

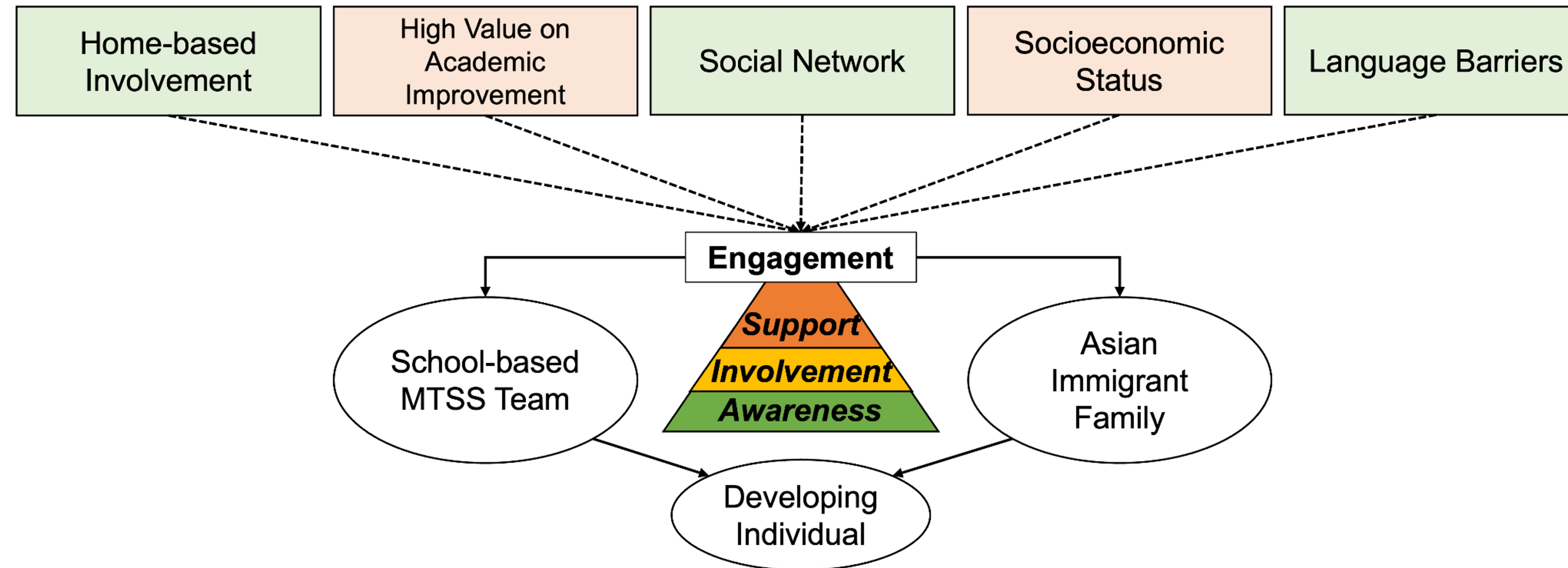
Promoting Asian Immigrant Families' Engagement in MTSS : Toward Culturally-Informed Practices

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ABSTRACT

In this theoretical research, we suggest culturally-informed practices to facilitate Asian immigrant families' engagement in the multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS). Based on a synthesis of existing literature, five sociocultural factors were identified as key considerations that could impact Asian immigrant families' engagement in MTSS: parents' home-based educational involvement, high value on academic improvement, social support, socioeconomic status, and language barriers. The current study highlights the importance of integrating the identified sociocultural factors when schools aim to (a) enhance a mutual understanding between school and Asian immigrant families, (b) encourage families' involvement in the MTSS implementation processes, and (c) support families to address their children's challenges at home. It also contains practical recommendations for teachers, school administrators, and school psychologists by specifying their roles in establishing a culturally-informed MTSS for Asian immigrant families.



MTSS AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES

- MTSS is a comprehensive framework designed to address a wide range of challenges students face, including, academic, internalizing, and externalizing problems (Kim & Lim, 2022).
- By providing universal and intensive strategies for those who do not respond to general instructions, MTSS can support every student with different severities of difficulties.
- Family engagement in MTSS is necessary for preventing inconsistent directions and expectations across home and school and for planning and implementing the most appropriate educational practices for students (Turnbull et al., 2015).
- Strategies of family engagement in MTSS suggested by Lewis et al. (2009):
 - *Tier 1 Awareness*: building families' awareness of MTSS efforts & enhancing schools' awareness of families' expectations and educational involvement practices
 - *Tier 2 Involvement*: building opportunities to involve families in the MTSS intervention planning and implementing processes
 - *Tier 3 Support*: Assisting families in addressing their children's challenges at home.
- Family engagement practices are dependent upon sociocultural contexts where families are situated.

