Coopersmith (1967) and Harter (1988) proved in their research, a series of correlations between these variables reveals the specific way in which parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' academic achievement correlate.

As described in Chapter 3, the items for each variable were summed together and tested for their reliability ($\alpha = .74$). Frequencies were then performed to obtain the mean, standard deviation, and mode of the six variables. Refer to Table 5 for these results. Descriptive statistics determined that the sample size was reduced from

Table 5 Frequencies, Means, and Standard Deviations of Six Variables

VARIABLE	SAMPLE SIZE	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
PAINT	155	11.8	3.86
SUPPORT	154	11	3.95
COMMUN	153	3.96E-02	3.05
SELFES	154	13.7	3.76
ACAMOT	156	5.12E-04	2.72
GRADES	156	2.4	1.42
TEAINT	157	4.97	1.89
ADUADO	157	5.9	2.56
TOTAL VALID SAMPLE SIZE: 147			

158 to 147 subjects, which was not significant (as also shown in Table 5 on page 57).

The bivariate correlations were expected to reveal that there were significant correlations (at the alpha level of .01) between parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' self-esteem, adolescents' self-esteem and adolescents' academic motivation, and adolescents' academic motivation and adolescents' academic achievement.

It was suspected that path analysis would show the following direction of influence from one variable to the other in each correlation: 1) parent-adolescent interaction affects adolescents' self-esteem, 2) adolescents' self-esteem affects adolescents' academic motivation, 3) adolescents' academic motivation affects adolescents' academic achievement. Refer to Figure 1 (on page 13) for the model, which represents these relationships.

Question 1:

Does parent-adolescent interaction affect adolescents'
self-esteem?

Overall, parent-adolescent interaction proved to have a significant correlation with adolescents' self-esteem. In particular, the correlation between Scale B (the quality of the relationship between parent and adolescent) was positively and significantly correlated to adolescents'

self-esteem ($r = .38$, $p = .01$). Scale C, the communication between parent and adolescent, and adolescents' self-esteem are positively and significantly correlated ($r = .38$, $p = .01$). Surprisingly, Scale A, parental support for the adolescents' academic achievement, did not have a significant correlation with the adolescents' self-esteem ($r = .12$, $p > .05$). Refer to Table 6 for the results of all three of the bivariate correlations.

Path analysis revealed that only Scale B, the quality of relationship between parents and adolescents, measured as significantly affecting adolescents' self-esteem ($b = .28$, $p = .01$). Teacher-adolescent interaction was the only other variable that measured as positively and significantly affecting adolescents' self-esteem ($b = .21$, $p = .01$). Refer to Figure 2, which depicts the path analysis results.

Question 2:

Does adolescents' self-esteem affect adolescents' academic motivation?

Adolescents' self-esteem had a significant and positive correlation with adolescents' academic motivation ($r = .20$, $p = .01$). Refer to Table 6. Path analysis disclosed that adolescents' self-esteem did not significantly affect adolescents' academic motivation

($b = .28$, $p = .009$), as shown in Figure 2. The quality of relationship between parents and adolescents ($b = .28$, $p = .01$) and teacher-adolescent interaction ($b = .32$, $p = .000$), the same two variables that affected adolescents' self-esteem, also significantly impacted academic motivation. Refer to Figure 2.

Question 3:

Does adolescents' academic motivation affect adolescents' academic achievement?

Referring to Table 6 (pg. 60), the adolescents' academic motivation and adolescents' academic achievement had a significant and positive correlation ($r = .39$, $p = .01$). As seen in Figure 2, adolescents' academic motivation was measured in path analysis as significantly affecting adolescents' academic achievement ($b = .31$, $p = .001$).

