

EXTENT OF ACCULTURATION EXPERIENCES AMONG HIGH SCHOOL MUSLIM  
STUDENTS IN AMERICA

By

SHIFA PODIKUNJU

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To my daughters, Zamirah and Sabreen:  
You are my inspiration for striving and reaching for my goals.  
May God bless you with all things good in this world and in the hereafter  
May you both always reach for the stars and strive for the best you can possibly be.  
And to all the Muslim adolescents who grow up in dual cultures, I dedicate this work to you.

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Shifa Podikunju

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Muslim high school students often face bi-cultural issues, which can be a source of additional stress while making the transition from childhood to adulthood. I explored the extent of acculturation issues experienced by Muslim students by using the Muslim Youth Acculturation Rating Questionnaire which is a questionnaire that was developed by the author for use in this study. A higher score on the MYARQ reflected greater extent to which the respondent experienced acculturation issues. Therefore, lower MYARQ scores are associated with higher acculturation (i.e., lesser extent of acculturation issues) while higher scores imply lower acculturation (i.e., greater extent of acculturation issues). This was a descriptive study based on a nationally representative geographic sample of high school students who were selected based on the criteria of being Muslim. Results from the 144 respondents indicated statistical significance in three areas. Boys had higher scores on the MYARQ than the girls, Urdu and Arabic speakers had higher scores than English and Other speakers, and the longer the length of residence for respondent's father and mother, the higher the respondent's scores. Results support previous research findings. However, new information also was found which may have potential impact on the study of acculturation trends especially among Muslims living in America. Implications and recommendations for counselors and educators are provided.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Cultural conflict is a current concern for American society in general and the counseling profession in particular as the number of immigrant families increases rapidly in the United States (U.S.) (Ying, 1998). According to recent estimates, first generation immigrants and second-generation children exceed 60 million, or 24 percent of the total population of the U.S. (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2003). Almost one in four Americans under age 18 is an immigrant or a child of a recent immigrant and the proportion keeps growing (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2003). The issues and problems that arise from linguistic, religious, cultural values, and other differences impact not only the immigrant families themselves, but also societal and cultural subsystems and social and other institutions in the U.S. (Ying, 1998). In particular, the problems and issues associated with assimilation of immigrants into American society impact school systems throughout the U.S. And by direct implication, they also impact educational professionals, including so-called non-instruction professionals, which include school counselors.

Acculturation is the process of adapting to a new cultural context (Berry, 1998; Berry & Sam, 1996; Berry, Trimble, & Olmeda, 1986; Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936). Issues related to acculturation that arise affect both parents and their children. However, it is important to acknowledge that there is diversity within and among immigrant groups, and therefore there also is diversity in their respective methods of and experiences in acculturation. Nonetheless, there also are common themes evident among most families engaged in acculturation (Dugsin, 2001).

In the U.S., Muslims comprise three groups: (a) immigrants, including both naturalized citizens and resident aliens; (b) American citizens who have converted to Islam; and (c) those

born to either of these groups (Numan, 1992; Project MAPS, 2001). The total number of Muslims currently residing in the U.S. is unknown. However, widely varying estimates report the Muslim population as between three and seven million (“Islam in the United States,” 2005). Accordingly, it has been estimated that by the year 2010, Islam could be the second largest religious denomination in the U.S. because of increased immigration of Muslims, a relatively high birth rate among Muslims in the U.S., and new converts to Islam among current U.S. residents (Bagby, 1994; U.S. Department of State, 2001).

Unfortunately, a stringent review of the literature yielded little professional commentary and even less research on acculturation issues among Muslim adolescents. However, there is some information in the professional literature about acculturation issues among Arab and South Asian populations in the U.S. Therefore, given that the largest percentage of Muslims in the U.S. come from Arab and South Asian countries (Pew Research Center, 2007), that literature and research on Arabs and South Asians allow some inferences about acculturation issues among Muslim families in the U.S. In particular, it yields some insight into the cultural and religious worldviews of U.S.-resident Muslims, particularly in regard to differences and similarities within and among various Muslim subpopulations in the U.S.

### **Scope of the Problem**

The cultural adaptation, sometimes called “generation,” gap between all parents and their children widens (at least for a while) as young children mature developmentally, and is particularly evident for children in adolescence. However, cultural adaptation (i.e., acculturation) among Muslim youth in the U.S. is especially difficult because of the combination of societal, familial, and developmental issues involved. Interestingly, children of immigrant parents generally acculturate to the majority culture at a faster rate than do their parents (Sodowsky, Kwan & Pannu, 1995; Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993; Ying, 1998). Youth’s rapid acculturation is

seen in their quicker ability to speak English as a primary language, faster adoption of Western values and lifestyles, and earlier socialization into mainstream society (Sodowsky, et al., 1995). Conversely, immigrant parents are more likely to hold onto their native language, cultural values, and lifestyles despite the demands and pressures to socialize into mainstream society (Sodowsky, et al., 1995; Ying, 1998).

In particular, Muslim immigrants' views of Americans are largely derived from the media (Hedayat-Diba, 2000). For example, the Western cultural values of individuality; independence; "natural," developmental separation from family; and openness of sexual expression are viewed as morally corrupt at best, and sinful at worst by most Muslim adults (Hedayat-Diba, 2000). Muslim parents also feel a religious obligation to protect their children and families from cultural values different from their own (i.e., traditional Muslim family values). Therefore, their children often experience having to "betray" their parents while they try to assimilate into the majority culture. Conversely, other children feel that they betray themselves and their own personal growth and freedom while they "protect" their parents' way of life (Hedayat-Diba, 2000).

Parents of Muslim youth often experience anxiety and frustration in their interactions with their children. Typically, they come from backgrounds where they did not question their parents or their elders who made career or personal life choices for them (Ibrahim & Ohnishi, 1997). These parents must cope with raising their children in a new culture with which they are not familiar while they try to raise their children as if they were in their home culture. Parenting in such a context causes conflict and frustration for both child and parent. It is evident that most Muslim parents are trying to find a balance between their own cultural and religious standards and mainstream social norms so that their children will be successful (Ibrahim & Ohnishi, 1997). In effect, they want to "do the right thing" both according to the dictates of their culture and to

the dictates of the larger society. There is a personal perspective in their attempts because among traditional Asian immigrants including Muslims, a child's choices and successes are a direct reflection of the parents' position in the community (Sodowsky, et al., 1995).

Many immigrant youth appear to oppose their family's native values and lifestyles, and seek instead to assume Western, American mainstream values and lifestyles (Lee, Choe, Kim, & Ngo, 2000). Interestingly, many Asian immigrants including Muslim parents recognize that they themselves and their children need to adopt certain Western-oriented behaviors for all to be successful in society and for the children to be successful in school (Ying, 1998). Nonetheless, intrafamilial differences in perspectives and approaches to childrens' acculturation often are a major source of family conflict.

