

Lub Zej Zog Project: Sustaining Hmong Language, Educators, and Critical Hope

Jenna Cushing-Leubner, Chong Moua, Choua Xiong, Vicky Xiong-Lor, Pang Yang, Sue Vang

Background

- Damaging experiences in schools, negatively impact Hmong youth success in school and beyond (Mouavangsou, 2021; Xiong, 2015)
- Limited to no community-driven educational transformation research grounded in refugee/displaced and less commonly taught language communities
- Limited curricula, materials, and texts by and for Southeast Asian U.S. refugee communities (e.g. Hmong)
- No teacher preparation programs focused on SEA community, language needs, & knowledge base
- Opportunities for workforce development across spectrum of education field
- High levels of Hmong educator burnout & turnover + large need by schools
- Severe loss of Hmong language within current generation + existing intergenerational transfer
- High levels of community involvement & civic engagement in Hmong U.S. community

Research Questions or Objectives

- How can long-term support of community-driven desires for educational transformation strengthen civic infrastructure and engagement amongst people typically assumed to be recipients of, rather than makers of, civic life and infrastructure?
- How can AmeriCorps programs given over to community desires increase critical hope amongst displaced and economically/politically suppressed communities?





Long-term investments that identify strengths and enact the visions and requests of teachers from refugee communities can promote student successes, increase teacher retention, and create infrastructure for sustainable community-driven programming.











For more information, contact: cushingj@uww.edu

Scan to see more about Lub Zej Zog Project's Community Impacts

Methodology: Participatory Design Research

- PDR (Bang & Vossoughi, 2015) in education is an interactive, community-driven research approach that brings together those most negatively impacted by teaching and learning environments (e.g. English dominant schools, underrepresentation of teachers from local immigrant & refugee communities, underrepresentation of literature & knowledge systems in school curriculum)
- Community research and design interventions that reflect the desires of the community
- Independent from educational institutions or in contingent collaboration (Tuck, et al, 2013) with academic institutions and researchers
- Lub Zej Zog's participatory design researchers = Hmong U.S. PreK-12 educators, youth, parents, artists, community educators, and elders
- Community partner MN Zej Zog = 100% Hmong Community Advisory Board and Leadership; 12 Core Research Leads (university & community), 113 participating educators (MN, WI, CA)

What potential opportunities to apply the study findings?

