

Strengthening School Experiences for Refugee Young People, Families, and Their Teachers in Florida

Introduction

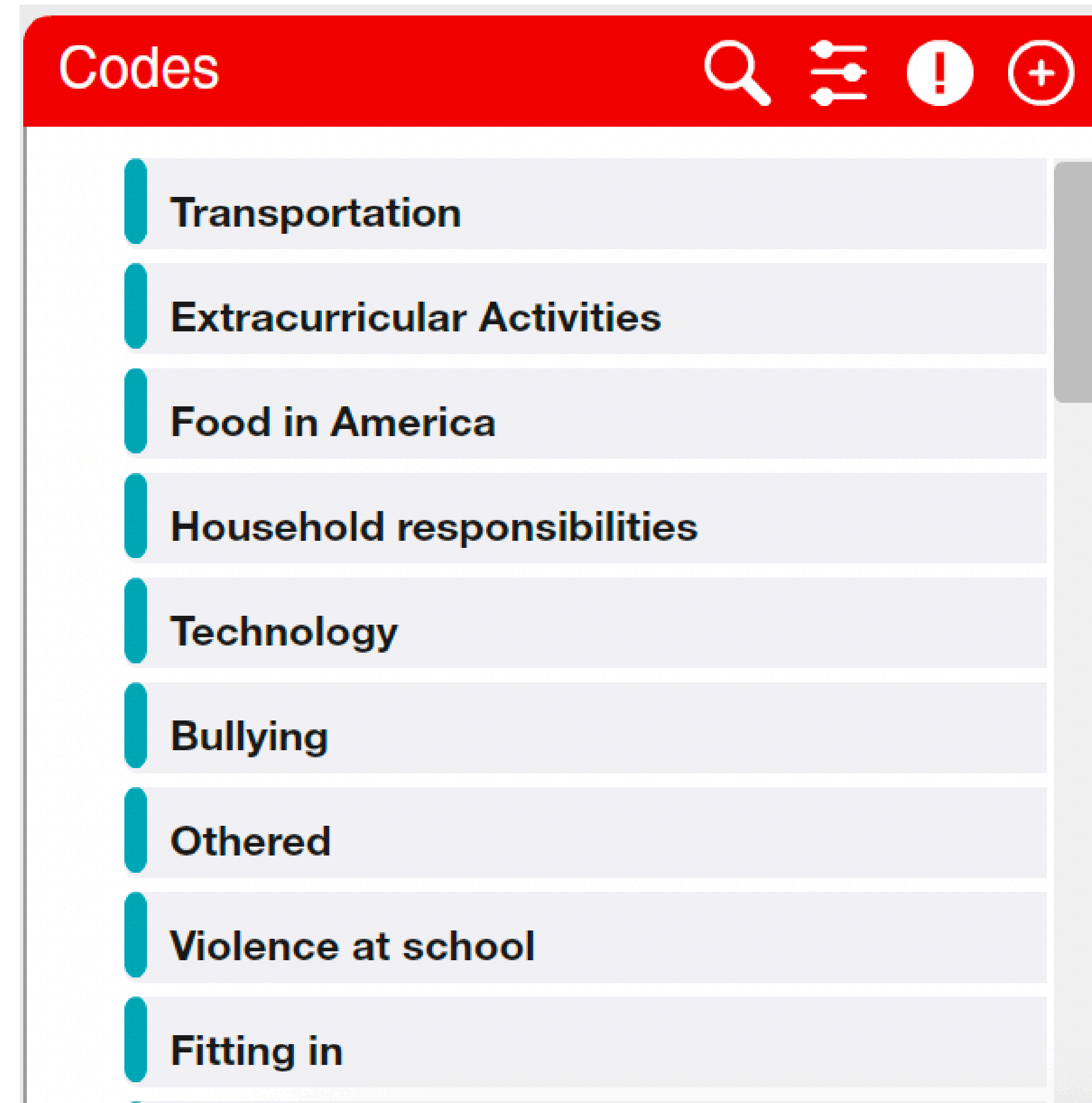
- Refugee children resettling in the United States often experience significant trauma.
- They are at higher risk for emotional, behavioral, and developmental difficulties compared to non-refugee peers.
- Early support during resettlement is critical for their long-term adjustment and well-being.
- The research focuses on improving the educational experiences of refugee youth in the U.S.
- It documents the challenges these students face.
- It aims to provide information to support specialized guidance and assistance for both students and teachers.