### **Significance of the study**

As the ethnic minority populations increases counselors, teachers and other mental health professionals are becoming more aware of the psychological and social effects of family conflicts on students and their families (Ying, 1998). Within the counseling setting, Asian American students attribute psychological distress to their relationships with their parents (Lee, 1997). School counselors often find that their role includes helping students adjust to the school environment (Myrick, 1997). However, they often find that they lack sufficient knowledge of Muslim populations (Carter, 1999) to provide effective interventions. A review of the literature showed almost no research conducted concerning the acculturation issues and related characteristics among Muslims adolescents. The results of this study identify the extent of acculturation issues faced by the Muslim student in the acculturation process and their related demographic characteristics and which can assist in the preparation of counselors as they expand their knowledge for the problems of and need for interventions about this group of minority individuals.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The primary purpose of this study was to identify the related demographic characteristics and the extent of acculturation issues faced by Muslim students. High school is a period of choices and decisions that can impact future education and career plans in the adolescent's life. During this time students learn to become independent of their parents and voice their own opinions and choices (Carter, 1999). The Muslim culture is more restrictive than the mainstream American culture. Thus, Muslim high school students often face bi-cultural issues, unknown to American peers. For example, American adolescents as a whole have the freedom or flexibility to make their own choices whereas such behavior is often prohibited in the Muslim family. Muslim students often deal with a "home culture" and a "school culture" and lead double lives, which can be a source of additional stress while making the transition from childhood to adulthood (Carter, 1999; Ghuman, 2003).

This study will explore the extent of acculturation issues experienced by Muslim students by using the Muslim Youth Acculturation Rating Questionnaire (MYARQ) which is a questionnaire that was developed by the author for use in this study. The questionnaire is made up of ten demographic questions, and thirty-one attitudinal questions that address different issues that may impact acculturation, as found in the related literature regarding immigrants, South Asians, Arabs and Muslims. A higher score on the MYARQ reflected greater extent to which the respondent experienced acculturation issues. Therefore, lower MYARQ scores are associated with higher acculturation (i.e., lesser extent of acculturation issues) while higher scores imply lower acculturation (i.e., greater extent of acculturation issues)

## Hypotheses

This was a descriptive study based on a nationally representative geographic sample of high school students. The students were systematically selected based on the criteria of being Muslim. The following null hypotheses were evaluated in this study:

HØ1: There is no difference in MYARQ total score based on respondent gender.

HØ2: There is no difference in MYARQ total score based on respondent country of birth.

HØ3: There is no difference in MYARQ total score based on respondent ethnicity.

HØ4: There is no difference in MYARQ total score based on respondent principal language spoken in the home.

HØ5: There is no difference in MYARQ total score based on respondent Muslim belief origin (i.e., by birth or conversion).

HØ6: There is no difference in MYARQ total score based on respondent type of school attended.

HØ7: There are no statistically significant interactions for MYARQ total score among respondent characteristics.

HØ8: There is no relationship between MYARQ total score and respondent age.

HØ9: There is no relationship between MYARQ total score and respondent's years in the United States.

HØ10: There is no relationship between MYARQ total score and respondent's father's years in the United States.

HØ11: There is no relationship between MYARQ total score and respondent's mother's years in the United States.

## Definition of Terms

**Acculturation** refers to how ethnic minority individuals adapt to the dominant culture and the associated changes in their attitudes, beliefs, values, and behaviors that result from contact with the new culture and its members (Berry, 1998).

**Adjustment:** 1: to adapt or conform oneself (as to new conditions); 2 : to achieve mental and behavioral balance between one's own needs and the demands of others (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, n.d.)

**Asian** refers to people who are from the Asian continent, which includes the countries of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Iran, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, and Iraq.

**Bicultural** refers to belonging or relating to two cultures.

**Ethnicity** refers to belonging to a particular cultural group, for example Arab or Indian.

**Gender** refers to male or female.

**Generational** status refers to the status of being born in the United States or in another country. For example, first generation Muslims are Muslims born in another country and then immigrated to the U.S. Second generation Muslims are Muslims born in the U.S. to immigrant parents.

**High school age** refers to those students who are attending grade nine through twelve in a secondary school in the U.S.

**Issues** refer to problems that Muslim students may have as a result of the process of acculturation to two cultures.

**Muslim** refers to individuals who adhere to the religion of Islam, either by being born into it or through conversion.

**MYARQ** refers to the Muslim Youth Acculturation Rating Questionnaire (see Appendix F) that was created for this study by the author. The questionnaire is made up of ten demographic

questions, and thirty-one attitudinal questions that address different issues that may impact acculturation, as found in the related literature regarding immigrants, South Asians, Arabs and Muslims.

### **Overview of the Remainder of the Study**

The introduction was presented in this chapter. The review of related literature is presented in Chapter 2 and the methodology for the study is presented in Chapter 3. The results of the study are shown in Chapter 4 and are discussed in Chapter 5.

## CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The primary purpose of this study is to identify the characteristics and the extent to which high school-age Muslim students experience different issues presumed to be associated with the acculturation process. A wide variety of potentially influencing factors (i.e., issues) have been associated with acculturation processes among an equally wide variety of groups engaged in acculturation. Demographic variables typically associated with acculturation effectiveness over different age levels include gender, age, specific ethnicity, number of years in the country, parental characteristics such as number of years in the country, and language spoken in the home (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006). There are, however, many other issues that might influence an individual's acculturation process, including those associated with perceptions and interpretations of gender roles, belongingness, interpersonal relations (i.e., dating), peer relations, religiosity, and individuation.

Unfortunately, there has been little attention in the professional counseling (and other, related) literature to the cultural composition and other characteristics of Muslim students in American schools (Alghorani, 2003) in general, and in particular as the characteristics relate to acculturation of Muslims in the U.S. However, cultural and other considerations significantly affect the academic, social, educational, and psychological welfare of Muslim students. Because most Muslim students attend public schools, school staffs, including school counselors, need to understand the cultural characteristics of this minority group to better help and serve them. Therefore, this research serves to shed some light on the special needs of American Muslims, and especially on Muslim youth in America's public schools.

### **Berry's Theory of Acculturation**

Berry's (1974, 1980) theory of acculturation emphasized a multidimensional, interacting system, which included individuals and their interactions with their respective environments. By definition, acculturation is concerned with how ethnic minority individuals adapt to the dominant culture and the associated changes in their beliefs, values, and behavior that result from contact with the new culture and its members (Berry, 1998; Berry & Sam, 1996; Berry, Trimble, & Olmeda, 1980). Berry's model included attention to influences such as Western education, wage employment, urbanization, settlement patterns, population densities, changes in socialization practices, and the pressures to change under the impact of these experiences.

Within Berry's theory, the acculturation of a minority person can be assessed by measuring two presumably independent dimensions: the degree of assimilation to the majority culture and the degree of retention of the minority culture (Berry, 1980, Berry, 1997; Berry & Sam, 1996; LeVine & Padilla, 1980; Sanchez & Atkinson, 1983). Level of assimilation into the majority, or host, culture describes the degree of contact and extent of participation that the individual has with the host (sometimes called dominant) culture (Berry, 1997, 1998; Berry & Sam 1996). It varies from full participation to complete rejection of the host culture's values, attitudes, and behaviors (Berry & Sam, 1996). Retention of the minority culture includes the extent to which individuals value and adhere to their culture of origin. It varies from strong adherence to the culture of origin to total neglect or opposition to maintaining the culture of origin (Berry, 1997, 1998; Berry & Sam 1996).

