

PERCEPTIONS OF TEENAGE  
MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS  
IN A  
CALIFORNIA URBAN AREA

by

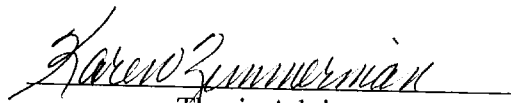
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A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the  
Master of Science Degree  
With a Major in

Home Economics

Approved: 2 Semester Credits

  
Thesis Advisor

The Graduate College  
University of Wisconsin-Stout  
Summer 2000

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the many people who helped and supported me with this research paper. A special thank you is extended to Dr. Karen Zimmerman for her unlimited time, guidance, and encouragement in the planning and completion of this project.

Thanks to Dr. John F. Cook, principal of E. Morris Cox Junior High School, for approving the survey instrument and the distribution plan for this research. Appreciation is extended to my wonderful colleagues at E. Morris Cox, Ms. Evelyn Vargas, Peter Crutchfield, Monique Parrish for distributing, collecting and returning the surveys to me.

Also, thank you to the E. Morris Cox parents who were so cooperative and timely with their response to the survey. Without your continued cooperation, this study could not have been completed.

A special thanks is extended to my parents, José and Gertrudis Vargas for their unending love, guidance and support throughout my life. Your push for higher education and learning has helped me to achieve all that I have today.

To all of you that helped me out in one way or other in the planning and completion of this research; Thank you!

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ABSTRACT

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<b>Perceptions of Teenage Multilingual Students</b>			
<b>in a California Urban Area</b>			
(Title)			
<b>Home Economics</b>	<b>Karen Zimmerman</b>	<b>08/00</b>	<b>76</b>
(Graduate Major)	(Research Advisor)	(Month/Year)	(No. Of Pages)
<b>American Psychological Association Manual</b>			
(Name of Style Manual Used in this Study)			

The purpose of this study was to assess perceptions of teenage multilingual students in a California urban area at E. Morris Cox Junior High School. The subjects of this study were students enrolled at the E. Morris Cox Junior High School in June 2000. A total of 80 were surveyed, 60 usable surveys were returned. The instrument used for this research project was developed by the investigator. It consisted of two sections: demographics and attitudes. Survey responses were tabulated and analyzed. Frequency counts and percentages were calculated for

Section I, Demographics for the total group of respondents. Frequency counts, percentages, means and standard deviations, T-Test and ANOVA were calculated for Section II, Attitudes including subscales, Family Support, Peer and Friends and Career and Educational Goals. The independent variables of gender, age, language, career and educational goals and grades compared attitudes including, family support, peer and friends and career and educational goals statements using T-Tests. Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated on all combinations of items and average scores from Section II, for the total group of respondents.

In this study 60.0% of the respondents were males and 40% of the respondents were females. These students ranged in age from 12 to 19. Most of the respondents had 3 to 6 children living in the household.

Students felt positive toward being successful in their career/job. Additionally students felt that a good education means more job opportunities. Respondents also indicated they strongly agree with the statement of “I would ride with a friend who has been drinking.” Other statements in which the respondents strongly agree were “My parents try to help me in a positive way”; “I have career ambitions to achieve something good,” “It’s important for parents that I get good grades”, “I feel confident around my friends”, “My career goals are detailed, achievement measured”, “Learning is important to me” and “My parents read Spanish”. Students responded negatively to the attitude statement “I don’t like the way I look”.

The Student Newman-Keuls Test and the Cronbach Alpha reliability analysis were used in this study. Cronbach Alpha reliability analysis used on attitude subscales; Family Support, Career and Educational Goals, Friends and Peers, and Self Attitude.

Some of the finds in this study indicate that overall students had a mean ( $\bar{x} = 6.72$ );

which was positive. Students felt positive toward setting career and educational goals. Attitude statements indicated that students's attitudes positively correlate with the respondent's current level of student perceptions toward career and educational goals on three items. Students considering various career options scored higher than those who had defined plans and much higher than those with no plans. There were five significant differences on student attitude statements based on language. Those students who selected the Spanish version scored significantly higher than those selecting the English version. Attitude statements items based on age revealed 16 year olds indicated a high level of agreement on wanting to be successful in their career/job than other age groups of respondents. There were three significant differences on student attitude items based on gender. Females scored significantly higher than males. Also there were a significant difference on attitude items based on grades. There was a significant difference on total average attitude score and grades. The group of A's and B's scored significantly higher than the group of B's and C's.

The limitations of this study included that the instrument was developed and designed by the investigator and therefore was not standardized. The survey was limited to one Jr. High School and represents the perceptions of multilingual student population in June 2000. The results of this study are generalized only to that particular population.

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## **Chapter I**

### **Introduction**

In the latter half of the twentieth century, the human race is involved in three vast movements: the acceleration of technology, the soaring of population and a leap in the expectation of overcoming poverty. All these forces have converged on the metropolitan or urban areas and social problems already complex are now far more difficult to solve (Nulland, 1999).

The magnetic attraction of the city is essentially economic. The city offers concentrated labor markets, rapid communication and the cultural and entertainment centers. In the field of American education the impact of change has been particularly noticeable. Certainly the schools in a changing society, if they are to remain viable, cannot long afford to remain creatures of inertia (Keniston, 1997). Many community leaders recognize that intelligent education expenditure can be investments in social capital. To attain broad governmental goals various forces have joined to seek increased opportunity for quality education for all the elements of the American Society (Konopka, 1996).

From a broad view of the city, particularly its depressed areas, a closer look at the children and youth or adolescents focuses on the primary though not the exclusive concern of the school (Konopka, 1996). One-third of the 13,000,000 adolescents enrolled in the nation's 15 largest school systems appear to be disadvantaged (Konopka, 1996). There always seems to be one common denominator: The family lacks income, information, needed skills and some

precedent for success (Keniston, 1997).

The model for all social relationships begins with the family unit. Even if some day the disadvantages youth becomes successful and is able to leave the ghetto physically, he will remain tied to it psychologically. The mold which fashioned his mental and emotional processes was patterned in large measure by his family and neighborhood (Linn, 1998).

Factors of race aside, many ghetto adolescents have a scholastic potential that exceeds their current levels of achievement (Linn, 1998). They are restricted by their environment and lack the “ground rules” needed for school bells, the institutional setting, demand of them much adaptation. The compliance required by the school clashes with aggression of the street. A gap remains between what they do and what they could do (Linn, 1998).

An attitude is a predisposition to act or think in a certain way feeling, opinion or mood. Attitudes are less specific than interests and are less overt (Rusell, 1997). Rusell (1997) considers attitudes to be pivotal concepts in a psychology that is proactive rather than deterministic. Attitudes may serve as motives and result in the acquisition of skills and knowledge. Attitudes may also take the shape of aversions and thus serve to limit one’s experience. In addition, attitudes serve as a motive power.

The reasons for the relative dearth of studies on adolescent thinking are multiple and intricate (Smith, 1999<sup>a</sup>). One of the most important of these is the diversity and the complexity of adolescent thinking, which requires equally complex and diverse, methods of investigation. Adolescents are, generally, less accessible and are likely to be less cooperative than children (Williams, 1990). Difficulties in investigating adolescent attitudes research continues to be done especially in urban inner cities schools but it is centered around only a lot of problems: moral

judgement and behavior, the generality of formal operations, self-concept, and conceptual orientation shifts.

One of the issues concerns ethnic differences in attitudes (Quiros, 1999). Racial differences in attitudes are hard to establish. Ethnic differences are only relative (Murr, 1998). One of the strongest factors in attitude development is the environment (Orr, 1999).

The family, as the primary source of socialization, transmits the values, ways and beliefs of society to its children so that they may function adequately within their environment. The family unit is at the heart of its respective culture. The home has a profound effect behaviorally, attitudinally, and emotionally on the maturing adolescent; his personality will be shaped by home experiences. The atmosphere of the home, or over all tone, arises from family interrelationships. The psychological atmosphere of the home emerges as a vital factor. The psychological and behavioral effects on the adolescent are contingent upon the degree of power exerted on him by his parents (Nollert, 1999). The psychological atmosphere of the home directly affects behavior and attitudes of adolescents, for patterns of interactions, values and ideals are formulated and learned within the family setting. If the home life is happy, the adolescent will react to people, teachers, and situations outside the home in the same positive manner (Hurlock, 1990).

Although the family has a primary influence during childhood, by adolescence the importance of these socializing agents decreases. The adolescent begins to acquire social and physical needs outside the immediate home. There is less emphasis on parents as a source of desired rewards. Other adults, the school, and peers compensate for many of the functions previously conducted in the home setting.

During adolescence, friends teach socialized skills and attitudes as well as provide

emotional security (Hurlock, 1992; Wagner, 1998). The adolescent acquires sex-role competence through peer interaction (Dunphy, 1993) and gratifies many status and identity needs (Brittain, 1993). The focus during adolescence is turned more toward peers, striving for stature and status.

With respect to education and careers excluded youth are virtually omitted from higher education. They are from minority or low socioeconomic groups (Tirell, 1998). Young people are faced with considerable frustration and disappointment. As a function of this changing attitude about education and careerism , many young people have chosen to drop out of conventional society.

### **Statement of Problem**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perception of multilingual students in a California urban area towards future educational goals and careers during 1999-2000 school year.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions were to:

- 1) What are the middle school student's perceptions toward future educational goals and careers?
- 2) How do attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students based on future educational goals and careers?
- 3) How do the attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students in a California urban area based on language?

- 4) How do the attitudes differ between middle school students in a California urban area based on age?
- 5) How do attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students based on gender?
- 6) How do attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students based on grades?

Subjects, chosen by cluster sampling, were three groups from eighth grade attending E. Morris Cox Junior High School in Oakland, California during the 1999-2000 school year. To address the concerns of the study, a four-part written survey was designated and developed by the investigator to gather information and assess the perceptions of multilingual students in a California urban area towards future educational goals and careers at this junior high school. The survey was approved by the teachers and principal of E. Morris Cox Junior High School in Oakland Unified School District and was administered by the teachers in their multilingual classes.

### **Assumptions**

Certain assumptions were made regarding the participants in this study. It was assumed that the students of the multicultural classes responded honestly to the survey. In addition, it was assumed that the answering students held an attitude that represented other multilingual students in the Bay Area of California.

### **Limitations**

The following limitations should be considered when interpreting the results of this study. The survey instrument was specifically designed for this study by the investigator. It was

evaluated by California educators and field tested with multilingual students in a California urban area. The findings are restricted to factors measured by the survey of multilingual students attitudes and they can only be generalized to the multilingual students of E. Morris Cox, Junior High School at Oakland Unified School District, Oakland, California. Participation was high, therefore, reasons for non-participation were not sought.

### **Definitions of terms**

Adolescents-period of growth between childhood and maturity.

Attitudes-posture or relative position, feeling, opinion or mood.

Career-vocation.

Goals-mark to reach in a race, purpose.

Multilinguals-involving several languages.

Peers-one's equal.

Perceptions-act or result of perceiving, ability to perceive.