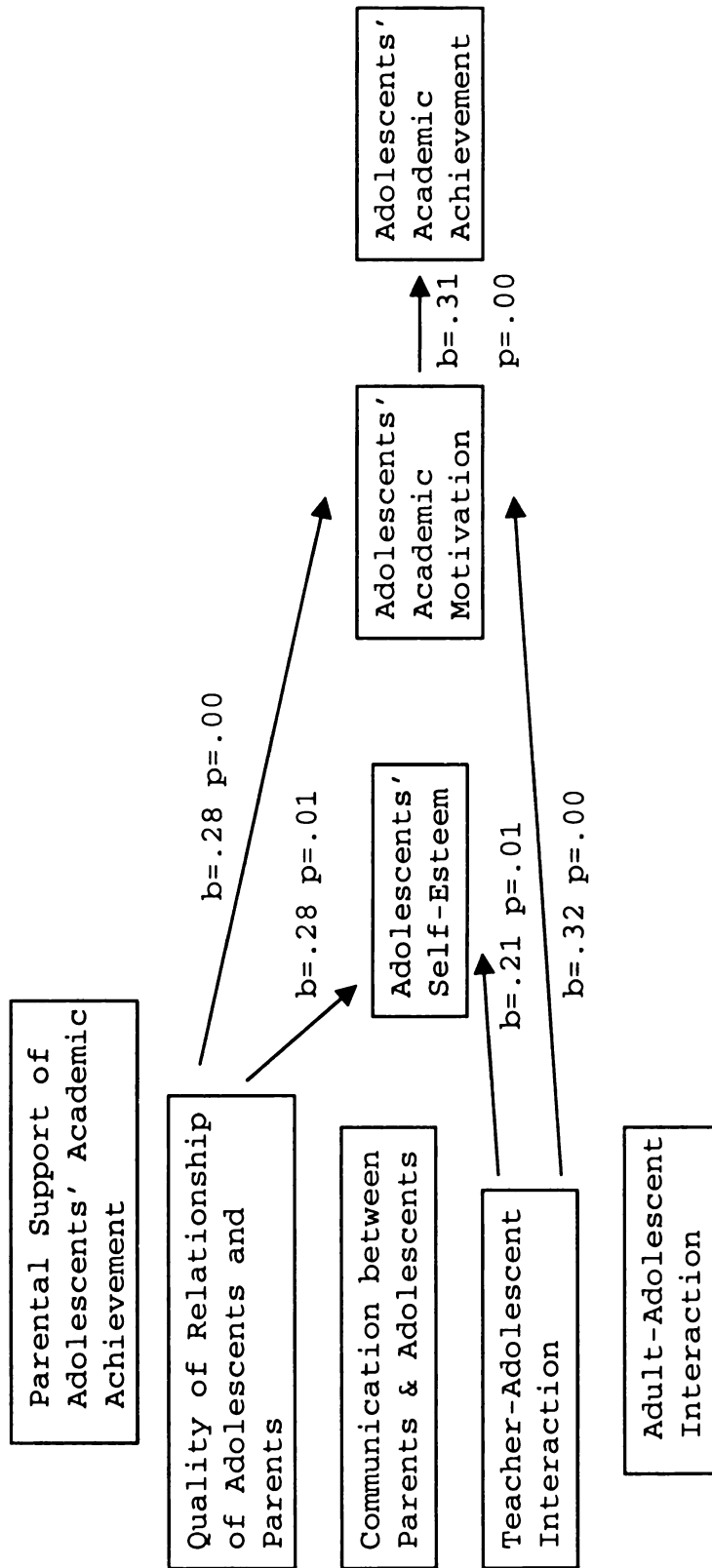


Figure 2 Path Analysis Results of the Correlation of Parent-Adolescent Interaction with Adolescents' Academic Achievement and Related Correlations

Chapter V

DISCUSSION

Findings of Present Study

This study's purpose was to examine if a significant relationship existed, in the Asian American context, between parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' academic achievement through a sequence of correlations between parent-adolescent interaction, adolescents' self-esteem, adolescents' academic motivation, and adolescents' academic achievement. Once it was confirmed that these correlations existed, the direction of influence from one variable to the next was deciphered. Figure 1 (page 13) pictorially explains what was expected from the results.