Berry's (1974,1980) model of acculturation proposes four ways that ethnic group members associate with their host culture: Individuals can assimilate (identify solely with the dominant culture and sever ties with their own culture); separate (identify solely with their own ethnic group and reject the host culture); marginalize (reject their own group and reject the host

culture); and integrate (become bicultural by maintaining characteristics of their own ethnic group while selectively acquiring those of the host culture). A characterization of a low acculturation person means that an ethnic minority person identifies more with native culture than with host culture while high acculturation depicts a person who identifies with the host culture. Different levels of acculturation correspond with different kinds of adjustment problems, and neither high nor low acculturation can be categorized as “good” or “bad” (Sodowsky, et al., 1991).

One of the difficulties of specifying the different domains (e.g., values, attitudes, interpersonal relationships, language, or behaviors) affected by the acculturation process is that acculturation can be viewed as either a group or individual phenomenon (Cabassa, 2003). Acculturation has a dualistic effect. It affects the culture of a group as well as changes the psychology of an individual (Berry & Sam, 1996). An example is a Mexican community in the U.S. may be considered to have acculturated to American culture because a large group of its members have learned to speak English. However, although this is technically correct, individuals within the community may differ significantly in their level of acculturation and vary in the ways they have adapted to American culture. It is the individual-level variability that most acculturation measures try to capture (Cabassa, 2003).

Acculturation also is influenced by contextual factors such as the circumstances surrounding immigration to a new culture (Berry, 1997; Berry & Sam 1998). Prior immigration contextual factors include reason for immigration, role in the immigration decision, prior knowledge or contact with host society, and separation and loss of significant others. The immigration context involves the type of immigration group (e.g. refugee or alien resident), route of immigration, level of danger in the immigration journey, and duration of the immigration

journey. In the new society, the settlement context includes societal attitudes toward immigrants, social environment, age at time of settlement, legal and residency status, cultural distance between culture of origin and culture of settlement, time spent in the new culture, and expectations for life in the new culture (Berry, 1997; Berry & Sam, 1996). Attention to these various contextual factors facilitates deeper understanding of how individuals adapt to a new cultural environment (Cabassa, 2003).

Acculturation can be viewed as a developmental process that varies in intensity and form over time (Berry, 1997). Individuals entering the acculturation process early in life, such as in childhood or adolescence, may embrace the dominant cultural values and behaviors as a way of fitting in, and therefore reject some aspects of their culture of origin. However, these same individuals later in life may embrace their culture of origin and integrate the two cultural orientations (Cabassa, 2003).

### **Research on Acculturation**

The work of Berry and his colleagues (Berry, 1980; Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987; Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989; Sam & Berry, 1995) in assessing the acculturation strategies of various immigrant groups in North America demonstrate that integration is the most psychologically adaptive pattern. Integrated or bicultural individuals experience less acculturative stress and anxiety and manifest fewer psychological problems than those who have been marginalized, separated, or assimilated (Berry, et al., 2006). Overall, marginalized individuals suffered the most psychological distress, including problems with self-identification and cultural alienation, which adversely affected their self-esteem (Farver, Narang, & Bhadha, 2002).

Acculturation may be more stressful for some ethnic groups than for others (Berry & Kim, 1988; Keefe & Padilla, 1987). Generally, the greater the difference between the native and

the new culture, the higher the stress level (Heras & Revilla, 1994; Thomas, 1995) and the more difficulty individuals experience in their psychological functioning (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993; Padilla, 1980; Phinney, 1990). For example, Amer (2005) studied acculturation and the mental health experiences of 611 Arab Americans from 35 U.S. states post September 11. Participants reported significantly higher anxiety and depression compared to normative samples and studies with other ethnic minority groups. Integrated and assimilated Arab Americans reported less stress, anxiety, and depression compared to those who were separated or marginalized. Acculturation stress correlated with anxiety and depression, and both family functioning and social support related to less stress and less psychological distress. Also, Christian Arabs showed significantly less acculturative stress, anxiety, and depression compared to Muslims.

Horan (1996) studied the acculturation and assimilation of Muslim and Christian Arab Americans into American culture and society. Among the 266 participants, the Christian Arab Americans chose integration and acculturation into American culture whereas Muslim Arab Americans were reluctant to adapt to the American culture and society and rejected America's core values.

Ghuman (2003) conducted a massive study with participants in four countries. The focus was on attitudes of second generation South Asians towards Western and home cultures. The four locations were Birmingham, United Kingdom; Vancouver, Canada; Sacramento Valley, U.S.A.; and Newcastle, Australia. The study was conducted over a period of eleven years from 1990 to 2001. The study investigated perceptions of parents and teachers on acculturation and social issues, and the social and educational condition of South Asian adolescent girls, in particular. A total of 951 students completed an acculturation questionnaire, and 125 also

participated in interviews. Seventy of their parents and 43 of their teachers also participated in interviews. Ghuman (2003) found that in general, boys and girls (except for Muslim boys in England) were in favor of integration into their host society as opposed to assimilation or separation. In regard to gender differences, girls scored higher than boys on their attitude toward acculturation. For religion and acculturation, Muslim (as opposed to Hindu and Sikh) boys and girls were closer to the separation end of acculturation, while the Hindu adolescents were closer to the assimilation end of the continuum. Sikhs were mainly in the middle. With regard to comparisons across the four countries, English Muslim adolescents were found to be low on the acculturation factor and high on the traditional factor, and therefore closer to the separation end of the continuum. The Australian Hindus came closer to the assimilation end, which implies high on acculturation and low on traditionalism.

In their study of American-born Asian Indian adolescents, Farver, et al. (2002) investigated the influence of the family on adolescents' acculturation, ethnic identity achievement, and psychological functioning. They found that parents with marginalized or separated acculturation style reported more frequent and intense family conflict than did parents with an integrated or assimilated acculturation style. In families where there was no acculturation gap, adolescents and their parents reported higher self-esteem and less frequent and less intense conflict. Thus, parents are instrumental in the successful functioning of their children in both cultural worlds based on how the parents relate to the host culture.

The presence of acculturation differences, especially cultural value differences, can result in misunderstandings, miscommunications, and eventual conflicts among family members. These types of family conflicts are conceptualized as a domain specific form of acculturative stress in that they reflect the difficulties in transitioning from one cultural environment to another (Sluzki,

1979). The psychological and social problems associated with acculturation conflicts include general adjustment problems, low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, problems with sexuality, physical abuse, and conduct disorders for immigrant populations (Cervantes, Padilla, & Salgado de Snyder, 1990, 1991; Gil, Vega, & Dimas, 1994; Lee, 1997; Szapocznik, Santisteban, Kurtines, Perez-Vidal, & Hervis, 1984; Uba, 1994; Vega, Khoury, Zimmerman, Gil, & Warheit, 1995). Unfortunately, there are few treatment models to address these culture-specific family conflicts (Szapocznik et al., 1984; Ying, 1998).

It is obvious that a wide variety of factors influence how and to what extent people acculturate into a new culture, including those specific to the individuals involved and those characteristic of the contexts in which individuals find themselves. Thus, any study of what factors affect the acculturation process must necessarily be multidimensional in nature.