This chapter has provided an introduction to the study. Subsequent chapters include a review of related literature, methodology of the study, a statistical and narrative presentations of the findings, and a summary that includes the conclusions of this study and recommendations for future research.

## **Chapter II**

### **Review of Literature**

This chapter contains a comprehensive discussion of principal areas considered important for this study Perceptions of Teenage Multilingual Students in a California Urban Area. This review of literature includes the following areas: attitudes, family support, career and education goals, and peers and friends. These four areas will be discussed in greater detail below.

#### **Attitudes**

An attitude is a predisposition to act or think in a certain way feeling, opinion or mood. Attitudes are less specific than interests and are less overt (Resell, 1997).

Resell (1997) considers attitudes to be pivotal concepts in a psychology that is practice rather than deterministic. Attitudes may serve as motives and tend to be self-perpetuating, in as much as they result in the acquisition of skills and knowledge. But attitudes may also take the shape of aversions and thus serve to limit one's experience. Attitudes serve as a motive power.

The sanctions of home, community, school, and church all have a share in the formation of attitudes. Hence no cataclysmic changes can be expected as the result of changing the situation in one aspect of the individual's total environment (Deese, 1997). Change does take place, however slowly and steadily, and even small increments have a cumulative impact.

## **Factors in the Development of Attitudes**

The principle that growth takes place most rapidly in the early years does not mean that the later years of development are unimportant. Change takes place that is consistent with previously established trends. Attitudes have the generic effect of shaping future as well as present behaviors (Allport, 1997).

Attitudes result from the integration of many specific responses to similar situations. Attitude originates in terms of specifics from general approach or withdrawal tendencies. The logical consequence of experience may not be realized because of another factor; that is attitudes may be taken over ready-made from other parents, teachers, peers. Absorption from others is probably one of the more important sources of attitudes.

## **Attitudes in Adolescents**

Studies of attitudes development in adolescence have generally comprised only a small fraction of the total number of studies of mental growth. The reasons for the relative dearth of studies on adolescent thinking are multiple and intricate (Stuwen, 1997).

One of the most important of these is the diversity and the complexity of adolescent thinking, which requires equally complex and diverse, methods of investigation. Adolescents are, generally, less accessible and are likely to be less cooperative than children (Williams, 1990). Difficulties in investigating adolescent attitudes research continues to be done especially in urban inner cities schools but it is centered around a lot of problems. One of these problems has to do with moral judgement and behavior, another with the generality of formal operations in adolescence, still another deals with the self-concept in adolescence, and a fourth is concerned

with conceptual orientation shifts, the ease with which children and adolescents shift from one level of cognitive functioning to another. A final problem, not limited to adolescent cognition has to do with ethnic differences, in cognitive ability (Smith, 1999<sup>b</sup>).

To the extent that the self-concept is considered a concept, it clearly falls within the domain of attitude. As soon as the self-concept is considered an affective schema whose measurement reveals facets of personality, the boundaries between the affective and the cognitive domains become more blurred (Murr, 1998).

Some of the most extensive work on adolescent attitude has been done in Europe and is reported in two recent books. In *Le moi et l'autre dans la conscience de l'adolescent*, Rodriguez Tome presents a theoretically oriented questionnaire study of adolescents' conceptions of themselves and others. Tome distinguished three dimensions of adolescent self-conceptions: egotism (for example, the tendency to feel superior); self-control (for example, the ability to solve problems without help); and sociability (for example, confidence) (Peer, 1998).

In a 1997-1998 Bay Area San Francisco, California study (Flanders, 1998), fairly conclusive evidence was collected indicating that over 3,000 students in two junior high schools scored highest on an attitude inventory assessing positive perceptions of their teachers and their schoolwork in October. In 1995-96 results were nearly identical to the 1997-98 results. There was a significant drop in average scores of positive pupil attitudes during the first four months of the school year. There is the possibility that change in positive pupil attitudes might be associated with the average class IQ, socioeconomic status (Purnell, 1998). In another study Morrison (1997) has shown that Rotter's notion of externality "and" internality (Rotter, Secman & Liversant, 1997) can be assessed among seventh-grade pupils. By externality it is meant the

tendency of a student to believe that his successes and failures are caused by forces beyond his control. By internality it is meant that the tendency to believe that successes and failures are self-determined and products of one's own behavior.

External children, according to Morrison's conception, would be more likely to associate the good and bad outcomes of classroom learning activities with the teacher who is a powerful source of influence. Internal teenagers, on the other hand, would see themselves as more closely associated with the good and bad characteristics of learning outcomes (Worell, 1997).

In 1997-98 another test of internality-externality was administered to all the pupils in the classes during the January administration of tests. The test consisted of 26 items, each containing two statements, and the pupils responded by marking the statement in each item which they believed was more often true (Tirell, 1998). In addition to these tests each of the 30 classrooms was visited by an observer trained to code verbal communication into the interaction analysis developed by Flanders (1998). More than six visits were made to each class and more than 7,000 tallies were recorded by observers.

External teenagers have less positive attitudes than did internal teenagers early in the school year but when the May scores are adjusted by the October scores, it is apparent that external pupils experienced significantly greater declines in their attitudes than did internal teenagers. Also teenagers with low-praise teachers showed greater losses in positive attitudes during the year than did teenagers with high praise teachers. Positive perceptions of teenagers toward their teacher and the learning activities seem to be related to teacher behavior (Tellma, 1998).

## **Attitudes and Ethnicity**

One of the issues that has received considerable public as well as professional airing in recent years concerns ethnic differences in attitudes (Quiros, 1999<sup>b</sup>). Anthropologists and biologists have pointed out that racial differences in attitudes are hard to establish. And, finally, statisticians point out that, in any case, the ethnic differences are only relative (Murr, 1998). Cruze and the Crows (1999) feel that one of the strongest factors in attitude development is the environment. This influence is so strong that as an adolescent grows older, his attitudes and points of view tend to conform more and more to those of the adults around him. It also becomes increasingly difficult for him to change his attitudes. Remmers and Whisler (1998) found a greater change in attitudes among seventh and eighth grade boys than among ninth graders.

## **Family Support**

The family, being the primary source of socialization, transmits the values, ways and beliefs of society to its children so that they may function adequately within their environment. Horrocks (1990) sees the family serving this function as a “status defining agency” and “experience-defining agency.” As a status-defining agency, the family establishes the status of the child and the role he must undertake to maintain this position in society. As an experience-defining agency, the family serves to interpret, evaluate, understand, or generally work through the social experiences the child will encounter. As Rogers (1995) has aptly stated, “His family provides a haven of security from his experiences in a sometimes unfriendly world. His parents and siblings act as sympathetic, though sometimes severe, critics of his fumbling efforts to define

his identity (Dreyfus, 1998, p. 52).

The family unit is at the heart of its respective culture. Today, as the youth of our culture attempts to establish new values, morals, and behavior patterns, the focus is on alternative family structures-such as communal living and extended families-as a means for change. The change agent is not just the occurrence of a new life-style, but also the transmission of beliefs to succeeding generations brought up under this environment (Purnell, 1999).

Children are taught to function within existing roles, thereby perpetuating the needs and desires of the society. The adolescent years represent a crucial period in the formation of “identity and in the formation of values, ideals, and attitudes; career and education future goals is profoundly influenced by the relations obtained between the adolescent and his parents,” (Meissner, 1990, p. 225).

The home has a profound effect behaviorally, attitudinally, and emotionally on the maturing adolescent; his personality will be shaped by experiences in this intense learning ground. The atmosphere of the home arises from family interrelationships. In the psychological atmosphere of the home, the power structure emerges as a vital factor. The psychological and behavioral effects on the adolescent are contingent upon the degree of power exerted on him by his parents (Nollert, 1999). The psychological atmosphere of the home directly affects behavior and attitudes of adolescents, for patterns of interactions, values and ideals are formulated and learned within the family setting. If the home life is happy, the adolescent will react to people, teachers, and situations outside the home in the same positive manner (Hurlock, 1990).

Research conducted by Stone (1996) shows high correlation between mutual participation among family members and a feeling of understanding. He found that adolescents who spend

time engaging in family activities have a more positive relationship with their parents and a more positive attitude when it comes to future education and career goals than those who regard home merely as a place to sleep. Results demonstrated that parental understanding substantially increased when parents were included in general activities.

Researchers agree that it is vital for each family member especially children and adolescents to be accepted, supported when it needs to be and respected as a person (Horrocks, 1990; Hurlock, 1992; Rogers, 1996). Family attitude and support are one of the most stable in warmth and affection (Horrocks, 1990; Rogers, 1996) nourishing a close tie of confidence and friendship which permits the child, adolescent to seek guidance in stressful times. On a behavioral level, the parents encourage and allow as much independence as the adolescent can comfortably manage (Horrocks, 1990). Havighurst and Peck view consistent control on the part of the mother and father as essential, for inconsistent discipline may lead to continued dependence, compliance, and maladjustment outside the family (Horrocks, 1990).

The psychological atmosphere of the home is dependent upon a complex network of behaviors and attitudes between parent and child, and the effects of these on the adolescent, whatever the atmosphere, has a pronounced effect on the ultimate nature of the adolescent (Nell, 1997). The lack of the emotional support formerly provided by the family and a neighborhood places added stress upon the already overburdened nuclear family including the adolescent, when the family fails at the impossible task of meeting all our needs for belonging. This sense of belonging is very important for adolescents especially in school (Tellma, 1998).

Family support is very important and necessary for adolescents especially when they are seeking meet the need of belonging. The family plays a decisive role in the moral development

of children and adolescents. Because of the moral crises of our times, finding ways to stimulate the development of moral thought and action in children is a crucial task. The emotional needs of parents themselves are one of the most powerful determinants of the attitude toward adolescents (Siegelman, 1996, p. 163).

Psychologically, the rejected child suffers emotional insecurity (Horrocks, 1990; Siegelman, 1996) and a feeling of low self-esteem (Rosenburg, 1992). He or she may continue to seek attention and approval from his parents, often by exhibiting immature behaviors; but continued expressions of unwelcome can further his or her isolated feelings. Habitual ways of interacting, learned in the home, may have long term effects in his or her later life. The adolescent, most of the time, sees his or her father as the principle agent of pressure and discipline and his or her mother as the principle source of support. In the patriarchal power structure, there are direct effects on the behavior and socialization of the adolescent (Peck and Havinghurst, 1996).

In the area of support, the mother is most frequently perceived by the adolescent as the chief source of support in a democratic family. "About half of the American families carry on a democratic form of life in the home...Authority is shared and decisions are made jointly by husband and wife in 50%" where parental power is shared (Smart, 1998, p. 20).

Each adolescent is just about the kind of person that would be predicted from a knowledge of the way his parents treated him. The importance of having a strong foundation in family and constant support from parents in children's lives fosters the development of independent, secure and more socially and emotionally mature adults in the future (Peck and Havinghurst, 1996).

## **Peers and Friends**

Although the family has a primary influence during childhood, by adolescence, the importance of these socializing agents decreases. The adolescent begins to acquire social and physical needs outside the immediate home, and there is less emphasis on parents as a source of desired rewards. Other adults, the school, and peers compensate for many of the functions previously conducted in the home setting (Hurlock, 1992; Thornburg, 1994).

