

RAISING MUSLIM ADOLESCENTS: SOMALI PARENTS PERCEIVED
CHALLENGES IN RAISING THEIR CHILDREN IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By

Gale Husom

A Capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in English as a Second Language

Hamline University

Saint Paul, Minnesota

May, 2009

Committee:

Anne DeMuth, Primary Advisor

Feride Erku, Secondary Advisor

Olga Becker, Peer Reader

Copyright by
GALE HUSOM
2009
All Rights Reserved

Thank you Mike, for your long lasting support of and patience with my educational goal. You have gone from tolerance to acceptance to being fully supportive; thank you for your growth in this area.

My gratitude goes to you, Mom and Dad for always believing in me and standing by me no matter what.

Thank you to my children, Mitchell, Lisa, Chris, Erin, Philip, and Cameron for being who you are. You give me strength and joy in my life.

Much appreciation goes to Hamed Sallam. He taught me about Islam and showed me his genuine concern for others.

Husom, G. The perceived challenges that Somali parents, as Muslims, face in raising their adolescents in the public school system. (2009)

The purpose of this qualitative study is to find out what Somali parents, as Muslims, perceive as the challenges in raising their children in the public schools. In order to find an answer to this question, I interviewed one mother and two teachers. The teachers were asked how they thought the parents of their students felt about the topics addressed. On many issues, all respondents gave similar answers, yet on some topics, they gave very diverse responses. The results indicate that parents have three major concerns. These include the breakdown in the relationship between the parent and child, the inability of parents to understand the educational system in the USA, and the desire of parents to have accommodations in the public schools for their children's religious and cultural beliefs. My conclusion is that in order to help the Somali student succeed in school, schools need to make helping parents a priority.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge my primary advisor, Anne DeMuth, for her many hours of reading, rereading and rereading some more. She was very knowledgeable yet so patient with me. For that I am grateful.

I would also like to thank Olga Becker, most of all for being a loyal friend whom I can confide in. Secondly, thank you for being my peer reader, for listening to me, supporting me and encouraging me. Ann Mabbott has been a major driving force for me from the very beginning of my ELL teaching career; I aspire to someday be as wise and kind as Ann.

The participants in this study deserve my appreciation also. They were selfless in their efforts to help me with my research. They gave up several hours of their time for a person they did not even know.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One:	
Introduction.....	1
Role of Researcher.....	3
Background of Researcher.....	4
Muslims.....	5
Somalis.....	6
Purpose of the Study and Guiding Questions.....	7
Summary.....	7
Chapter Overview.....	8
Chapter Two: Literature	
Review.....	9
Islam.....	9
The Somali Family in Somalia.....	11
Somalis in Minnesota.....	13
Maintenance of First Language.....	21
Acculturation.....	24
Parenting in a Foreign Country.....	26
Clash Between American Teen Culture and Islamic Values.....	29

Chapter 3:

Methodology.....	33
Overview of the Chapter.....	34
Qualitative Research Paradigm.....	34
Data Collection.....	35
Procedure.....	40
Data Analysis.....	41
Verification of Data.....	42
Ethics.....	42

Chapter Four:

Results.....	44
Background Information.....	45
Maintenance of First Language.....	48
Parenting in a Foreign Country.....	52
Acculturation.....	56
Issues at Home.....	60
Issues at School.....	61
Clash Between American Teen Culture and Islamic Values.....	67
Possible Ways to Help Children Succeed in School.....	69
Conclusion.....	71

Chapter Five:

Conclusion.....	73
-----------------	----

Major Findings.....	73
Implications for Teachers/Administrators/etc.	86
Limitations.....	90
Suggestions for Further Research.....	93
Appendices.....	96
Appendix A – parent interview questions.....	96
Appendix B – teacher interview questions.....	106
Appendix C – chart of interview results.....	116
References.....	123

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Trying to draw closer to God and following my religion have always been a significant part of my life. My parents divorced when I was young, so my mom raised three children on her own. She was steadfast in her faith and in conveying that faith to my brother, my sister, and me; we were raised Seventh Day Adventist. We worshiped on the Sabbath as is prescribed in the Old Testament of the Bible; that is, we did not do work of any kind or engage in recreation from sunset on Friday till sunset on Saturday, the Sabbath. This meant I could not be involved in extra-curricular sports since so many games were on Friday night and Saturday. We did not wear jewelry or makeup, attend dances, smoke, drink, or eat pork. We went to very few movies, and dressed very modestly.

My mother was (and is) a very devote Christian. Her deepest desire was to send us to a Christian school. Because of finances, family situations and a move, this dream was only to become a reality part of the time. Every few years I alternated from public schools to private schools. In high school I went to a Catholic school, an Adventist boarding school and a public high school. Though I am eternally grateful to my mother for the faith she helped instill in me, I often times felt like an outsider, like I did not belong to the mainstream.

During my second year of teaching, I had some Muslim students in my class. I saw them as very dedicated to their faith – a faith that at times may separate them from the mainstream. In some ways I feel a connection to Muslims. I respect their sincerity, and at the same time I wonder if they too feel disconnected from the mainstream as I did while growing up.

Muslims believe in loving Allah (God), a life exhibiting generosity, tolerance, modesty, mercy, balance, and common sense. These traits are ones that most Americans would agree are worthwhile and honorable – ones that most would say they try to incorporate in their own lives.

They are very much like many other Americans who try to live their lives according to high ethical values. Even though Christianity, Judaism, and Islam have some differences, all believe in one God and adhere to basically the same moral code. Yet when some Muslims come to America, they may face many adjustment issues, including parenting. They are a minority, even though Islam is the fastest growing religion in the United States (Coleman & Ganong, 2004). As a minority, they may not have the same support in their cities, in the media, or in public schools as they had in their homelands. When children go to school they may be the only ones that are wearing a hijab, or staying out of the lunch room during Ramadan because they are fasting.

Somali parents have many decisions to make. Do they let their teens date as American teens do? Should they let their adolescents be part of the individualism of this society or try to maintain the strong family loyalty and

conformity that they enjoyed in their country of origin? Are parents' expectations for girls different than their expectations for boys? Should parents let their teens dress the same as most American teens? Are American holidays to be celebrated, ignored, or is there a compromise to be made? These are just a few of the issues parents deal with when wanting to retain Islamic values within their families.

How can parents help their children deal with these issues? How can parents incorporate their religious practices within this new culture? These are issues for Muslims in general, but I think Somali Muslims in America struggle with these even more. The remainder of this chapter introduces Somali Americans and some of the issues they face in America. First, I will explain my role as researcher.

Role of Researcher

My research will include doing two practice interviews plus three more interviews. Each will be approximately two hours long. Before I interview the participants, I will give them a copy of the interview questions so that they will know what to expect. As detailed more fully in chapter three, I will be as unobtrusive as I can in order to get genuine responses.

I work in a rural school district and do not have Somali students or know of any Somali families in my town, so I will have to recruit participants to participate in interviews. To do this, I will ask my professors and teacher friends of mine for leads. I will contact the Islamic Center in a nearby town and ask for interested participants. I am taking a class on Islam at the Islamic University, so I

may make contacts here as well. Another resource I have is administrators of adult ESL classes; they can ask students who would be interested in doing an interview with me. If this doesn't work, I have received many tips from colleagues as to where else I could get participants. I will continue to use colleagues as a rich source of information in this area.

Background of the Researcher

As stated at the beginning of the introduction, my childhood gave me feelings of being an outsider. Later in life, I wondered if Muslims felt like outsiders as well. In the spring of 1998, I graduated from college with a B.S. in English. That fall, I taught 7th grade English as a year-long substitute. I liked it very much, but like many first year teachers, I felt overwhelmed much of the time. The following year I took a half time English position in the hopes of it turning into full time. Just as I had hoped for, two months later the principal came to me and asked, “How would you like to make your half time position into full time by teaching a few ESL classes?”

I said, “Sure, what is ESL?” She explained what it was and what I needed to do; then I was on my way. I tell this story to illustrate my general curiosity and willingness to learn something new. As I was teaching that year, I learned that there was so much I did not know about other cultural groups. That year was the first time I saw a student sit in the library during lunch because she was fasting. It was the first time I saw a girl wearing a *hijab*, or a student sitting in the library

during gym class because she was not suppose to wear shorts. It was also the first time I saw a student refuse to sit by another student of the opposite gender. I was very curious and had to find out more.

Later, when I was taking classes for my ESL degree, I met some Muslim peers. I became friends with them and grew to respect them for their strong values; I admired the depth of their commitment. I wondered how they could hold so steadfastly to a religion that received so little support from the mainstream culture. Since they were immigrants, was their upbringing so different from mine? What went on in their childhoods that made them hold so strongly to their convictions? What about Muslim American parents who are raising their families here without the familial and community support of their native countries? Can they be as successful as they were in their native country? Or do they measure success by different means in American culture? How do they instill the values of their religion, Islam, in their children when the mainstream does not seem to support it?

Muslims

Coleman & Ganong (2004) state that there are one to three billion Muslims worldwide. Muslims are those who follow the religion of Islam. In this study, I will be looking at Somali Muslims who actively practice Islam and who have immigrated to the United States within the last 15 years.

According to Carter and Eugene (1996,1999), Muslims place high value on conformity and benevolence. When asked to rate themselves in a study,

Muslims rated themselves high in positive human relations, self-control, compassion, discipline, forgiveness, rationality, autonomy, and spirituality. They are a group of people who show mutual interdependence on immediate and extended family members as well as community members. They feel that family should be a caring, supportive unit (Tarazi, 1995).

Islam started around the year 600. It is a monotheistic faith since Allah is the one and only God. The Qur'an was revealed to Muhammed, the main prophet, through the Angel Gabriel ('Abd al 'Ati, 1998). The Qur'an is the holy book and equivalent to what the Bible is for Christians. Islam has six articles of faith and five pillars of Islam. How it is practiced may vary in different cultures or even in different families, but the main principles are the same everywhere.

Somalis

Somalis are an ethnic group that are almost entirely Muslim (Collet 2007; Masny 1999; Oikonomidou 2007; Putman, 1993; Wilder 2000). Somalia is located in Africa and is a little smaller than the state of Texas. Most of Somali is rural and nearly 80% of the people are pastoralists, agriculturalists, or agro-pastoralists. The vast majority of people are ethnic Somalis who practice Islam and speak dialects of Somali (Putman, 1993). Their society is clan based with most families having many children and including extended family members in the household (Masny, 1999). Oral language is the main form of communication with no written language until 1972 (Crabb, 1996).

The civil war in Somalia had a devastating effect with an estimated 400,000 people being killed, dying of famine or disease; almost 45% of the people were displaced inside the country or fled to other countries (Putman, 1993). Beginning in the 1990's and continuing, large numbers of Somalis came to Minnesota as refugees with more than three fourths of them settling in the Twin Cities (Robillos, 2001). Even though families expected conditions to be better since they were no longer in the midst of war, there were still difficulties to overcome. Some specific challenges to the well being and healthy development of the Somali refugee child are experiences of separation, loss, disruption of socialization, and traumatic experiences (Alitolppa-Niitamo, 2004). These issues coupled with learning a new language and a new culture as well as dealing with the possible role reversal between parent and child can cause a child to have a hard time achieving to his/her full potential. This in turn may produce parents who are worried about the academic and social success of their children.

Purpose of the Study and Guiding Questions

The purpose of this study is to find out what perceived challenges Somali Muslim parents face in raising their adolescents in the public school system. I decided to focus on Somalis for two different reasons. Somali students seem to be having a harder time than many other ethnic groups in integrating into the public school system. Also, many parents seem to have trouble understanding the school culture (Masny, 1999). This study is being done in order to better

understand Somali parents' concerns for their children's educational needs and to find out what schools can do to help. To guide my research, I will conduct extended interviews to investigate the following questions:

- 1) What perceived challenges do Somali parents, as Muslims, face in raising their adolescents in the public school system?
- 2) To what do they attribute these difficulties?
- 3) What do Somali parents feel the schools could do to help alleviate these problems?

Summary

In this study, I will focus on the perceived challenges that Somali parents, as Muslims, face in raising their adolescents in the public school system. I will find out what difficulties Somali parents perceive their children having in succeeding academically in school. Also, I will try to discover what parents attribute these difficulties to and what they feel schools can do to help alleviate these problems.

These are important areas to study since research on Muslim parenting issues are understudied (Coleman & Ganong, 2004; McAdoo 1999; Borstein, & Cote, 2004; Carolan et al.2000). The insights gained from this study could help school teachers and administrators be more informed about these parents' struggles and how to accommodate their children.

Chapter Overview

In Chapter One I introduced my research by establishing the purpose, significance and need for the study. The context of the study was briefly introduced along with the role, assumptions, and biases of the researcher. The background of the researcher was also provided. In Chapter Two I will provide a review of the literature relevant to Somali Americans and parenting. The topics I address in chapter two include: Islam, the Somali family in Somalia, Somalis in Minnesota, maintenance of first language, acculturation, parenting in a foreign country, and the clash between American teen culture and Islamic values of Somalis. Finally in chapter two, I focus on what perceived challenges Somali American parents face in raising their adolescents.

Chapter Three includes a description of the research design and methodology that guides this study. Chapter Four presents the results of this study. In Chapter Five I discuss my conclusions on the data collected. I also discuss the limitations of the study, implications for further research and recommendations for educators and parents.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

When I think of the Muslims who have immigrated to the United States, many topics can be investigated. The question I have chosen to study is: What perceived challenges do Somali parents, as Muslims, face in raising their adolescents in the public school system? The literature review in this chapter begins by giving a description of the religion of Islam, then moves on to the relationship between Islam and parenting with specific references in this last section to the family as a whole, the mother's role, and the child's role. Then maintenance of first language is discussed with subsections summarizing benefits of first language (L1) maintenance and the consequences of the loss of L1. Following that is an overview of acculturation and how immigrants adjust to a new country. Next is a discussion about the general findings, issues in school, and issues in family life concerning parenting in a foreign country related to the experience of Somali Muslims in the U.S. Muslim immigrants in the U.S. is the next category. The section on Muslims in Minnesota is divided into the Muslim community and Somalis in Minnesota. The end of the chapter focuses on the clash between the American teen culture and Islamic values of Somalis.

Islam

Islam means submission to Allah, Muslims' name for God (Muslims believe in the same God as Christians and Jews but they assign different attributes

to him), and was started by the prophet Muhammad around the year 600. It is practiced by Muslims all over the world. Islam is the fastest growing religion in the U.S (McAdoo 2004; Coleman 2004; Oikonomidoy, 2007). It is one of the world's three major monotheistic faiths along with Judaism and Christianity. Many scholars (Altereb, 1996; Eugene, 1996; Hodge, 2002; Moore, 2006; Esposito, 2004; Reece, 1997) have summarized the core beliefs of the Islamic faith as follows: Allah is the one and only God. Muhammad is the main prophet. The *Qur'an*, compared to the Bible for Christians, was revealed to Muhammad by Angel Gabriel and inspired by Allah. It is the holy book and gives Muslims guidance for their everyday lives. Islam's six articles of faith are belief in Allah, prophets, angels, revealed books, predestination (Al-Kadar), and the afterlife. The five pillars of Islam are the belief that there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his messenger, praying five times a day, giving to the poor, fasting during the holy month of Ramadan, and going on a pilgrimage to the holy city of Makkah once in a lifetime ('Abd al Ati, 1998). Islam requires that these pillars and articles are to be applied in their totality as people are able (Farid, 2004).

Islam encourages love of Allah (God) and others, self discipline, morality, modesty, peaceful coexistence, and tolerance. Tarazi (1995), and Altereb (1996) refer to it as a balanced way of life that does not endorse excessive behaviors and exhibits mercy, compassion, and common sense.

Other main requirements of Islam have to do with modesty and restrictions of food and drink. Islam calls for modesty in dress and actions of both

genders. Males and females alike are to dress modestly. Some females wear a *hijab*, headscarf, for reasons of modesty and to show submission to Allah. The modesty requirement also includes no mixing of genders before marriage, such as no sitting next to or talking to someone of the opposite gender without an adult present, and no dating. As far as food and drink are concerned, Islam prohibits eating pork, drinking alcohol, and smoking (Alterebe, 1996; Stodolska, 2006; Reece, 1997; Zine, 2006).

Even though Islam has set tenets of the faith, the way the religion is carried out in everyday life may tie closely to what is expected, or it may be quite different; this is true for almost any religion. Adherence depends on the commitment of the family members to the religion or what the cultural norm is.

Followers of Islam have lived in America for many years, but it was not until the last decade that Americans have grown more conscious of this fact. This is probably due partly to the attack on the World Trade Center in New York in 2001 and the aftermath. It is also due to the recent more numerous arrival of Islamic immigrants (McAdoo, 1999).

In summary, Islam necessitates the surrender of one's will to that of Allah's. Many writers call it a complete way of life, a comprehensive life plan, a way to gain moral guidance in all walks of life. It is said to be proper in every human context because it is pure and unchangeable yet adaptable to different environments

(Altereib, 1996; Hodge, 2002; Schmidt, 2004). It is the religion of almost all Somalis.

The Somali Family in Somalia

The Somali Muslim's definition of the family is that it is the basic unit of social organization. It is the foundation of social, religious, and economic activities. One's religious, class, and cultural identity are defined by the family (Putman, 1993). Its members must put the group's survival above personal needs. For Somalis, the family is the ultimate source of identity and personal security (1993). Several sources assert that family ties in Islamic families are very strong (McAdoo, 1999; Stodolska, 2006; Schmidt, 2004; Hodge, 2002; Tarazi, 1995; Coleman & Ganong, 2004). These ties do not just happen by accident; they are intentionally developed by the parents and extended family members.

Somali families tend to be very large; this is due to the fact that they believe in having many children, and many times extended family members live in the household also (Robillos, 2001). The parents as well as other adult family members are to be highly respected. It is the child's duty to take care of the aging parents' physical and social needs. Islam promotes this obligation by socializing the child to remain part of the group and sacrifice personal needs for the welfare of the family (McAdoo 1999).

The hierarchy of the family is that the parents are in charge, and the children are expected to mold to parents' expectations. Of course these expectations are to be reasonable and fair. McAdoo (1999) asserts that strong

social pressure is put upon the child not to openly deviate from acceptable forms of behavior. According to Islam, the mother is respected and has a very high status. Islamic belief holds that mothering is the most important identity and responsibility of a woman. A mother must put the welfare of her children first. A mother has the role of nurturing, and caring for the family. She also needs to be self sacrificing, putting the needs of others first. If her child needs something, this need must come before her own.

Somali culture is male centered (Putman, 1993), and this carries through to the family as well. The father is the head of the family; he is the authority. It is his responsibility to provide for the family whether the wife works or not. Also, when the sons become school age, it is the father's duty to give them religious and moral training. Female labor is valued as long as the male is still viewed as being in charge (Putman, 1993).

