

Online Supplement

Summary. This supplement provides detailed information on the Southern Immigrant Academic Adaptation (SIAA) study, including the characteristics of SIAA survey participants and procedures for focus groups with adolescents, parents, and teachers at participating schools. This supplement also provides information on the types of questions used during our focus groups with adolescents and teachers. Lastly, we provide information on focus group participants views on immigration provided in a brief 3-minute questionnaire provided to participants prior to beginning each focus group.

Survey Participants. The SIAA collected survey data from 239 first-year Hispanic students enrolled in nine North Carolina high schools in 2006-07. The high schools participating in the SIAA were randomly selected with a probability proportional to the number of Hispanic students enrolled in 9th grade. Hispanic students completing the SIAA survey were predominantly first or second-generation immigrants (67%), and primarily identified as Mexican (54%), Honduran (12%) or El Salvadorian (10%). Additional details regarding the surveys and participants can be found in reports published on-line (Potochnick and Perreira 2007; Spees and Perreira 2011). From among these nine high schools, two rural and two urban schools were randomly selected to participate in the focus group arm of the study. In **Table A1**, we provide data from the 114 Hispanic students who completed surveys in the four schools participating in the focus group arm of the study. All study procedures were approved by the UNC Chapel Hill Institutional Review Board

Hispanic Students' Perceptions of School Context. Though our qualitative analysis of focus groups with non-Hispanic students, parents, and teachers revealed stark differences between schools, analysis of Hispanic students' impressions of their schools revealed few

significant differences (**Table A1**). Hispanic students in school 1 reported the highest levels of school belonging and school climate. In comparison to the other three schools, they also reported liking school and perceived the lowest likelihood of discrimination. Hispanic students in school 2 reported the highest levels of encouragement from adult teachers and administrators in their school. At the same time, they perceived a greater likelihood of discrimination than students in school 1 and liked school less. The perceived likelihood of discrimination appeared to be highest in our two rural schools (school 3 and 4). Hispanics' sense of school belonging and climate was also lower in these two schools than in the two urban schools (schools 1 and 2).

Description of Focus Group Procedures. We held 34 focus groups with 139 participants from 2 rural and 2 urban high schools in 2007-08. At least seven focus groups were conducted in each school. We conducted additional focus groups with parents or students in some schools to accommodate schedules and interest. All 9th-grade teachers in the participating school were invited to participate in a school-based focus group. To identify students and parents to participate in focus groups, researchers visited classrooms to provide brief presentations about the project and handout information for students to share with parents. In a second visit, students interested in participating in focus groups provided their contact information, sex, and self-identified race-ethnicity (non-Hispanic black, non-Hispanic white).

Figure A1 provides an overview of the themes and concepts discussed in each focus group. In each focus group, non-Hispanic students, parents, and teachers were asked to describe their community and changes in their community over the past decade, attitudes or normative beliefs about Hispanic values and culture, behaviors or daily interactions with Hispanics in their schools and communities, and accommodations. Accommodations refer to the policies, practices, and programs that recognize the capabilities/strengths of Hispanics or needs of Hispanics

adjusting to life in each community and school. All focus groups followed an open-ended discussion guide (**Table A2**) and most were conducted by a research team member of the same racial background. The majority of focus groups were conducted in classrooms and conference rooms after school hours in each of the four participating schools. Focus groups lasted between 45-90 minutes and were digitally recorded and transcribed. Participants received \$15 gift cards for participating in the study.

Focus Group Participants' Views on Immigration. At the start of every focus group session, participants completed a preliminary, self-administered questionnaire assessing participant demographics and, with questions adapted from recent Gallup polls and the Pew Hispanic Center 2006 Immigration Survey, views on immigration (**Table A3**). Though differences between schools in our small sample were not significant, participants had diverse views on immigration, according to preliminary questionnaires. They were evenly divided between those who felt that immigrants strengthen the country (35%); burden the country (30%); and, had not formed an opinion (32%). Less than one-third believed that immigrants threatened American values or customs. At the same time, one-quarter believed that legal immigration to the U.S. should be decreased. On the whole focus group participants had attitudes towards immigrants that were more positive than the attitudes expressed in a variety of national polls conducted in 2006 (Pew Hispanic Center 2006).