During adolescence, friends who have many of the same problems teach social skills and attitudes as well as provide emotional security (Hurlock, 1992; Wagner, 1998). The adolescent acquires sex-role competence through peer interaction (Dunphy, 1993) and gratifies many status and identity needs (Brittain, 1993). During adolescence one is turned more toward peers as he strives for stature and status. Adolescents often feel that accepting parental values and rejecting those of their peers will place them in a tenuous situation with their friends. They may face the possibility of social isolation (Thornburg, 1992).

The adolescent most often choose friends who have values and behavioral norms that resemble his own. For this reason, the peer group is seen by the parents as not violating parental beliefs, but as serving to reinforce or crystallize derived values (Bondura, 1996; Cole 1997). Friends are viewed in a positive light, and serve as a source of control when parents are not present. Parental influence seemingly withstands adolescent involvement with the peer world.

In adolescence, he begins to move outside the family and changes to being “less an observer and more as a participant who actually has a place to fill” (Konopka, 1996, p. 299). The adolescent reevaluates his value system, strives for autonomy, and desires the right to make his own decisions. Stimuli hits him from all worlds including school and peers. Adolescents must

sort through their feelings and thoughts.

Clearly, peer group pressure appears to be most intense during adolescence. While a young person is struggling with problems within himself, he is particularly concerned with his relationships with those who reflect his worth, his peers. In fact, Clinard (1997) ascribes drug use to peer group associations. Linn (1998) notes that most youths are introduced to drugs by a close friend, relative or peer. Indeed, most authorities as well as adolescents, tend to agree that personal curiosity and peer example are by far the most compelling reasons for the initial use of drugs (Ames, 1999).

The social striving of the American adolescent centers around the need to develop a clear status and a gratifying, consistent self image. To do this he must gain recognition from his peers, on the basis of peer group values; no longer can recognition from his family suffice. At the same time he must develop qualities which will equip him for adult, such as initiative, responsibility and self-reliance.

Much of the burden of adolescent socialization rests upon the school. The formal curriculum of the school does much to produce responsible work habits, but it alone cannot meet all of the adolescents developmental needs. The values of the school including diligence in study, respect for the social etiquette and moral codes of the middle-class adult world are not necessarily those of the adolescent. The adolescent may or may not derive great satisfaction from achievements in terms of these adult values (Nollert, 1999). The peer group is uniquely equipped to meet the very needs which the formal curriculum leaves unmet. In the peer group, the adolescent can test new social skills and gain recognition for achievements valued by his age-mates. Dating and athletics build a well defined sex role into the adolescent's self-image (Smith

1999<sup>c</sup>). He wins recognition for his sense of humor or his loyalty to friends. At a time when he must begin to break away from his family, the peer group gives him the security of group membership. Dememrath (1998) concludes that the person who successfully adjusts to adult demands must first prepare himself in informal peer group life.

### **Career and Educational Goals**

The world is definitely changing and along with it, the adolescents. They are being confronted with new experiences, new ideas and new times (Purnell, 1998).

Keniston (1997) has referred to three categories of students in attempting to understand the attitudes of youth with respect to education and careers. Students solidly define their “educational goals in non-vocational terms; they are interested in exploring the world, bringing critical judgement to bear on its problems, finding their identities, defining new life-styles,” (Keniston, 1997, p. 124). They wish to go through their educational process for the purpose of gaining the necessary credentials for admission to middle-class society.

The excluded, according to Keniston (1998), are those students who until recently were virtually omitted from higher education. They are from minority or low socioeconomic groups. Young people are faced with considerable frustration and disappointment. As a function of this changing attitude about education and careerism, many young people have chosen to drop out of conventional society. As mentioned earlier, some choose to leave the urban areas and return to a simpler life. Others elect to try their hand at being craftsmen or tradesmen. Others join movements, become street people, or turn to drugs (Nulland, 1999).

A recent concept today among young people is the notion of serial careers. In previous

generations, it was expected that a young person would decide upon a career early in life and then pursue this path until retirement (Savard, 1995, p. 250).

Young people are considering the possibility of short-term career commitments for periods of ten years or so. Young people, with the concept of multiple careers in mind, will find adjusting to a changing society and rapid technological advancement far less overwhelming and threatening than it was for previous generations who were faced unexpectedly, with the reality of change (Dreyfus, 1998).

As Dreyfus (1997) has pointed out, technology has increased to the point that one can no longer expect to achieve complete job satisfaction, since an increasing number of tasks are being carried out through automation with the press of a button. Job alienation is increasing and enjoyment of work is decreasing. Many young people have observed the mass unemployment in the traditionally secure professions. They also question the relevance of education, when many educated people are unemployed.

Adolescents are also questioning the relevance of roles by sexual gender. Therefore, any discussion of the relevance of careerism must also include a questioning of the traditional view of the roles of men and women.

Traditionally, education has been thought of as a vehicle for obtaining a good job. Students were expected to decide early in life what occupation they wanted to enter and then proceed to obtain the relevant training and education. It was expected that a student would choose that occupation which would yield the greatest financial gain and status. The young person was expected to obtain as much education as possible. However, as education and careers will not bring satisfaction or security, many students begin to question the relevance of

education, as well as the work ethic itself (Quiros, 1999<sup>b</sup>). Young people see that wealth and material possessions of the “good life” have not helped make the world a better place in which to grow. They recognize that one’s identity is separate from the career a person chooses.

### **Summary**

The task of growing from childhood into becoming an adult could be considered from a variety of viewpoints. In the main these viewpoints have approached the subject from a consideration of physiological and hormonal development, social influences, economic determination, or emotional development (Wagner, 1998).

Adolescence can be defined as a holding period in which education, maturation and waiting are the major tasks to be faced. Adolescence as a meaningful concept is best considered within a broad framework of the total development of the individual.

The importance of family support and peers and friends reflect attitudes toward career and educational goals. Increasingly, adolescents are searching for ways of integrating all of those changes to their own lives. Adolescents are beginning to recognize their experienced a period of accelerated growth, where they were not quite children yet not quite adults.

Young persons growing between more than one culture and in urban city areas experience a lot of stress especially those that come from economical, personal and emotional problems. Perceptions for young people that come from inner cities include a lot of positive and negative issues (Thurnburg, 1994).

The work ethic, careerism, goal orientation, productivity are being carefully examined. Adolescents are caught in the middle of this, trying desperately to make sense of their experiences and perceptions.

## **Chapter III**

### **Methodology**

This chapter will define and explain the research questions of this study, the selection of subjects and the development of the survey instrument. The processes of data collection and data analysis are included as well as the limitations of this study.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to assess the perceptions of multilingual students in a California urban area towards future educational goals and careers. It was also designed to ascertain whether attitudes were affected by the demographic characteristics of the population.

This investigation focused on the following research questions:

- 1) What are the middle school student's perceptions toward future educational goals and careers?
- 2) How do attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students based on future educational goals and careers?
- 3) How do the attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students in a California urban area based on language?
- 4) How do the attitudes differ between middle school students in a California urban area based on age?
- 5) How do attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students based on gender?
- 6) How do attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students based on grades?

## **Subjects**

Subjects were multilingual students at E. Morris Cox Junior High School in Oakland Unified School District, California during the 1999-2000 school year. The Oakland Unified School District has 150 middle schools, which served students in fifth through ninth grade. The public school system serve a population of 30,000 students, and of those, 250 were enrolled at E. Morris Cox Junior High School. Of these students there were 105 multilingual students.

Oakland is an urban community, located in the San Francisco Bay Area, in Alameda County, California. It is located approximately 12 miles northeast of San Francisco, California. The population of the Bay Area is 750,000. Oakland, itself, is estimated to have a population of 120,000 people.

The area surrounding Oakland has a very strong technological influence. Significant industry in Oakland consists of high tech companies.

## **Development of the instrument**

To address the concerns of the study, a four part written survey was designated and developed by the investigator to gather information and assess the perceptions of multilingual students toward educational goals in a California urban area in the middle school based upon relevant literature (Allport, 1997; Brittain, 1993; Bondura, 1996; Clinard, 1997; Cole, 1997; Deese, 1997; Dreyfus, 1997; Douvan, 1998; Dunphy, 1993; Flanders, 1993, 1995, 1996, 1998; Garner, 1997; Horrocks, 1990). The survey instrument titled "Teen Survey" was administered to the multilingual students in the Oakland Area Unified School District. It contained 11 questions regarding demographics, and 44 statements referring to attitudes, family support, peers and

friends and career and educational goals. Refer to Appendix B for the specific questions asked on the survey and to Appendix C for the specific comments and concerns written by the students.

Section I, Demographic Information, solicited personal information from the multilingual students that would aid in identifying various subgroups for comparison purposes. Information regarding each respondent's gender, age, educational level, employment status, family composition, ages of school-aged children and relationship to the school-aged children were solicited. Refer to Appendix B for the specific questions asked.

Section II, Attitudes, used a Likert-type scale from one to nine to assess attitudes regarding family support, peers and friends, and career and educational goals statements. The investigator developed a list of positive and negative statements regarding perceptions of multilingual students in the middle school. After reading each attitude statement, students responded on the following nine-point scale: numeral one being strongly disagree, numeral three being disagree, numeral five being undecided, numeral seven being agree, and numeral nine being strongly agree. Numbers between one and nine indicated varying degrees of agreement with each statement. Higher numerals indicated higher level of agreement. Items 3, 7, 11, 15, 19, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 30, 34, 40, 42 and 44 were reversed.

The research instrument was developed in the spring of 2000. The instrument was developed in two versions, English and Spanish in order to meet the needs of the non-English speaking students. The instrument was pilot tested and revised in May, 2000. The field testing was done with the teachers and principal at E. Morris Cox Junior High School. Upon review of the pilot sampling, several questions were rephrased to improve clarity. After that revision the survey was field tested with 60 students in Oakland Unified School District. Their critique of the

instrument was analyzed and all necessary revisions were made. When revisions were completed the instrument was presented to the principal at E. Morris Cox Junior High School for final comments and approval of implementation.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

Teen surveys, including a parent consent letter (see Appendix C) explaining the purpose of the study and assurance of confidentiality, parent consent letters were sent home with the student and returned by June 16, 2000. Refer to Appendix C for the specific letter. The survey was developed in more than one language in order to fulfill the needs of the students. (See Appendix B).

One week was allowed for the collection of the instrument. Teachers encouraged a high rate of return from the students. Therefore, no follow-up was necessary.

### **Data Analysis**

Statistical analyses of the responses to the survey questions were analyzed at the University of Wisconsin-Stout Academic Computer Center. No codes or special markers were used, therefore, absolute anonymity was maintained. Demographic information, items 1-11, collected in Section I was tabulated as frequency counts and percentages. Section II, Attitude, family support, peers and friends and career and educational goals was tabulated as frequency counts, percentages, means and standard deviations.