### **The Muslim Population in America**

American Muslims come from several countries. According to statistics provided by Project MAPS (2001), the largest two groups of American Muslims are of South Asian (32%) and Arab (26%) descent, followed by African-American (20%), African (7%) and other (14%). The South Asian Muslim group emigrated primarily from Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh (Project MAPS, 2001). The Arab Muslim group emigrated primarily from Egypt, Lebanon, and Palestine (Arab American Institute, 2005). More recently, the Pew Research Center (2007) reported the Arab Muslims to be the largest immigrant Muslim group (37%) and the South Asian group to be only 27% according to their survey. This shift in numbers may be due to increased immigration from the Gulf States in the Middle East in the past five years since the start of the U.S.–Iraq war. Each group has its own underlying cultural norms that intertwine with their religious perspectives. For example, the Arab subculture, in general, adheres more stringently to Islam than does the South Asian subculture. Therefore, knowing the level of adherence to

Islamic values may be an indicator of which Arab culture a person belongs or from which the person emigrated. However, some cultural norms are shared by both groups.

Many researchers expound on the need for research to identify the mental health stressors of American Muslims (e.g., Daneshpour, 1998; Haque, 2004; Hedayat-Diba, 2000; Kelly, Aridi & Bakhtiar, 1996; Khan, 2006), and have written elaborately on the beliefs and practices of American Muslims. In particular, Haque (2004) wrote that Muslims face ongoing stressors in America that may negatively affect their mental health and contended there are few therapists well-grounded in the Islamic approach to mental health counseling. Generally, the imam (i.e., the one who leads the prayer at a mosque and/or is an Islamic scholar) treats mental health problems of Muslims in a community. Thus, Muslims may not feel comfortable working with secular therapists who do not understand Muslim culture or the religious contexts of Muslim issues. Importantly, mental health professionals must “understand the culture, customs, and religious beliefs of Muslims in order to serve them on an equal footing with other Americans” (Haque, 2004, p. 57). Despite the growing number of Muslims in the U.S., American Muslims continue to be understudied, widely misunderstood, and falsely stereotyped (Kelly, Aridi, & Bakhtiar, 1996). Among other negative repercussions, the neglect, misunderstandings, and negative stereotypes have sensitized Muslims against seeking the services of Western counselors because they feel they will not be understood and/or that counselors will try to impose Western values upon them (Jaffari, 1993).

Even American-born children raised in Muslim homes may not feel themselves to be a part of mainstream American society because some hold to their family’s (traditional) religious and cultural norms and values. However, in general, immigrants face more challenges upon entering America, and so American-born children likely find it easier to assimilate into mainstream

culture. At school, American-born Muslim children generally are expected to comply with cultural norms in regard to, for example, dress code, food habits, socialization, and even accent. However, acculturation is not easy for them. For example, secular occasions such as Halloween and Valentine's Day do not exist in Islam, and American Muslim children face a predicament when their parents do not approve of partaking in such events (Haque, 2004). Similarly, during adolescence, when dating becomes the typical American social norm, according to Muslim social norms Muslim youth are supposed to stay away from activities such as premarital "free mixing" between genders (Haque, 2004). Selecting partners for marriage is a serious issue because parents prefer their grown-up children to marry in their own cultures (Haque, 2004). Thus, there are a variety of cultural issues that influence the acculturation of American Muslim youth.

Because the American Muslim population is comprised of several cultural and ethnic subgroups, it is important to delineate the Islamic religious beliefs and the cultural worldviews dominant in each subgroup. Religious beliefs and cultural worldviews are interrelated yet distinct. In some cases, religion dictates behavior while in others culture dictates the practice of the religion, and therefore behavior.

American Muslims are misunderstood primarily because of the stereotypes and myths about their religion and its purported practices. Therefore, it is timely, and indeed late, to obtain empirical evidence about the American Muslim population in general and American Muslim youth in particular because of their critical issues and needs, particularly those related to acculturation. Further, it is especially important for mental health professionals and other counselors to have information on American Muslim youth so that they will be able to provide culturally sensitive interventions for these students.

## **Muslims and Religion**

The basic teaching of Islam, as with most other religions, is to remember God and do good things for others at all times. Presumably, life in this world is rewarded in the afterlife, which is understood to be eternal. This is the governing principle for practicing Muslims, and is taught from birth. Muslims express their beliefs through the practice of rituals called the Pillars of Islam. The first expression of belief is the shahadah, which is the declaration of faith in one God and that Mohammad is His Messenger. The second is the performance of the five obligatory prayers every day. By performing a predetermined ritual of worship five times a day, Muslims believe that they stay connected with God at all times. The third expression of belief is paying a percentage of personal wealth as charity, or zakat, at least once a year. The fourth is fasting (for healthy Muslims) between the hours of sunrise and sunset during the month of Ramadan. The fifth expression of belief is the hajj, a pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca for those financially and physically able.

Because of the preeminence of Islam in the lives of American Muslims, it necessarily is an important factor and issue associated with acculturation. For American Muslim youth in particular, the primary dilemma is coping with the discrepancies in the practice of Islam between the former and new countries. Therefore, religious practices should be investigated in study of the acculturation experiences American Muslim youth.

## **Muslim Cultural Worldviews**

The behavior of the South Asian Muslim people reflects primarily Hindu traditions and values (Ibrahim & Ohnishi, 1997). For example, for South Asian Muslims, married women always wear bangles to signify their status as wives. Notably, in South Asian culture in general, women only marry once, i.e., divorce is forbidden. In contrast, Islamic teachings allow divorce

for both men and women (Ibrahim & Ohnishi, 1997). Indeed, Islam gives Muslim women several rights (not always practiced) not universally common in South Asia, including the right to divorce without providing a reason and the right to remarry as often as she becomes single.

All South Asians, regardless of their religion, hold some basic worldviews attributable to their common socio-historical culture. Ibrahim and Ohnishi (1997) presented a number of worldviews important to South Asians and Muslims, including the importance of the family and filial piety, respect and honor for parents, and strong emphasis on duty to the family. An individual's responsibility and duty to family is even before duty to self.

Sodowsky, et al. (1995) elaborated upon the importance of family to both South Asian and East Asian Americans including those who are Muslims in this group, and noted in particular structured family roles and hierarchical relationships, self-control and dignity, respect for community, and cordiality as commonly held family orientation emphases. Also within this perspective, importance is placed on the role of the male as the head of household. Women may work outside the home, but only to supplement family income. Sons rarely take part in the daily chores and are valued more than daughters. Ibrahim and Ohnishi (1997) stressed that self-expression, self-control, and personal modesty also are highly valued, as is not drawing attention to self as being better than others. Unfortunately, this latter perspective can be misunderstood as not having a high self-esteem.

Regardless of the country of origin or religion, however, the hallmarks of the Arab culture are family cohesion and loyalty (Nassar-McMillan & Hakim-Larson, 2003). Final authority for all family matters rests with the father, or in his absence, with the oldest male in the family. Major decisions, such as choosing a marriage partner or a career, are influenced by family expectations and requirements (Adudabbeh, 2005). Family privacy is of great significance

because it is connected to maintaining the honor and good name of the family. Elders in the family are expected to be cared for by other family members; their place in the family requires respect and payback for their roles as good parents. Talking negatively about a parent is unacceptable and regarded almost as a sin (Abudabbeh, 2005).