It has been investigated as to how parent-child interaction influences the character of children and how it reciprocally affects parents and children (Stafford & Bayer, 1993). The results from this study support previous research in that, at least, one aspect of parent-child interaction is significantly related to children's development of self-esteem. According to the study's results, the quality of the relationships between parents and adolescents, the love adolescents felt were expressed to them by their parents, and the strength of the adolescents' belief that they belonged to a loving and

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happy family, significantly supported and influenced their self-esteem. ~~These results coincide with the research~~ Buri and his colleagues had done. Buri et al (1992) stated that consistent show of parental behavior such as nurturance, affection, and support for their children, significantly and positively correlated with children's development of self-esteem.

Parental support for adolescents' academic achievement, another measure of parent-child interaction used in this investigation, did not have a significant bivariate correlation with adolescents' self-esteem. It was not alarming to then find, in the path analysis, that it did not significantly impact adolescents' self-esteem. In other words, parents inquiring about their children's attention to homework or participation in school activities and parental involvement in school programs seemed insignificant for adolescents' self-esteem.

The third scale measuring parent-adolescent interaction, communication between parents and adolescents, had a significant correlation with adolescents' self-esteem, but did not measure as significantly affecting adolescents' self-esteem. It appeared that the frequency and ease with which adolescents found they could speak with

their parents were not as imperative to adolescents' self-esteem as was thought.

Although there was a significant correlation between adolescents' self-esteem and their academic motivation, adolescents' self-esteem did not significantly influence the academic motivation. It was believed, as supported by the research of Susan Harter (1988), that the greater the support and acceptance one received from significant others, the more positive one's self-esteem would be. This positive self-esteem, in turn, would lead to greater academic motivation because the person's belief in himself would result in greater academic achievement (Harter, 1988). Apparently self-esteem was not as significant for academic motivation as expected. It is important to refer to the bivariate correlation between adolescents' self-esteem and academic motivation, an alpha level of .05 and a Pearson correlation value of .18. The lack of significance and low Pearson value hint at what to expect from the path analysis results between the two variables. Namely, adolescents' self-esteem did not significantly affect adolescents' academic motivation.

It is possible that, with the use of the secondary data, self-esteem was not measured as accurately as necessary to precisely rate its relationship with academic

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motivation. If the concepts of global and specific self-esteem are applied, as studied by Rosenberg and his colleagues (Rosenberg, et al., 1995), the results from the correlation and path analysis on adolescents' self-esteem and adolescents' academic motivation are not surprising.

This investigation looked at global rather than specific self-esteem (e.g., academic self-esteem). Rosenberg's study disclosed that an individual's behavior, such as academic motivation or achievement, is not affected by, but rather affects global self-esteem. Instead, specific self-esteem affects an individual's behavior. Thus, for this particular study, it was logical that global self-esteem did not influence adolescents' academic motivation. Rather, adolescents' academic motivation and academic achievement are more likely to affect their global self-esteem. If specific self-esteem (e.g., academic self-esteem) had been measured in this study, it might have shown an effect on adolescents' academic motivation.

Adolescents' academic motivation had a significant bivariate correlation with, and was directly and significantly influenced by, the quality of relationship between parents and adolescents. It was found that the security of love and happiness adolescents sensed they had with their parents, directly, rather than indirectly (by

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way of self-esteem), impacted adolescents' academic motivation. The significance of the bivariate correlation between the quality of relationship between parents and adolescents and adolescents' academic motivation hinted at how significantly the quality of the relationship adolescents had with their parents would impact the academic motivation. These results contradict the research of Greenberger and Chen (1996) and Asakawa and Csikszentmihelyi (1998). They claimed that the quality of the relationship between Asian American parents and adolescents is not as positive as often thought. Instead the adolescents claimed to receive pressure rather than support from their parents to succeed. Also, the relationship quality did not show to impact the adolescents' academic motivation or achievement.