T-tests were done on items 1-44 subscales, and the average score in Section II. The independent variables were gender age, educational level and employment status. Pearson

correlation coefficients were calculated on all combinations of 1-44 and the average from Section II for the total group of respondents.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) with a student Newman-Keuls Range Test was done on items 1-44 subscales, and the average score in Section II, Age was used as the independent variable.

### **Limitations**

Limitations of this study included that the instrument was developed and designed by the investigator and therefore was not standardized. The survey limited to one middle school and represents the attitudes of that multilingual students population in June 2000. The results of this study are generalizable only to that particular population.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Results and Discussion**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter includes the findings of a survey administered to multilingual students enrolled at E. Morris Cox Junior High School in Oakland, California. The survey had two sections: demographic information and attitudes regarding family support, peer and friends and career and educational goals. This chapter includes the survey results, a discussion of the results, and an evaluation of the data as it relates to the research questions of this study.

#### **Demographic Characteristics**

The purpose of Section I, Demographic Information, was to obtain demographic information for comparison of specific groups. Following is a breakdown of the demographic data of this project including gender, age, number of children, family structure, marital status, ethnic background, career goals, school grades, parents' level of education and post high school plans.

#### **Gender**

Sixty students responded to the question on gender. Thirty-six students (60.0%) indicated they were males and 24 students (40.0%) indicated they were females. See Table 1.

Table 1: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	24	40.0
Male	36	60.0

### Age

The ages of the respondents were identified. These students ranged in age from 12 to 19. Ten students (16.7%) indicated he/she was in the 14 year old range, 12 students (20.0%) indicated he/she was in the 15 year old range, 17 students (28.3%) indicated he/she was in the 16 year old range, 9 students (15.0%) indicated he/she was in the 17 year old range and 6 students (10.0%) indicated he/she was in the 18 year old range. See Table 2.

Table 2: Age

Age	Frequency	Percent
12 years old	2	3.3
13 years old	2	3.3
14 years old	10	16.7
15 years old	12	20.0
16 years old	17	28.3
17 years old	9	15.0
18 years old	6	10.0
19 years old	2	3.3

## Children

Respondents were asked to indicate how many children under 18 lived in the household. Households ranged in size from 1 to 8 children. Most of the households had 3 to 6 children living in the household. See Table 3.

Table 3: Number of Children Living in Household

No. Of Children	Frequency	Percent
1 child	1	1.7
2 children	3	5.0
3 children	16	26.7
4 children	13	21.7
5 children	10	16.7
6 children	12	20.0
7 children	4	6.7
8 children	1	1.7

## Structure of the Family

Respondents were asked to indicate their family structure. Twenty-seven (45.0%) of the students indicated that they live with two biological/adoptive parents, 17 (28.5%) of the students indicated that they lived with one biological parent and one step parent, 10 (16.7%) of the students indicated that they lived with one biological parent and one adoptive parent and 6

students (10.0%) indicated that they lived with a single parent. See Table 4.

Table 4: Family Structure

Family Structure	Frequency	Percent
2 bio/adopt parents	27	45.0
1 bio/1 step parent	17	28.3
1 bio/1 adopt parent	10	16.7
single parent	6	10.0

### Marital Status

Respondents were asked to indicate the marital status of the parents with whom they lived. Thirty-four (56.7%) students indicated that their parents were married, 18 (30.0%) students indicated that their parents were divorced, and 5 (8.3%) students indicated that their parents were separated. See Table 5.

Table 5: Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
married	34	56.7
divorced	18	30.0
separated	5	8.3
never married	1	1.7
other	2	3.3

### Ethnic/Cultural Background

Respondents were asked to indicate their ethnic/cultural background. Fifteen (25.0%) of

the students indicated they were Mexican American, 15 (25.0%) of the students indicated they were Cuban American, 17 (28.3%) of the students indicated they were Puerto Rican American, 7 (11.7%) of the students indicated they were Central American, 5 (8.3%) of the students indicated they were South American and one (1.7%) of the students indicated that he/she was Asian-American. See Table 6.

Table 6: Ethnic/Cultural Background

Ethnic/Cultural Background	Frequency	Percent
Mexican American	15	25.0
Cuban American	15	25.0
Puerto Rican American	17	28.3
Central American	7	11.7
South American	5	8.3
Asian American	1	1.7

### **Career Goals**

Respondents were asked to indicate their future career goals. Twenty-three (38.3%) of the students indicated they had definite goals set. Twenty-two (36.7%) of the student indicated that they were considering different options and 15 (25.0%) of the students indicated that they had no idea of a career and no career goals set yet. See Table 7.

Table 7: Career Goals

Career Goals	Frequency	Percent
Definite-I Know	23	38.3
Considering options	22	36.7
None-no idea	15	25.0

### Post High School Plans

Respondents were asked to indicate their post high school plans. Twenty-eight (46.7%) of the students indicated that they will look for a job and will not go to college. Thirteen (21.7%) of the students indicated that they will attend a vocational or technical school, four (6.7%) of the students indicated that they will attend trade school, five (8.3%) of the students indicated that they will attend four-year college, seven (11.7%) of the students indicated that they will join the military and three (5.0%) of the students indicated other. See Table 8.

Table 8: Post High School Plans

Post High School Plans	Frequency	Percent
Work-No College	28	46.7
Attend Voc.-Tech.	13	21.7
Attend Trade	4	6.7
Attend Four-Year	5	8.3
in the Military	7	11.7
Other	3	5.0

### **Start Career Goals**

Respondents were asked to indicate when they started planning their career goals. Thirteen (21.7%) of the students indicated that they started when they were in elementary school, 14 (23.3%) of the students indicated that they started when they were in middle school, 33 (55.0%) of the students started planning career goals at the high school level. See Table 9.

Table 9: When Started Making Career Goals

Career Goals	Frequency	Percent
Elementary School	13	21.7
Middle School	14	23.3
High School	33	55.0

### **Parents' Highest Level of Education**

The educational level of the respondents was identified by four subgroups, in terms of the highest level of education completed by the parents. Thirty-seven (61.7%) of the students indicated that their parents had some grade school, five (8.3%) of the students indicated that their parents were high school graduate/GED, 12 (20.0%) of the students indicated that their parents had some post-secondary education and six (10.0%) of the students indicated other. See Table 10.

Table 10: Parents' Highest Level of Education

Parents' Highest Level of Education	Frequency	Percent
Grade School	37	61.7
High School Graduate/GED	5	8.3
Post-Secondary	12	20.0
Other	6	10.0

### High School Grades

Respondents were asked to indicate their academic achievement in high school. Nine (15.0%) of the students indicated that they received about half A's and half B's, 12 (20.0%) of the students indicated that they received mostly B's, 31 (51.7%) of the students indicated that they received half B's and half C's and eight (13.3%) of the students indicated that they received mostly C's. See Table 11.

Table 11: Grades

Grades	Frequency	Percent
About half A's/B's	9	15.0
Mostly B's	12	20.0
About half B's/C's	31	51.7
Mostly C's	8	13.3

### Attitudes Toward Career and Educational Goals

Section II of the survey sought to identify the attitudes of multilingual students toward career and educational goals. A nine point Likert scale was used. The scale responses ranged

from “Strongly Agree” which was scored as a 9 to “Strongly Disagree” which was scored as a 1. Answers were tabulated by determining the means and standard deviations for the collective responses to these statements. For purposes of this study, mean values falling between four and six represent an undecided or neutral response, mean values of six and above were considered agreeable responses, and mean values of four and below were considered disagreeable responses. Table 12 shows the results in sequential order from what students agreed with most to least. See Table 12.

Table 12: Attitudes Towards Setting Career and Educational Goals

Item #	Mean $\bar{x}$	S.D.	Rank Order
13. I want to be successful in my career/job	6.72	1.69	1
14. A good education means more job opportunities	6.55	1.89	2
44. I would ride with a friend who has been drinking	6.50	2.76	3
12. My parents try to help me in a positive way	6.25	1.78	4
29. I have career ambitions to achieve something good	6.25	1.78	4
36. It's important for parents that I get good grades	6.23	1.96	5
38. With a good education I can get a better paying job	6.20	1.82	6
18. I feel confident around my friends	6.20	2.07	6
37. My career goals are detailed, achievement measured	6.15	1.84	7
24. Learning is important to me	6.12	2.08	8
33. My parents read Spanish	6.12	1.82	8
31. I am happy with my life	6.08	1.78	9
32. School is challenging and interesting for me	6.07	1.98	10
28. My parents want me to go to college after high school	6.02	2.05	11

Item #	Mean $\bar{x}$	S.D.	Rank Order
39. I believe I can achieve my goals	5.98	1.84	12
10. My friends influence me in a positive way	5.97	1.97	13
6. Going to college will improve my chances in life	5.88	2.03	14
20. I help my brothers and sisters with their homework	5.83	2.27	15
16. I get my school assignments done on time	5.82	2.16	16
17. My parents read English	5.78	2.12	17
5. My career goals are challenging	5.72	2.02	18
8. I would like to complete high school	5.65	2.18	19
4. My parents attend school conferences	5.62	1.83	20
9. My parents value education	5.60	2.37	21
21. My future career goals are realistic	5.57	2.62	22
35. None of my friends use drugs	5.55	2.17	23
2. I have good natured friends	5.55	1.95	23
43. Drugs are greatest danger young people face in the USA	5.15	2.19	24
1. Parents contact teacher if things are going badly	5.05	1.97	25
41. None of my friends drink alcohol	4.97	2.52	26
40. I hate school	4.73	2.43	27
42. I don't feel in control of my life	4.48	2.21	28
7. I skip school because it is not important to me	4.47	2.16	29
22. I feel like quitting school and getting a job	4.38	2.62	30
27. I have friends who are suicidal	4.33	2.19	31
19. I see my friends ruining their lives with drugs	4.23	2.03	32
3. I feel pressure from friends to use drugs/alcohol	4.22	1.82	33
26. My friends get me into trouble	4.22	2.42	33
11. I have friends who drink a lot	4.18	1.85	34

30. I feel that going to college is a waste of time	4.13	1.90	35
23. Classes are too difficult for me	4.08	2.18	36
34. I don't have any close friends	4.03	1.93	37
15. I don't like the way I look	3.98	2.24	38
25. Parent's job is more important to them than I am	3.90	2.26	39

Section II, a Likert scale was used to measure attitudes, family support, friends, educational goals toward career and educational goals. Responses used were strongly agree (9); slightly agree (8, 7); undecided (5, 6); slightly disagree (2, 3, 4); disagree strongly (1). Table 12 shows the means, standard deviations and rank order of each of the attitude statements. This table is arranged by the means score. Respondents strongly agreed with the statement "I want to be successful in my career/job", which had a mean score of 6.72. The respondents responded that a "good education means more job opportunities" which had a mean score of 6.55. Respondents also agreed that they would "ride with a friend who has been drinking" which had a mean score of 6.50. Respondents also agreed that their parents tried to help them in a positive way which had a mean of 6.25. Also, respondents agreed that they had ambitions to achieve something good with a mean of 6.25.