Sexuality is a taboo subject in Arab families, rarely if ever discussed openly among parents and children, and sexual “inappropriateness” is viewed as bringing shame to the family. There is even less tolerance for homosexuality (Abudabbeh, 2005). Further, openness and directness in a person’s speech can be considered rudeness (Dwairy, 1998), and are avoided for the sake of keeping a relationship intact. Lack of acknowledgment and discussion presents a dilemma for a large number of immigrant Arab families because sexuality is blatant in American society. Therefore, issues related to sexuality are often problematic for American Muslim youth.

Clearly worldviews influence how people behave in many, perhaps all, contexts (Ibrahim & Ohnishi, 1997). Therefore, they necessarily influence the behaviors associated with acculturation, and are important to consider in examining the acculturation of American Muslim youth.

### **Gender Roles**

According to Ghuman (2003), a pervasive issue among South Asians and South Asian Muslims is gender equity and gender role specialization. South Asian families in the West, with some exceptions, have been slow to adapt gender equality and gender role specialization because of their history and traditions. For example, arranged marriages are still the norm among most South Asians (Anwar, 1998; Drury, 1991; Shaw, 2000), and tend to disadvantage girls because of the need for a bride’s dowry. A bride’s dowry can cost a family up to \$30,000 in jewelry, household goods, bride’s clothes and gifts to the groom’s relatives. There has been little modification to this custom in America, and it also is still widely practiced in Canada, Australia,

and the U.K. (Ghuman, 2003). The necessity of a bride's dowry also helps perpetuate the lower status of girls in South Asian families.

Boys are more "indulged" in South Asian families. For example, their breaking of social norms, food taboos, dress codes, even dating and drinking are often "overlooked" in South Asian families in the West (Ghuman, 2003). This "double standard" in the treatment of sons and daughters often causes tension and anxiety in South Asian families (Shaw, 2000; Gibson, 1988).

Talbani and Hasanali (2000) interviewed 22 South Asian adolescent girls in Montreal, Canada. The participants identified three important issues in Muslim girls' socialization, including differential (a) treatment of boys and girls in the home, (b) decision-making power (i.e., girls have far less), and (c) control over intermingling with the opposite sex (i.e., there is considerable less freedom for girls). The girls also felt that there was high social cost associated with being vocal or expressing dissent, so they "accepted" their conditions in the hope of bringing gradual change as they became adults.

Because Western values typically include gender equity and women's rights, American Muslim youth are clearly growing up hearing double messages about the place of the women in the greater society and within the family. These double messages impact the acculturation processes and behaviors of all American Muslim adolescents, both male and female, and therefore should be investigated.

### **Individuation**

Respect for community is emphasized in both South Asian and Arab Muslim cultural groups. Immigrant Muslims in the (local) community are viewed as extended family and each Muslim has responsibilities to them (El-Islam, 1983; Ibrahim & Ohnishi, 1997). Within most Muslim cultural groups, individual needs and desires are to be subsumed to and/or sacrificed for the good of the larger group (Sodowsky, et al., 1995). This belief system is considered to reflect

social consciousness. In turn, this social consciousness is reflected in very high regard for learning. In particular, formal education is presumed to lead to financial security and success, which are indicated by ability to take care of the family and to give back to the community. For example, second generation South Asians, which includes the Muslims in this group, are taught the importance of developing the self by thinking and behaving independently in schools and the larger society. However, South Asian families interpret individualistic mentality as selfish because it implies making personal choices of friends, hobbies, interests and aptitudes, and careers, and may even be interpreted to mean experimenting with sexuality (Ghuman, 2003). The belief that individual needs and desires are to be subsumed to those of the family and community stands in opposition to the concept of individuation, that is, to the development of personal independence and autonomy. However, individuation is generally accepted as a primary developmental task for youth in America (Chodorow, 1978; Erikson, 1968; Gilligan, 1982; Nelson, 1996). Therefore, American Muslim youth confront differing ideologies (i.e., those within and outside of their historical culture) about what are appropriate developmental tasks and associated behaviors. Obviously, then, issues related to individuation should be investigated in any larger examination of the acculturation process of American Muslim youth.

### **Interpersonal Relationships and Dating**

Dating and premarital sexual relations are considered important and relatively normal rites of passage to adulthood and attaining independence within many Western value systems. However, for most South Asian families, such activities would “smear the honor” and lower the social status of the family (Ghuman, 2003.) Arab and South Asian Muslims value modesty about sexuality, including that virginity is treasured. Thus, dating and/or unchaperoned interaction between males and females is highly discouraged (Timimi, 1995). Arranged marriages are still the norm in these cultural subgroups. Further, marrying within the

individual's ethnic group is part of the person's duty to family because it preserves stability in the family, community, and religion (Sodowsky, et al., 1995).

Within most of American society, adolescence is a time when young people are establishing relatively intense interpersonal relationships through dating behavior. Often, these dating behaviors include experimentation with various degrees of intimacy vis-à-vis sexual behaviors. American Muslim youth are thus confronted with the behaviors of their peers, and can respond to those behaviors from any of a variety of perspectives. For example, they can view those behaviors as "alright and appropriate" in the attempt to be like their (American) peers or they can view them as "inappropriate" within the context of the belief systems of their cultural heritage. Thus, dating and associated behaviors impact the nature of the acculturation process for American Muslim youth, and should be examined in study of their acculturation process.

### **Religiosity**

For Muslims, religion is a way of everyday life. Every act is performed with the underlying notion of "only if God wills" (Insha Allah). Fatalism, i.e., the belief that no matter what one does, certain events in life are pre-determined and must be dealt with appropriately, underlies all behavior in every setting; what is meant to be will be. Based on Haddad and Lummis's (1987) study of Muslims' values, characteristics such as a person's country of origin, length of stay in the U.S., observation of the Pillars of Islam in every day life, attending Mosque or other religious and social services at the Mosque and following a strict Islamic dress code, including wearing the hijab (head-covering), have been noted as reliable indicators of religiosity and devoutness among Muslim Americans (Hedayat-Diba, 2000).

Ahmed (2004) studied the impact of religious minority status on adolescent's religiosity and psychosocial maturity among American youth, including some Muslim youth. Of the 174 participants, the Muslim youth were found to be significantly more religious than their non-

Muslim counterparts in the study. Ahmed (2004) concluded that this strong identification with a religious status may positively impact their pro-social behavior and psychosocial maturity, and also serve as protective factors during adolescent development.

Ghuman (2003) reported on the importance of religion as an issue that affects South Asian families and noted that South Asian parents worry that their children are not committed to the practice of and adherence to Islam. Modood, Berthoud, Lakey, Nazroo, Smith, Virdee, and Beishon (1997), cited in Ghuman (2003), found that second-generation South Asian adolescents did not consider religion to be as important as their fathers and mothers did, except specifically for the Muslim adolescents who were more committed than were Hindu or Sikh adolescents. Therefore, because of the salience of the practice of religion and the underlying continuity of religion in everyday life, religiosity should be studied as part of the acculturation process of Muslim adolescents.