As expected, adolescents' academic motivation was directly and significantly correlated to their academic achievement. It proved that a person had to have the motivation to perform successfully in school, in order to reach high academic achievement. This coincides with the research done by Susan Harter (1988).

Additional findings.

It was not intended to analyze and include in this study the relationship the control variable, teacher-

adolescent interaction, had with the other variables. This variable was not included in the series of relationships that define the relationship of parent-adolescent interaction and adolescents' academic achievement. Yet, as it turned out, teacher-adolescent interaction had a significant role in the outcome of adolescents' self-esteem and their academic motivation. It had significant correlations with adolescents' self-esteem and their academic motivation. In fact, this variable had a stronger correlation with adolescents' academic motivation than did the quality of the relationship between parent and adolescent. It also significantly impacted adolescents' self-esteem and academic motivation. Because of the results' significance, teacher-adolescent interaction has to be mentioned and discussed.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Limitations

Though this investigation seemed to produce some results that could be useful when studying Asian American adolescents, this study has certain restrictions, which need to be taken into consideration when studying or applying the results. As expressed earlier, the Asian American minority group is a heterogeneous group of many different Asian cultures. There are the Asian Americans who originate from East Asia (e.g. China, South Korea, and Japan). Others are from South and Southeast Asia (e.g. Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia). To obtain the most accurate information about Asian Americans there needs to be a greater understanding of the different cultures that make up this minority group. This study did not take into consideration the heterogeneity of the ethnic group. Therefore, the data collected from the Asian American adolescents in this investigation was not as accurate as it could have been.

The size of this analysis' sample was small, 147 youths. The larger the sample, for any study, the finer the accuracy in the results because of the greater amount of data collected. The small sample size of this study needs

to be taken into consideration because this investigation's results are not as precise as they could have been, had the sample been larger.

The adolescents of the sample were from Michigan only. If Asian American adolescents from each of the United States had been included, the results would have given a more accurate depiction of Asian American adolescents. This is especially true considering that the highest concentrations of the Asian American population are located in California, New York, and Chicago. It would have been a much more informative and reliable study had the sample been collected from different regions across the U.S.

Because this was a secondary data analysis, the data used for this study were not collected with this investigation in mind. The data had to be manipulated so it would be able to answer, as best as it could, the questions pertaining to the analyses. If primary data had been used for this study, the items would have been intentionally designed to measure the study's variables more precisely. For instance, this study measures global self-esteem rather than specific self-esteem. If one were wanting to apply Rosenberg's (1995) concept of global self-esteem and specific self-esteem to this study, it would not be possible because items from the ABQ survey were only able

to measure global self-esteem and not specific self-esteem (e.g., academic self-esteem).

It is a challenge, in any study, to identify the direction of influence between two variables. This investigation tried to identify a direction of the relationships between the six different variables through the use of path analysis. Even though this was true, it cannot be stated affirmatively that the influence only runs in one direction. More than likely, variables mutually influence one another. This inquiry did not have the complete capability of identifying the precise direction of influence and did not take into consideration the possibility of highly mutual influence between the variables.

Self-esteem is influenced by several different factors in an individual's environment. For this investigation only one factor, parent-adolescent interaction, was studied in terms of its effect on adolescents' self-esteem. For the sake of this study, certain factors were not taken into consideration as influences on adolescents' self-esteem. Adolescents' success in peer relationships and their success in school and recreational activities were not considered, nor were their relationships with adults aside from their parents (e.g. their teachers or neighbors).

Also, the adolescents' perception of their physical attractiveness was not taken in consideration.

Conclusion

Before this study was done, parent-adolescent interaction was assumed to have a significant impact on child development. It was disclosed, upon the completion of this investigation, that there is the high possibility that Asian American adolescents, in Michigan, need the security of strong, quality relationships with their parents, relationships that exhibit love and happiness. Teacher-adolescent interaction was not a focal variable intended to be examined in this investigation, yet it had a significant result in its effects on adolescents' self-esteem and their academic motivation, an effect that is strongly worth mentioning. Adolescents in this survey displayed a need to have similar security in the relationship they have with their teachers, as they do with their parents. From the assurance they have in these relationships, the adolescents are able to build positive and high levels of self-esteem. This peace of mind allows them to develop high academic motivation, which then induces them to perform better in school. It also seems apparent that if Asian American adolescents do not have

supportive relationships with their parents and teachers, they suffer from lower self-esteem.