Other statements included "It's important for parents that I get good grades" ( $\bar{x} = 6.23$ ); "With a good education I can get a better paying job" ( $\bar{x} = 6.20$ ); "I feel confident around my friends" ( $\bar{x} = 6.20$ ); "My career goals are detailed achievement measured" ( $\bar{x} = 6.15$ ); "Learning is important to me" ( $\bar{x} = 6.12$ ); "My parents read Spanish" ( $\bar{x} = 6.12$ ); "I am happy with my life" ( $\bar{x} = 6.08$ ); "School is challenging and interesting for me" ( $\bar{x} = 6.07$ ); "My parents want me to go

to college after high school” ( $\bar{x} = 6.02$ ). See Table 12. On the low end students indicated that they disagreed with the statements of “I don’t like the way I look” with a mean score of 3.98. Also respondents disagreed with the statements of “Parents’ job is more important to them than I am” with a mean score of 3.90.

Table 13 includes the subscales scores on Section II Attitudes statements toward career and educational goals including family support with a mean score of 5.64, career and educational goals with a mean score of 5.88, friends and peers with a mean score of 4.99, and self attitudes with a mean score of 4.95. See Table 13.

Table 13: Subscales for Family Support, Career Goals, Friends and Self Attitude

Subscales	$\bar{x}$	S.D.
Family Support	5.640	1.112
Career Goals	5.88	.5473
Friends	4.99	.9729
Self Attitudes	5.375	.7203

Table 14 included a Cronbach Alpha reliability analysis of the following attitude subscales; Family Support, Career and Educational Goals, Friends and Peers, and Self Attitude. In the subscale of Family Support has a reliability coefficients of Alpha = .7326 and Standardized item Alpha .7390. This subscale of 10 items was high enough for group prediction. In the subscale of Career and Educational Goals has a reliability Alpha -.7854 and standardized item alpha .7853. This subscale was also high enough for group prediction. In the subscale of Friends and Peers a reliability coefficients of Alpha = -.3252 was found. The subscale of Self Attitude had a reliability of Alpha = .5661. Neither the family and peers subscale or the self

attitude subscale had a high enough alpha for use analyzing group differences.

Table 14: Cronbach Alpha Reliabilities of Subscales for Family Support, Career Goals, Friends and Self Attitude

Subscale	Alpha	Standardized Alpha
Family Support	.7326	.7390
Career and Educational Goals	.7854	.7853
Friends and Peers	-.3252	-.3302
Self Attitude	.5661	.5636

An ANOVA with the Student Newman-Keuls test were done on multilingual student attitudes to determine differences based on student future career and educational goals. There were no significances on student attitudes based on future goals.

There were two significant differences on attitudes based on student age. On participation item 13: "I want to be successful in my career/job" a significant difference was found at the .05 level among the groups. Using the Student Newman-Keuls test, a significant difference at the .05 level was found between the student's ages of 16 years old ( $x = 7.29$ ,  $n = 17$ ) and 17 years old ( $x = 5.65$ ,  $n = 17$ ). The 16 year old students indicated a higher level of agreement with the statement of wanting to be successful in their career/job than the 17 year old students.

On item 44: "I would ride with a friend who has been drinking" a significant difference was found at the .05 level among the groups. Using the Student Newman-Keuls test, a significant difference at the .05 level was found between the student's ages of 16 year olds ( $x = 7.76$ ,  $n = 17$ ) and 12-14 year olds ( $x = 5.0$ ,  $n = 14$ ). The 16 year old students indicated a higher

level of agreement with the statement of riding with a friend who has been drinking than the 12-14 year olds.

T-tests were done on multilingual student attitudes to determine if there were any significant differences between means based independent variable of language. Students selected the questionnaire either written in English or written in Spanish. There were relationships or trends and significant differences at .05 probability levels between English and Spanish speaking students on survey attitude items 8, 9, 31, 32, 33 and the average score from Section II Attitude Statements.

One significant difference was noted on career and educational goals attitudes on item 8: "I would like to complete high school" the Spanish respondents indicated higher levels of agreement with a ( $\bar{x} = 6.32$ ) were significantly different at the .05 level than the English respondents ( $\bar{x} = 4.93$ ).

On item 32: "School is challenging and interesting for me" the Spanish respondents indicated higher level of agreement ( $\bar{x} = 6.61$ ) at the .05 level than the English respondents ( $\bar{x} = 5.48$ ).

One significant difference was noted on family support attitudes. On item 9: "My parents value education" the Spanish respondents indicated higher level of agreement with a ( $\bar{x} = 6.29$ ) at the .05 level than the English respondents ( $\bar{x} = 4.86$ ). On item 33: "My parents read Spanish" the Spanish respondents indicated higher level of agreement ( $\bar{x} = 6.65$ ) at the .05 level than the English respondents ( $\bar{x} = 5.55$ ).

One trend was also identified with this t-test on self attitude item 31: "I'm happy with my life". The Spanish respondents indicated higher level of agreement ( $\bar{x} = 6.58$ ) at the .05 level

than the English respondents ( $\bar{x} = 5.55$ ). See Table 15.

Table 15: Significant Differences on Student Attitude Items Based on Language

Item	Category		T Value	Probability
	English n=29	Spanish = 31		
8. I would like to complete high school	$\bar{x} = 4.93$ SD = 2.42	$\bar{x} = 6.32$ SD = 1.72	-2.552	.014*
9. My parents value education	$\bar{x} = 4.86$ SD = 2.59	$\bar{x} = 6.29$ SD = 1.95	-2.401	.020*
31. "I'm happy with my life"	$\bar{x} = 5.55$ SD = 1.99	$\bar{x} = 6.58$ SD = 1.41	-2.295	.026*
32. "School is challenging and interesting for me"	$\bar{x} = 5.48$ SD = 2.37	$\bar{x} = 6.61$ SD = 1.36	-2.246	.030*
33. My parents read Spanish	$\bar{x} = 5.55$ SD = 2.05	$\bar{x} = 6.65$ SD = 1.43	-2.386	.021*

\* = .05 level of significant  
 \*\* = .01 level of significant  
 \*\*\* = .001 level of significant

T-tests were done on multilingual students to determine if there were any significant differences between means based on the independent variable of gender. There were relationships or trends and significant differences at .05 probability levels males and females on survey attitude items 12, 18, 26 and the average score from Section II Attitude Statements.

There were 3 significant differences on student attitude items between males and females.

Furthermore there was a significant difference on total attitude average score and gender. The females scored significantly higher (more positive) than males.

One significant difference at the .05 level was noted on item 12: “My parents try to help me with my school work”. Males respondents indicated higher levels of agreement ( $\bar{x} = 6.64$ ) at the .05 level than the females respondents ( $\bar{x} = 5.67$ ). On item 18: “I feel confident around my friends” the female respondents indicated higher levels of agreement ( $\bar{x} = 7.00$ ) at the .05 level than the male respondents ( $\bar{x} = 5.67$ ). On item 26: “My friends get me into trouble” the female respondents indicate high levels of agreement ( $\bar{x} = 5.08$ ) at the .05 level than the male respondents ( $\bar{x} = 3.64$ ). See Table 16.

Table 16: Significant Differences on Student Attitude Items Based on Gender

Item	Category		T Value	Probability
	Female n = 24	Male n = 36		
12. My parents try to help me with my school work	$\bar{x} = 5.67$ SD = 2.01	$\bar{x} = 6.64$ SD = 1.51	-2.132	.037*
18. I feel confident around my friends	$\bar{x} = 7.00$ SD = 1.77	$\bar{x} = 5.67$ SD = 1.51	2.552	.013*
26. My friends get me into trouble	$\bar{x} = 5.08$ SD = 2.39	$\bar{x} = 3.64$ SD 2.28	2.355	.022*
Total Attitude Average Score	$\bar{x} = 5.51$ SD = .812	$\bar{x} = 5.28$ SD = .646	-2.136	.040*

\* = .05 level of significant

\*\* = .01 level of significant

\*\*\* = .001 level of significant

Using the Student Newman-Keuls test, a significant difference at the .05 level was found

between 17-19 year olds ( $\bar{x} = 5.6.5$ ) and the other two groups including 12-14 year olds ( $\bar{x} = 6.86$ ) and 15 year olds ( $\bar{x} = 7.25$ ). See Table 17.

Table 17 Significant Difference on Student Attitude Items Based on Age

Item #	12-14 years old x A n = 14	15 years old x B n = 12	16 years old x C n = 17	17-19 years old x D n = 17	F Value	Probability
Career and Educational Goals  13. I want to be successful in my career/job	6.86	7.25	7.29	5.65	3.858	.014*
Friends and Peers  44. I would ride with a friend who has been drinking	5.00	5.67	7.76	7.06	3.566	.020*

\* = .05 level of significant    \*\* = .01 level of significant    \*\*\* = .001 level of significant

T-tests were done on multilingual student attitudes to determine if there were any significant differences between means based on the independent variable of post high school plans. There were relationships or trends and significant differences at .01 and .05 probability levels go to work and post secondary education on survey attitudes 7, 13, 19, 27, 30, 35, and 40 the average score from Section II Attitude Statements.

Attitude statements indicated that students' attitudes positively correlate with the respondent's current level of student perceptions toward career and educational goals. Students considering various career options scored higher than those who had defined plans and much higher than those with no plans.

One significant difference was noted on Career and Educational goals attitudes statements item 7: "I skip school because it is not important to me" the respondents post high school plans of college or military indicated high level of disagreement ( $\bar{x} = 5.24$ ) at the .01 level than the respondents who wanted to go directly to work ( $\bar{x} = 3.54$ ).

On item 13: "I want to be successful in my career/job" the respondents with post high school plans to go to college/military indicated a higher level of agreement ( $\bar{x} = 7.28$ ) at the .01 level than the respondents who planned to work ( $\bar{x} = 6.11$ ).

One significant difference was noted on Friends and Peer attitudes statements item 19: "I see my friends ruining their lives with drugs," Respondents with post high school plans of going to college or the military indicated a higher level of agreement ( $\bar{x} = 4.93$ ) at .05 level than the respondents post high school plans of working ( $\bar{x} = 3.57$ ).

On item 27: "I have friends who are suicidal the respondents, students with post high school plans of college or military indicated a higher level of disagreement ( $\bar{x} = 5.07$ ) at the .05 level than the respondents who planned to work ( $\bar{x} = 3.64$ ).

On item 30: "I feel that going to college is a waste of time" the respondents post high school plans of college or military indicated a higher level of disagreement ( $\bar{x} = 4.72$ ) at the .05 level than the respondents post high plans of working ( $\bar{x} = 3.68$ ).

On item 35: "None of my friends use drugs" the respondents post high school plans to

work indicated a higher level of disagreement ( $\bar{x} = 6.14$ ) at the .05 level than the respondents who post high school plans of college or military ( $\bar{x} = 4.93$ ).

An ANOVA with the Student Newman-Keuls test were done on multilingual student attitudes to determine differences based on career and educational goals. There were two significant differences on attitudes based on student career and educational plans.