### **Belongingness**

The need to belong is considered a fundamental human motivation (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Belonging is not just wanting to be a part of something, but also involves taking part in that thing (Capra & Steindl-Rast, 1991). In a longitudinal study of identity development among immigrant young adults, Arredondo (1984) found that a sense of belonging is crucial to feeling positive about self, to feeling trust and positive regard from and for others, to making a commitment to stay in the current country.

In Kim, Brenner, Liang and Asay's (2003) study on the adaptation experiences of Asian Americans, 10 Asian-American college students who immigrated to the United States as a child or adolescent were interviewed. They expounded on the process of negotiating between two cultures as being difficult and making them feel marginalized from both cultures. More than half of the participants reported that it was difficult to integrate the norms of both the U.S and

indigenous cultures; they experienced confusion about the use and appropriateness of each culture's traditions and at which times to use either. Participants felt that they were not accepted in their native culture because they grew up in America and also were not accepted in America because they were immigrants having different cultural values and practices. They found it difficult to fit into both worlds and cultures and felt they did not belong to either.

Belongingness is an important element to consider because it impacts the psychological well-being of Muslim youth. Therefore, it is a significant part of the acculturation process and should be explored further.

### **Language**

Native and host language proficiency and use are generally regarded as key indicators of level of acculturation (Birman & Tricket, 2001), and are addressed in most measures of acculturation (Phinney, Berry, Vedder, & Liebkind, 2006). Development of language proficiency speeds the acculturation process. The faster immigrants learn to use the host language, the faster they adjust to the new culture. For example, Swaiden, Marshall and Smith (2001), in their study of the acculturation strategies of Muslims in America, found that the more frequent the use of native language, the greater the desire to retain native culture and remain separated and the lower the desire to adopt American culture and integrate into the mainstream American culture.

Whereas immigrant adolescents face the task of learning the host language, second-generation adolescents often lose the ability to speak their native language (Phinney, et.al, 2006). Learning the host language and becoming fluent in it from a very early age is critical to the adolescent's success in school, having positive peer interactions, and integrating with their peer group members, all of which facilitate acculturation into the mainstream society. Conversely, learning the adolescent's family's native language is voluntary, and less significant in the

adolescent's to the day-to-day functioning. Therefore, language is an important variable associated with acculturation and warrants further investigation.

### **Perceived Discrimination**

Experiences of prejudice and discrimination are major factors among those making the acculturation process potentially stressful (Berry, 1997). However, stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination are rarely accounted for in acculturation research (Phinney, et al., 2006). They contend that not enough is known about how widely adolescents in immigrant families perceive discrimination and how such perceptions are related to the experience in their new country and to their overall adaptation.

Research on discrimination among immigrants suggest that it has a reciprocal relationship to acculturation attitudes; that is, the attitudes of members of the larger society toward immigrants is likely to be reflected in the feelings of immigrants about the society (Kalin and Berry, 1996). Therefore when immigrant adolescents feel that they are viewed negatively by others, they will be more likely to view society negatively and reject being part of the larger society; that is they would favor separation or marginalization over integration or assimilation.

Positive sense of belonging to one's ethnic group predicted more positive attitudes toward other groups, which in turn predicted lower perceived discrimination (Romero & Roberts, 1998). Only when people are secure in their own identity will they be in a position to accept those different from them (Phinney, et.al, 2006). When people feel secure they are less prejudiced toward others and when they feel threatened they are more prejudiced (Berry & Kalin, 1995). Conversely, the perception of discrimination may strengthen one's ethnic group identification and weaken ties to the national group (Phinney, et.al., 2006).

Since September 11, Muslims in America in particular are highly profiled on television and other media. The increased negative attention can impact the acculturation process of

adolescent Muslims. Therefore, perceived discrimination based on being a Muslim in America would be an important element to research in this study.

### **Other Relevant Variables**

Length of residence in the U.S. is perhaps the most frequently used measure of exposure to American (Western) culture (Faragallah, Schumm & Webb, 1997). In general, the greater the exposure to U.S. culture, the more likely that an immigrant will acquire the American culture in an adaptive manner or else reject it and depart the country. El-Badry and Poston (1990), El-Sayed (1986) and Musleh (1983) all found a positive relationship between length of residence and acculturation success for Arab immigrants to the United States. Immigrants who had been in the U.S. for a shorter period suffered more problems than immigrants who had been in the U.S. for longer periods of time (Penaloza, 1994; Swaiden, Marshall, & Smith, 2001). Age at immigration also may be important, because younger immigrants may be more flexible with respect to the changes required to adapt to a new culture (Faragallah, et.al., 1997).

Parents' sense of ethnic identity and level of acculturation can influence a child's sense of identity and level of acculturation (Farver, et al., 2002). Parents are influential in setting the tone for their children's behavior, attitudes, and successful functioning in both cultural worlds. In their study of the ethnic identity, acculturation and conflict among Asian Indian families, Farver, et al. (2002) found that the more separated or marginalized the parents were from the mainstream (American) culture, the more conflict there was within the families. They also found that adolescents were more likely to be assimilated than parents because of the socializing aspects of the school environment. If the adolescents retain their heritage, they are more likely to be alienated from their peers. Unfortunately, if immigrant adolescents reject their native culture, they risk being alienated from their own ethnic group without assurance that they will be accepted into the mainstream.

Farver, et al., (2002) also found that adolescents who had acculturated to a large extent reported higher self-esteem than did the adolescents who had acculturated to lesser extents. Acculturated adolescents also reported less anxiety and higher self-esteem. An acculturation gap (i.e., the level of acculturation thus far achieved) is often widest between the first and second generations. Therefore, immigrant parents and their American-born children may be at the highest risk for psychological maladjustment (Farver, et.al., 2002).

Other researchers have found that parents' level of acculturation effects family functioning and adolescent adjustment. For example, investigators have shown that adolescents whose immigrant parents did not adapt well to the host culture (i.e., preferred separation) had more psychological problems than did adolescents whose parents were more integrated or assimilated (Barankin, Konstantareas & deBosset, 1989; Koplow & Messinger, 1990; Minde & Minde, 1976). Similarly, in families in which immigrant parents were overly identified with their ethnic group, strong ties to the native culture served to separate or marginalize the family from the host culture (Keefe & Padilla, 1987).

Therefore, each of these factors is important in the acculturation process of both parents and children and should be investigated further.

### **Summary of the related literature**

The review of the literature has highlighted Berry's theory of acculturation and the research associated with acculturation. The Muslim population in America is made up of different ethnic groups; therefore it is critical that both cultural and religious worldviews are considered when counseling this group. Muslim view of mental health and counseling, Muslim religious beliefs and cultural values were further examined to get a more in-depth understanding of this population. Gender roles, individuation, interpersonal relationships and dating, religiosity, belongingness, language, perceived discrimination and length of residence were considered

important factors of interest in the literature review as having important effects in the acculturation process.

## CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to identify the demographic characteristics and the extent to which high school-age Muslim students experience different issues presumed to be associated with the acculturation process. This chapter provides a description of the methodology for the study, including delineation of the relevant variables, population, sampling procedures, instrumentation, research procedures, and data analyses.