Another part of the culture is that it is clan based; according to Masny (1999), collective thinking and working practices are the norm. Working or living alone are not common practices. Somalis have a collective commitment to reproduce communal values in their young.

Education is highly valued in Somalia but is a scarce resource (Alitolppa-Niitamo, 2004). The Somali language was strictly oral until 1972 when it became a written language. After this, basic education became compulsory, yet opportunities for education were unevenly distributed and beyond the reach of most Somalis (Putman, 1993). Even with the students who did have the

opportunity to go to school, the majority did not go beyond primary school (Masny, 1999). Needless to say, a high percentage of adults are illiterate or have low literacy in reading and writing.

One of the greatest influences on the lives of all Somalis is the religion of Islam. It defines who they are. It is so much a part of their culture that it is hard to tell if certain beliefs and actions are a result of the culture or the religion (Farid & McMahan, 2004). Of the different sects of Islam, most Somalis are Sunni Muslims.

Somalis in Minnesota

Miller (2007) states that 35,000 Somalis started arriving in the 1990's to escape oppression and war torn countries. In 2003, the United States received 1445 immigrants and refugees from Somalia, 2223 in 2004, and 7429 immigrants came to America in 2005 (Department of Administration / Office of Geographic and Demographic Analysis / State Demographic Center, 2007). Of the estimated 150,000 Muslims in Minnesota, half are from Somalia and Ethiopia. Aynte (2006) explains that Minnesota is the most popular destination for US Muslims. According to Robillos, (2001) Minnesota has the largest population of Somalis in the US. Three fourths of these Somalis are refugees of the civil war that was raging in their country (Wilder, 2000). After the first refugees started settling here, they would tell their extended families and friends that Minnesota had many good jobs, good schools and excellent refugee services; as a result, more refugees

would come. Later, Somalis would choose Minnesota because of family and community (Farid & McMahan, 2004).

Many choose to settle in Minneapolis because of the concentration of services available to Somalis, low housing costs, social activity, social support, and availability of public transportation and religious services. There are some, however, who are starting to move to St. Paul, as well as to the first tier of suburbs around the Twin Cities, and even into rural areas. This can be especially difficult for women since it tends to isolate them from the emotional and linguistic support of the Somali community (Farid & McMahan, 2004).

The Somali Muslim Community

New to Minnesota is *Tarek ibn Ziyad* Academy Charter School in Inver Grove Heights. This school started in 2003 and has about 350 students. The vast majority of these students are Somali Muslims and second language learners of English. A sister charter school has now opened in Blaine, Minnesota.

Also new to Minnesota as of January 26, 2007, is its first Islamic University. It was originally located on Central Avenue in Minneapolis; it has now moved to Lakeland Ave. N. in Robbinsdale and is called Islamic University of Minnesota. It offers classes related to the Arabic language and the Islamic religion. Somalis as well as many other Muslim ethnic groups attend classes here.

According to Wafiq Fannoun, Executive Director of the Islamic University of Minnesota (personal communication, September 11, 2007), Minnesota is home to between 100,000 – 150,000 Muslims, and 80 % of that

number are immigrants. With this number ever increasing, it is no wonder there are so many community organizations in Minnesota. There are numerous mosques, many Islamic Centers, Muslim-owned businesses, as well as private and charter schools for Somali Muslims. Dr. Dawud Mulla, Secretary of Trustees at the Islamic Center of Minnesota in Fridley (personal communication, September 16, 2007), helped me to understand the many services available to Muslims in this state. The Islamic Center in Fridley was started at the University of Minnesota by Muslim students. It is an organization that offers classes on Saturdays in Islamic studies and the Arabic language to children who go to public school. It houses a private Islamic school, *Al-Amal*, during the week. In fact, a big addition to the school was just finished in August, 2007. It has a bookstore, a library, and many support services for Islamic families such as counseling, health care at a free clinic, food at a food shelf, and socializing through social events. There are 25 other Islamic Centers in the Twin Cities area, but no other one has a full time school in it although most of the centers have weekend school to teach Arabic and for their students to learn more about Islam.

Dr. Dawud Mulla went on to tell me that there are a variety of Muslim owned businesses in the Twin Cities area. Jerusalem Market, Holy Land Bakery, Crescent Moon Bakery, Patel's Grocery Store, and NK Design are just a few. Around 25 houses of worship, called mosques, can be found there as well. The amount of support and services available in Minnesota and specifically in St. Paul and Minneapolis helps explain why Muslims choose to locate in this area

(Farid & Mc Mahan 2004; Fannoun, personal communication). Somalis are part of this group.

Issues at Home

Many Somali families in the United States cannot educate their children about Islam as thoroughly as they would like. In the ideal situation, the children are taken to Islamic classes as well as having religious training by the father. These two things are hard if not impossible in some families since the fathers are not living in the households. Farid and McMahan (2004) account for the absences of these fathers. When the civil war broke out in Somalia, militia from one clan would execute the men of the rival clan. Also, some men would send their families to another country for safety. As a result, many families who came to America did so without the fathers. A study conducted by the Wilder Research Center of Hispanic, Hmong, Russian, and Somali immigrants found that Somalis were most likely to have a spouse living elsewhere (Wilder, 2000).

Since the vast majority of Somali families in Somalia had intact families with a mother, a father, and extended family members (Farid, 2004), there is no model of single parenting for this new family formation. The mother must now fulfill both parental roles as well as supporting the family. Even if the father does come with the family, he finds that the skills he learned for providing for his family in Somalia are not employable skills here (Farid, 2004). This is an even bigger challenge given the fact that the parents do not know the new language and may not have even gone to school in Somalia since many Somalis are nomadic.

To compound the problem, the children who are in the public schools now may have spent their formative years in refugee camps. Without their fathers and having their mothers preoccupied with survival, these children may not have been taught the Islamic values that Muslims try to instill in their children at an early age. When they attend the public schools, it is all too easy for them to take on the values of the teen culture –spending time with peers instead of family (Hodge, 2002), looking after oneself instead of others (Beshir, 2001) - since they may not be firmly rooted in their own faith (personal interview, Mohamed Farid).

Yet another issue is that with the children being exposed to English in school every day, they usually learn English and adapt to the culture more quickly than the parents, especially if the mothers stay at home. This places the child in the parental position since the parents are often unable to communicate with teachers and administrators at school; students are asked to be interpreters for the parents (Alitolppa-Niitamo, 2004). Role reversal may also be caused by parents who are isolated from the mainstream.

When children are in the parental position, parents' authority is undermined (2004). Sometimes the children take advantage of this situation. In a personal conversation on Feb. 3, 2008, Mohamed Farid, who teaches Somalis at a high school in a metropolis area, told me that sometimes the students tell their parents they have been given a few days off of school, when really they have been suspended.

Issues at School

Alitolppa-Niitamo (2004) states that many Somali students have a myriad of challenges; this slows down their coping capacity and acculturation process. This is especially true for teenagers. On arrival a large number of teens are illiterate or have severely disrupted schooling. This group is very vulnerable since they have many transitions in a short time, particularly if they come from a family that has no formal education.

Somali children who are refugees experience several problems. They may be separated from or have even lost other immediate or extended family members, have traumatic experiences during the war or in the refugee camp, have disruption of socialization, experience physical ailments or sicknesses, or have disrupted education. All of these factors can affect their school success.

The educational expectations of parents for their children are generally high; they are oftentimes higher than in their native country of Somalia. In fact, education may be one of the motivations behind the move. A child's achievement may be a way for families to regain a sense of control over the family's fate and provide social mobility. These expectations are higher for boys; oftentimes they are higher than what most boys can reasonably achieve. If the boys are not successful in school, they may accumulate absences and/or be drawn into adversarial subcultures. Girls are also expected to achieve, but they must balance the demands of school with the informal learning about homemaking skills that goes on at home. If they fail to achieve in school to the desired level, they may get married early and/or start having babies (Alitolppa-Niitamo, 2004).

Another challenge at school is that Somali students may receive a negative reception from their foreign host country. Alitolppa-Niitamo (2004) claims Somali students are the hardest hit in terms of prejudice, racism, and anti-immigration sentiments. In a study at a Finnish school in Helsinki, Somali students were found to not mix well or socialize with the Finnish students, and the boys were openly harassed. The discrimination was not always overt though. Kahin (1997) found that the racial discrimination by classmates was subtle but pervasive with many internalized negative attitudes about Somalis. African Muslim immigrants and refugees, because of their ethnic and religious identities, experience negative reactions in their host societies. In fact, Muslims from Africa seem to be discriminated against more than other Muslim groups because of their darker skin and stricter dress codes. In turn, some Somali students feel like outsiders and participate in acts of resistance toward not being accepted (Oikonomidou, 2007). Some of them even disown their own community and culture in an attempt to be accepted, only to meet indifference or disdain from the other students (Kahin, 1997).

Perhaps the biggest problem area is literacy. In a study done in British schools, many Somalis achieved only marginal literacy, even after five years (1997). Possible reasons for this underachievement include students' lack of formal education, late arrival date in the US, cultural bias in curriculum, limited exposure to English because of social segregation of the Somali community, lack of effective home/school links and stable housing arrangements, and low

expectations from teachers who think Somali students are traumatized and unable to learn (Kahin, 1997).

Parents' Concerns for Students' Success

Parents have some very specific concerns about their children's success in school. Collet (2007) and Kahin (1997) both found that parents worry that the schools are not making adequate provision for the religion of their children. Parents feel that many times there is not proper space or adequate time allowed for Friday prayers which need to be performed during the school day; it is difficult for students to follow the requirements for Friday prayer if their school does not support them in their efforts. Also, there may not be a suitable washroom and prayer area for preparation for the two to three daily prayers that occur during the school day (Kahin, 1997). Another area of interest parents have is in wanting to be informed of any religious assemblies that occur at school during the school day. They want the right to allow or not allow their children to attend these assemblies (1997).

The ability of the students to observe Islamic holidays causes apprehension among parents also. For example, *Ramadan* is a special time in the Islamic faith that lasts approximately one month. Many Muslims fast during this time period. Parents are concerned about their children having to sit in a lunch room where others are eating lunch when their children may be trying to fast. They are concerned about the physical demands of testing, gym class, and extra-curricular sports during *Ramadan* as well since students will not be at their best

when they are not eating during daylight hours. *Eid* is another holiday that Somali Muslims celebrate. Parents do not like the fact that if their children miss school for this purpose it may not be counted as an authorized absence (Kahin, 1997).

Since modesty and privacy are a priority for Muslims, Somali parents are apprehensive about issues related to gender. These issues include mixing of the genders for gym and sexual education classes (Kahin, 1997; Robillos, 2001). Parents would prefer that their children, especially the girls, have gym class only with their same-gender peers in order to best preserve their modesty at all times. They feel that sexual education classes should be taught in single gender classes if at all.

Other areas which cause parents uneasiness include the fact that their children may be underachieving (Kahin, 1997). What makes this even harder is their inability to help their children with homework or be more involved in the school if they do not know the language very well. Parents are aware of the racial harassment that their children face. Girls wearing a *hijab* may be an issue as well since wearing it is not always accepted or allowed (Kahin, 1997).

Many Somali parents are not happy with the way school meals are planned or presented (1997). Most Somalis do not eat pork, but there are many items in school lunches that include pork. Furthermore, sometimes these items are not clearly labeled so that students can avoid them. Instead, students who wish to avoid pork may unwittingly eat it.

Maintenance of First Language

Benefits of L1 Maintenance

As mentioned earlier, many Somalis who live in the United States are immigrants or refugees who bring their native language with them. The majority of these families learn English because it is the dominant language here. In doing so, should families maintain their first language along with learning English or just concentrate on becoming proficient in their new language? Research suggests (Kouritzin, 2000; Schechter & Bayley, 1997; Sandel et al. 2006; Tannenbaum, 2005) that maintaining the heritage language is beneficial in many ways.

First language retention helps with the development of the second language.

Academic and cognitive development in L1 has a positive and important effect on L2 in regards to academic success (Collier, 1995). The language skills children used to develop their first language can be transferred to the L2. This is much easier than learning these skills for the first time. Also, the learning of content material in L1 transfers to L2. It is better to maintain a solid base in one language while continuing to develop the L2 (Collier, 1995).

Maintaining L1 gives a sense of belonging and cultural identity (Kouritzin, 2000; Schechter & Bayley, 1997; Tannenbaum, 2005; Sandel et al., 2006; Guardado, 2002). When children are proficient in their native language, they can claim membership in that language group. Language helps transmit

culture; knowing the language enables children to be a part of their cultural heritage. If children do not know their heritage language, it will be very hard to feel deeply connected to that culture. Keeping one's home language gives a broader acculturation, a deeper multiculturalism, a greater tolerance for others and less racism (Baker, 2000). There is less chance of being ethnocentric if one belongs to two or more different language groups.

Without knowing the L1, children can lose important immediate and extended family relationships (Guardado, 2002; Baker, 2000; Tannenbaum, 2005). Many times the L1 is the only language that older family members speak well. These family members also transmit values through the L1 (Schechter & Bayley, 1997, Tannenbaum, 2005). Without these relationships, an important part of children's stability would be gone.

Sandra G. Kouritzin calls language the most intimate of all possessions (2000). It is a significant part of who we are. Tannenbaum (2005), Sandel et al. (2006), and Kouritzin (2000) describe the home language as being closer and much more intimate and genuine than the second language. Emotions do not translate well into the L2. It is much easier to maintain family relationships and parent in your own language. Kouritzin (2000), who parented two children in her L2, felt incompetent.

Loss of First Language

Even though a first language can be kept when a second is learned, sometimes it is lost. Kouritzin (1997, 1999) completed an oral history study on

21 people who had lost their first language in the process of learning their second language. She found most of them reported many negative familial, psychological, and social effects (as cited in Guardado, 2002). The factors that help bring about this language loss are varied. One reason was the devaluing of the primary language in the community. Another reason was the lack of prestige or rejection of the L1's culture by the dominant community. Yet another is the language shift in the home where older children start speaking the L2 to the younger siblings at home. Being exposed to the L2 early in a child's development can be damaging to the L1 development (Guardado, 2002). Also, parents with limited L2 proficiency may switch to the L2 to accommodate the preferences of the children, believing this will help the children practice the L2 (Guardado, 2002; Kouritzin, 2000). Yet in the process, children lose their L1. This can cause a break in communication between the children and the parents.

There are strategies, though, that families can take to combat the loss of their first language. A key factor is for families to keep the relationships strong with family and friends in their home country as well as with other L1 speakers (Stoessel, 2002; Hulsen, De Bot & Weltens, 2002; Schecter & Bayley, 1997). Another tactic is to have a strong, positive attitude about language retention and find ways to encourage it. Speaking the language at home will help keep it alive.

If the L1 is not kept alive, it can lead to conflict with the parents who expect children to succeed in L2 while retaining the traditions and values of the

family. It can also lead to estrangement between family members (Tannenbaum, 2005).

Acculturation

Soon after Somali immigrants, like other immigrants, arrive here, they begin to realize precisely how different America is from their native country where Islam was the nationally accepted religion. The dress is different, the place of worship, the signs along the street, even the holidays are not the same. Somehow immigrants must find a way to adapt to their new environment. This can be done in a variety of ways.

Complete assimilation is the loss of the heritage culture and language. Subordinate groups may modify behavior, beliefs, and appearances to fit the dominant culture; some do not modify these things. If they do change their behavior, beliefs, and appearances, immigrants and refugees become Americanized and lose their own culture. When this becomes particularly destructive is when the children try to assimilate, but the parents will not or cannot, which can lead to dysfunctional families. Another way for individuals to adapt is through monoculturalism, which denies the differences of other cultures. Neither one of these ways respects both cultures equally. Moderate, selective acculturation, on the other hand, advocates being connected in both cultures. It stresses learning the new language and culture while keeping the old. This seems to lead to the most desirable outcomes in the areas of language and culture (Roberts, 2007).

Under the umbrella of acculturation are dissonant acculturation and consonant acculturation. Alitolppa-Niitamo (2004) states that in dissonant acculturation, some members of the family learn the English language and American ways while at the same time losing the immigrant culture faster than other members of the family. Usually it is the child who learns the ways of the new country faster while losing the immigrant culture more quickly than the parents. This can lead to role reversal where the child knows more in the new country than the parent and is therefore in control in many ways. Consonant acculturation, instead, is when the child's acculturation experience and the parents' happen at roughly the same time (Roberts, 2007). For example, the parents and children learn English and the new culture at roughly the same rate. Consonant acculturation is much more desirable than dissonant acculturation since the latter can lead to difficulties within the family.

Roberts (2007) explains that another potential area of conflict is when people from less individualistic cultures, such as Somalis (Masny, 1999), immigrate to extremely individualistic cultures, such as America. Allitolppa-Niitamo claims the bonding social capital of Somalis has traditionally been very strong (2004). In other words, Somalis enjoy very close relationships. Working or living alone are not common in Somali culture; they are not individualistic (Masny, 1999). In stark contrast is America's individualistic culture. Here ties between members can be looser with a "look after yourself and your immediate family" attitude (Roberts, 2007).

Arrival in the U.S. can either strengthen or weaken Somali Muslims' resolve to practice Islam (Reece, 1997). Even so, Muslims retain their faith at a high rate. Hodge (2002) writes that Islam seems to instill resilience. He also believes that Muslims may have difficulty integrating into U.S. society while maintaining Islamic values. Maybe the best alternative to this issue is to be Muslim by religion and American by culture (Ramadan, 2007). By this Ramadan means staying true to the tenets of Islam while finding a way to contribute to and offer something to society. Muslims must make their decisions as citizens in the name of principles shared with other Americans, not solely based on their religious identity (Ramadan, 2007).

There are a few factors which play a part in determining if Muslim immigrants will have satisfaction in their life in the U.S. Carter (1999) claims the indicators for children are the child's ability to speak English, if she was foreign born or not, how accepting versus rejecting he is of Islamic values, and the amount of social contact the family has with other Muslims. Faragallah, Schrumm and Webb's (1997) indicators for immigrants in general differ slightly. They suggest one will have greater satisfaction if there is longer residence, younger age at immigration, no recent visit to one's homeland, and being a Christian. These are all things which help immigrants to feel more comfortable in their new homeland. At the same time, these factors bring reduced family satisfaction. They encourage American ways, not Somali ways.

Parenting in a Foreign Country

General Findings

Parenting is a rewarding but difficult task. When the stress of trying to adapt to a new culture is added to this undertaking, the challenges can be multifaceted. Most parents want to parent the way they were raised. This may be due to the fact that cognition related to childbearing and socialization are among the most resistant to change (Borstein, 2004). Facing parenting in a foreign country may be very challenging especially if the host country seemingly holds dissimilar values.