Table 1 Culturally-Informed Practices Promoting Asian Immigrant Families' Engagement in MTSS

Sociocultural Factors	Awareness	Involvement	Support
Home-based Educational Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance MTSS team's awareness of home-based involvement in Asian immigrant families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect different types of parental involvement in children's learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform parents of instructional strategies that can be easily applied at home
High Value on Academic Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance parents' awareness of academic intervention in MTSS • Do not overgeneralize high academic achievement of Asian students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use improvement-oriented communication • Involve parents in planning interventions for academic improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform parents of instructional strategies and community resources conducive to academic improvement
Social Network Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance MTSS team's awareness of the limited social network of Asian immigrant families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite a group of parents when planning additional support for their children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the meeting of parents of color or with immigrant backgrounds
Socioeconomic Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance MTSS team's awareness of limited school involvement of low-income families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the most convenient time for parents when planning parent-teacher meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform parents of the way to support their children within a limited amount of time at home
Language Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance MTSS team's awareness of limited school involvement of parents not feeling comfortable communicating in English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use simple vocabulary and visualized graphics when meeting parents not feeling comfortable communicating in English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make brochures of the way to support their children at home in parents' home languages

SOCIOCULTURAL FACTORS INFLUENCING ASIAN IMMIGRANT FAMILIES' ENGAGEMENT IN MTSS

Home-based Educational Involvement

- Asian immigrant parents tend to provide direct or indirect support for their children's education in their home contexts.
- They are less likely to engage in school-based involvement when compared to European American parents (Ji & Koblinsky, 2009).
- Asian immigrant parents' home-based involvement may be because they distinguish parents' roles at home from the teachers' roles at school (Chan, 2004).

High Value on Academic Improvement

- Asian immigrant parents tend to value their children's academic improvement more than parents from other cultural backgrounds.
- High value on academic improvement might be influenced by Confucian teaching that emphasizes learning as a process of self-cultivation (Yamamoto et al., 2022).
- Asian immigrant parents often do not have sufficient financial and human network resources to sustain their living, they may believe academic achievement is the only way to achieve social mobility.
- However, not all Asian immigrant parents hold the same values on their children's academic achievement (Kim et al., 2018).

Social Network Support

- Parents' connections to other parents can create social environments that are conducive to their children's educational success (Kao & Rutherford, 2007).
- It may not be easy for Asian immigrant parents to access social capital and connections (Lee & Bowen, 2006).
- Increased social support can be a facilitator for the higher level of engagement in MTSS by allowing parents to gain greater access to important school information and resources (Lew, 2006).

Socioeconomic status (SES)

- Due to less flexible work schedules, the need to take on more jobs, or exhaustion, parents from low SES backgrounds are less likely to participate in school activities than their peers from middle and high SES backgrounds (Benson & Martin, 2003).
- Low SES is associated with the lack of social network support among parents (Hovart et al., 2003)

Language Barriers

- The actual and perceived language barriers hinder Asian immigrant parents from communicating with the school and make parents less involved in school activities (Wang, 2008).
- Asian immigrant parents' language barriers can prevent them from socializing with other parents in the school (Lim, 2012).

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Recommendations for Teachers

- Teachers need to accurately understand the sociocultural backgrounds of Asian immigrant families and accommodate their communication style.
- Adopt teacher-to-home approach to detect home-based resources
- Use improvement-based communication style

Recommendations for School Administrators

- School Administrators are responsible for redistributing teachers' workload so that they can spend more time to communicating with families; and for supporting meetings of parents from marginalized or immigrant backgrounds.
- Holding regular meetings where all school staff can freely discuss their challenges while reforming their MTSS practices.

Recommendations for School Psychologists

- School Psychologists are responsible for supporting teachers and other staff to promote Asian immigrant families' engagement in MTSS (Eagle et al., 2015).
- They can also contribute to addressing adaptive challenges that emerge when establishing a culturally responsive MTSS, by forming close relationships with teachers and supporting staff.