On item 12: "My parents try to help me with my school work" a significant difference was found at the .05 level among the groups. Using the Student Newman-Keuls test, a significant difference at the .05 level between the students career and educational plans was found between students considering options ( $\bar{x} = 7.00$ ,  $n = 22$ ) and those with no plans or - no ideas ( $\bar{x} = 5.40$ ,  $n = 15$ ). The group of students considering options indicated a higher level of agreement with the statement of parents helping them with their homework than students with no plans and no idea of what they might do in the future.

On 13: "I want to be successful in my career/job" a significant difference was found at the .05 level among the groups. Using the Student Newman-Keuls test, a significant difference at the .05 level was found between the categories of considering options ( $\bar{x} = 7.59$ ,  $n = 22$ ) and have no plans and no idea ( $x = 6.07$ ,  $n=15$ ). The group of students considering options indicate a higher level of agreement with the statement of wanting to be successful in their career/job than students with no plans.

On item 43: "Drugs are the greatest danger young people face in the USA" a significant difference was found at the .05 level among the groups. Using the Student Newman-Keuls test, a significant difference at the .05 level was found between the students with definite career and educational plans ( $\bar{x} = 5.78$ ,  $n = 23$ ) and students considering options ( $x = 4.18$ ,  $n = 22$ ). The

group of students with definite plans indicated a higher level of agreement with the statement of “Drugs are the greatest danger young people face in the USA” than students who were considering options.

Using the Student Newman-Keuls test three significant differences were found. The group of students having no idea for career plans ( $\bar{x} = 5.40$ ) were significantly different at .05 level than students with definite career goals ( $\bar{x} = 6.09$ ) those students considering options ( $\bar{x} = 7.00$ ).

Using the Student Newman-Keuls test three significant differences were found. Those having no idea for career plans ( $\bar{x} = 6.07$ ) were significantly different at .05 level than students with definite career goals ( $\bar{x} = 6.30$ ) those students considering options ( $\bar{x} = 7.59$ ). Furthermore there was a difference between students definite career goals ( $\bar{x} = 6.30$ ) and considering options ( $\bar{x} = 7.59$ ). See Table 18.

Table 18 Significant Difference on Student Attitudes based on Career Goals

Item #	Definite- I Know x A n= 23	Considering Options x B n=22	None- No Idea x C n=15	F Value	Probability
Family Support  12. My parents try to help me with my school work.	6.09	7.00	5.40	4.155	.021*
Career and Educational Goals  13. I want to be successful in my career/job.	6.30	7.59	6.07	5.465	.007*

Friends and Peers					
43. Drugs are the greatest danger young people face in the USA.	5.78	4.18	5.60	3.735	.030*

\* = .05 level of significant    \*\* = .01 level of significant    \*\*\* = .001 level of significant

On item 40: "I hate school" the respondents with post high school plans of college or military indicated a higher level of disagreement ( $\bar{x} = 5.62$ ) at the .05 level than the respondents who planned to work ( $\bar{x} = 4.07$ ).

On item 41: "None of my friends drink alcohol" the respondents with post high school plans to work indicated a higher level of disagreement with a ( $\bar{x} = 5.68$ ) at the .05 level than the respondents post high school plans of college or military ( $\bar{x} = 4.17$ ). See Table 19.

Table 19 Significant Difference of Student Attitudes based on Post High School Plans

Item	Category Work no college n = 28	Voc/trade 4 year/military n= 29	T Value	Probability
7. "I skip school because it is not important to me"	$\bar{x} = 3.54$ SD = 1.50	$\bar{x} = 5.24$ SD = 2.31	-3.316	.01**
13. "I want to be successful in my career job"	$\bar{x} = 6.11$ SD = 1.57	$\bar{x} = 7.28$ SD = 1.69	-2.703	.01**

19. "I see my friends ruining their live with drugs"	$\bar{x} = 3.57$ SD = 1.10	$\bar{x} = 4.93$ SD = 2.53	-2.641	.05*
27. "I have friends who are suicidal"	$\bar{x} = 3.64$ SD = 1.77	$\bar{x} = 5.07$ SD = 2.45	-2.527	.05*
30. "I feel that going to college is a waste of time"	$\bar{x} = 3.68$ SD = 1.25	$\bar{x} = 4.72$ SD = 2.27	-2.167	.05*
35. "None of my friends use drugs"	$\bar{x} = 6.14$ SD = 1.41	$\bar{x} = 4.93$ SD = 2.69	2.145	.05*
40. "I hate school"	$\bar{x} = 4.07$ SD = 1.88	$\bar{x} = 5.62$ SD = 2.65	-2.550	.05*
Total Attitude Average Score	$\bar{x} = 5.29$ SD = .505	$\bar{x} = 5.45$ SD = .909	-2.256	.05*

\* = .05 level of significant \*\* = .01 level of significant \*\*\* = .001 level of significant

T-Test were done on multilingual student attitudes to determine if there were any significant differences between means based on the independent variable of grades. There was one significant difference at .05 probability levels. On item 24: "Learning is important to me" the A's and B's/B's grades respondents indicated higher levels of agreement ( $\bar{x} = 6.32$ ) than students with B's and C's/C's grades ( $\bar{x} = 4.93$ ). See Table 20.

Table 20 Significant Difference on Student Attitude Items Based on Student Grades

Item	Category		T Value	Probability
	A's and B's/B's n= 21	B's and C's/C's n = 39		
24. "Learning is important to me"	$\bar{x} = 6.32$ SD = 1.72	$\bar{x} = 4.93$ SD = 2.49	-2.552	.014*

\* = .05 level of significant    \*\* = .01 level of significant    \*\*\* = .001 level of significant

### Discussion

This study focused on determining student attitudes at E. Morris Cox Junior High School in Oakland, California toward setting career and educational goals. Demographic characteristics were also investigated to determine their effects on multilingual student attitudes. Data was collected from a 44-item survey administered in June 2000 to 60 students.

Section I of the survey revealed a description of the sample population participating in this study. More males (n = 36) responded to the survey than females (n = 24). Most of the students were between the ages of 12 and 19, and respondents had 3 to 6 children living in the household. Twenty-seven of the students indicated that they live with two biological/adoptive parents. Thirty-four of the students indicated that their parents are married. Seventeen of the students indicated that they were Puerto Rican.

The attitudinal statements in Section II revealed respondents overall had positive feelings toward career and educational goals in the junior high school. Students felt positive toward setting career and educational plans. The findings also indicated that most of the respondents want to be successful in their career/job. Students felt positive toward being successful in their career/job. Additionally, students felt that a good education means more job opportunities and

better quality of life. Students strongly agree in the statement of parents trying to help with school work. Students indicated a high level of agreement in starting to plan for career and educational goals at high school level.

Research Question One: What were the middle school student's perceptions toward future educational goals and careers? Attitude statements revealed respondents overall had positive feelings toward career and educational goals. Overall students had a mean of ( $\bar{x} = 6.72$ ); which was positive. Students felt positive toward setting career and educational goals.

Research Question Two: How do attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students based on future educational goals and careers? Attitude statements indicated that students attitudes positively correlate with the respondent's current level of student perceptions toward career and educational goals on three items. Students who were considering various career options scored higher than those who had defined plans and much higher than those with no plans. Furthermore students who planned to go to college or the military had more positive attitude average score than those who planned to work.

Research Question Three: How do the attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students in a California urban area based on language? There were five significant differences based on language. Those students who selected the Spanish version scored significantly higher than those selecting the English version of the survey. Language made a significant difference on attitudes of these students.

Research Question Four: How do the attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students in a California urban area based on age? Attitude statements revealed the students ages 16 years old indicated a higher level of agreement on wanting to be successful in their career/job than other age groups of respondents. Also the 16 year old students indicated a higher level of agreement with the statement of riding with a friend who has been drinking than the other age groups of respondents.

Research Question Five: How do attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students based on gender? There were three significant differences on attitude items between males and females. Furthermore there was a significant difference on total average attitude score and gender. Females scored significantly higher (more positive) than males.

Research Question Six: How do attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students based on grades? There were one significant difference on attitude items between A's and B's/B's and B's and C's/C's. Furthermore there was a significant difference on total average attitude score and grades. The group of A's and B's/B's scored significantly higher than the group of B's and C's/C's.

Attitude statements revealed respondents overall had positive feelings toward career and educational goals. Attitudes have the generic effect of shaping future as well as present behaviors (Allport, 1997).

Statisticians point out that, in any case, the ethnic differences of language and differences in gender, age, grades are only relative (Murr, 1990). Cruze and the Crows (1999) fee that one of

the strongest factors in attitude development is the environment.

Resell (1997) Attitudes may serve as motives and tend to be self-perpetuating in as much as they result in the acquisition of skills and knowledge. The adolescent years represent a crucial period in the formation of “identify and in the formation of values, ideals, and attitudes; career and education future goals is profoundly influenced by the relations obtained between the adolescent and his parents,” (Meissner, 1990, p. 225). During adolescence, friends who have many of the same problems teach social skills and attitudes as well as provide emotional security (Hurlock, 1992; Wagner, 1998). Friends are viewed in a positive light, and serve as a source of control when parents are not present.

Give the best of intentions and a variety of opportunities some students chose not to plan for future career and educational goals. This study did not determine “why” the students chose not to plan for future career and educational goals - only that some did and some did not. Overall, the hand-written comments were very insightful of students enrolled at E. Morris Cox Junior High School.

## **Chapter V**

### **Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations**

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the investigation ,draw conclusions based upon the analysis of the data, suggest recommendations for further study, and discuss the educational implications of this study. A description of methodology and data collection analysis will be included in the summary. Conclusions and recommendations for further study will be drawn from the results.

#### **Summary**

The purpose of this study was to assess perceptions of teenage multilingual students in a California urban area at E. Morris Cox Junior High School. It was also designed to ascertain whether attitudes were affected by the demographics of the population. The independent variables used for data analysis were gender, age, language, career and educational goals and grades.

The study was conducted in June 2000. The population was drawn by cluster sampling, from the multilingual students enrolled at E. Morris Cox Junior High School in academic year 1999-2000. The sample group of 60 students received a teen survey in the classroom requesting their participation. Sixty surveys were filled out and returned to the teachers. This survey was utilized in data analysis.

Each student anonymously completed a two part survey that addressed demographics and attitudes toward family support, friends and peers, career and educational goals and self attitudes.

The researcher designed and developed the instrument titled "Teen Survey". This instrument was developed in two versions, English and Spanish in order to meet the needs of the non-English speaking students.

Section I, Demographic Information, solicited personal information from the students that would aid in identifying various subgroups for comparison purposes. Data regarding each respondent's gender, age, language, career and educational goals, ethnic background, parent's level of education and marital status. Respondents also indicated their family composition, the ages of all minor children living in the household.

Section II, Attitude Statements, used a Likert-type scale from 1 to 9 with 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = uncertain and 9 = strongly agree to numerically record students' opinions. The students were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with 44 various attitude statements regarding Family Support, Friends and Peers, Career and Educational Goals and Self Attitudes.

Comments were written on the surveys by the students. The comments remarks were compiled and can be viewed in their entirety in Appendix B.

The instrument was pilot tested in May 2000. The pilot test was done with teachers and the principal of E. Morris Cox Junior High School. Dr. John F. Cook, principal of E. Morris Cox Junior High School, approved both the instrument and the distribution plan.