Reese (2002) conducted a study which compared the child-rearing practices and values of Mexican immigrants raising their children in the United States with those of their siblings who are raising children in Mexico. The results are enlightening as they may echo the results of studies on other cultural groups. Reese found that parents in the U.S. were stricter than their siblings in Mexico because they perceived America as a more dangerous place. They were also more controlling with their teens. Fathers here helped more with literacy activities than mothers because the mothers' English skills were typically not as good as the fathers'. A greater portion of the women here work, so the husbands help out at home more often. Finally, the parents here said there are greater opportunities for education and employment. They are bothered, though, that their children face more temptations than they did in Mexico; maybe that is why parents are more strict here. Could any of these findings for the Mexican parents' experiences in the United States be true for Somali parents in the United States?

Somalis living in the United States have certain problem areas that arise. These are a result of interaction of religion, family, native culture, and mainstream U.S. culture. Among these problems are home/school relations, family issues, peer relations, dating ethics, self-identity, cultural events, and curricular problems.

Issues in the School

When dealing with schools, parents may be afraid that their language skills make it difficult to be understood by school officials. This can make it hard for parents to express their concerns. Some parents may feel that it is inappropriate to even get involved in the school: the school is the realm for the teachers; the home is the parents' arena.

Another conflict arises with religious holidays such as Christmas, Chanukah, and Easter. During Christmas time, there may be exchanging of gifts, decorating, singing Christmas carols, and sharing baked goods. School districts give one and a half to two weeks vacation for Christmas as compared to one, two, or even no days for Ramadan. Some parents do not like having their children exposed to activities centering around holidays they do not believe in. On the opposing side, what does a parent do when a holiday they believe in, like Ramadan, is not recognized by the schools?

There is also the challenge of helping children succeed within the new language. This is a huge concern since it takes many years to become academically proficient in a new language. How can parents best help their

children to succeed academically? Should parents keep speaking the L1 at home or should they speak English in order to help their children practice the new language?

Many worry over distorted images and unequal coverage in curriculum of native and immigrant cultures. If Muslim children do not see themselves represented fairly and accurately in text books, they may grow to have a negative view of themselves (Carter, 1999).

Issues in Family Life

Parents may not feel as respected by their children as they were in their own country. They may not learn the language as quickly as their children, thus causing a role reversal. Another problem is that the children may have difficulty with peers who do not understand their faith or culture, especially if there are outward signs of faith like Somali Muslims fasting during Ramadan or wearing a *hijab*. The issue of dating can be particularly hard for Muslim parents as well. It is such an accepted ritual in the U.S. but not be so in the mainstream Somali culture. Finally, all immigrant families bring their cultural traditions from their homelands with them. What do parents do when they feel their children are becoming too Americanized and losing their cultural traditions?

Clash between American Teen Culture and Islamic Values of Somalis

Being a teenager and living in the American culture is perhaps much more difficult than being a child or an adult here. When a child is young, her world consists of her immediate family and a few others. As an adult, he can choose

where he spends his time and with whom he associates. As an adolescent in public schools, which most Muslim youth attend (Moore, 2006), she has very little control over the environment; she must attend classes and cannot choose who is in them. If her values, dress, and way of life is different from most other teenagers, it will be more difficult for Somali teenagers and therefore their parents.

Islamic immigrants and Americans, as described by scholars (Moore, 2006; Beshir, 2001), have cultural differences, opposing worldviews, and dissimilar political aspirations. Should we be surprised then, that the American teen culture as experienced in school is so opposite from what Somali parents and the Islamic religion expect of their adolescents?

In Hodge's (2002) article, 'Working with Muslim Youth,' he lists five of the most pertinent values for Muslim youth and how they are in conflict with American teen culture. The values he writes about in his article are family, community, modesty, morality, and nutrition. In the Islamic family, youth do things with their parents more than they do with their peers. Even after puberty, they do not differentiate from the family unit because being interconnected is a family value. The teen culture of America, though, emphasizes friendships with peers. Teens can receive a driver's permit when they are 15 and a license when they are 16, and many do. This enables them to be very mobile and spend more time away from home. Most teens hang out with their friends in their free time, join sports teams, and work; their social unit is becoming their peers.

The value of community is a high priority for Somali Muslims also. Youth may sacrifice freedom to help community or family. It is not uncommon for males to defend their siblings, family, and faith. In the American teen culture, however, teens are socialized to look out for themselves and go off on their own when they grow up. This culture, as Beshir (2001) contends, tells teenagers to be the best they can be; that is their first priority even over the needs of others.

Modesty is a high priority in the Somali's faith and is widely affirmed. Male and female alike need to be modest in dress. Some females even choose to wear a *hijab*, a head scarf, as a sign of modesty. On the contrary, the American teen culture as expressed through the mass media places a high value on body image, and has many role models who advocate this. For example, Barbie and Britney Spears have been role models focusing on body image.

Somalis' Islamic faith has very similar views on morality as compared to Christianity and Judaism (Hodge, 2002; Coleman & Ganong, 2004; Gehrke, 2006). All three religions forbid behavior which is mentally, physically, or morally harmful to others. They all believe in the equality of all individuals before God and in treating others with respect and honesty. They affirm the sanctity of human life, and only condone sex in the context of marriage.

Where the ways part is in that American culture places higher priority on individualistic values such as success, self-actualization, and self-reliance whereas the Somali culture assigns more value to the family. American teens are taught that financial success is of great value.

The last value conflict described by Hodge (2002) is nutrition. In the school setting, Islamic youth can have a hard time adapting since they do not eat pork or any meat which is not kosher. Since pork is in many school lunches, Muslim students need to be aware of when it is being served so they are not faced with going against their beliefs. Also, even though teenagers are not supposed to drink, or take drugs in Somalia or the United States, many teenagers do in America.

In addition to issues raised by Hodge (2002) are peer relations, dating, self-identity, cultural events, and curricular issues. Carter (1999) and Beshir (2001) describe how difficult it is for Islamic youth to fit into the dominant culture in part because of these issues. When issues like dress make the Islamic students stand out so much (Schmidt, 2004; Zine, 2006), American peers may feel they cannot relate to them. Dating is highly restricted or may not even be allowed in Islam but is an accepted practice in America. Muslim youth may have trouble knowing how to identify with the new culture and at the same time to stay true to their Islamic values. The holidays celebrated are very different and Muslim youth may not see themselves represented in the curriculum. All of the issues mentioned are ways that the Islamic culture clashes with American teen culture.

There has been a significant amount of literature about Muslims and the Islamic religion. Where the gap lies is that most of the research has been done on Islam as a unified body and how things are supposed to be, not with popular practice and how things really are within Muslim American families (Coleman &

Ganong, 2004; McAdoo, 1999; Keshishian, 2000, Roberts, 2007; Eugene, 1996; Borstein & Cote, 2004). Another gap, which I will be focusing on, is the lack of studies done on Muslim students, especially Somalis, in US schools. By doing my research project, I hope to find out what some Somali parents and educators feel their challenges are in raising their teenagers. My goal is that this information will help other parents and the school system to better understand Somali parents and their children's needs.

In conclusion, this literature review has covered basics of Islam. Islam in regards to parenting was divided into the three subcategories of Islamic family, parent's role, and child's role. The benefits of retaining the first language have been discussed along with the consequences of losing it. Acculturation is addressed and is followed by parenting in a foreign country. After this there will be a short summary of Muslim Americans and Muslims in Minnesota. The final section is the clash between American teen culture and Islamic values of Somalis.

In Chapter three, Methodology, I have provided an overview of the chapter. I have also provided a description of qualitative research, the data collection process, the long interview, observation, procedure, pilot study, materials, data analysis, verification of data, and ethics.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This study is designed to explore the perceived challenges Somali parents, as Muslims, face in raising their adolescents in the public school system. As discussed previously, when Somalis immigrate to this country, they face a culture that many times is vastly different from that of their country of origin. In their native country, their religion, cultural traditions, and ways of parenting were usually congruent with the society in which they lived. When they come to America, they may lose a great deal of support. Because the American culture is so different from the one they came from, they face many challenges.

In this study, I will conduct interviews to find out what perceived challenges Somali parents, as Muslims, face in raising their adolescents in the public school system. Specifically, I will seek answers to these questions. 1. What do parents feel are the challenges/barriers to their adolescents' success academically and socially in school? 2. What do they attribute these problems to, and what can schools do to alleviate these difficulties?

In order to answer these questions, I will be conducting two-hour interviews with three different participants. These participants will be adult Somalis; they will either be parents or teachers of Somali students. The parents

will have immigrated to America within the last 15 years. I will provide an interpreter for parents if one is needed. Each parent will have at least one teenager attending a public school. The teachers will teach Somali students at a public school and be proficient in English, which will be their second or other language. At least one participant will be a man, and at least one will be a woman. I will find these participants through colleagues at my university, teacher friends of mine, and contacts I have at the Islamic University in a nearby city.

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter describes the methodologies to be used in this study. First, the rationale and description of the research design is presented along with a description of the qualitative paradigm. Second, the data collection protocols are presented. Next, the procedure for the study is outlined. Following this is a description of how the data will be analyzed and then verified. Finally, there will be a list of safeguards taken to protect informants.

Qualitative Research Paradigm

The type of study I will be doing is more appropriate for qualitative instead of quantitative research. As McCracken (1998) and others note, Quantitative research is precise, deals with numbers, does hypothesis testing, is statistical and controlled. It tests theories in order to generalize results. The categories are already established, and the objective is to find relationships between these set categories. It asks precise, closed questions, and the investigator

needs to be dispassionate. A sampling of respondents is needed in order to generalize (McCraken, 1988).

Qualitative Research, according to Sherman and Webb (1988), “implies a direct concern with experience as it is ‘lived’ or ‘felt’ or ‘undergone.’” It also looks for patterns of interrelationships between many categories. These categories take shape during research. The researcher, who is also an instrument in the qualitative process, must elicit testimony, search out patterns, and offer explanations of hidden worlds. Qualitative research tells us what people think and do, not how many of them think and do it; categories and assumptions matter rather than how many people hold the assumptions. The questions are more complex and imprecise, therefore, they need to be opened-ended (McCraken, 1988).

Merriam gives five characteristics of a qualitative study: it is emic, or coming from the insider’s perspective, the researcher does the data collection and analysis, it usually involves fieldwork, it uses inductive research strategies, and it is richly descriptive (1998). This fits the type of research I have done in several different ways. I have attempted to get Somali parents’ perspectives instead of my own. I have done the data collection and analysis. Fieldwork was done when conducting the interviews. Since I used my observations and intuition to find answers to my questions, I have used inductive research strategies. Finally, I created a picture to show a process of understanding.

Data Collection

Participants

I had three participants in this study. All the participants were born in Somalia; I wanted all of them to have very similar cultural backgrounds since Islam is practiced differently in different cultures. The teachers are male and have college degrees. The parent is female and has taken some college classes. I intentionally tried to get people of differing socio-economic status and gender. Hopefully, this will give me a wide range of opinions.

Since I know of no Somali Muslims in my school district or even in my community, I had to recruit participants for my study from elsewhere. To do this, I asked my professors and teacher friends for leads. I also contacted the Islamic Center and Islamic University in a nearby town to ask for interested participants.

Location/Setting

Since I interviewed three participants who are not connected to my teaching job in any way, I did not meet with them at my school. I met with them in college libraries, coffee shops and, in one case, at a participant's home by her request. I wanted to meet at a location that put them at ease and where they felt safe. I feel the safer they felt, the more they would be able to share openly and honestly.

Data Collection Technique 1 – Long, semi-formal interview

In order to collect my data, I conducted long, semi-formal interviews with open-ended questions. My question, What perceived challenges do Somali parents, as Muslims, face in raising their adolescents in the public school

system?” seems to fit very well with this method. The long interview is a way to capture ethnographic data in qualitative research. In McCracken’s (1988) opinion, it is one of the most powerful methods of qualitative study because it lets us see how the respondent views and experiences the world. It is highly efficient, productive, streamlined, and a less obtrusive format than some other ethnographic methods. When the investigator is working with someone from a different culture, he or she can more clearly see cultural assumptions and practices. This is because the researcher has the critical distance that is needed; in addition, when an interview is relatively anonymous, there is more opportunity for candor.

The four steps leading up to the creation of the long interview were discovered through my literature review. They include: exhaustive literature review, review of cultural categories, discovery of cultural categories, and discovery of analytic categories (1988). This method seemed like the best one to use for my study, yet there are a few limitations to consider. While not working with my own culture, I was not able to use my own understanding and experience to interpret the data. I had to figure out how to best construct the relationship between the respondents and myself. I realized that the process of interviewing was time-consuming, privacy-endangering, and intellectually and emotionally demanding for the participants (McCracken,1988). In order to address these concerns, I created interview questions carefully after becoming more aware of cultural issues through my literature review. Keeping respect for participants as a top priority

helped me to be sensitive to what was in their best interest and how I could make things less demanding for them.

In the process of interviewing, I tried to be as nondirective as possible in order to let the participants speak as openly and fully as possible. There were several steps in interviewing. First, I tried not to encourage participants to answer in any particular way or supply terms for them. The idea is to let them tell their own story in their own way as much as possible. Next, generating interview questions that started off light and informal helped to establish a trusting environment (1988).

Using “grand tour” questions helped me to be unobtrusive. These are general questions that are asked in a nondirective manner. They do not supply the terms of the answers they solicit. This technique includes floating prompts to gently encourage the participant to give desired information. Floating prompts can be the raising of eyebrows in an inquisitive manner, repeating respondent’s last remark, or asking, “What do you mean by _____?” In the case that this did not work, I was prepared to use more obtrusive tactics such as planned prompts. These consisted of asking respondents to make a contrast between two things, to put things into categories, or to recall exceptional incidents. An even more obtrusive strategy is auto driving – asking participants to comment on a picture or other stimuli.

My body language also helped or hindered the process of trying to be unobtrusive. I tried to be as benign, accepting, and genuinely curious as possible.

I did this through by my body posture and facial expressions. I did not want to convey an attitude of criticism (McCracken, 1988).

Data Collection Technique 2 – Open-ended questions

Open-ended questions fit best with the semi-formal interviews I did.

These questions allowed respondents to give detailed information and define their world in their own unique way (Merriam, 1998; McKay, 2006). I made use of the four different question types: hypothetical – poses what if questions; devil's advocate – challenges respondent to consider an opposing view; ideal position – asks person to describe an ideal situation; interpretive – offers an interpretation of what is being said and asks for a reaction. Each of these question types has a purpose. Hypothetical questions elicit answers that are many times the respondent's true experiences. Devil's advocate questions are useful to use when the topic is controversial. With ideal position questions, one can find out both the positive and negative side of a situation. Interpretive questions provide a check on what the interviewer thinks was heard, as well as an occasion to receive more information or opinions.

Questions which I avoided include multiple, leading, and yes-or-no questions. These questions can be confusing, reveal a bias or assumption the researcher is making, or allow the respondent to answer with a simple yes or no, thereby cutting off the possibility of elaboration. After the questions had been answered, I was ready with probes and follow-up questions that encouraged participants to give more details on the topic being covered. These were not

specified ahead of time since they are dependent on how the respondent answers the interview question (Merriam, 1998).

Data Collection Technique 3 – Observations

Kidder describes observation as a research tool when it “(1) serves a formulated research purpose, (2) is planned deliberately, (3) is recorded systematically, and (4) is subjected to checks and controls on validity and reliability” (as cited in Merriam 1988, p. 94).

To use this technique in a skilled way, the researcher needs to know how to separate detail from trivia and use rigorous methods to confirm observations. Observation is a good strategy for outsiders because they may notice things that seem routine to insiders. Observers can record behavior as it happens. As an observer, I noticed the participant’s manner of dress, speech, tone of voice, and nonverbal behavior. I thought about what happened as well as what did not happen. I also monitored my actions, speech and thoughts.

It is true, though, that outsiders can miss implications and subtle meanings. For this reason, I was in contact with a Somali friend whom I could openly ask questions of and check out assumptions I may not have realized I had. I took notes after the interviews as well about what I observed during the interviews.

Some limitations to this method include the continuous concern about the flow of research activities, and about how the investigator affects what is being observed as well as the climate of the setting. The best way to start addressing

these possible issues is to be aware of them. With a heightened sense of awareness, I was able to make my actions and responses as unobtrusive as possible.

Procedure

Participants

I interviewed three participants; two of them are Somali, male high school teachers in a metropolitan area. One of them has his master's degree, and the other is working on his. The third respondent is a Somali female who has a 16 year old daughter. All three respondents are Muslim and have been in the United States between 10 to 15 years.

Pilot Study

I conducted two pilot studies with Somalis who have very similar backgrounds to my participants. Before I did this, I needed to figure out exactly who would be in the study. Once I knew this for sure, I looked for one more person who would be willing to be involved in a pilot study. I explained to them that I am doing the interview in order to practice. After the pilot study, I assessed what, if anything, I needed to change about the questions I asked, my tactics, and the setting and location. I also asked the practice interviewees if there was anything that I could improve, if there was anything I did or asked that made them uncomfortable in any way, and if they had any suggestions for questions I could add or should take off.

Materials

The materials I used were interview questions and observations. I gave these questions to participants one week ahead of time so that they had time to think about their answers. The questions I asked related to the sections of the literature review. They were in categories of maintenance of first language, basic demographic information, parenting in a foreign country, their acculturation experience, issues at home, issues at school, the clash between American teen culture and Islamic values, possible solutions, and a conclusion.

These interviews were recorded with a digital voice recorder that has a good microphone and a counter. Later, I transcribed the data that I felt was most important; I downloaded the recordings unto my computer and transcribed it from there.

Post-interview

When I met with the participants, I tried to schedule a time with them for three weeks later to verify all data. This way, if there were any discrepancies in what they said or if I didn't understand something that was said, I could clarify it. Unfortunately, none of them wanted to do that. I ended up sending the transcribed interviews to them through e-mail. They were able to look over the transcriptions and told me of any errors or misunderstandings.

Data Analysis

Analyzing the data gained from interviews and observations is an important part of the research process. The purpose is to determine categories,

assumptions, and relationships within the data. The discovery of analytic categories has five stages: utterances; observation; examining interconnection of observations; putting observations into subjects, categories, or themes; subjecting them to a final process of analysis.

This system is a good check for reliability in qualitative work (McCracken, 1988).

To analyze my data, I highlighted and took notes of the transcriptions. I organized some of the data by physically cutting the transcription into categories of themes and putting them into separate manila folders. When I interviewed the respondents, I also asked questions in the same order with each person so as to add reliability to the project.