References

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Table A1. Hispanic Adolescent Perceptions by School, Frequency and Percents

	By Focus Group School							
	School: 1 (n=26)		School: 2 (n=40)		School: 3 (n=12)		School: 4 (n=36)	
Demographic Characteristics								
Mexican Background	18	69%	8	20%	10	83%	9	24%
Foreign-Born	21	81%	24	60%	7	58%	18	50%
School Belonging								
Low	1	4%	7	18%	2	17%	6	17%
Medium	14	54%	26	65%	9	75%	25	69%
High	11	42%	7	18%	1	8%	5	14%
School Climate/ Respect **								
Low	2	8%	8	20%	4	33%	8	22%
Medium	12	46%	27	68%	7	58%	23	64%
High	12	46%	5	13%	1	8%	5	14%
Likes School**								
Low	3	12%	11	28%	2	17%	8	22%
Medium	10	38%	28	70%	9	75%	24	67%
High	13	50%	1	3%	1	8%	4	11%
Adult School Encouragement								
Low	9	43%	12	30%	5	42%	18	50%
High	12	57%	28	70%	7	58%	18	50%
English Language Acculturation **								
Low	11	46%	12	33%	2	18%	12	34%
High	13	54%	24	67%	9	82%	23	66%
Perceived Likelihood of Discrimination								
Low	7	27%	7	18%	0	0%	3	8%
Medium	16	62%	23	58%	11	92%	26	72%
High	3	12%	10	25%	1	8%	7	19%

Note: **p<0.05 fisher's exact test. Data presented here are from the survey of Hispanics students enrolled in 9th grade at each of the schools participating in focus groups with non-Hispanic students, parents, and teachers. Percentages are adjusted for survey weights. Items evaluated include: (1) school belonging measured by seven items on a 5-point Likert scale (Fulgini et al. 2005) (2) school climate measure by five items on a 5-point Likert scale identifying how well respected students feel for their academic contributions (Fulgini et al. 2005) (3) liking school measured by four items on a 5-point Likert scale (Fulgini et al. 2005) (4) adult school encouragement measured by two items of how often adults at school encourage education, (5) English language acquisition measured by four items indicating how well youth speak, understand, read, and write English (Marin et al. 1987), and (6) the perceived likelihood of discrimination measured by responses to four scenarios in which the respondent indicates the likelihood of experiencing mistreatment in their community (Mendoza-Denton et al. 2002). Low, medium, and high categories are based on the sample mean \pm 1 SD. Adult Encouragement at School and English Language Acculturation dichotomized into high (value of 5) and low (values less than 5).

Figure A1. Factors Influencing the School Context for Hispanics and the Modes of Incorporation and Acculturation adopted by Schools and Individual Parents, Teachers and Students within Schools