Asian parents in past research were critiqued as being authoritarian and showing a lack of emotional warmth towards their children (Asakawa & Csikszentmihalyi, 1998). Even though the adolescents described their parents in such a manner, it was thought that the Asian American adolescents were performing successfully academically. The results from this study do not support this concept. According to the data collected from these Asian American adolescents, having parents who do not exhibit warmth or love strongly contributes to lowering the adolescents' level of self-esteem and subsequently, their academic motivation, which then negatively impacts the adolescents' success in school.

Overall, this study had the power of the adolescents' outlook on their relationships with their parents, the way they look upon themselves, and how they viewed their school environment and their performance within that environment. Having obtained their point of view enables us to learn what these adolescents, in particular, need in order to develop into adults who have positive self-esteem and lead a productive and happy way of life. This study, in particular, highlights how the quality of the relationship

these adolescents have with their parents and teachers significant affects how the adolescents view themselves and how they perform in school.

Direction for future research.

Some could argue that the revelations from this study about Asian American adolescents from Michigan are true for all children, no matter what their ethnic background. There are common universal needs that all adolescents share. In order to understand whether or not the modified model (Figure 3) is applicable to other American ethnic groups, it would be appropriate to first apply the modified model to the national sample of Asian American adolescents to find if it applies to Asian Americans nationally. Then, by applying the model to the other ethnic groups in the national data, it could be discovered if parent-adolescent interaction and teacher-adolescent interaction are significant factors in the development of self-esteem and academic motivation for the majority of all American adolescents.