Verification of Data

Merriam (1998) defines internal validity as establishing how congruent findings are with reality and whether or not investigators are measuring what they think they are measuring. To establish validity in my research, I employed various strategies. I did extensive research for the literature review in order to try to bring coherence to the study so that what I pursue has a strong base in prior research. To add information to the literature review, I went to the Islamic University in Minneapolis, and two public schools where there are Muslim students. As part of my research project I conducted two-hour interviews of Somali teachers and a parent. Checking my work was done in two different ways; participants were contacted after the interviews to check for accuracy, and a few of my peers occasionally reviewed my work; they periodically reviewed my

capstone as well as talking with me about questions I had on my topic. Each of my peers has many Muslim students and knows more about this topic than I do. In addition, in the beginning of the study I have clarified my assumptions and biases.

Ethics

This study is employing the following safeguards to protect informants' rights:

1. Written permission was obtained from informants.
2. Research objectives were shared with informants.
3. I filled out the short human subject research form that was approved by the review committee.
4. The interviews were transcribed.
5. I changed the names of all informants to protect their identities.
6. During the interview, we were in a college library or a place of participants choosing.
7. Taped interviews were stored in my home where they could be locked up and destroyed after the paper was complete.

In this chapter, the methods of my study have been outlined. I used qualitative research, and then conducted long, semi-formal interviews which consisted of open-ended questions and observations. I did two pilot interviews and three interviews for the study. After the interviews I sent the transcriptions through e-mail to each participant so they could check for accuracy. Later, I

analyzed the data and verified it. The next chapter presents the results of this study.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

This study took place between November 16, 2008 and January 4, 2009. I conducted two practice interviews and three interviews that I used for my study. All participants were born in Somalia, are Muslim, now live in Minnesota, and are parents. No participant's name is used in the study. Of the participants used in the paper, two are teachers in the same metropolitan school district. I planned to do all the interviews in college libraries; however, it didn't work out that way. The first practice one was held at a college library. The second one was at a Somali mall. The next two were at restaurants, and the final one was at the participant's home.

Through the collection of these data, I sought to find the answers to the following questions: What perceived challenges do Somali parents, as Muslims, face in raising their adolescents in the public school system? To what do they attribute these difficulties? What do Somali parents feel the schools could do to help alleviate these problems?

I will present the results of the interview in the same order as the questionnaire with the exception of background information coming first. Next will be maintenance of first language, parenting in a foreign country, and acculturation. After that will be issues at home, issues at school, and clash between American teen culture and Islamic values of Somalis. The last topic will be possible ways to help children succeed at school. All information in chapter four came from the interviews. All information in chapter four reveals answers given by participants and does not reflect research or my personal opinions. A chart which is a compilation of interview responses will be found in Appendix C.

Background Information

Zahra

Zahra is a parent of an 11th grade girl named Fatima who attends a metropolitan high school. They live by themselves; she has been divorced for nine years. Born in Somalia, Zahra's first language is Somali. She also speaks English and Swahili. Zahra and her family moved to Kenya for a while so the children could be schooled in English. Later, they returned to Somalia only to have to move back to Kenya because of civil war in Somalia. As an adult, she

moved to Canada and then to the United States where she has been for twelve years. She came to a different state prior to coming to Minnesota where her mother, brothers and sisters live. Zahra does not have a degree but has attended college for a couple of years.

Mohamed

Mohamed was born in Somalia but left Somalia because of civil war. Being a refugee who felt he had no choice, he came to the United States. He, his wife and children live together in Minnesota which was the first place he came to; someone here sponsored him. He had a high paying, well-respected job in Somalia. When he came here he started working in the schools as a bilingual teacher, and now he is a high school ESL teacher and has been teaching for 15 years. His schooling extends beyond his bachelor's degree.

Mohamed was reluctant to talk about himself or his family. The input he was willing to give me concerned his students and their parents.

Amadu

Amadu was born in Somalia, but when civil war broke out, he became a refugee. First he went to Kenya for two years, then to California to be with his sister who sponsored him. Later, a friend called him and said there was lots of work in Minnesota, so he came to Minnesota. He has been in the U.S. for more than 10 years and now lives in a metropolitan area with his wife and three daughters aged nine, seven and five. His wife was born in Somalia but came here when she was young. She doesn't speak much Somali. Amadu and his wife

spoke mostly English with their daughters when they were young; as a consequence, the children's first language is English.

He used to work with social services. He has been a Bilingual Social Studies Teacher in a metropolitan high school for four years now. He teaches adult ESL in the evening, works with many Somali parents, and is working on his MA in education.

General Observations

In the process of doing the interviews, I made several observations. One was that all participants were very adamant about their Islamic beliefs. When I asked them questions about Islam, they all answered with conviction. In fact, both teachers spoke with a strength I rarely if ever hear. I could tell by their firm answers that their beliefs were unwavering. Furthermore, their actions supported their stated beliefs. Two respondents asked for a break during the interview so that they could go to the mosque to pray. We continued the interview when they were done. One of the respondents set up a day for the interview, but then I did not hear from her for a few days. She had lost her phone, and my phone number with it. When we were finally able to reconnect, she apologized several times. She was very upset about keeping me waiting and said she always tries to honor her word; in Islam, keeping one's word is a high priority. These events spoke to me in a strong way. I felt they each not only had a strong belief system but acted on it as well.

Another observation I made was the hospitality that all the respondents showed me. I wanted to show them that I appreciated the time they put into my research, so I brought a small jar of homemade jam for each. This seemed to be nothing compared to their hospitality. There were five interviews all together counting the two practice ones. For three of the interviews, we were supposed to meet at a library, but it was closed for the holidays. We went to a restaurant instead. I wanted to pay since they were giving up their free time for me. I offered profusely, but it made no difference. Each of them insisted on paying since I was a guest to their city.

Background Information of Students' Parents

Both Amadu and Mohamed agree that the parents of their students usually have little or no education, although a few of them have college degrees. Generally they do not speak English.

Amadu told me that the parents of his Somali students speak Somali and maybe another language such as Italian, Arabic, Swahili or one of the languages spoken in Ethiopia. Sometimes you may even see a parent who speaks three languages but not English. Some may be on welfare; the majority of the ones who work have low incomes and probably work evening hours such as 4 to 11pm. The majority of the parents are married and live together in the same house with their immediate family members or with extended family. Mohamed, on the other hand, said most of the parents are females who don't speak English, and if they work they do odd jobs. Because of civil war, many mothers came here with their

children while the fathers stayed back in Somalia or may have been killed. There are some fathers who are here with their families though. Parents came here because refugees have no choice. One must go wherever accepted.

Both Amadu and Mohamed thought that most parents went to another country before coming to the United States because in order to be given refugee status, one has to go to another country first. He listed various explanations as to how they ended up here. The United States is believed to be the best country and very powerful. It also has good technology. Immigrants are provided resettlement and may have relatives that live here. Some of them may be asylum seekers.

Maintenance of First Language

Both teachers thought that parents of their students learned the Somali language first but usually do not read or write it; parents may also speak one or more other African languages including Swahili. Arabic is the other language they might possibly speak. The first school they may have gone to would be a Qur'anic school where they would have learned the Arabic language. However, the majority of the parents do not speak any other language, nor do they read Somali. Zahra, Fatima's mother, explained that the first language she learned was Somali; Zahra also knows English and Swahili.

Zahra's daughter, Fatima, was born in Canada and learned both Somali and English at the same time. For first grade, Fatima was sent to live with her grandparents in Africa where she learned Swahili. From second grade on, she

attended school in the United States. Not all Somalis learned two languages at once as Fatima did. Somali is the language that the teachers believe their students first learned.

Mohamed believes that because of civil war in Somalia, many of his students have interrupted, limited, or no education before they came to America; that is one very important reason why his students struggle when learning English. Combined with this is the fact that most of the families are illiterate, therefore the parents cannot offer the support the child needs. Amadu says his students have two major problems with being schooled in English. One is with the reading and writing; they have a hard time understanding what they read, and cannot write English correctly. Speaking comes much more easily and is not generally a problem. The other problem is that they do not understand the educational system. This issue will be discussed later in the paper.

Parents speak mostly with other Somali speakers as compared with speaking with other English speakers. Zahra speaks Somali with her extended family members, friends and neighbors. She does speak English at work, though, and most of the time with her daughter. Amadu explained that when the parents have a problem, sometimes they will not go to the school's main office; they use Somali teachers as a resource instead of going to the administration. Yet some parents will not even trust Somali teachers. They think the teachers are speaking in the same way they are, so how can they help? They want to go to the people who have the power. Another reason for the mistrust is hidden tribal issues which

are not openly discussed. A Somali parent may think a staff member is from a different tribe and may hold bad feelings against the parent.

Both teachers reported that the parents use Somali at home with the children. Amadu said the children use English in virtually all circumstances including when responding to their parents. Mohamed said they use Somali if the parent doesn't speak English or a combination of both languages if the parent speaks both. Many times it has to do with age. The older generation uses Somali; the younger generation uses English. In circumstances where the parents do know English, they may use Somali for specific circumstances. Amadu reported, "Mostly when they are angry they use Somali." Zahra uses Somali with most of her social contacts and when she and her daughter are in public and want to speak privately.

When it comes to maintaining the home language, Amadu thinks the students who can speak, read and write their native language can transfer their knowledge learned in Somali to English. They also need to continue practicing the speaking, reading and writing of their native language. Amadu believes these students generally do not lose their first language. He said the students who lose their native language are the ones who lack literacy skills in that language. In Mohamed's school district, there are advocates who are trying to include native language literacy programs that might help students maintain their native language. Students learn the language quickly, according to Mohamed yet so far, "nothing is helping them to maintain." Fatima has maintained her home language

enough to carry on a conversation in Somali, but Zahra says that Fatima's "...gender pronouns are totally mixed up."

Amadu asserted that students are having a hard time maintaining their first language since the media and culture supports English, not Somali. Students are exposed to English through the television, radio and internet. The students are adopting the culture here, and that includes the English language. Amadu lamented, "They are losing something that I don't know. They came here two years ago. They are losing something because of the media." Amadu goes on to explain that another reason they are losing their home language is that when they speak English, they are rewarded by being understood and by getting jobs. When they speak Somali, they are punished; no one understands them. Also, there tends not to be a lot of socialization between Somali parents and children. The parents talk about politics and what is going on. The children talk about the American culture. The children speak English to each other in person and on the phone. They do not speak Somali to each other. They are Somali by color and ethnic group, not as much by language and culture.

Both Mohamed and Adadu agree that the students' loss of their first language (L1) has had a significant impact on the families. There is a disconnect between the parent and child. They each feel they are not understood. The parent speaks in Somali, and the child answers in English, the language of her environment. If Amadu tells his daughter in Somali to go to the bathroom, she can understand. She cannot, however, answer in Somali. This disconnect

broadens to extended family members as well. Amadu's own daughter cannot speak Somali. When her grandmother calls from Somalia, he must translate since the grandmother and granddaughter do not know each other's language.

Mohamed also felt the loss of L1 had a negative impact on families. He related a case he knew about where the parents did not teach their children their native language, and the parents did not learn English. It ended up that they had to use social workers as interpreters between them. This is happening in some of his students' families. Now the parents are starting to realize how important the Somali language is and are trying to encourage their children to use it more. In Zahra's case, she knows English very well, so she can still communicate with her daughter. Fatima knows Somali well enough to communicate somewhat with her extended family. There are times though, that some of them tease her about her Somali language skills. That does not help Fatima to want to use Somali.

Even though communication is generally difficult between students and their extended family members in Somalia, the students' parents keep close contact with extended family in Somalia. All three participants feel that even though Somali parents live in America, they are connected to family members in Somalia. Somali parents regularly send money to these relatives.

When asked who is learning the language the fastest between the father, mother, both parents or the children, Mohamed and Zahra thought the children are learning it the fastest. Zahra said, "They speak so fast, it's not even funny." Zahra felt the fact that her daughter had learned the language so well had not

caused any problems in their family; Zahra speaks English fluently as well. On the other hand, Amadu thought the mothers are learning it the fastest. He based his opinion on the fact that the majority of people that come to his adult ESL class are women, so they must be the ones who are learning it the fastest. The fact that they are learning English, sometimes causes problems with the husband: Amadu said, "Sometimes the men have suspicions because the more English she knows, the less men can oppress." Mohamed felt that if the parents do not learn English, they will lose communication with their children, so they should all learn English.

Parenting in a Foreign Country

There are many issues involved with parenting in a foreign country. In fact, Amadu said, "There is really too much." One of the big problems is that parenting was very different in Somalia. In Somalia, according to respondents, everybody is your parent. If children misbehave, everyone is going to teach them the right way. The parent's word is law, and there is no compromise. The child follows what the parent says. If the child does not obey the parent and becomes bad, there is a social network that has the power to punish the child. In the United States, if a parent kicks a child out of the house, the government may get involved. Amadu explained how it works in Somalia. Over there, no one else will take the child in, and the government cannot get involved. In Somalia, society controls the behavior and options of the children. Children need to show good behavior and act as a gentle person. For example, smoking is not acceptable, especially for girls. If a girl is smoking, there are consequences such

as no one wanting to date her. Other consequences may include someone talking to her about this behavior. An even bigger consequence for bad behavior may be that her future will be affected. Maybe no one will want to marry her. In Somalia, virtually everyone parented in the same manner; all community members supported the parents and held the same values. The difference in the United States is that there are some Somali parents who say 'do what I say,' some who compromise, and some who say, 'do what you want.' So not everyone parents in the same way as they did in Somalia.

All participants agreed that overall, parents are not as strict here as they were in Somalia. There is no way they can be as strict; the children are managing the households and being interpreters. They threaten to call 911 if the parents tell them to do something they don't like. Zahra thinks she is not as strict here as what she might be in Somalia. She says there are a lot of Somali children who run away because their parents are too strict; she does not want that to happen with her daughter. She wants to know Fatima, develop a relationship with her where Fatima feels she can come to her and tell her things. On the other hand, Amadu had the idea that parents are very strict. They want their children to speak the language very well, and keep their own culture and religion.

Another aspect of Somali parenting which has carried over to the United States is that most Somali parents and children do not interact much at home. The children are talking to other children, and the parents want to talk to other adults, so there is not much conversation going on. The parents are working, cooking or

busy with other things. Amadu said this worked in Somalia since Somalia was a collective society, and everyone shared in the parenting role. He said it is not working very well in America though.

Amadu also claimed the sociolinguistic rules are different here as well. In Somalia, there are distinct rules about how to speak with different groups of people. When a child speaks to the elderly, she needs to slow down and use very respectful words. When she speaks to her parents, there is a certain way. In America there do not seem to be any boundaries between these groups. Children speak the same to their parents as they do with their peers. The respondents reported that children do not talk back to their parents in Somalia. That is the opposite of what they have seen happening here where children do talk back to their parents and generally do not give their parents the respect they deserve. Mohamed said his students mostly see African American neighborhoods, and they do not see respect there. He felt the wealthy communities do a good job raising their children. Amadu felt the non-Somali children of middle class families respect their parents, but the children from lower socio-economic families do not respect their parents. Zahra's daughter talks back to her sometimes and does not help around the house the way she did when she was a child. Mohamed thinks the Somali children will respect their parents if the parents love them and support them well.

If there is not enough respect though, it may have to do with the fact that the children seem to be in control. All three respondents felt the children know

they "...have the upper hand...". Overall, the children know the language and culture better than the parents. They usually know more about what is going on in this culture and how to relate to others outside their community. The children interpret for the parents in many situations and even help write the bills out. They are the ones who usually run the household. Because of this, they sometimes take advantage of this situation. Interviewees claimed that sometimes students tell their parents they are doing well in school when they really are not.

Dealing with the law is a matter that came up several times in my interview with Amadu and Mohamed. According to them and Zahra, the parents fear that the law, child protection, will take their children away. The children know this and sometimes take advantage; they know that if the parent hits them, they can call 911. They feel the parents of their students do not understand the laws and have a fear of them. The parents are afraid that their children will (most of the time unknowingly) do something wrong and get arrested. Then they will be in the system forever and will not be able to get jobs. Amadu says he has heard stories of families moving back to Somalia if their children get in trouble, but he does not personally know of any cases.

According to respondents, the next concern for parents is living in a country that does not have accommodations for their parenting style. There is a system here which produces the American style of parenting. Mohamed was very concerned that there was not enough support for parents to sufficiently educate their children about Islam. Although there are some mosques and private schools

that try to do that, "...it is not on the scale that we have in our country." Amadu explained that churches accommodate many familial needs, but Somalis are not Christians, so they are usually not an active part of this. Recreational parks are a good resource for young families, but Somalis are not used to this concept. The laws are not designed to accommodate the Somali style of parenting either. Zahra said that if a Somali parent spans her child to discipline her, the child might be taken away.

When asked if students have non-Muslim friends, all three participants said yes. In fact, Zahra reported that almost all of her daughter's friends are non-Muslim. Amadu told me about some interracial, interfaith marriages he is aware of. It happens and is increasing. For Muslims, the Islamic faith gives permission for men to marry Christian or Jewish women. However, women are only allowed to marry Muslim men. Most Somali parents want their children to marry within these Islamic guidelines. Reality may sometimes differ; Amadu's sister married a non-Muslim man.

Acculturation

Respondents reported that students were born in Somalia, Kenya, or another country; the younger ones may have been born in America. The ones who were born in America or went to school in America feel that this is their home. Mohamed thought his parents may say this is home or they have two homes. Amadu quoted a Somali prophet, "where you make your life is your home." Amadu also thought some parents would say "...nothing is like original

home.” In Somalia, they were somebody; here they are at the bottom. Zahra’s daughter was born in Toronto, Canada. Since Zahra has been here for 19 years, she feels at home here and is involved with her daughter’s schooling and with the community. She encourages Fatima to be involved in school activities as well. She did say she would like to go back to Somali to retire if things are well there.

All participants felt that in general, the children are learning the American culture faster than the parents, and they feel more comfortable here. The children like the freedom they have here. They are acting and thinking like Americans. Whatever they do is based on American norms. Because of this, the students are losing their culture, and no one can do anything about it; it is environmental. The children are picking up the culture around them instead of the one their parents grew up with. This causes tension since parents place more value on Somali culture and ways of thinking than the children do.

What parents do like about America is the culture of going to school, getting degrees and working hard. Amadu also stressed the point that the United States has taught Somalis to work hard and respect time. “We never respected time. In America time is money,” Amadu said. Somali parents appreciate the culture of giving, specifically the religious groups that give without expectation of being paid back. Amadu said, “We are supposed to follow their footsteps.”

All participants had some concerns about being involved with the American culture. Zahra’s first and biggest concern was how to keep her daughter from taking drugs. She was worried about Fatima getting her driver’s

license because then Fatima might drive around with people Zahra does not know; they may use drugs and be a bad influence on her daughter. Mohamed thought the parents of his students were concerned with their children being involved in gangs, being able to understand the laws of the land, and helping their children deal with peer pressure. Amadu felt parents worry that in America their children may become involved with gangs, drugs, going to clubs and drinking. They also do not like the influence television has on their children; they feel the children want to act out what they see on television.