Responses obtained from the instrument were tabulated and statistically analyzed by the Computer Center at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. Frequency counts and percentages were computed for each item on the survey. In addition, the means and standard deviations were computed on all items and the average scores from Section II.

In Section II, also included a Cronbach Alpha reliability analysis of the following attitude subscales; Family Support, Career and Educational Goals, Friends and Peers, and Self Attitude.

T-Tests based on language, gender, age, career and educational goals, post high school plans and grades were also calculated on all attitude items subscales and the average scores from Section II.

ANOVA and the Student Newman-Keuls tests were done on attitude items, subscales and average scores from Section II.

Findings based upon the analysis of data revealed that 60% of the respondents were males and 40% of the respondents were females. The ages of the respondents were identified. These students ranged in age from 12 to 19. Household ranged in size from 1 to 8 children. Most of the respondents had 3 to 6 children living in the household. Twenty-seven of the students indicated that they lived with two biological/adoptive parents and 17 students indicated that they lived with one biological parent and one step parent. Thirty-four of the students indicated that their parents were married and 18 students indicated that their parents were divorced. Seventeen students indicated they were Puerto Rican, 15 indicated they were Mexican American and 15 indicated they were Cuban American. Twenty-three students reported they had definite goals set, 22 of the students indicated that they were considering different options and 15 indicated that they had no idea of a career and no career goals set yet. Twenty-eight students reported that they will look for a job and will not go to college and 12 students indicated that they will attend a vocational or technical school.

Thirty-three students started planning career goals at the high school level and 13 started when they were in elementary school. Thirty-seven students indicated that their parents had

some grade school and 12 students indicated that their parents had some post-secondary education. Thirty-one students indicated that they received half B's and half C's and 12 students indicated that they received mostly B's.

Section II of the survey to identify the attitudes of multilingual students toward career and educational goals. A nine point Likert scale was used. Attitude statements revealed respondents strongly support the statement of "I want to be successful in my career/job". Students felt positive toward being successful in their career/job. Additionally, students felt that a good education means more job opportunities. Respondents also indicated to a strongly agree with the statement of "I would ride with a friend who has been drinking". Other statements in which the respondents strongly agree with it were "My parents try to help me in a positive way"; "I have career ambitions to achieve something good", "It's important for my parents that I get good grades", "With a good education I can get a better paying job", "I feel confident around my friends", "My career goals are detailed, achievement measured", "Learning is important to me", and "My parents read Spanish". Students responded negatively to the reversed attitude statement "I don't like the way I look." Since students disagreed with this statement, it is assumed that students felt positive about the way they look.

The attitude section of the survey revealed a positive response to students toward career and educational goals. The overall mean for the 44 attitude statements in Section II was 6.72 which indicated agreement. In the subscales for Family Support, Career Goals, Friends and Self Attitude the overall mean for the 44 attitude statements was Career Goals with 5.88. In Cronbach's Alpha Reliabilities of subscales for Family Support, Career Goals, Friends and Self Attitude the overall mean for the 44 statements was Career and Educational Goals with an Alpha

of .7854. Neither the Family and Peers subscale or the Self Attitude subscale has a high enough alpha for use analyzing group differences.

T-test were done on multilingual student attitudes to determine significant differences between means based language, age, gender, career and educational goals and post high school plans.

Limitations of this study included that the instrument was developed and designed by the investigator and, therefore was not standardized. The survey was limited to one junior high school and represents the attitudes of that students population in June 2000. The results of this study are generalizable only to that particular population.

### **Conclusions**

The conclusions based upon the analysis of data are discussed according to the six research objectives stated in Chapter III.

Research Question One: What were the middle school student's perceptions toward future educational goals and careers? Attitude statements revealed respondents overall had positive feelings toward career and educational goals. Overall students had a mean of ( $\bar{x} = 6.72$ ); which was positive. Students felt positive toward setting career and educational goals.

Research Question Two: How do attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students based on future educational goals and careers? Attitude statements indicated that students attitudes positively correlate with the respondent's current level of student perceptions toward

career and educational goals on three items. Students who were considering various career options scored higher than those who had defined plans and much higher than those with no plans. Furthermore students who planned to go to college or the military had more positive attitude average score than those who planned to work.

Research Question Three: How do the attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students in a California urban area based on language? There were five significant differences based on language. Those students who selected the Spanish version scored significantly higher than those selecting the English version of the survey. Language made a significant difference on attitudes of these students.

Research Question Four: How do the attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students in a California urban area based on age? Attitude statements revealed the students ages 16 years old indicated a higher level of agreement on wanting to be successful in their career/job than other age groups of respondents. Also the 16 year old students indicated a higher level of agreement with the statement of riding with a friend who has been drinking than the other age groups of respondents.

Research Question Five: How do attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students based on gender? There were three significant differences on attitude items between males and females. Furthermore there was a significant difference on total average attitude score and gender. Females scored significantly higher (more positive) than males.

Research Question Six: How do attitudes differ between multilingual middle school students based on grades? There were one significant difference on attitude items between A's and B's/B's and B's and C's/C's. Furthermore there was a significant difference on total average attitude score and grades. The group of A's and B's/B's scored significantly higher than the group of B's and C's/C's.

### **Recommendations**

The methodology and findings of this study provoke consideration of several recommendations for further research. These include:

1. Administering the survey instrument to students at the beginning of the school year and at the end of the school year so that student attitudes can be compared.
2. Conducting a follow-up study in a few years to determine if student attitudes toward setting career and educational goals have changed.
3. Conducting research on a larger, more widespread population sample to include all junior high schools in this school district.
4. Conducting research to determine whether teachers and administrators are willing to change and incorporate of students perceptions in their schools based on previous attitudinal research done with students.

### **Educational Implications**

The results of this study should help student educators and administrators in the Oakland

Area Unified School District in evaluating present multilingual student attitudes, current practices, and desired levels of students perceptions at E. Morris Cox Jr. High School. Once the school has evaluated this research, they should be ready and willing to take the first step toward incorporating change.

The data from this research supports the willingness of multilingual students to be actively involved in their future career educational goals in their Jr. high schools. The schools need to discover meaningful ways to involve students. Students need to be welcomed into the schools and classrooms and kept well-informed about their multilingual students' education. If schools and teachers keep the lines of communication open and build a level of trust, then students will be better able to support the learning process at school and home. Students are the school's best public relations agents. They have far greater power to effect change than teachers do. Students are a resource that must be used wisely.

The information gathered from this investigation may be helpful to those individuals or groups of individuals in incorporating multilingual students' perceptions in their programs. It is anticipated that this research might also be a catalyst for individuals or groups of individuals wanting to evaluate their own existing multilingual students programs.

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## Appendix A

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Your child's multilingual class has an opportunity to take part in a study about perceptions of teenage multilingual students in a California urban area. The principal has fully approved this project. I am asking your permission for your child to be included in this study.

A survey will be conducted which will take approximately fifteen to twenty minutes.

If you have any questions about the study please call me at (715) 232-3368; or my advisor at (715) 232-2530. Please sign the attached form indicating whether or not you have agreed to have your child participate and return it by June 16, 2000.

Questions or concerns about participation in the research or subsequent complaints should be addressed first to the researcher or the research advisor and second to Dr. Ted Knous, Chair, UW-Stout Institutional Review Board of the Protection of Human Subjects in Research, 11 HH, UW-Stout, Menomonie, WI 54751, telephone (715) 232-1126.

A report of the classes' responses will be sent to the teacher. You are welcome to read them. Each child's individual responses will be kept anonymous. Thank you very much for your time and support.

Sincerely,

I \_\_\_\_\_, do \_\_\_\_\_ do not \_\_\_\_\_ agree to  
(Print Your Name) (Check One)

allow my child, \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in this study  
(Print Child's Name)

about \_\_\_\_\_.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Estimados Padres:

La clase multicultural de su hijo tiene la oportunidad de ser parte de un estudio diseñado para explorar las actitudes de las adolescentes hacia la educación y metas profesionales en las escuelas urbanas del Área de la Bahía de San Francisco, California. El director de la escuela autorizó el permiso para el estudio.

Yo estoy pidiendo su autorización para que deje a su hijo/a participar del estudio. Los estudiantes van a contestar un cuestionario que tomará de quince a veinte minutos.

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta del estudio por favor llame a (715) 232-3368; o puede comunicarse con mi consejero a (715) 232-2530. Por favor firme el siguiente permiso donde indique si esta de acuerdo que su hijo/a participe o no participe de este estudio por favor regrese esta forma para el 16 de junio de 2000.

Preguntas o comentarios sobre la participación en este estudio o quejas sobre este estudio debes de enviarlas al Dr. Ted Knous, Encargado, UW-Stout Miembro de la Directiva del Instituto de la Protección de Derechos Humanos, 11HH, UW-Stout, Menomonie, WI 54751, teléfono (715) 232-1126.

El resultado de este cuestionario va a ser enviado a los maestros de los grupos participantes. Usted puede leer los resultados también. Cada cuestionario del estudiante se va a mantener en una forma anónima. Muchas gracias por su tiempo y su respaldo en este estudio.

Sinceramente,

Nellie E. Vargas

Yo \_\_\_\_\_, quiero \_\_\_\_\_ que mi hijo/a participe.

(Por favor seleccione uno)

Estoy de acuerdo que mi hijo/a \_\_\_\_\_ participe en el estudio sobre \_\_\_\_\_.

Firma de Padres: \_\_\_\_\_

Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

## Teen Survey

### Directions:

This questionnaire is part of a study designed to explore teen attitudes toward career and education goals in inner city schools in the Bay Area of San Francisco, California. Do not put your name on the survey. The questionnaire is completely anonymous. Please answer all of the following questions to the best of your ability.

### Section I: Demographic Data

1. Gender:  
 Female  
 Male
  
2. Age category:  
 12    15    18  
 13    16    19  
 14    17    20
  
3. How many children aged 18 and under live in your household?  
 1    5    9  
 2    6  
 3    7  
 4    8
  
4. My family consists of:  
 2 biological/adoptive parents  
 1 biological/step-parents  
 1 biological/adoptive parent  
 single parent  
 other: Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Status of the parent I live with is:  
 married  
 divorced  
 separated  
 never married  
 other: Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. My ethnic/cultural background is:  
 Mexican American  
 Cuban American  
 Puerto Rican American  
 Central American  
 South American  
 Asian American, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

7. My career goals are:  
 definite - I know what I want to do  
 considering several options or career possibilities  
 none - no idea
8. My post high-school plans are to:  
 go to work - no college plans  
 attend vocational or technical college  
 attend trade school  
 attend a four-year college  
 join the military  
 other (describe): \_\_\_\_\_
9. When did you start to plan your career goals and post high school plans?  
 elementary school  
 middle school  
 high school
10. Parent's highest level of education:  
 grade school  
 high school graduate/GED  
 post-secondary graduate (vocational and/or some college)  
 Bachelor's degree received  
 Master's degree or Professional Degree received  
 other (describe): \_\_\_\_\_
11. Which of the following best describes your high school grades up to now?  
 mostly A's  
 about half A's and half B's  
 mostly B's  
 about half B's and half C's  
 mostly C's  
 about half C's and half D's  
 mostly D's  
 mostly F's

## Section II: Attitudes

Indicate the extent to which you agree with each of statements below by selecting a number from 1 to 9.