### **Relevant Variables**

The independent variables addressed in this study include the responding student's gender, age, country of birth, ethnicity, number of years in the U.S., father's number of years in the U.S., mother's number of years in the U.S., primary language spoken in the home, origin of religion and type of high school. Gender was self-reported by the respondent as male or female. Respondent students also self-reported their respective current age in years and country in which they were born. Ethnicity was self-reported by the student as Indian, Arab, African American or Other. Responding students also self-reported the numbers of years the student, student's father, and student's mother, respectively, have lived in the U.S. Principal language spoken in the home was self-reported by the responding students as English, Urdu, Arabic, or Other. Origin of religion was reported as Muslim By Birth or By Conversion. The dependent variable addressed in this study is the responding student's total score on the Muslim Youth Acculturation Rating Questionnaire (MYARQ), a questionnaire developed by the author for this study (see Appendix F).

### **Population**

The sample for this study was drawn from the population of American Muslim students attending public, private, and Islamic high (secondary) schools in the U.S. The U.S. Census

Bureau does not collect data on religious identification or affiliation. Therefore, there are no official estimates of the Muslim population in the U.S census bureau data, and all reports of the Muslim population in the U.S. are estimates from other sources (Pew Research Center, 2007).

Various institutions and organizations have given widely varying estimates about how many Muslims live in the U.S. For example, recent studies reported 1.1 million (Kosmin & Mayer, & Keysar 2001), 1.6 million (Glenmary Research Center, 2002), 1.9 million (Smith, 2002), 4.7 million (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2005), and 6.7 million (Ba-Yunus, 1997), 7.0 million (Hartford Institute for Religious Research, 2000) Muslims in the U.S. Discrepancies among the estimated numbers of the U.S. Muslim population revolve usually around the survey methodologies used to estimate that population (Smith, 2002). However, extant political opinions influence some estimates (Smith, 2002). For example, some Muslim groups even contend that population estimating surveys have undercounted the U.S. Muslim population due to “Islamophobia,” Muslims’ fear of revealing their faith in a survey and/or Muslims identifying themselves as Muslims even though they do not attend mosques (i.e., actually practice the faith) (“Muddle over Muslim census,”2001).

The Pew Muslim American study surveyed a national sample of 1,050 Muslims living in the U.S. and projected the Muslim population to be 0.6% of the U.S. adult population. This estimate suggests there are approximately 1.5 million Muslims 18 years old or older currently living in the U.S. Extrapolating from those data and U.S. Census Bureau data, the Pew Research Center therefore estimated that there are approximately 850,000 Muslim Americans under the age of 18 nationwide, in addition to the 1.5 million adults, for a total of 2.35 million Muslims (Pew Research Center, 2007).

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (2006) reported that the projected total enrollment of secondary school students in public schools in the U.S. in 2007 will be approximately 33% of the total number of students enrolled in public schools in the U.S. Therefore, it can be estimated that the maximum number of Muslim students in the public and private secondary schools in the U.S. would be approximately  $(850000 \times .33 =) 280,500$ . However, some proportion of the estimated total of 850,000 Muslim children has not yet entered the school system. Therefore, the estimated maximum number of American Muslim students is something less than 850,000, and correspondingly, the estimated number of American Muslim students in secondary schools is something less than 280,500.

The Pew Muslim American Survey found that 54% of all adult Muslims in the U.S. are male (Pew Research Center, 2007). According to NCES data (2004), males are more likely than females to drop out of high school (11.6 percent compared to 9.0 percent). Therefore, it could be suggested that there would be a higher percentage of Muslim females than males in secondary schools in the U.S. However, as indicated, in the (American) Muslim population, great emphasis and value are placed on education, which in turn would suggest that a relatively low percentage of Muslim students drop out of school. Therefore, it is likely that the male to female ratio for American Muslim students in secondary schools in the U.S. is approximately 54 to 46, as it is in the general population of American Muslims.

Sixty-five percent of adult Muslims in the U.S. were born in another country (Pew Research Center, 2007). Of the 35 percent (of so-called) American-born Muslims, 21 percent are converts to Islam and only 14 percent were born Muslims in other countries (Pew Research Center, 2007). Twenty one percent of the American-born (or 7% of all Muslims in the U.S.) are second-generation, with one or both parents having been born outside of the U.S. The 65% who

were born outside of the U.S. come from at least 68 different nations, with no one country accounting for more than 12% of the immigrants (Pew Research Center, 2007):

Thirty - seven percent of all foreign born Muslim Americans arrived from the Arab region, including Arabic-speaking countries in the Middle East and North Africa. An additional 27% emigrated from the South Asian region, including Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. Another 8% come from European countries and 6% from other parts of Africa. In terms of specific countries, 12% of foreign-born Muslims arrived from Pakistan, and the same proportion from Iran. No more than 7% of first generation immigrants were born in any single country. (Pew Research Center, 2007, p.16).

Most foreign born Muslims arrived in the U.S. in the 1990s (33%) or in the current decade (28%). An additional 23% came during the 1980s, while just 16% came to the U.S. earlier than that. The vast majority of immigrant Muslims who arrived prior to 1990 and during the 1990s have become naturalized citizens (92% and 70%, respectively).

The Pew Muslim American Survey also found that the American Muslim population is significantly younger than the non-Muslim population (Pew Research Center, 2007). More than half of adult Muslims (56%) are between the ages of 18 and 39; 31% are between the ages of 40 and 54; and only 13% of Muslim adults are ages 55 and older. Fully 33% of adult Muslims live in households with no children.

The current study was focused in states reported to have the highest Muslim populations (Kosmin, & Lachman, 1993) among state residents, including California (0.6%), New York (0.8%), New Jersey (0.6%), Illinois (0.4%), Pennsylvania (0.3%), Texas (0.2%), Michigan (0.3%), and Massachusetts (0.4%). However, Muslims in a few other states (e.g., Florida) were included to attempt to achieve the needed minimum sample.

## **Sampling Procedures**

The sample for this study included (self-identified) American Muslim students currently enrolled in public, private, and Islamic high schools in the U. S. Several different approaches were used to identify, contact, and solicit participation from these students.

The primary method used to obtain participants was solicitation of assistance from secondary school counselors in public high schools in the U.S. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) provides an (updated annually) online member directory of elementary and secondary school counselors that includes the state in which they are located and their email addresses. This directory is available to all ASCA members, and was used for initial contact with potential assisting secondary school counselors in the nine states that have the highest Muslim population.

Secondary school counselors identified from the ASCA directory were sent an email inviting them to participate in this study (Appendix A). Those responding affirmatively to the request were emailed the flyer as well as asked if they would like a packet of flyers sent to them via the U.S. postal service. As per the requirements stipulated by the Institutional Review Board, each counselor was asked to include in his/her reply that the school's administration had approved for the flyer to be distributed to the Muslim students. The participating school counselors were asked to distribute the flyers to Muslim students known to them and to request that each student thus identified take the flyer home to her or his parent(s). All school counselors expressed that they did not want the flyers mailed to them, as they did not have more than a range of ten to twenty Muslim students that they knew of in their schools. The flyer (Appendix B) contains information about the study, an invitation for the parent of the student to contact the primary researcher via email to get the URL address and the personal identification number (PIN) needed to allow their student to participate. The primary researcher had an automatic

response set up at her email that replied immediately to any parental email asking for the study's URL and Pin number. The URL address conveyed the informed consent for the parent (Appendix C). Insertion of the provided PIN at the Informed Consent website (a) represented informed consent by the parent(s) for the student to participate in the study and (b) allowed the student to access the questionnaire MYARQ. The student gave his/her Child's Assent (Appendix C) by typing in YES, and then proceeded to respond to the 31 survey items and 10 demographic questions of the MYARQ. Students who are 18 or older did not need to get parental involvement and instead inserted the PIN number as their consent to participate in the study. A paper version of the questionnaire was also made available for those who requested it.