All respondents agreed that there are barriers to success for Somalis in the United States. Both the teachers thought the parents were held back by the court system. They did not understand the laws and were many times unaware when their children are breaking them. If their children do get arrested, the parents do not understand what needs to be done next or how to help their children. Also, there are many opportunities the parents do not have access to if they do not know the language. Since Somali parents are not used to the cold climate of Minnesota, Mohamed believes many of them are having a hard time adjusting to that too.

The barrier parents seemed to feel the strongest about was being Islamic in a non-Islamic culture, according to all respondents. They feel that Muslims and Islam in general have been discriminated against, especially since the destruction of the World Trade Center in 2001. They do not like how people form their opinions about Islam from how the media portrays the situations. They feel that, as Mohamed put it, “the media is just picking up information of the bad

things” and “the media is the problem for the Muslims.” He said, “...the media is labeling Muslims as terrorists...” Others treat them as if all Muslims are terrorists, and this could not be farther from the truth. Mohamed firmly believes that people who apply Islam properly are very good examples.

All three participants concur that parents’ faith in Islam has become stronger as a result of living in the United States. They said that in Somalia, most people had similar beliefs. Here, you have to be more knowledgeable, more conscious of your environment since there are so many different religions otherwise you may lose your faith. Some Somalis become more religious; some females wear a *hijab* here when they did not wear one in Somalia. Amadu thinks it is a symbol that they are different, still a Muslim. When I was speaking with Zahra, I noticed she was wearing a traditional Somali dress and head scarf. She explained that she decided four or five years ago to cover herself, and now Fatima does also. Zahra said she does this because of her strengthening Islamic faith, not as an outward symbol that she is different from others.

This strengthening of faith does not seem to hold true for the children though; all respondents agreed that the children seem weaker in their faith as a result of living here. Amadu said some even call these children, “Americans with a *hijab*” - “Only the hijab is Muslim, but the inside is American.” The parents and/or the *sheik* at the mosque are responsible to teach Islamic values to the children. This educating has not been happening to the same degree as it would

have in Somalia. There is not enough time here to properly teach Islam. Another issue is that the children have no interest.

According to the interviewees, one more difference concerning how Islam is practiced here as opposed to how it is practiced in Somalia is the celebration of holidays. The primary difference is that in Somalia, Islamic holidays were national holidays, and not many people had to work. Everyone came together to celebrate. In America Muslims still celebrate their holidays, but everyone else is working. Amadu and Zahra believe that celebrating here is totally different than in Somalia and not as meaningful. In Somalia everyone is celebrating together, laughing, speaking one language and listening to music on the radio like Christmas. There was more time to celebrate. Here they will fill up the time with other activities. Amadu went as far as to say, "That kind of culture really has meaning. We are losing that meaning here." Even though parents feel so strongly about this, they do not seem able to get back to Somalia very often. They go back anywhere from every year or two to rarely ever. Even though they would like to, they may not have enough money or the passports which would allow them to travel to another country.

Issues at Home

According to participants, the main problem at home seems to be the disconnect between the parents and children. The children are learning the language and culture of the US quickly, yet most of the parents speak little or no English. Many times the parents will speak Somali to the children who will then

answer in English. The language gets to be a problem; soon both sides find it difficult to communicate in a meaningful way that the other can understand.

Also, the parents' thinking patterns are aligned with Somali culture, whereas the children's thinking is more similar to American views. Zahra felt this to be true to a certain extent in her family, but since she knows English so well it is not as much of a problem for her family as she feels it is for some other families.

There are other exceptions to this where the parents are educated and can speak, read and write English. Most parents though, do not read or write English or Somali and only speak Somali. This can put the children in the parental role in many situations. The teachers agreed that students interpret for their parents in almost all circumstances such as at schools, clinics, stores, and at businesses. In short, many times the children are effectively running the households. Again, since Zahra has been in the country a long time and knows the language and culture well, this did not hold true for her family. Another exception is that at Amadu's school, interpreting done by the children is prohibited.

Issues at School

All respondents concurred that education is extremely important to Somali parents. In fact, they felt it was equally or even more important than in Somalia since you could still support your family in other ways in Somalia if you did not have an education. Parents want to support their children's education here, but they face several obstacles. By far the primary concern that all three participants

had concerning schools was the parents' lack of understanding regarding the educational system in America. This problem seemed to far outweigh any other. The educational system in Somalia is very different from what it is here. The first four years that Fatima was in school in America, Zahra did not understand the educational system. She was use to Somalia where the students do work all year, but whether or not they pass to the next grade was dependent on how well they did on a final test at the end of the school year. She did not know that here, all the work students do all year counts toward their grades. Zahra said that in Somalia, the educational level was very high, and if children did not get their homework done, they would get in trouble at school. The educational system put the responsibility of learning directly on the child. Zahra said, "...in Africa, your child knows that activity is required from them." The parents were not expected to be involved in their children's education the same way they are here.

In the United States, sometimes the parents do not know what high school credits are about or that if their child gets an "F" on her report card, she can go back and take the class over. They might not even know that they should be helping their children with homework, and even if they did know, most of them are unable to because of their limited language skills. Children do not have parents who graduated from high school or college in the United States, so the parents cannot use their experiences to guide their children. The parents do not understand the educational system, so how can they help the children?

When parents do try to become involved with the schools, they face the challenges of the language barriers since most of them do not speak English. If they are able to get an interpreter, speak with a Somali staff member, or speak English themselves, they can speak with staff members, but they tend to feel their voices are not heard, not respected. They also feel they do not have much to contribute and are not a valued member of the community. Mohamed felt there were other factors involved in parents' lack of involvement with the schools. Since the weather here can be quite a bit different from the warm climate of Somalia, many parents have a hard time adjusting to the frigid temperatures of Minnesota. Some of the parents may not have dependable transportation either.

Zahra's principal concern was communication with teachers and the school in general. She said that for the first four years of her daughter's schooling, she did not know how to communicate with the schools or even that she should be doing this. Then, she was on the internet and accidentally discovered the parent portal for her daughter's school. This is an on-line communication link between the school and the parents. She learned that she can see how Fatima is doing in her classes and how to e-mail Fatima's teachers. After this, Zahra stayed in touch with Fatima's teachers either through e-mail, phone or through visits to the school. She is also up-to-date on Fatima's grades since she now knows how to readily access them.

According to respondents, as far as parental expectations are concerned, having their children graduate not only from high school but college as well is a

major priority for parents. Yet, there are some parents who feel boys must succeed since they will be supporting families; girls can marry someone, so it is not quite as important for them to succeed. There is a lot of pressure put on boys. Other parents feel it is equally important for girls as well as boys to succeed. One teacher said more girls are succeeding in the United States because more attention is given to programs for girls. The other teacher said there are more girls in his classes. In one class, he only has four boys. Mohamed said that in Somalia, because of the scarcity of opportunities, boys were given more attention. The parents wanted the boys to get an education in order to support the families. The other two respondents felt the expectations were the same in Somalia as in the United States.

When looking at the success of students, we must also look at the age when children start their schooling in the USA. One teacher felt teenagers have a harder time than children who start school here at a younger age. Teenagers are trying to fit in; they do not know the language well, so they have problems with other teenagers. Some of them struggle so much that when they are 18 years of age, they leave the United States; some go back to Somalia. The other teacher said each age group has its own advantages and disadvantages. Teenagers do not have enough time in school to learn the skills needed to be successful, yet they retain more of the Somali cultural background and are more responsible. They tend to finish high school and college. The younger children have the advantage of starting at the beginning with the American school system. The disadvantage

they have is that they probably play more video games and watch more movies growing up. They may not be as responsible and hardworking as the older children. Zahra had no opinion on this issue; since she only has one daughter, she felt she could not compare.

Another problem that may sometimes stand in the way of students' success at school may be perceived discrimination. Zahra and one teacher felt discrimination by teachers was a concern. Sometimes teachers had low expectations of Somali students and did not expect them to excel. Amadu said parents do not understand when their child gets a D or an F in one subject, yet she does well in math or science. "They feel there is language discrimination" by the teachers. Even so, Amadu does not feel this is a problem. Zahra thought her daughter should not have to be segregated and put in ELL class; speaking a different language should be a plus, not a minus. Fatima attended ELL classes for the first four or five years, and then Zahra pulled her out of ELL classes. Zahra also wondered if Somali students received as much academic support from counselors as other students received.

Other times teachers were viewed as not being accepting of certain minority groups including Somalis. Zahra said that some teachers really do not care about certain students. "They kind of hush a certain group of kids." Fatima's school took some students to the opera and the museum, but not all students. One teacher decided to take the Somali students to Valley Fair at the end of the year. Other reasons for discrimination included being black and being

Somali. Of the discrimination issues mentioned above, discrimination by teachers and discrimination because of color seemed to be parents' major concerns.

For students, the problems are varied. Zahra thought her daughter's principal concern in school right now is doing well in algebra and avoiding discrimination by teachers. The teachers felt the biggest problems were the language barrier, environmental differences, education, and peer pressure.

Amadu explained that language can be a problem for several reasons. The first reason is that it is more challenging to learn academics in a new language.

Another reason is that when Somali students speak their home language, many times other students cannot understand them and tease them. Peer pressure is not a minor matter either. In fact, peer pressure seems to be a main issue parents have with public schools. Parents want their values to be accepted and respected by the schools their children attend. They do not want their children to feel inferior or to compromise their religious beliefs. This peer pressure and discrimination by teachers are two of the main reasons why Somali parents are now looking to put their children in charter schools.

Somali parents want their children to succeed in public schools, but have reservations as to how this will be done. One worry they have is about their children passing state tests and graduation standards; all children are expected to pass these tests whether it is in your first language or not. Zahra wants Fatima to take some classes in the summer to make up for some classes she failed. Parents appreciate when there are Somali teachers and support staff in the schools. They

are a very essential component of the connection between parents and school. Zahra wishes there were more Somali staff members since they help culturally and with communication. Mohamed said sometimes there are enough Somali staff members; it depends on the school. Amadu thought there were enough, but they quit because the school does not give them enough hours. He also said sometimes parents do not trust the Somali support staff. "We are a tribal society." If a Somali person is translating, a parent may not know which tribe he was from in Somalia. If he was from an opposing tribe, the parent may think he will not translate correctly because he does not like the parent's tribal affiliation. Amadu said, "That is another issue that is a hidden thing that we do not always explain."

Somali parents also worry about how their children will follow what is prescribed by the Islamic faith in the public school setting. Mohamed said all Muslims are required to pray five times a day and dress modestly. They must not eat pork or date. All respondents agreed that parents had little to no problem with the dietary requirements since most schools either do not have pork on the menu or let students know when it is on the menu. Respondents did not voice concern over the dating issue either. The issue the teachers thought the parents had with dress is that in gym class many times girls are required to wear clothes that parents feel are not modest. Girls may also be required to participate in gym class with boys. Parents do not approve of either one of these situations.

The issue all three participants reacted the most strongly to was that of the students being allowed time and space to pray during school hours. The five daily

prayers must be performed during specific time frames; there are usually two that fall during school hours. The teachers thought some schools are good at allowing time and space for the students to pray while other schools are not. Mohamed said the schools that are familiar with the culture are better at making these allowances. Amadu alleged parents are sending their children to charter schools because they feel students are not being allowed adequate time and space for their prayers. Zahra voiced no concern over dress, dietary needs, or dating. She said Fatima's school has allowed time and space for students to pray, but students were found hanging around in the hallways and causing trouble. Now sometimes they do not let the children leave the classroom.

Time off during religious holidays did not seem to be an issue for two of the respondents. One teacher, however, thought parents are not happy that schools give two weeks off for Christmas and only two days for *Eid*. There is inequality in respect to religion. He stated, "This country was built on Judeo-Christian values. We came late, but we need accommodations."

Clash Between American Teen Culture and Islamic Values

Somali parents place a high value on their Islamic faith and want their children to accept these beliefs also. In fact, all respondents were very adamant that children's acceptance of Islamic values is the top priority for parents. Amadu thought parents would have strong expectations that their children accept these beliefs. He emphasized the fact that praying five times a day, fasting during Ramadan, and not eating pork are all obligatory, not a choice but a must for

Muslims. There are a few exceptions to the fasting, however, such as being ill, pregnant, nursing a baby and having a menstrual cycle. Mohamed and Zahra emphasized the fact that these things are expected of the children, but ultimately the decision needs to be left up to them. They said parents must train their children well when they are young and teach them to make these decisions on their own. Respondents agree that overall, children have accepted their parents' Islamic values. This makes the parents happy.

None of the respondents, however, are happy about how Islam is portrayed in the media. Mohamed thought that because of the media coverage of the destruction of the World Trade Center in 2001, all Muslims are viewed as terrorists. He also said the media only covers the bad things. He stressed the fact that in the Islamic faith, if you kill someone, Muslim or not, it is as if you killed all humanity. The Somali parents are upset that their families are viewed as terrorists when that is not what their faith is about.

While most Somali children have accepted Islamic values, Somali parents realize their children will also accept some American values. The parents do not like all American values, but the ones they are happy to have their children accept are the high value of education and good work ethics. Mohamed said cleanliness is another American value Somali parents like. Zahra thought Fatima has learned to be more individualistic than what is accepted in the Somali culture. She thought this was a plus though, since it will help her daughter depend on herself more. Amadu also thought Somali children being raised in America are

becoming more individualistic, although he viewed this as a problem and another thing that separates the parents and children. He said it is the opposite of the collective society in Somalia where everyone helps each other.

Another opposite to Somalia's Islamic values is the relationships between young males and females and beliefs about marriage. Zahra's daughter is 16 and as far as Zahra knows, has not dated or even asked to do so. If Fatima does want to date, Zahra hopes Fatima will tell her so that she can help Fatima make decisions. As far as Fatima's future, Zahra hopes Fatima will graduate from college and have children after she gets married. Zahra has strong expectations that Fatima will do these things, but at the same time she will not force her daughter. She wants to be a guide and let her daughter make the final choices.

When asked what parents thought about the issue of dating and marriage, Mohamed stated that it is not allowed. "Contact to females is only through marriage." Plans for the future should be approached together with both parent and child. In Islam, one can only get married with the permission of the female's parents. Mohamed spoke of being responsible for finding a husband who has Islamic values for his daughter.

In the issue of dating, Amadu said sometimes the young men and women want to date whomever they please and "...don't even care about following the culture." He explained that Somalis have arranged marriages. The young men and women may not even have a choice in this matter because it is a Somali tradition. Sometimes when the boy reaches puberty, the parents tell the boy to get

married. According to Amadu, parents are afraid that if he does not, he "...will do something bad." The parents will support the couple while they are still in school. "That still exists today." According to Amadu, the only ones who let their children choose their own paths in this issue are the secular ones, the ones who do not care. They say, "You get what you like. Let me know."

Possible Ways to Help Children Succeed in School

Zahra's advice to schools could be summed up in two words – better communication. She was very adamant about this point and repeated it several times during the interview. Schools need a better system for telling Somali parents about the parent portal, the on-line school site where parents get information about the school and their children's academic progress in each class. If parents do not know how to use it, maybe schools could help train parents to use it. Also, she suggests, not giving letters to the children and expecting the parents to get them; the letters do not always get to the parents.

Zahra suggests that in order for children to be successful, teachers and parents need to be a team. She thinks teachers should let parents know if there is a problem with school work or behavior. We, parents and educators, should catch students before they get off track. Zahra wants counselors to be more involved and give Somali students more advice on planning their educational path. Parents need to be involved as well. They need to work at home with their children and become involved with the school. The school system wants students to do well. "For the school to do better, the parent needs to be involved."

Mohamed and Amadu had advice for schools too. Parents want an acceleration of their children's English language skills. Teachers should be strict with students and make them do the school work. Schools need to think about adding bilingual services; this will help students learn English and help with parental communications. Teachers need to teach students real life skills. Some students can do the reading and writing, but when it comes to real life, they cannot make decisions. Amadu says, "They need to be taught how to make decisions, how to compare two things and select one." They also need the tools to become productive as well. These tools include not only education, but moral support as well. This is the first generation that is going to college. They do not know what it is like. Sometimes, if they fail a test they quit. Students do not have mentors to help them through the process and tell them to keep going; they can still succeed even if they fail a test.

Mohamed emphasized that teachers need to understand the students' backgrounds. Many times Somali students come here with very little or no formal education. Mohamed does not want teachers to compare these students to English-speaking middle class children who were born here. Teachers need to tell students they are an accepted part of the community. Mohamed also wants schools to give them the time and space they need for their daily prayers. Schools should understand these students and lead them to higher education. If we do not do this, Amadu feels, "They will be another African American group who came here and went to the jails."

Schools need to work on establishing better communication with parents as well as listening to parents and respecting their opinions. Parents want their children to succeed but do not always know how they can help and feel what they have to offer is not valued anyway.

Respondents reported that parents are afraid that their children will lose their language and religion if they go to public schools since these schools are secular. Many parents are now putting their children in charter schools because of this; they feel charter schools listen to parents and help them. Schools need to find ways to fit students with Islamic cultures into non-Islamic communities. If schools do not find a way to do this, parents will continue to look to charter schools, as they are now, as a relief from this situation. Parents want a place where their cultural practices and religious beliefs are not only accepted but respected.

Conclusion

The interviewing process did not go at all like I suspected, so I had to make changes along the way. Two of the respondents took a break to go to the mosque to pray during the interviews. Some of the interview locations were changed at the last minute due to weather, car trouble, and participants desire to eat before the interview was complete. I needed to be patient and put participants' needs before my own.

Most of the responses were what I expected, but a few very important ones, were not. To me this was the fun part since I learned something new. The

fact that respondents at times gave very different answers only added to the intrigue.

In this chapter I presented the results of my data collection. First was a summary of participants' background information. After that, data was organized into categories that are chronologically consistent with the interview questions. These include maintenance of first language, parenting in a foreign country, acculturation, issues at home, issues at school, clash between American teen culture and Islamic values of Somalis, and possible ways to help children succeed at school. In Chapter Five I will discuss my major findings, their implications, limitations, and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

Chapter five will contain my conclusions about what I have learned from interviewees about the issues Somali children face in succeeding at school. This is an important issue since there are so many Somali children in the public schools now. In this research project I attempted to answer the following questions: What perceived challenges do Somali parents, as Muslims, face in raising their adolescents in the public school system? To what do they attribute these difficulties? What do Somali parents feel the schools could do to help alleviate these problems? In this chapter I will address my major findings, their implications for schools, limitations, and suggestions for further research.

Major Findings

In order to answer my research questions, I read dozens of journal articles and books, took a college class called “Introduction to Islam,” talked informally with many different people, and formally interviewed five people (two for practice and three for the study). After doing this research, I found some answers to my questions: I discovered that what was going on within the Somali family itself probably had more to do with students’ success at school than anything else. In short, I felt as though I had not been asking the right questions. I should have been asking, “What is going on in Somali families that is making it difficult for children to succeed in school?” I believe that helping Somali families is the best way to help Somali children do well at school.