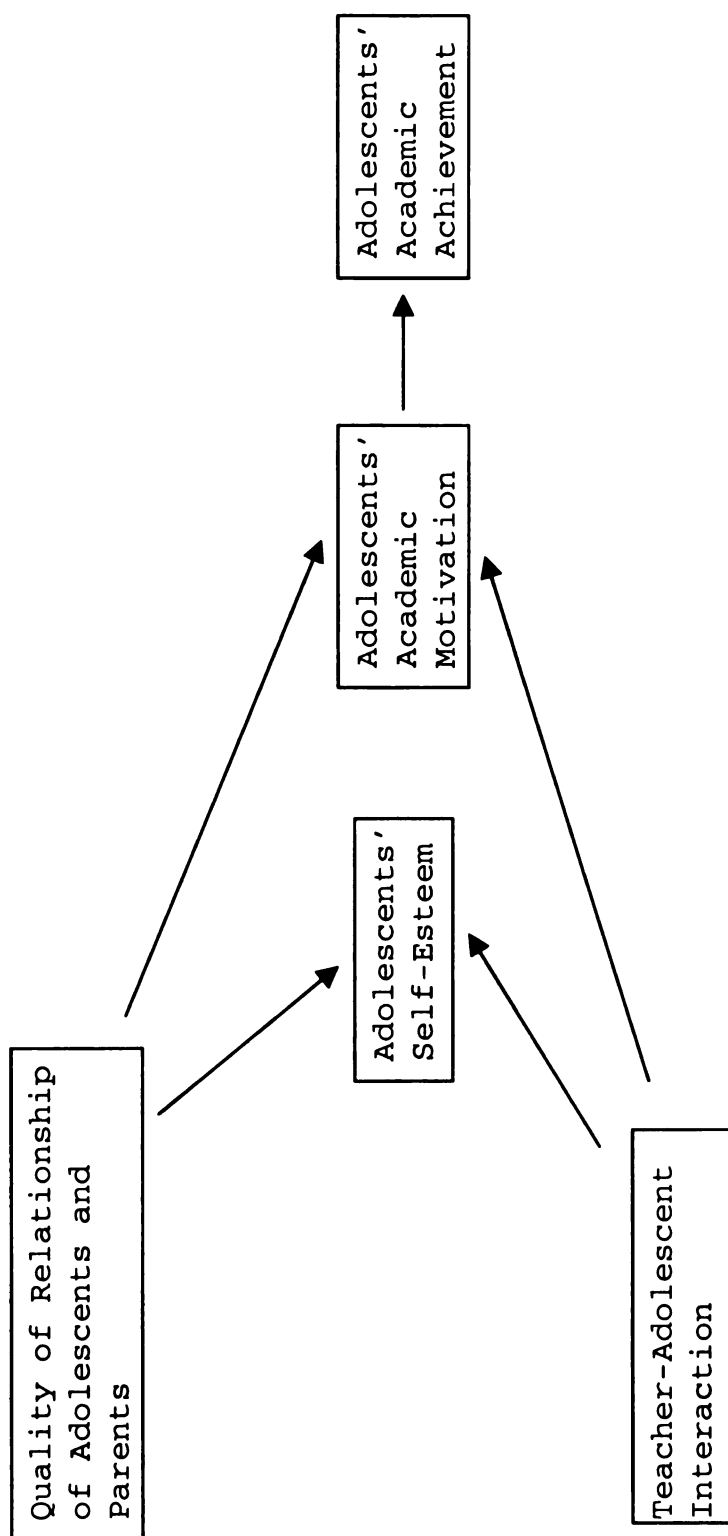


Figure 3 Newly Modified Model of Parent-Adolescent Interaction with Adolescents' Academic Achievement and Related Correlations

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Letter of Approval from the University Committee on
Research Involving Human Subjects



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**MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY**

July 31, 1998

TO: Francisco A. Villarruel
ICYP
2 Paolucci Bldg

RE: IRB#: 98-512
TITLE: ASIAN AMERICAN ADOLESCENTS: THE RELATIONSHIPS
AMONG ADULT-ADOLESCENT INTERACTION, ADOLESCENTS'
SELF-ESTEEM, ADOLESCENTS' ACADEMIC MOTIVATION,
AND ADOLESCENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT.
REVISION REQUESTED: N/A
CATEGORY: 1-E
APPROVAL DATE: 07/31/98

The University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects' (UCRIHS) review of this project is complete. I am pleased to advise that the rights and welfare of the human subjects appear to be adequately protected and methods to obtain informed consent are appropriate. Therefore, the UCRIHS approved this project and any revisions listed above.

RENEWAL: UCRIHS approval is valid for one calendar year, beginning with the approval date shown above. Investigators planning to continue a project beyond one year must use the green renewal form (enclosed with the original approval letter or when a project is renewed) to seek updated certification. There is a maximum of four such expedited renewals possible. Investigators wishing to continue a project beyond that time need to submit it again for complete review.

REVISIONS: UCRIHS must review any changes in procedures involving human subjects, prior to initiation of the change. If this is done at the time of renewal, please use the green renewal form. To revise an approved protocol at any other time during the year, send your written request to the UCRIHS Chair, requesting revised approval and referencing the project's IRB # and title. Include in your request a description of the change and any revised instruments, consent forms or advertisements that are applicable.

**PROBLEMS/
CHANGES:**

Should either of the following arise during the course of the work, investigators must notify UCRIHS promptly: (1) problems (unexpected side effects, complaints, etc.) involving human subjects or (2) changes in the research environment or new information indicating greater risk to the human subjects than existed when the protocol was previously reviewed and approved.

If we can be of any future help, please do not hesitate to contact us at (517)355-2180 or FAX (517)432-1171.

Sincerely,

David E. Wright, Ph.D.
UCRIHS Chair

DEW:bed

cc: Mary Elizabeth Hoffman



**OFFICE OF
RESEARCH
AND
GRADUATE
STUDIES**

University Committee on
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