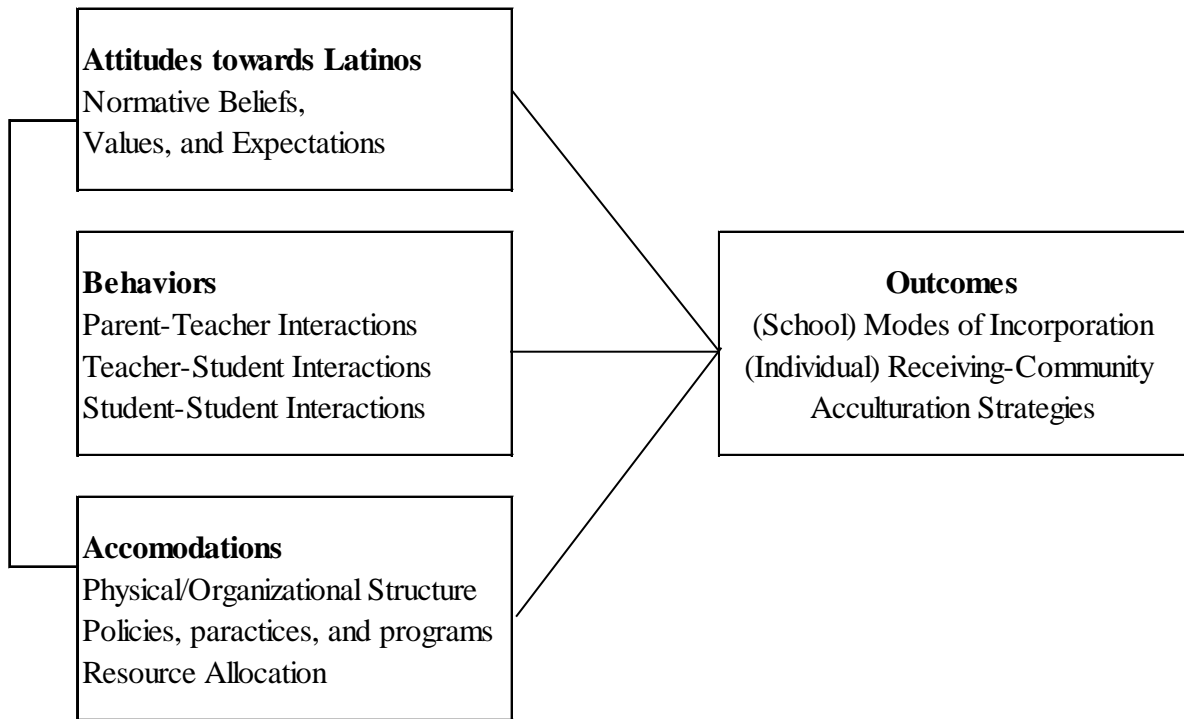


Table A2. Sample Focus Group Interview Questions

Interview Theme	Youth	Parents	Teachers
Attitudes in Community and School	How would you describe your community? Your school?	How would you describe your community? Your child' school?	How would you describe your community? Your school?
	Why do you think Hispanic/Latinos moved to NC? What made them want to come here?	Why do you think Hispanic/Latinos moved to NC? What made them want to come here?	Why do you think Hispanic/Latinos moved to NC? What made them want to come here?
	How do you think Hispanic/Latino kids are similar to you? different from you?	How do you think Hispanic/Latino kids are similar to your kids? different from your kids?	How do you think Hispanic/Latino kids are similar to non-Hispanic kids in your school? different from non-Hispanic kids in your school?
Behaviors and Interactions	What types of social groups are there in your school?	What types of social groups are there in this community (your child's school)?	What types of social groups are there in this community (school)?
	How do you think you and other students like you are treated by the (social group) at your school?	How do you think your child is treated by (social group) at your school?	How well do different social groups at this school get along?
	What types of interactions do you have with (Hispanic/Latinos) in your school? Outside of your school?	What types of interactions do you have with (Hispanic/Latinos) in your child's school? Outside of your child's school?	What types of interactions do you have with (Hispanic/Latinos) in school? In the community?
Accomodations	What types of challenges do Hispanic/Latino students at this school experience?	What types of challenges do Hispanic/Latino students at this school experience?	What types of challenges do Hispanic/Latino students at this school experience?
	What types of resources do Hispanic/Latino students at this school have?	What types of resources do Hispanic/Latino students at this school have?	What types of resources do Hispanic/Latino students at this school have?
	What types of things do you or your school do to help students from different groups understand one another?	What types of things do you or your school do to help students from different groups understand one another?	What types of things do you or your school do to help students from different groups understand one another?

Note: These are sample questions. Interviews are unstructured and open ended to allow questions to be tailored to the respondent. Youth and adults were prompted for the name(s) that they use to refer to individuals from Mexico and Central America. Thus, the terms Hispanic, Latino, Mexican, Honduran, El Salvadoran, Guatemalan were used by interviewers depending on the preferred name used by focus group members. In some cases, repondents referred to "illegal" immigrants. Interviewers were instructed to use only the terms immigrants, undocumented immigrants, or unauthorized immigrants.

Table A3. Focus Group Opinions by School, Frequency and Percents

	Total Sample (N=139)		By Focus Group School							
			School: 1 (n=31)		School: 2 (n=40)		School: 3 (n=36)		School: 4 (n=32)	
Attention Participant Pays to Politics and Government										
A Lot	16	12%	7	23%	2	5%	5	14%	2	6%
A Fair Amount	60	43%	13	42%	20	50%	12	33%	15	47%
Not Much or Not At All	59	42%	10	32%	17	43%	16	44%	15	47%
Most Important Problem Facing the Country ^a										
The Economy	39	28%	9	29%	13	33%	8	22%	9	28%
Wars in the Middle East	33	24%	6	19%	13	33%	9	25%	5	16%
Other/Unkown	28	20%	7	22%	6	15%	9	25%	6	19%
Healthcare and/ or Education	17	12%	5	16%	4	10%	4	11%	4	13%
Immigration	15	11%	4	13%	3	8%	4	11%	4	13%
The Government	14	10%	4	13%	4	10%	2	6%	4	13%
Racism and Discrimination	10	7%	--	--	2	5%	6	17%	2	6%
Do Immigrants Strengthen or Burden the Country?										
Strengthen	47	35%	12	40%	16	43%	12	33%	7	23%
Burden	41	31%	9	30%	9	24%	10	28%	13	42%
Don't Know	43	32%	8	27%	12	32%	12	33%	11	35%
Do Newcomers Strengthen or Threaten Traditional American Values/Customs?										
Strengthen	55	40%	18	58%	14	37%	15	42%	8	25%
Threaten	39	28%	5	16%	11	29%	11	31%	12	38%
Don't Know	40	29%	7	23%	13	34%	8	22%	12	38%
Should Legal Immigration Increase Decrease or Remain Unchanged?										
Increased	18	13%	6	20%	5	13%	4	11%	3	9%
Kept at Present Level	52	38%	14	47%	17	43%	12	33%	9	28%
Decreased	36	26%	5	17%	10	25%	9	25%	12	38%
Don't Know	28	20%	4	13%	7	18%	9	25%	8	25%

Note: Focus groups include non-Hispanic students, parents, and teachers. Due to small sample sizes with each school, differences in percentages between schools were evaluated using Fisher's Exact Test. No significant differences were identified. ^a Multiple responses per participant.