All participants interviewed were refugees who were born in Somalia as are most Somali parents living in America. Somalis usually go to another country first, most commonly Kenya, before coming here. They come to a land where the language, culture, parenting style, government, educational system, and climate are very foreign to them. They most often come with few resources, and must somehow learn to make a living, fit in, and raise their families. It is no wonder they struggle. Rather than asking what problems students are having at school, maybe it would have been better to ask what parents are struggling with, and how schools can support them.

If schools could find a way to support parents' needs, I feel this would be the best way to help children succeed academically and socially. There are a few reasons for this. Parents who do not know or feel like a part of the American culture cannot help their children find their place in it. If parents are not familiar with the educational system here, how can they guide their children through it? Also, having parents who are not proficient in English can place the added burdens on the children of being interpreters and many times acting in parental roles.

While I was conducting interviews, I found that many of the responses concurred with the written information (Beshir, 2001; Guardado, 2002; Hodge, 2002; Alitolppa-Niitamo, 2004; Moore, 2006) I had read. Over all, respondents' answers were consistent with each other, most of the time supporting previous researchers' findings but sometimes not. At other times, participants' answers

varied from one another. To me this seemed like a logical result since no three people think exactly the same even if they come from the same background. For example, all participants concurred that when the parents do not know English well, the children may be put in the parental role which will undermine parental authority. Their statements concurred with research findings (Alitolppa-Niitamo, 2004). On the other hand, Zahra's feelings about her daughter did not concur with these research findings. She thought her daughter had developed an individualistic attitude because of being raised in America. Contrary to research findings (Masny, 1999) which state Somalis do not value individualism, Zahra liked the fact that her daughter was independent. The other two participants did not like the new individualism they saw developing in Somali children.

The following contains brief summaries of what respondents said in the interviews. After that are my conclusions about what they said about each topic.

All respondents agreed that Somali parents speak Somali, but most do not read or write it. The parents do not speak, read or write English. However, there are always exceptions to the rule.

They were also in agreement that students usually learn Somali as their first language. Again, there are exceptions here. Amadu's children and Zahra's child both learned English first or along with Somali. This could be because Amadu's children were born in America, and Zahra's child was born in Canada, both places where English is the dominant language. Also, according to

respondents, many times parents encourage children to speak English at home because they want their children to be successful in school in America.

Parents typically speak with other Somali speakers as compared with speaking with other English speakers. One exception Amadu found to this was that sometimes parents did not want to speak to Somali staff members; they wondered if the staff member was from a different tribe in Somalia and did not like them if they were. Amadu is the only one of the three that mentioned this concern. I had the feeling that he spoke very much from personal experience and what was on his heart; he did not try to plan out what he said or screen himself for “the right answers.” Mohamed seemed more thoughtful, intentional, and seemed to plan out exactly what he wanted to say. Zahra is a parent, giving a parent’s perspective. She said she feels very comfortable speaking with Somali staff members. In fact, she would prefer speaking with Somali staff since they understand her culture and religion. They may even feel freer to speak with her daughter in the same way Zahra would.

Although there are exceptions to this, the general consensus of the respondents in regards to family language use was that parents use Somali and children use English. Parents want their children to succeed in school, so they let them speak English at home in order for them to get more practice. They are getting more practice, but what the families are giving up is great. Parents and children are losing a common language that binds them together. In time, they find it hard to carry on anything but the very basic of conversations. Children

find it difficult if not impossible to communicate with extended family members in Somalia as well. Conversely, parents feel strongly connected to extended family members even though they do not see them very often. All respondents offered the fact that they send money regularly to family members in Somalia. They said it is part of their responsibility. In fact, the third pillar of Islam is Zakat which means giving to those in need (Altareb, 1996; 'Abd a 'ati, 1998). It is a duty enjoined by God and undertaken by Muslims to benefit society as a whole ('Abd a 'ati, 1998).

Mohamed and Amadu felt that when parents do not learn English, this can cause problems. The following includes some of these problems. Children must interpret for the parents in nearly all circumstances. They hear things and are exposed to worries from these conversations that they should not be exposed to at such young ages. They are paying bills and filling out forms. Numerous times, children are running the households; they have the upper hand and sometimes take advantage of the parents. Because of this, children are losing respect for their parents.

Zahra and Mohamed both felt the children are learning the language faster than the parents. Amadu, on the other hand, thought the mothers are learning it faster. Again, I think Amadu's opinion is based only on personal experience since mothers are the ones who attend his adult ESL classes. The other two participants' opinions coincide with research I have read (Alitolppa-Niitamo, 2004) and what I have experienced as an ESL teacher. All respondents were in

agreement that the children are learning the culture more quickly than the parents and that this was a source of conflict since parents value the Somali culture more.

Because of what I discovered during the interviews and my readings, I strongly agree with Amadu on his assessment that “there is really too much” when it comes to parenting in a foreign country. It is hard enough to be a parent; then to add the complications of being a Somali parent in America makes things even more challenging. The issue that kept coming up over and over again in the interviews and seemed to be the root of many of the struggles for Somali families was the difference in parenting styles here versus the Somali way of parenting. According to respondents, in their native country, parenting was a collective experience. What parents said was respected and obeyed; it was the law. All community members had the right, in fact the responsibility, to parent everyone else’s child. If a child did not conform to what was expected, there were covert consequences, which ranged from spanking to lessened marital opportunities. To the contrary, in America parents are expected to be responsible for their own children. Children are expected to obey parents, but not to the same extent. Children here are given more choices. The community in general does not have the right to parent someone else’s child. The covert consequences are not as severe as in Somalia.

This change in acceptable parenting practices has caused huge problems for Somali families. They are afraid that if they parent in the way they know, child protection will take their children. The children know this and threaten to

call the police, or they may run away if parents are too strict. Zahra has been in America for many years, is educated and has taken a parenting class here. She wants to develop a relationship with her daughter, Fatima, and teach her to make choices for herself. Zahra seems to be an exception to the rule. I think this is due to being educated and living here a long time. She has siblings in the U.S. that arrived before her. She said they have helped her with babysitting, advising, and lending a listening ear. All of her siblings have college degrees as well; that fact could also help account for her ability to be more open minded in her parenting style and willingness to make a composite of the two cultures.

All respondents had the same opinion about who lives in the household. Mohamed said that because of the war in Somalia, most households are headed by single mothers. Amadu thought the majority of the parents are married and live together. I feel the reason for the difference of opinion here could be due to the fact that Mohamed has done research in this area and looks at the situation in broad terms. Amadu may be going by personal experiences of what he has seen.

One thing all respondents said parents liked about the Americans is that they value education; I feel Somalis like this since they value it also. They also liked the fact that Americans value time and work hard; these seem to be values they admire for their potential to be good role models for Somalis. Two respondents felt Somali children raised in the US are more individualistic than children raised in Somalia. One participant thought this was another thing that

divided the parents and children. The other one, Zahra, thought it was a good thing. She explained that since Fatima is being raised in the US, she wanted Fatima to be able to survive in a more individualistic society. This could be explained by the fact that Zahra has some college education, is employed and has mostly raised Fatima on her own; she has learned to be an independent woman.

When asked what parents worry about, there was not one item that all three participants agreed upon. Two said drugs were a concern and two said gangs. One said peer pressure while another said she was worried about her daughter being negatively influenced which is the same thing as peer pressure. The other worries are more individualized.

Both the teachers thought the American legal system presented problems for families since their limited language skills kept them from understanding the laws. For example, parents may not understand housing rules and have too many people living in their rental unit. Children might not know there is a curfew at night and be out too late. Also, the legal system is very different here than what parents are used to. Zahra did not mention the legal system as being a problem. She knows the language, feels comfortable here, and has said her daughter is doing very well. She probably has not had to deal with the court system yet.

When asked how important it was to parents that their children accept the Islamic faith, all respondents stated emphatically that it was the most important thing to them. It is so important, in fact, that Amadu thought parents would expect their children to accept these beliefs without giving them any choice in the

matter. Zahra and Mohamed, though, thought parents would expect that children accept these values, but would not try to force them. They would teach children when they were young and be a guide for them later, letting their children make the final decision. Since Zahra and Mohamed tend to be more introspective, I wonder if that is the reason for the discrepancy in answers.

All respondents agreed that it is much harder here to raise their children in their Islamic faith than it was in Somalia. There is not the same amount of community resources and Quar'anic schools to support the Islamic way of thinking and living. Two respondents reported that Islamic holidays do not have the same meaning here as they did in Somalia. The respondents said this situation seems to be making the parents more fervent in their faith because of having to make deliberate choices; here there is not one single religion which is supported by the communities and public schools. The parents' strengthening of faith does not seem to be inherited by the children. In fact, respondents said being in the United States seems to be making the children weaker. I feel this is generally due to living in a culture where there is freedom to believe whatever you want. The advantage to this type of system is just that, you choose your own beliefs. The disadvantage is that there is not one accepted belief system for the whole country. If you come from a collective society, it can be very challenging to figure out how to help your children retain your beliefs without the support you are use to.

All respondents felt education was a top priority for Somalis. They expect their children to graduate not only from high school but college as well. The

expectations they held for boys as opposed to girls, however, were unclear. Zahra only has one girl but said her expectations for a boy would be the same.

Mohamed explained that expectations would be the same for both genders.

Amadu, on the other hand, said there is a gender problem in this area. He said parents put a lot of pressure on boys to succeed since they will be taking care of a family; girls can get married at 18 or 20 and someone will take care of them.

Even though Amadu stands alone on this issue, I feel his opinion is more representative of Somali culture in general.

From the literature I have read and the Islamic class I took, I have learned that there are very specific roles for men and women in the Islamic faith; the responsibilities are clearly laid out. Men and women are considered equal, yet different. Also, when I was talking to Mohamed before and after the interview, I had the impression that he expected certain behaviors from me as a female and different ones for him as a male.

An illustration of this point is when Mohamed and I met for our interview. We met at the library on a very snowy day. The library was closed, so I gave him a ride to a bookstore for the interview. During the drive there and back as we were talking, he told me to slow down, to park my car in a specific place, and not to move my car because it fit nicely where it was. He insisted on buying lunch for me because it was part of his culture and because the man always pays for the woman. The differing gender expectations were not unanimously expressed by all participants, yet I feel they are there.

There was no consensus among participants as to whether teenagers or younger children have a harder time in school. When Somali students come here as teenagers, they bring with them more Somali cultural background and are more responsible, but they have a harder time fitting in. The younger students do better with academics but may not be as responsible. There is no clear cut answer to this question because each group has something unique to deal with. I think it is not a matter of which age of entrance is harder but what are the challenges for each age group?

All participants felt the lack of understanding regarding the educational system in America was parents' biggest problem. Even Zahra, who knew English when she first came here, admitted she and her daughter had a difficult time for the first four years because Zahra did not understand how diverse the American educational system was from Somalia's. She said in Somalia the school staff took care of all the educational needs of the child and parents were not involved. In America, she found out, parents are encouraged and even expected to be involved in their child's education. Neither she nor Fatima had a role model that had been through this system to guide them. She stated that after she figured out how students were graded, what was expected of her daughter, and what she needed to do as a parent in order to help her daughter succeed, Fatima did much better. This tells me that parents want to help their children do well in school, but do not always know how, and this issue is separate from the limited language issue.

Zahra was the only one who expressed concern about the communication between the schools and the parents. In fact, she said this issue has caused her the greatest concern; she was quite adamant about this point. Even though the teachers are also parents, they are in the schools and are more familiar with what is going on. I think they do not feel the same need for communication as Zahra does. Also, maybe the parents have not expressed this need to the teachers since the parents themselves are unaware of its necessity.

Another problem parents had directly with the school system was feeling their voices were not respected and valued. I am not quite sure why this was. Was it because with limited language skills they had a hard time expressing their desires? Was it due to the fact that their desires may differ so much from the established norms at schools? Both the teachers suggested that parents really want a private school where their religious and cultural beliefs are supported. I suspected that the fact that parents' cultural and religious beliefs are so different was the reason they felt their opinions were not valued.

Having Somali support staff and teachers was something all participants agreed was essential since they helped with cultural issues and communication. Nevertheless, perhaps due to his inhibition in his conversation with me, Amadu was the only one who mentioned any possible mistrust of Somali staff members because of possible tribal rivalries.

Within the schools, there were many issues that were reported as being a problem for parents, students, or both. The biggest ones included peer pressure

about religious or cultural issues, discrimination by teachers, and students' lack of time and space to pray during school hours. These issues are viewed as so distressful that parents are turning to charter schools as a way to avoid them.

Even though participants felt teacher discriminated against Somali students, both teachers expressed some reservations about African Americans. For example, one teacher thought students did not see respect in the African American neighborhoods. He also alluded to premarital sex and teen pregnancies. The other teacher suggested that this was a group that was heading for the prisons. As I was listening to this, I was remembering what Zahra had said about feeling that her daughter was discriminated against for being black and Somali. Were the Somalis in turn discriminating against African Americans?

Whether they were or not, the participants definitely felt Somali students were discriminated against. Two of the three participants pointed this out more than once. They thought discrimination was due to color, being Somali and lack of language skills. They also felt teachers' expectations were too low. Zahra felt that Fatima's being placed in ESL class was a form of discrimination; she thought Fatima was looked at as having a deficit, and she did not like Fatima being segregated from the general population. Even though an article I read (Kahin, 1997) mentioned discrimination by teachers, it still came as a surprise to me. I have always thought ESL classes were designed to help students be more proficient in English, not to place judgments on students. Teachers need to accept all students, so I was saddened to think Somali parents do not feel their children

are accepted. As an ESL teacher, I know that students are not placed in ESL classes as a form of discrimination but as a way to help the students become more proficient in their English language skills.

Participants felt students were discriminated against as Muslims too. All agreed that Americans are prejudice against Muslims in general, especially after the World Trade Center was destroyed in 2001; they felt the media was labeling them as terrorists. To me this point was of interest. When I asked them in the interview if Somali students were accepted at school or had any problems at school with other kids because of being Muslim, they all said the children were accepted. None of them mentioned teachers discriminating against students because of being Muslim. I wonder if participants were thinking that Muslims in general were discriminated against but when asked specifically about their children, they did not want to admit that their children were not accepted even though they felt this was the case.

When asked about dating, the reactions were quite diverse. One person said at times the students date whomever they want and do not care about their parents' culture. One reported that it would be her child's choice, but that she wanted to be a part of that decision. The final participant stated firmly that it is not allowed. I feel these contrasting opinions show how difficult it for parents to enforce their beliefs in a society that generally does not support them.

An issue that garnered a great deal of consensus, though, was the expectation that the children get married. They all agreed on this issue and were

firm on it. Both the teachers mentioned the responsibility of the parents to arrange a marriage for their children; Zahra said nothing about arranging a marriage for her daughter.

When looking back at the responses from interviewees, I feel the differences in answers can be attributed at least in part to differing perspectives. Amadu seemed to say whatever he was thinking. He was willing to look critically not only at Somalis and Islam in America but in Somalia as well. I felt that what he told me was his real impressions, not what he wanted me to think. Zahra also seemed to give answers freely and express what was on her mind. The only time I felt some hesitation was when I asked about discrimination. She seemed hesitant to respond. It was like she was checking me, a teacher, out to see if it was alright to say she felt teachers discriminated against her daughter. I had the impression that she had worked hard to integrate her Islamic faith as a Somali into the American culture. The result seemed to be a composite of the two cultures. Although the first two mentioned seemed to be quite open, I had the feeling that Mohamed screened the responses he gave me for the purpose of trying to give me a certain view of Somalis and Islam. I felt he answered or did not answer in accordance with this rationale.

All respondents did hold the same view in regards to how hard it is for Somali parents. There is conflict between the parents and the children since the children are learning the American cultural faster than the parents and the parents places more value on Somali culture than the children do. It is hard enough to be

a parent; then to add the complications of being a Somali parent in America makes things even more challenging.

Implications for Teachers and Administrators

While making their lives in the US, Somali families have many issues to deal with. The majority of Somali families are not here by choice, but because of war in Somalia. They are trying to make the best of their situations. At first glance, their children's lack of English language skills may be what educators see as setting them apart and causing difficulties. Although this is a genuine concern, I feel it is not the problem that causes families the most difficulties.

The change in how family members relate to one another because of the differences in the language, culture and religion here is the root of much deeper and longer lasting complications. Children seem to pick up oral language quickly; the literary skills do take a matter of years, but they develop. While learning a new language is a challenge, I believe students have a much harder time learning how to be successful in school, feeling like they belong, and at the same time maintaining healthy and positive family relationships at home. When Somali families come to the USA, they bring their own parenting style with them. They bring their understanding of Somalia's educational system, and the experience of living in a monocultural society. It is hard for parents to adjust to a society that is so different from their own. I feel that focusing on and helping the parents is the best and most productive way to help children succeed at school. Parents play a crucial role in the welfare of the child and the family as a whole. If

schools focus on helping parents, they in turn will be more able to give their children the support that is needed.

Somehow schools need to take an active role in helping parents understand the educational system here. Time and time again during the interviews, participants emphasized the fact that education was a high priority for parents; they really want their children to succeed and graduate not only from high school but from college as well. They want to support their children but do not know how. They do not understand how credits work at the high school or that students can take a class over if they do not pass it the first time. They do not understand that contrary to how things were in Somalia, in the USA parents are encouraged and even expected to be actively involved in their children's education. I have found that parents place high value on education; if they understand the differences between the two educational systems, they can and will do what they can to support their children and the possibly the schools as well.

Somali parents' desire to help their children thrive in this new country has led them to allow their children to speak English at home with family members instead of using their native language. Participants told me that parents allow or encourage this so that children will flourish at school. As supported by research and summarized in chapter two, children will learn English since it is all around them at school and everywhere else they go. The real issue is, "Will they retain their home language?" If children do not speak it at home with family members, they begin to lose their home language and their ability to communicate in a

meaningful way with their parents. The disconnect between parent and child is widespread and detrimental to the family unit. Also, research (e.g., Collier, 1995) has shown that maintenance of L1 has a positive effect on L2.

Because of the reasons just mentioned, Schools, and especially ELL teachers, need to make a concerted effort to educate parents about the benefits to having their children speak their native language at home. I strongly feel that ELL teachers need to educate administrators and staff members about this issue as well. All school personnel need to support the idea or it may not work. In the interview Amadu told me that he, a bilingual teacher, did not make an effort to encourage children to speak their home language with parents; I had the feeling that he did not know if this was a good idea or not. In my own experiences, I have come across several mainstream teachers who told parents that children should be speaking English at home. If parents and students receive mixed messages from schools, they will not know what to do. In short, ELL teachers need to tell parents, students, and staff members about all the positive benefits of students' maintenance of L1.