If you agree strongly with the statement, enter a 9. If you disagree strongly, enter a 1. If your feelings are not as strong, select a number between 1 and 9.

Consider each statement carefully, but make your choices as rapidly as you can. There are no right answers. The best responses are your personal opinions.

Remember to answer all of the questions.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Disagree Strongly			Undecided			Agree Strongly		
Slightly Disagree						Slightly Agree		

EXAMPLE: 6 1. I believe women should be able to play professional football.

- 1. My parents contact a teacher if things are going badly with one of their children.
- 2. I have good-natured friends.
- 3. I feel pressure from my friends to use drugs and/or alcohol.
- 4. My parents attend school conferences.
- 5. My career goals are challenging (high but attainable).
- 6. I feel that going to college will improve my chances in life.
- 7. I skip school because it's not important to me.
- 8. I would like to complete high school.
- 9. My parents value education.
- 10. My friends influence me in a positive way.
- 11. I have friends who drink a lot.
- 12. My parents try to help me with my schoolwork.
- 13. I want to be successful in my career/job.
- 14. Having a good education means that I will have more job opportunities.
- 15. I don't like the way I look.
- 16. I get my school assignments done on time.
- 17. My parents read English.
- 18. I feel confident around my friends.
- 19. I see my friends ruining their lives with drugs.
- 20. I help my brothers and sisters with their homework.
- 21. My future career goals are realistic.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Disagree Strongly	Slightly Disagree		Undecided			Slightly Agree		Agree Strongly

- \_\_\_ 22. I feel like quitting school and getting a job.
- \_\_\_ 23. The classes are too difficult for me.
- \_\_\_ 24. Learning is important to me.
- \_\_\_ 25. My parent's job is more important to them than I am.
- \_\_\_ 26. My friends get me into trouble.
- \_\_\_ 27. I have friends who are suicidal.
- \_\_\_ 28. My parents want me to go to college after high school graduation.
- \_\_\_ 29. I have career ambitions to achieve something good or great with my life.
- \_\_\_ 30. I feel that going to college is a waste of time.
- \_\_\_ 31. I'm happy with my life.
- \_\_\_ 32. School is challenging and interesting for me.
- \_\_\_ 33. My parents read Spanish.
- \_\_\_ 34. I don't have any close friends.
- \_\_\_ 35. None of my friends use drugs.
- \_\_\_ 36. It is important for my parents that I get good grades in school.
- \_\_\_ 37. My career goals are detailed; putting in dates so that achievement can be measured.
- \_\_\_ 38. If I get a good education I can get a better paying job.
- \_\_\_ 39. I believe I can achieve all my goals.
- \_\_\_ 40. I hate school.
- \_\_\_ 41. None of my friends drink alcohol.
- \_\_\_ 42. I don't feel in control of my life.
- \_\_\_ 43. I believe drugs are the greatest danger that young people face in the United States
- \_\_\_ 44. I would ride with a friend who has been drinking.

*Thank you for your cooperation!*

## Questionario para adolescentes

### Direcciones:

Este cuestionario es parte de un estudio diseñado para explorar las actitudes de los adolescentes hacia la educación y, metas profesionales en las escuelas urbanas del Área de la Bahía de San Francisco, California. Ono escribas tu nombre en este, cuestionario. Este cuestionario es completamente anonimo. Por favor contesta todas las preguntas lo mejor que puedas.

### Sección I. Información Demográfica

1. Sexo:  
 Femenino  
 Masculino
  
2. Edad:  
 12    17  
 13    18  
 14    19  
 15    20  
 16
  
3. Cuantos ninos de 18 o menores de 18 viven en tu casa?  
 1    7  
 2    8  
 3    9  
 4  
 5  
 6
  
4. Mi familia consiste de:  
 2 biológicos/adoptivos (padres)  
 1 biológico/padrastro/madrasta (padres)  
 1 biológico/1 adoptivo (padres)  
 padre o madre soltero/a
  
5. Estado civil de mis padres con los que vivo:  
 casados  
 divorciados  
 separados  
 nunca se han casado

6. Raza  
 Mexicano americano  
 cubano americano  
 puertorriqueño americano  
 centro americano  
 sur americano  
 asiatico americano, especifica \_\_\_\_\_
7. Mis metas profesionales son:  
 definitivas, Yo sé lo que quiero y lo que voy a hacer  
 considerando diferentes profesiones /opciones  
 ninguna, no tengo idea
8. Después qué termine la escuela superior mis planes son:  
 irme a trabajar - no pienso ir a la universidad  
 asistir a una escuela técnica vocacional  
 asistir a la universidad (4 años)  
 irme al ejercito  
 otro (describa) \_\_\_\_\_
9. Cuando empezaste a planear tus metas profesionales y que planes tienes después de terminar la escuela superior?  
 escuela elemental  
 escuela intermedia  
 escuela superior
10. Nivel de educación de mis padres:  
 escuela elemental/secundaria  
 escuela superior/Diploma de escuela superior  
 preparación vocacional/grado asociado de universidad  
 Bachillerato (4 años de universidad)  
 Maestria/Certificado profesional  
 Otro (describa) \_\_\_\_\_
11. Cúales de las siguientes alternativas es la que mejor describe tus notas en la escuela hasta el presente?  
 mayormente Aes  
 mitad Aes otra mitad Bes  
 mayormente Bes  
 mitad Bes otra mitad Ces  
 mayormente Ces  
 mitad Ces otra mitad Des  
 mayormente Des  
 mayormente eFes

## Sección II: Actitudes

Indica hasta que punto estas de acuerdo con las preguntas relacionadas a Padres, Amigos y compañeros, Drogas/Alcohol,/ Apoyo familiar metas profesionales metas en educación, Autoestima y Motivación. Si estas completamente de acuerdo con la pregunta marca el 9. Si no estas de acuerdo con la pregunta marca el 1. Si no estas muy seguro de la pregunta, entonces selecciona un número entre 1 y 9. Considera cada pregunta cuidadosamente, trata de no tomarte mucho tiempo en las preguntas.

No hay contestaciones correctas. La mejor respuesta es tu opinión personal.

Recuerda contestar todas las preguntas.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Estoy Completamente En desacuerdo		Parcialmente en desacuerdo		Indeciso		De acuerdo parcialmente		completamente de acuerdo

Ejemplo: 6 1 Yo creo que la mujer debería jugar balompié profesional.

- \_\_\_ 1) Mis padres se comunican con los maestros cuando las cosas no marchan bien en la escuela con unos de sus hijos.
- \_\_\_ 2) Tengo muy buenos amigos.
- \_\_\_ 3) Mis amigos me presionan para que use drogas y alcohol.
- \_\_\_ 4) Mis padres atienden a las conferencias de la escuela.
- \_\_\_ 5) Mis metas profesionales son un reto grande (pero alcanzables).
- \_\_\_ 6) Yo creo que asistiendo a la universidad tendría más oportunidades en la vida.
- \_\_\_ 7) Yo falté a la escuela porque la escuela no es importante para mí.
- \_\_\_ 8) Me gustaría terminar la escuela secundaria.
- \_\_\_ 9) Mis padres valoran una buena educación.
- \_\_\_ 10) Mis amigos me influyen de una manera positiva.
- \_\_\_ 11) Tengo amigos que toman mucho.
- \_\_\_ 12) Mis padres tratan de ayudarme con mis asignaciones.
- \_\_\_ 13) Yo quiero ser exitoso en mi profesión y mi trabajo.
- \_\_\_ 14) Teniendo una buena educación tengo más oportunidades de empleo.
- \_\_\_ 15) No me gusta la manera que lucho.
- \_\_\_ 16) Yo hago todas mis asignaciones de la escuela.
- \_\_\_ 17) Mis padres leen inglés.
- \_\_\_ 18) Me siento alrededor de mis amigos.
- \_\_\_ 19) Yo veo a mis amigos arruinando sus vidas con las drogas.
- \_\_\_ 20) Yo ayudo a mis hermanas y hermanos con las asignaciones.
- \_\_\_ 21) Mis metas profesionales son realistas.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Estoy Completamente En desacuerdo		Parcialmente en desacuerdo		Indeciso		De acuerdo parcialmente		completamente de acuerdo

- \_\_\_\_\_ 22) Quisiera salirme de la escuela y buscar un trabajo.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23) Las clases estan muy dificiles para mi.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24) Aprender es importante para mi.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25) El trabajo de mis padres es más importante para ellos que yo.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26) Mis amigos hacen que yo tenga problemas.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 27) Tengo amigos que tienen intentos suicidas.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 28) Mis padres quieren que yo vaya a la universidad despúes de graduarme de escuela superior.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29) Yo tengo metas y ambiciones profesionales de lograr algo bueno y grande con mi vida.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30) Yo pienso que ir a la universidad es una pérdida de tiempo.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 31) Estoy satisfecho con mi vida.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 32) La escuela es un reto e interesante para mi.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 33) Mis padres leen español.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 34) Yo no tengo ningun amigo íntimo.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 35) Ninguno de mis amigos usa drogas.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 36) Es importante para mis padres que yo obtenga buenas notas en la escuela.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 37) Mis metas profesionales son especificas, incluyendo las fechas de cada meta para asegurarme del logro de estas.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 38) Si obtengo una buena educacion puedo conseguirme un trabajo con buena paga.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 39) Yo creo que puedo alcanzar todas mis metas.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 40) Yo odio la escuela.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 41) Ninguno de mis amigos consume alcohol.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 42) Yo no me siento en control de mi vida.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 43) Yo pienso que las drogas son el peligro más grande que enfrenta la juventud en los Estados Unidos.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 44) Yo me montaria en el carro con un amigo que este borracho y este a su vez este manejando.

*Gracias!!!*

## Appendix C

## STUDENT SURVEY COMMENTS

The following comments about Perceptions of multilingual students were written to the teachers:

### Family and Job Commitments

“I wish my family could be more involved in my life and maybe I will not be this mess up in my school work.”

“I am limited in my time which could be used to help in the classroom due to personal problems.”

“I do feel it is important for my parents to get more involved in my school work, activities, extra curricular programs. I wish they had more time but they work long hours.”

### Communication

“I don’t talk to my parents about school plus they don’t ask me either.”

“My parents never come to parents school conferences, they don’t care.”

“If my parents don’t care I don’t care either.”

### Self Esteem

“I don’t care if people think that I am stupid.”

“I do just easy things I don’t try difficult ones because I know I can’t do it.”

“I don’t care what people think about me.”

“I know I am not important.”

### Career and Educational Goals

“I am going to look for a job. I am not going to college.”

“I want college education. I want a better quality of life.”

“I believe that you really don’t need to have a college degree to get a good paying job it’s just a matter of luck.”

“I think that if I finish college; I will have better opportunities in this society.”

“I don’t care about education.”