Data Collection

- Semi-structured interviews conducted with families and children in the American school system (IRB-approved protocols).
- Open-ended questions focused on:
 - Educational experiences
 - Perceived barriers within the school system
 - Sources of support
- Interviews were recorded and transcribed.
- Listening notes documented recurring themes, tone, and context.

Analysis

- Refugee students more commonly formed friendships with other refugee peers.
- Some reported American peer connections; others reported none.
- Classmates played role in adjustment.
- Some maintained traditions; others adopted American norms.
- Many students carried significant household responsibilities.
- Experienced bullying related to language and accents.
- Demonstrated strong motivation to succeed despite challenges.



example of codes we apply to text (try to apply more than 1 to portions of text to find overlapping connections)



Photo shows a visual representation of the frequency of codes used.

References

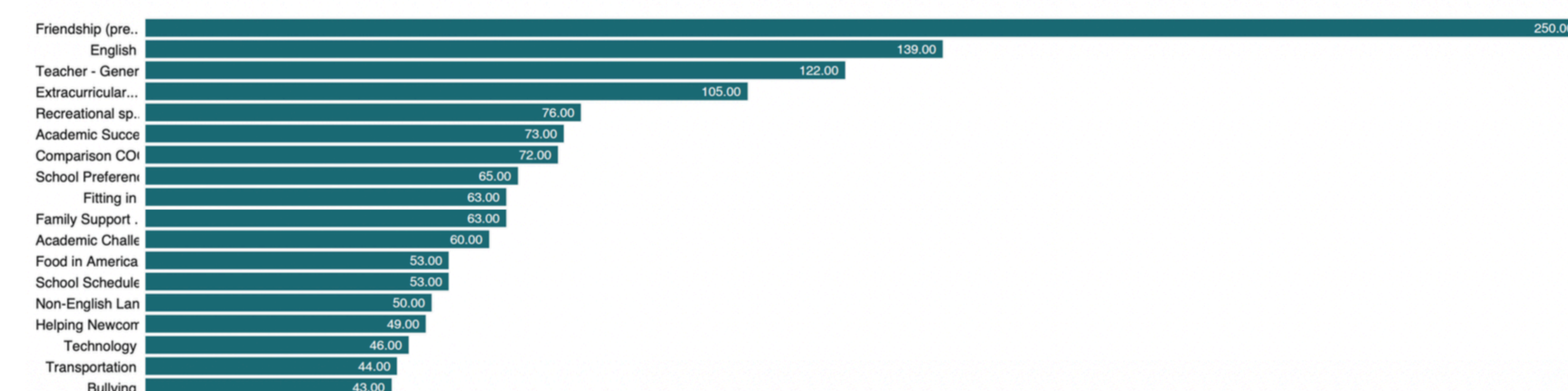


Results

- Those who arrive earlier tend to adjust more easily than those who arrive later.
- English proficiency plays a major role in integration
- Younger students appear more outgoing a while older students tend to be more reserved.
- Students reported experiences of othering and bullying.
- Future Steps for the Research:
 - Continue refining the codebook, including clarification of codes such as age of enrollment and migration trajectory.
 - Track students over time to better understand long-term adaptation outcomes.
 - Further examine how age at arrival influences social integration and academic adjustment.

Discussion

- This info is crucial to not only creating a future education system, but also society that promotes social cohesion among various differing individuals. Values in students that allow the integration of culturally different peers in school, are carried along into their future as they advance their careers and become participants in society.
- It is clearly known that socially cohesive societies have higher rates of technological innovation, better public health systems and reduced crime.
- Very rewarding to focus on certain aspects of a refugee student's life in order to make their experiences in the school system easier and more rewarding in the long term.
- For example, during the coding process we discovered that there were frequent reports of bullying related to language and accents. This information allows us to devise plans that allow us to target and reduce these experiences for refugee students, including creating culturally responsive curriculums, reinforcing and creating stronger consequences for anti-bullying policies and fostering inclusion through classroom bonding projects.



Graph of the frequency of word coded, as shown Friendship and English are very relevant topics to this research and the families