Another topic ELL teachers need to educate parents about is whether or not they should learn English and for what purposes. Again, if parents are learning English so they can speak it at home with their children, I do not think that is a good idea. Children generally learn it faster than the parents anyway (Lightbown, 1999). On the contrary, a good reason to learn English is to be able to function effectively in society. Learning English, parents will be able to help

their children navigate the educational system and give them the support they need. An additional positive reason for parents to learn English is to maintain the leadership and parental role in the household. When children interpret for parents in various circumstances, the parental role is overturned with the child being in charge. If parents learn English, they can begin to rectify this situation. This is advice that staff needs to be educated about as well; the ELL teacher is where this education needs to begin.

ELL teachers need to stand up for their students and insist that schools do not allow children to interpret for parents at school conferences and meetings. When this role reversal takes place, it only weakens the family structure. As noted before, this needs to be a joint effort. All teachers and administrators need to understand and support this effort so parents know the schools are trying to help the families.

My advice is for schools to find a way to help Somali parents feel that they are a valued member of the school community, that their voices are heard and respected. If Somali parents feel they are wanted, they will feel free to become more involved with the schools. This can only be positive since they will be more in touch with their children's world. They may see first hand what their the school environment is like and what their children deal with on a daily basis.

Finally, Mohamed suggested that schools need to find a way to fit students with Islamic cultures into non-Islamic communities. Somali parents' belief in education is rivaled only by the potency of their religious beliefs. They want their

children's religious beliefs to be respected and accommodated for. Probably the most important issue in this regard is for students to be allowed the time and space to pray as needed. If parents feel public schools make it hard for their children to follow Islam as prescribed, they will take their children out of public schools and put them in charter schools. This is already happening and will continue to happen if schools do not make accommodations for Somali students' Islamic beliefs.

I firmly believe that something Mohamed told me is more important than any ideas I have come up with. Before the interview with Mohamed, he told me that Somalis, including himself, did not like the cold weather here; his country had a very warm climate. Even so, there was war and killing in Somalia, and he definitely did not like that. When he came here, the weather was very cold, but the people treated him with kindness and warmth, so he felt warm inside. He said, "What makes the difference is the human touch." I think he meant that with all the problems Somali families are facing in the United States, the best thing others can do is to treat them with kindness and warmth.

Limitations

I chose a topic I knew very little about. I have no Somali students and know of no Muslims in my school district. I grew up in St. Paul but have lived in rural areas all of my adult life. I like to keep connected with what is going on outside the walls of rural Cambridge, though. I am a person who likes to learn, so what better topic than something I am so unfamiliar with. Because of the topic I

chose and my utter inexperience with it, my learning curve was quite high. If you are the type of person who enjoys this sort of experience, then by all means, do what I did and research something you truly want to find out about. If on the other hand, you do not want to work that hard (and are ready to give up the fun of all those new discoveries), then choose a topic you know more about; that would be an easier route. Personally, I am happy with the choice I made.

Getting interviews was the most problematic part of my research and took me several months. Originally, I was planning on interviewing three Somali parents. I had to ask other professional contacts I had to ask people for me. Right now, Somalis as a whole do not want to be in the media; they are afraid of being negatively represented as they have been in the past. As an example of this negative representation, an article in the Minneapolis Star Tribune (Johns & Meryhew, 2009) last month told of a young man from Minneapolis who had driven a vehicle packed with explosives that killed as many as 30 people in Somalia. Shirwa Ahmed, first known suicide bomber with US citizenship, had apparently been indoctrinated and recruited by a militant group while living in Minneapolis. The article went on to explain that other Somali men have disappeared from the Twin City area in recent months. The authors were wondering if these men were recruited to fight in Somali's civil war. Even though there are good things going on in the Somali community, the negative is what makes the news.

Because Somalis feel others are only looking for bad news, they have not been very anxious to talk to outsiders. That was one hurdle I faced. I had to have someone they knew tell them that I was doing research to try to help them. In essence, someone else had to vouch that I was trustworthy. Even after I overcame that hurdle, the next issue was finding a parent who fulfilled the research requirements and was proficient enough in English to complete the interview. Although I had assistance from others, the task proved too challenging for me. I eventually opted to interview two teachers whom I had become acquainted with. Then I only needed to find one parent. That was still difficult but more manageable.

Of the four interviews I planned at the library, only one was held there. Each time it was closed due to semester breaks or holidays. It is always good to have a backup plan even if you think you have all bases covered. During the interviews, I sometimes had the feeling that participants said what they wanted me to hear. Only one of the interviewees seemed to speak with total candor. The others seemed to hold back at times, not wanting to give answers that may make them or Somalis in general look bad. I think part of this is due to the fact that Somalis feel the media portrays them as terrorists; they are very concerned about how they are portrayed now. They want Muslims to be known for their positive points and not have the media dwell only on the negative. Maybe someone from inside their culture could have gotten more candid responses.

Another piece of advice for during the interviews is to not take notes. I did at first because I wanted to make sure I did not miss anything; what if the voice recorder stopped working? Later I relaxed and decided to skip the notes. In that interview, I think I listened more closely and asked better follow-up questions. I feel like I was more in tune with the respondent and was able to think more about what he/she was saying and meaning since I was not focused on writing.

After the interviews were complete, I was planning on using voice recognition software or a Dictaphone to transcribe the interviews. I ended up doing neither. I did not even try either option. I recorded the interviews on a digital voice recorder and transferred them onto the computer with Nero Showtime software. Then I decided to take the cheaper and quicker route of recruiting two of my four grown children to help me with the transcription. My daughter is such a fast typist, she could listen and type, stopping occasionally to catch up. With my son, I would start and stop the digital voice recorder and he would type. It worked well, and both volunteered their services freely. My advice here again is have a plan A, but always have a plan B as well, or at least be open to one, in case there are kinks in plan A.

Suggestions for Further Research

When I was reading articles for my research, I came across one article that said Somali students felt discrimination from their teachers. I did not think too much of it since it was only one article out of a huge stack of resources. During

the interviews, though, the respondents brought it up several times and mentioned different reasons for the discrimination. They felt teachers viewed second language learners as having a deficit and expected less of these students. Discrimination because of color was also perceived. Are these allegations really true, and if so, why and what can be done to improve the situation?

As an ELL teacher, I strongly advocate for children speaking their native language at home with their family members. None of the participants, however, even came close to alluding to the idea that they or other Somali families spoke mostly or entirely Somali at home with other family members. The reason they gave is that the parents wanted the children to speak English as much as possible so they would be more successful. Didn't any of the families get the message from the schools and especially from the ELL teachers that speaking the home language at home would be more beneficial in the long run for children's family relationships as well as their academic careers? How can this message be spoken more clearly, with more support from the entire school and not just ELL teachers, and to a wider audience?

Both teachers reported that parents did not feel like a part of the community, that their voices were not heard and respected. Why not? Another area for future research would be to find out what is making parents feel this way? Is it something the schools are doing or not doing? Does it have more to do with perceptions or lack of language skills? Zahra felt that Somalis are discriminated against by teachers. Farid (2004) asserts that Somalis can be left feeling

powerless when they are immersed in a dominant culture that emphasizes individual accomplishments.

My conviction is that helping parents is the best way to help students. Therefore, the suggestion for further research I feel most strongly about is this: find out what the connections are between the struggles Somali families, and especially parents, have adjusting to the US culture and the success of their children in the schools.

Since doing this research, I have become more aware of the familial issues that affect students' work in school. This research was done on Somali families, but the results can be applied to many other families as well. For instance, after this project, I asked my students to write an essay about the conflicts between immigrant parents and their children. The papers mirrored the results of this research even though my students are not Somali. As a result of what I have learned, I decided to have a potluck-get together for my students' families as a way for them to get to know one another and for me to support them.

As far as disseminating my research, I plan on presenting my findings at an ESL conference in the fall. I can also try to publish my findings in an academic journal. These findings could even serve as a presentation for a district in-service at my school.

APPENDIX A

PARENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Parent Interview Questions

These questions are arranged into topics from parts of the literature review with the addition of background information. I start with background information because it is the least intrusive. By starting out in a more casual way, I hope to build the level of trust for the more personal questions.

I may or may not ask the three participants all of these questions; it depends on how the interview goes. I will also have planned and floating prompts ready for

use if needed. I will also ask participants not to share the questions with anyone else. The interview will cover the following topics:

Maintenance of First Language

Background Information

Parenting in a Foreign Country

Acculturation

Issues at Home

Issues at School

Clash Between American Teen Culture and Islamic Values of Somalis

Possible Ways to Help Children Succeed in School

Maintenance of First Language

- What is the first language that you learned?
- Do you know any languages besides English and Somali?
- What language did your children first learn? How old were they?
- What struggles have your children had involved with learning a new language?
- How have these struggles affected your family?
- How is being schooled in their second language hard for your child(ren)?
- In what ways is it difficult for you?
- Does your family speak mostly with other Somali speakers, English speakers, or would you say it is evenly balanced? Why?
- How well do your children still speak their home language?
- If well, what has helped them maintain this language?
- If not well, why do you think they are losing it?

- How has your children's loss of L1 affected your family?
- How has it affected their relationship with extended family members?
- How close is your family to extended family members in your country of origin?
- Are you worried about your children losing cultural traditions from your native country? Explain.
- In what circumstances does each member of the family use Somali? (with whom?)
- In what circumstances does each member of the family use English? (with whom?)
- Who is learning the language faster, you, your spouse or your children? Why? What problems, if any, has this caused? Can you give examples?

Background Information

- What is your first name?
- How old are you?
- Do you work? Where? How long? What hours?
- Are you married? If so, for how long?
- Does your spouse work? Where? How long? What hours?
- Do you and your spouse live in the same house? If not, why?
- Who all lives with you and why?
- How many children do you have?

- What are the genders and ages of your children?
- What grades are they in?
- What school(s) do they attend?
- Do they all live with you? If not, where do they live?
- What country were you born in?
- If a country other than America, what other countries have you lived in?
- Why did you live in these other countries?
- Why did you leave your home country?
- When did you come to America?
- Why did you come to America as opposed to another country?
- Did you come to Minnesota when you first entered the U.S.?
- If not, how did you end up in Minnesota?
- How much education do you have?
- How much education does your spouse have?

Parenting in a Foreign Country

- How is parenting in the United States different than parenting in your home country?
- What are some positive points about parenting here?
- What are some negative points about parenting here?
- Do you think you are stricter here or not as strict? Why?
- Do your children face dangers in the U.S.? If so, what?

- Did they face dangers in your homeland? If so, what?
- How do you feel about the amount of respect American children give their parents?
- Do you feel your children give you the respect you deserve? Why or why not?
- Have your children made friends with non-Muslims as well as Muslims? Explain.
- How do you feel about being involved with the American culture?
- How do you feel about your children being involved with the American culture?
- What Islamic holidays do you observe?
- What are Islamic holidays like here as compared to your home country?

Acculturation

- Where were your children born?
- What do you feel is home for you, the U.S., your native country, or somewhere else?
- If the U.S., how long were you here before you felt this way? What helped you to feel this way?
- If your native country, why do you think that is?
- To what extent do you feel comfortable here?

- Are there things that make you uncomfortable about living here?
What?
- How often do you visit your home country? Tell me about your last visit?
- Who do you think feels more comfortable here, you or your children?
Why? What problems, if any, has this caused? Can you give examples?
- Who is learning the American culture faster, you or your children?
Why? What problems, if any, has this caused? Can you give examples?
- Does being in the U.S. help you to be stronger or weaker in your faith?
Explain.
- Do you feel that your children are stronger or weaker in their faith as a result of being raised in the U.S.? Explain.
- In the ideal situation, who is responsible to teach Islamic values to your children? Why this person/these people?
- Is this the way it is in your family? Explain.

Issues at Home

- At what level do you read and write English?
- Does your job require that you know English well?
- Have any of your children ever acted as an interpreter for you?
- If so, how often and for what purposes?

- How did that make you feel? How did it affect your relationship with your child(ren)?
- If you have a teenager and a child or children of another age, who do you feel the transition has been harder for, the teenager or the other child(ren)?

Issues at School

- What challenges have you had in helping your children maintain Islamic values here?
 - For example, has dress been an issue?
 - What about dietary preferences/school lunches?
 - How about being able to worship in desired fashion?
 - In school or with classmates?
- If you have a teenager and a child or children of another age, who do you feel school has been harder for, the teenager or the other child(ren)?
- What issues in school have your younger children faced?
- What issues in school has/have your teenager(s) faced?
- Which issues have caused the greatest hardship for your child(ren)?
- Which issues have caused you the greatest concern?
- In what ways are you involved with your children's schooling here?

- Do you find any difficulties being involved in your children's schooling? Explain.
- How important is it to you that your children succeed in school?
- Is it more important, equally important, or less important than in your home country?
- What are your school expectations for your boys?
- What are your school expectations for your girls?
- Are these expectations any different than they would be if you were still in your home country? If so, why?
- What discrimination, if any, do you feel your children have experienced at school?
- If discriminated against, how have your children responded to this?
- Do you feel that your children are accepted in school?
- Have your children continued to accept your cultural and religious beliefs, even while living in the U.S.?
- If not, what parts do you feel they have not accepted? Why?
- How important is it to you that they accept your Islamic values?
- What American values, if any, have your children accepted?
- Are you happy or unhappy about their acceptance of these American values? Explain.

- Is the school making adequate provision for your children's religion?
Are your children allowed the time and space to worship as prescribed by their faith?
- Are your children allowed to observe Islamic holidays? If not, why not?
- Do you feel you are adequately informed of religious assemblies at school?
- What concerns, if any, do you have for your children's modesty in dress?
- What concerns, if any, do you have about the mixing of genders in school?
- What concerns, if any, do you have about the academic success of your children?
- How do you feel about the amount of Somali support staff at your children's school?
- Are you able to help your children with homework as much as you would like to?
- If you could choose the perfect school day for your children, what would it look like?

Clash Between American Teen Culture and Islamic Values

- Do you feel that your children spend more time with their friends or with their family? Why is this? How do you feel about it?

- Do you have an expectation that your children pray five times a day, even when they are at school or is this decision left up to them?
- What problems, if any, have there been in this area?
- Do you have an expectation that your children follow Islamic guidelines in regards to fasting during Ramadan and not eating pork even when they are at school or are these decisions left up to them?
- What struggles, if any, have there been in this area?
- Have your children had any problems in school or with non-Muslim friends because of being Muslim? If so, give examples.
- Have your children wanted to date or spend more time with someone of the opposite gender than you would like? If so, give examples of how this was handled?
- If this issue has not arisen yet, how will you handle it in the future?
- As your children reach young adulthood, do you have strong expectations as to the choices they make for their future or will you let them choose their own paths?
- If you have strong expectations, what are they? Why do you have these expectations?

Possible Ways to Help Children Succeed in School

- What do you feel could be done in the schools to help meet the needs of your children?
- What other suggestions do you have?

- What other parenting issues have you faced that you would like to share with me?
- Of the parenting issues you have faced here in the United States, which one(s) do you feel are the most difficult to deal with?
- Which issues are the most important to you?
- What are your ideas for solutions to these issues?
- What would you like educators to know about the parenting issues you face?
- How can educators help you in your parenting efforts?
- Is there anything I have not mentioned but you feel is important?

APPENDIX B

TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Teacher Interview Questions

These questions are arranged into topics from parts of the literature review with the addition of background information. I start with background information because it is the least intrusive. By starting out in a more casual way, I hope to build the level of trust for the more personal questions.

I may or may not ask the three participants all of these questions; it depends on how the interview goes. I will also have planned and floating prompts ready for use if needed. The interview will cover the following topics:

Maintenance of First Language

Background Information

Parenting in a Foreign Country

Acculturation

Issues at Home

Issues at School

Clash Between American Teen Culture and Islamic Values of Somalis

Possible Ways to Help Children Succeed in School

Conclusion

Maintenance of First Language

- Do the parents of your students usually know any languages besides English and Somali?
- What language did their children first learn? How old were the children?
- What do students struggle with in learning a new language?
- How have these struggles affected the families?
- What is hard for children about being schooled in their second language?
- Do the families of your students speak mostly with other Somali speakers, English speakers, or would they say it is evenly balanced? Why?
- How well do your students still speak their home language?
- If well, what has helped them maintain this language?
- If not well, why do you think they are losing it?
- How has your students' lose of L1 affected their families?
- How has it affected their relationship with extended family members?

- How close are families to extended family members in their country of origin?
- Are you worried about your students losing cultural traditions from their native country? Explain.
- In what circumstances does each member of the family use Somali? (with whom?)
- In what circumstances does each member of the family use English? (with whom?)
- Who is learning the language faster, the father, mother, both father and mother, or the children? Why? What problems, if any, has this caused? Can you give examples?

Background Information of Teacher

- What grades and subject do you teach?
- How long have you been a teacher?
- What country were you born in?
- If a country other than America, what other countries have you lived in?
- Why did you live in these other countries?
- Why did you leave your home country?
- When and why did you come to America?
- Did you come to Minnesota when you first entered the U.S.?
- If not, how did you end up in Minnesota?

- How much education do you have?
- Who lives in your household?

Background Information of Parents

- Tell me about the parents of your Somali students: what type of work do they do, and what hours do they have?
- What is their marital status? If married, do they live in the same house? If no, why not?
- Who lives in their households? Only immediate family or extended family members also?
- After these parents left Somalia, did they go somewhere else first, or straight to America? Why?
- Why did they come to America as opposed to somewhere else?
- What are their educational backgrounds?

Parenting in a Foreign Country

- How is parenting in the United States different for parents than parenting in their home country?
- What would parents say are some positive and negative points about parenting here?
- Do you think the parents are stricter here or not as strict? Why?
- What dangers do their children face in the U.S.?
- What dangers did their children face in your homeland?

- How do parents feel about the amount of respect American children give their parents?
- Do parents feel their children give them the respect they deserve? Why or why not?
- Have their children made friends with non-Muslims as well as Muslims? Explain.
- How do parents feel about being involved with the American culture?
- How do parents feel about their children being involved with the American culture?
- How do they celebrate Islamic holidays here as compared to how they celebrated in their home country?

Acculturation

- Were your students born in America? If not, where?
- Where would most parents say is home for them? America, Somalia, or somewhere else?
- Are there things that make parents uncomfortable about living here? What?
- How often do they visit their home country?
- Who do you think feels more comfortable here, the parents or the children? Why? What problems, if any, has this caused? Can you give examples?

- Who is learning the American culture faster, the parents or their children? Why? What problems, if any, has this caused? Can you give examples?
- Does being in the U.S. help parents to be stronger or weaker in their faith? Explain.
- Do you feel that their children are stronger or weaker in their faith as a result of being raised in the U.S.? Explain.
- In the ideal situation, who is responsible to teach Islamic values to children? Why this person/these people?
- Is this the way it is in the families of your students? Explain.

Issues at Home

- At what level do most of the parents read and write English?
- How often and for what purposes do students act as an interpreter for the parents?
- How does that affect parents' relationships with their children?
- Who do you feel the transition has been harder for, the teenager or younger children? Why?

Issues at School

- What challenges have parents had in helping their children maintain Islamic values here?

For example, has dress been an issue?

What about dietary preferences/school lunches?

How about being able to worship in desired fashion?

In school or with classmates?

- Between a teenager and a child or children of another age, who do you feel school has been harder for, the teenager or the other child(ren)?

Why?

- What issues have caused the greatest hardships for students?
- Which issues have caused parents the greatest concern?
- Do parents find any difficulties being involved in their children's schooling? Explain.
- How important is it to parents that their children succeed in school?
- Is it more important, equally important, or less important than in their home country?
- What are their school expectations for your boys as opposed to girls?
- Are these expectations any different than they would be if parents were still in their home country? If so, why?
- What discrimination, if any, have students experienced at school?
- If discriminated against, how have these children responded to this?
- Have your students continued to accept their parents cultural and religious beliefs, even while living in the U.S.?
- If not, what parts do you feel they have not accepted? Why?
- How important is it to you that they accept your Islamic values?
- What American values, if any, have students accepted?

- Are parents happy or unhappy about students acceptance of these American values? Explain.
- Would parents say the school is making adequate provision for their children's religion? Are their children allowed the time and space to worship as prescribed by their faith?
- Do parents feel adequately informed of religious assemblies at school?
- What concerns, if any, have parents had for their children's modesty in dress?
- What concerns, if any, do parents have about the mixing of genders in school?
- What concerns, if any, do parents have about the academic success of their children?
- How do parents feel about the amount of Somali support staff at their children's school?
- Are parents able to help their children with homework as much as they would like to?
- If parents could choose the perfect school day for their children, what would it look like?

Clash Between American Teen Culture and Islamic Values

- Do parents have an expectation that their children pray five times a day, even when they are at school or is this decision left up to the children?

- What problems, if any, have there been in this area?
- Do parents have an expectation that their children follow Islamic guidelines in regards to fasting during Ramadan and not eating pork even when they are at school or are these decisions left up to the children?
- What struggles, if any, have there been in this area?
- Have students had any problems in school or with non-Muslim friends because of being Muslim? If so, give examples.
- If so, give examples of how this was handled?
- Would parents say that wanting to date has been an issue for their children? If so, how?
- As their children reach young adulthood, do parents have strong expectations as to the choices their children make for the future? Will parents let their children choose their own paths, or are they somewhere in between on this issue?
- If parents have strong expectations, what are they? Why do they have these expectations?

Conclusion

- What do parents feel could be done in the schools to help meet the needs of their children?
- What other suggestions do you think parents would have?

- What do you, as a teacher, feel could be done in the schools to help meet the needs of students?
- What other suggestions do you have as a teacher?
- What other parenting issues have parents faced that you would like to share with me?
- What issues have you faced as an teacher that you would like to share with me?
- Of the parenting issues parents have faced here in the United States, which one(s) do they feel are the most difficult to deal with?
- Which issues are the most important to parents?
- What are your ideas for solutions to these issues?
- Is there anything I have not mentioned but you feel is important?

APPENDIX C

CHART OF INTERVIEW RESULTS

MAINTENANCE OF FIRST LANGUAGE

	<u>Zahra</u>	<u>Mohamed</u>	<u>Amadu</u>
self - uses English at work and with daughter	X		
daughter learned English and Somali at same time	X		
speaks English with family, social contacts, daughter in private	X		
parents - go to Somali teachers with problems	X	X	
connected with family in Somalia	X	X	X
learn Somali first, do not read or write it		X	X
may speak more than one African language		X	X
majority do not speak any other language		X	X
do not read Somali		X	X
use Somali at home with children		X	
use Somali at home with children when angry			X
feel disconnected to children		X	X
mothers - learning English faster than fathers or children			X
students - have interrupted or little education because of civil war causing them to struggle		X	X
feel disconnected to parents		X	X
learn English faster than parents	X	X	
losing L1 has had negative effect on family		X	X

not supported well by most families who are illiterate	X	
find it hard to maintain Somali, not enough support	X	X
can transfer knowledge of Somali, if fluent, to English		X
use English unless parent does not know it	X	
older generation uses Somali		
use English in almost all circumstances		X
have trouble reading, writing, understanding educational system		X

PARENTING IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY

	<u>Zahra</u>	<u>Mohamed</u>	<u>Amadu</u>
in Somalia- everyone helps with parenting	X	X	X
everyone teaches what is correct	X	X	X
parents' word is law, children must obey	X	X	X
public, long term consequences for misbehavior			X
society controls behavior and options of child			X
social network to punish a child			X
not much parent/child interaction at home		X	X
children do not talk back to parents	X	X	X
strict rules about how to speak with adults			X
in America - parents not as strict	X	X	
parents strict			X
not everyone parents as they did in Somalia	X	X	X
children have more leverage over parents	X	X	X
parents talk to adults, children talk to children		X	X
not much parent/child interaction at home		X	X
children talk back to parents	X	X	X
lack of respect from children	X	X	X
Somali parents will be respected if they show respect		X	
children see disrespect in African American communities		X	
non-Somali middle class children respect parents			X
children know culture better	X	X	X
children usually are in charge in the household		X	X
and take advantage of it			
parents fear child protection will take their children	X	X	X
parents do not understand the laws and fear them		X	X
parents feel there are not enough religious supports to educate children		X	
parents feel there are not enough support for Somali parenting style			X
students have non-Muslim friends	X	X	X

ACCULTURATION

	<u>Zahra</u>	<u>Mohamed</u>	<u>Amadu</u>
home is - this is home/I have two homes		X	
your life is where you make it/nothing like original home			X

	I feel at home here/want to retire in Somalia	X		
children -	learning culture faster	X	X	X
	feel more comfortable here and like the freedom	X	X	X
	actions based on American norms	X	X	X
	losing Somali culture	X		X
parents -	place more value on Somali ways	X	X	X
	like America's culture of working hard, seeking education		X	X
	like America's culture of giving, respecting time			X
parents' concerns -	keep children away from drugs	X		X
	being involved in gangs		X	X
	not understanding the laws, court system		X	X
	helping children deal with peer pressure		X	
	dealing with cold weather		X	
	discrimination against Muslims	X	X	X
faith in Islam -	parents' faith has become stronger in America	X	X	X
	parents feel the need to be more conscious of faith	X	X	X
	Somalis wear <i>hijab</i> here, not in Somalia	X	X	
	children's faith is weaker in America	X	X	X
	children are "Americans with a <i>hijab</i> "			X
	lack of Islamic education for children in America	X	X	X
	not enough time for proper Islamic education	X	X	X
holidays -	in Somalia everyone came together to celebrate	X	X	X
	Islamic holidays are not national holidays	X	X	X
	celebrations are different here and not as meaningful	X		X
	less time to celebrate here	X		X

ISSUES AT HOME

	<u>Zahra</u>	<u>Mohamed</u>	<u>Amadu</u>
main problem is disconnect between parent and child	X	X	X
parents speak in Somali, child answers in English		X	X
can be difficult to communicate in meaningful way		X	X
parents value Somali ways	X	X	X
children value American ways	X	X	X
most parents do not read or write English, children must interpret, translate, be in parental role		X	X

ISSUES AT SCHOOL

	<u>Zahra</u>	<u>Mohamed</u>	<u>Amadu</u>
educational system - education is extremely important	X	X	X
education is equally or more important as in Somalia	X	X	X
biggest concern is not understanding educational system	X	X	X

parents do not understand high school credits			X
parents do not know they should be helping child			X
Somalia - responsibility is on child	X		
Somalia - parents not expected to be involved	X		
parental involvement at school - language barrier	X	X	X
feel voices not heard or respected		X	X
feel they do not have much to contribute		X	X
may not have dependable transportation		X	
may have a hard time adjusting to frigid temperatures		X	
communication with teachers - main concern	X		
parental portal has helped	X		
parental expectations - top concern, graduating from high school then college	X	X	X
boys must succeed, girls can marry			X
a lot of pressure on boys			X
equally important for boys and girls to succeed		X	
more girls succeed in US than boys		X	
in Somalia, boys are given more attention because of scarcity of education - must support family		X	
in Somalia, expectation same as in US	X		X
entrance age - teenagers struggle more than younger children			X
teenagers try to fit in, problems with other teens			X
each age group has problems		X	
teens do not have enough time to learn needed skills		X	
teens retain more Somali religion, culture		X	
teens more responsible, finish school		X	
younger children not as responsible		X	
younger children - more years in US schools		X	
no opinion	X		
discrimination - by teachers and because of color a major concern	X	X	X
teachers have low expectations of Somalis	X	X	
language discrimination by teachers, but not a problem			X
being put in ELL class is discrimination	X		
wonder if Somali children get as much support from academic counselors as other children	X		
biggest problems for students -			
avoid discrimination by teachers	X		
do well in academics	X		
language barrier		X	X
environmental differences		X	X
education		X	X

	peer pressure		X	X
	peer pressure and discrimination by teachers is reason parents send children to charter schools		X	X
Somali support staff -	parents appreciate them	X	X	X
	essential connection between parents and staff	X	X	
	wish there were more	X		
	not enough hours or money, so they quit			X
	parents may not trust them, possible tribal conflicts			X
	This is a hidden issue			X
Islam -	little or no problem with dietary requirements	X	X	X
	no concern over dating issues	X	X	X
	gym class - immodest dress, participate with boys are problems		X	X
accommodations for prayer -	parents felt strongest about	X	X	X
	some schools good at allowing time, space, some not		X	X
	schools familiar with culture make allowances		X	
	not enough allowances, parents send children to charter schools			X
holidays -	no issue	X	X	
	inequity in respect to days off for non-Islamic holidays			X

CLASH BETWEEN AMERICAN TEEN CULTURE &

Zahra

Mohamed

Amadu

ISLAMIC VALUES

Islamic values - child's acceptance is first priority for parents	X	X	X
acceptance of Islamic values is expected, final decision is child's	X	X	
acceptance of Islamic values is expected, considered a must, no choice given			X
media portrayal - unhappy about Islam's portrayal in media	X	X	X
all Muslims viewed as terrorists	X	X	X
media only covers bad things about Muslims		X	
American values - parents like value of education and hard work	X	X	X
likes cleanliness		X	
likes individualism, helps child be independent	X		
do not like individualism, opposite of Somalia's collective society			X
dating & marriage - dating is not allowed in Islam		X	X
parent wants to be a guide, advisor in this area	X		
contact to females is only through marriage		X	
marriage only with permission of parents		X	
parents arrange marriage, child must agree		X	
parents arrange marriage, sometimes no choice is given (exists today)			X
parents who let children choose own path do not care, are secular			X

POSSIBLE WAYS TO HELP CHILDREN SUCCEED IN SCHOOL

Zahra

Mohamed

Amadu

communication - feels better communication between parent and school is the key to child's success	X		
schools need better system for telling parents about parental portal	X		
if needed, schools need to teach parents to use portal	X		
parents and teachers need to be a team	X	X	
academic counselors should give Somali students more guidance	X		
parents need to be more involved	X		
other ideas - schools may want to add bilingual services		X	X
teachers need to be strict with students, make them do the school work			X

teach students real life skills, decision making skills		X
give students moral support		X
make effort to understand students' backgrounds	X	
accept students as they are, verbalize this to them	X	
lead students to higher education	X	X
give students time and space for daily prayer	X	X
respect and value parents' opinions	X	
fit students with Islamic beliefs into American schools	X	

REFERENCES

- ‘Abd al ‘Ati, H. (1998). *Islam in Focus*. Beltsville, MD: Amana.
- Alitolppa-Niitamo, Anne. (2004). Somali youth in the context of schooling in metropolitan Helsinki: A framework for assessing variability in educational performance. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. 30(1), 81-106.
- Altareb, B. (1996). Islamic spirituality in America: A middle path to unity. *Counseling & Values*, Oct., 41(1).
- Aynte, A. (2006). Minnesota among top destinations for US Muslims, survey finds. *Minnesota Monitor*. Retrieved September 11, 2007, from <http://www.minnesotamonitor.com/showDiary.do?dairyId=918>
- Baker, C. (2000). *The care and education of young bilinguals*. New York: Multilingual Matters LTD.
- Beshir, E. & M., (2001). *Muslim teens: Today’s worry, tomorrow’s hope*. Beltsville, MD: Amana.
- Borstein, M. & Cote, L. (2004). Mothers’ parenting cognitions in cultures of origin, acculturating cultures, and cultures of destination. *Child Development*, 75(1), 221-235.
- Carolan, M., Bagherinia, G., Juhari, R., Himelright, J., & Mouton-Sanders, M. (2000). Contemporary Muslim families: Research and practice. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 22(1), 67-79.
- Carter, R. (1999). Counseling Muslim children in school settings. *Professional School Counseling*, 2(3), 183-188.

- Coleman, M.& Ganong, L. (Ed.). (2004). *Handbook of contemporary families: Considering the past, contemplating the future*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Collet, Bruce A. (2007). Islam, national identity and public secondary education: perspectives from the Somali diaspora in Toronto, Canada. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 10(2), 131-153.
- Collier, V. (1995). Acquiring a second language for school. *Directions in Language & Education*, 1(4), 1-10.
- Crabb, Ruth. (1996). Working with Hassan. *Multicultural Teaching to Combat Racism in School and Community*. 14(2), 22-25.
- Department of Administration / Office of Geographic and Demographic Analysis / State Demographic Center. Immigrants to Minnesota by region and selected country of birth. Retrieved October 2, 2007 from <http://www.demography.state.mn.us>
- Esposito, J. (Ed.) (2004). *The Islamic world, past and present*. 1& 2. NY: Oxford University Press.
- Eugene W, K. Jr. (1996). Muslims in the United States: An exploratory study of universal and mental health values. *Counseling & Values*, Apr., 40(3). Retrieved July 15 from Academic Search Premier.
- Faragallah, M.; Shumm, W. & Webb, F. (1997). Acculturation of Arab-American immigrants: an exploratory study. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 28:3.
- Farid, M. & McMahan, D. (2004). *Accommodating and educating Somali students in Minnesota schools*. Saint Paul: Hamline University Press.
- Gehrke-White, D. (2006). *The face behind the veil: The extraordinary lives of Muslim women in America*. New York: Kensington.
- Guardado, M. (2002). Loss and Maintenance of first language skills: Case studies of Hispanic families in Vancouver. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 58(3), 341-363.
- Hodge, D. R. (2002). Working with Muslim youths: Understanding the values and beliefs of Islamic discourse. *Children & Schools*, 24(1), 6-20.

- Hulsen, M.; De Bot, K.; & Weltens, B. (2002). "Between two worlds." Social networks, language shift, and language processing in three generations of Dutch migrants in New Zealand. *International Journal of Social Language*, 153, 27-52.
- Johns, E. & Meryhew, R. (2009). FBI chief: Suicide bomber indoctrinated in Minnesota. *Star Tribune*. Retrieved March 21, 2009, from <http://www.startribune.com/local/40202352.html>
- Kahin, Monamed H. (1997). *Educating Somali children in Britain*. Staffordshire, England: Trentham Books.
- Kouritzin, S. (2000). A Mother's tongue. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34(2), 311-323.
- Lightbown, P. & Spada, N. (1999). *How languages are learned*. NY: Oxford University Press.
- Masny, Diana. (1999). Weaving multiple literacies: Somali children and their teachers in the context of school culture. *Language, Culture, and Curriculum*, 12(1), 72-93.
- McAdoo, H. (Ed.). (1999). *Family ethnicity (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- McCraken, G. (1988). *Qualitative research methods: The long interview*, (13). Newbury Park: Sage.
- McKay, S.L. (2006). *Researching second language classrooms*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Minneapolis Foundation, Minnesota State Demographic Center. (2007). Changing faces: cultural snapshots. *The Changing Face of Central Minnesota*, 5, 23.
- Moore, J. R. (2006). Teaching about Islam in secondary schools: Curricular and pedagogical considerations. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 39, 279-286.
- Oikonomiday, Eleni. (2007). 'I see myself as a different person who [has] acquired a lot...': Somali female students' journeys to belonging. *Intercultural Education*, 18, 15-27.

- Putman, Diana B. (1993). The Somalis: Their history and culture. CAL refugee fact sheet series, 9, 1-22.
- Ramadan, T. (2007). What the West can learn from Islam. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 53(24), B6-B8.
- Reece, D. (1997). The gendering of prayer: An ethnographic study of Muslim women in the United States. *Journal of Communication & Religion*, 20(1), 37-47.
- Reese, L. (2002). Parental strategies in contrasting cultural settings: Families in Mexico and "El Norte". *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 33(1), 30-59.
- Roberts, J. (2007). Wearing the hijab: An argument for moderate selective acculturation of newly immigrated Arab-American women. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, Retrieved July 19, from Communication & Mass Media Complete database.
- Robillos, Mia U. (2001). Somali community needs assessment project: A report prepared for the Somali resource center. *Minnesota University, Minneapolis. Center for Urban and Regional Affairs*, CURA-01-4, iii-19.
- Sandel T., Chao W., & Liang, C. (2006). Language shift and language accommodation across family generations in Taiwan. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 27(2) 126-147.
- Schechter, S. & Bayley R. (1997). Language socialization practices and cultural identity: Case studies of Mexican-descent families in California and Texas. *TESOL Quarterly*. 31(3), 513-536.
- Schmidt, G. (2004). Islamic identity formation among young Muslims: The case of Denmark, Sweden and the United States. *Journal of Muslim Affairs*, 24(1), 31-43.
- Sherman, R. & Webb, R. eds. (1988). *Qualitative research in education: Focus and methods*. Bristol, Pa: Falmer Press.
- Stodolska, M. (2006). The influence of religion on the leisure behavior of immigrant Muslims in the United States. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 38(3), 293-320.

Stoessel, S. (2002). Investigating the role of social networks in language maintenance and shift. *International Journal of Social Language*, 153, 93-131.

Tannenbaum, M. (2005). Viewing family relations through a linguistic lens: Symbolic aspects of language maintenance in immigrant families. *The Journal of Family Communication*, 5(3), 229-252.

Tarazi, N. (1995). *The child in Islam: A Muslim parent's handbook*. Plainfield, Indiana: American Trust.

Wilder Research Center. (2000). *Speaking for themselves: A survey of Hispanic, Hmong, Russian, and Somali immigrants in Minneapolis-St.Paul*. Retrieved November 15, 2008, from www.wilder.org/research/reports.

Zine, J. (2006). Unveiled sentiments: Gendered Islamophobia and experiences of veiling among Muslim girls in a Canadian Islamic school. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 39, 239-252.