Another sampling procedure included contacting Islamic centers and mosques in the states with the highest Muslim populations and Florida via email to disperse information about the study. The centers contacted were identified from directories provided by the leading Muslim organization in North America, the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA). ISNA is "an association of Muslim organizations and individuals that provides a common platform for presenting Islam, supporting Muslim communities, developing educational, social and outreach programs and fostering good relations with other religious communities, and civic and service organizations" (<http://www.isna.net/about/mission.html>, retrieved August 22, 2007). The directories provide the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of mosques and Islamic centers that have registered with ISNA. The centers are listed alphabetically by state. Only the metropolitan centers in the states with high Muslim populations (as listed previously) were contacted for participation.

The request to the respective centers involved distribution of an announcement to adult mosque attendees to invite parents of adolescent Muslims to encourage their respective children

to participate in the study (Appendix E). An email request sent to the director of an Islamic center will request information about the study which will be attached to the end of the email (Appendix F) be forwarded (e.g., via a listserv) to adult members of the center. Also, the director was requested to post a paper copy of the invitation to participate that could be viewed at gatherings at the center (e.g., Friday afternoon prayers). This method also solicited interest from Islamic school directors who were interested in participating in the survey.

### **Resultant Sample**

Shavelson (1996) provided a convenient method, and table, for determining desired minimal sample size. He also indicated that an alpha level of .05 ( $\alpha = .05$ ) and a power level of .90 ( $\beta = .90$ ) are common values for social science research, with  $\beta = .90$  actually being a relatively stringent criterion. The remaining item needed to determine a suitable minimal sample size is the size of the difference between means (i.e., effect size) in standard deviation units ( $\Delta$ ). The effect size value can be determined a priori only on the basis of intuition, i.e., in consideration of the ramifications of making incorrect decisions. For this research, the effect size was set at  $\Delta = .25$  because it is a relatively stringent criterion. Applying these values to the table provided in Shavelson (1996, p. 640), the minimum sample size for this study should be 168. In addition, it is anticipated (based on data presented previously) that the gender ratio among respondents will be approximately 1:1.

### **Survey Development**

The Muslim Youth Acculturation Rating Questionnaire (MYARQ Appendix F) was developed for the purposes of this research and used to allow American Muslim youth to indicate the extent to which they have experienced various acculturation issues. The original version was an online questionnaire. During the data collection phase, several Islamic centers and some parents requested paper copies of the MYARQ. Therefore, the paper version of the survey was

created for those who requested it. The (attitudinal) subsection requires respondents to use a Likert scale to indicate the extent to which they agree with the respective statements (which reflect various acculturation issues) as they apply to the respondent. The attitudinal subsection of the MYARQ is preceded by a subsection that asks respondents to provide the personal (i.e., demographic) information investigated in the study.

The demographic questions asked for the respondent for his/her gender (male or female, age (write-in value), ethnicity (Indian, Arab, African American, Other), country of birth (U.S., Other), primary language spoken at home (English, Urdu, Arabic, Other), number of years lived in the U.S. (Born in the U.S. , write-in value), number of years Father has lived in the U.S. (write-in value), number of years Mother has lived in the U.S. (write-in value), type of Muslim (By Birth, By Conversion), and type of high school (Public high school, Private high school, Islamic high school, Other). These variables were chosen for this study as being pertinent variables related to acculturation from the literature (Berry, et al., 2006).

The attitudinal items (i.e., acculturation issues) in the MYARQ were derived from the professional literature. The items themselves are declarative statements intended to reflect the essence of a particular acculturation issue that has been presented in the professional literature. The attitudinal subsection of the MYARQ includes items to address six types of acculturation issues: (a) gender roles, (b) interpersonal and peer relations, (c) religiosity, (d) individuation from family, (e) belongingness, and (f) perceived discrimination. The items are statements relative to the respective acculturation issues. The item response choices are: (SA) Strongly Agree, (A) Agree, (U) Undecided, (D) Disagree, and (SD) Strongly Disagree. The MYARQ is presented in Appendix E.

For example, Ghuman's (2003) study, which was conducted on South Asian adolescents living in four western countries (including Australia, Canada, England, and the U. S.), presented a questionnaire with some relevance to this study. Several items from that questionnaire suggested topical statements for the MYARQ. Similarly, Berry, et al.'s (2006) study on immigrant youth provided suggestions for topical statements in the MYARQ.

For the MYARQ questions relating to gender roles (GR), two sources were used to derive each statement. MYARQ GR#1 Muslim women should be allowed personal freedom and MYARQ GR#2 Muslim women should stay home and take care of their family when they get married were derived from Faragallah, et al.'s (1997) question "Should women be allowed more personal freedom or should they stay home more?" in their study on the acculturation of Arab-American immigrants. The remaining GR questions in the MYARQ were derived from Ghuman's (2003) questionnaire with South Asian adolescents. MYARQ GR#3 Muslim men should make all the important decisions in the family ("Men should make all the decisions about the affairs of the family" Ghuman, 2003, # 25); MYARQ GR#4 Muslim women should not work outside the home ("A woman's place is in the home" Ghuman, 2003, #11); MYARQ GR#5 Muslim girls and boys are not treated the same ("Girls and boys should be treated the same" Ghuman, 2003, #1).

Several sources in the literature were noted as relating the values that are inherent for Muslims regarding interpersonal and peer relations (IPR). Notably, Abudabbeh (2005), Sadowsky, Lai and Plake (1991) and Timimi (1995) noted the importance of marrying the same religious and ethnic groups to continue the lineage for Muslims; therefore IPR # 1 Muslims should marry only within their religious group was created. Ghuman (2003) and Wakil, Siddique and Wakil (1983) stressed the importance of behavior with peers to be successful in school;

therefore IPR#2 Muslim teenagers should behave like non-Muslim American teenagers so that they can be more successful in school was created. Ali, Liu and Humedian (2004), Hedayat-Diba (2000), Talbani and Hasanali (2000), Timimi (1995), and Wakil, Siddique, and Wakil (1983) emphasized the social restrictions placed on Muslim adolescents while interacting with the opposite gender. Therefore, IPR#3 It is okay for Muslim girls and boys to talk to each other whenever they want to was created. IPR #4 and IPR #5 were derived from Ghuman (2003): My marriage should be arranged by my family (“Marriage should be arranged by the family” Ghuman, 2003, #1); Muslim boys and girls should be allowed to go on group dates with other Muslims. (Boys and girls should be allowed to meet each other in youth clubs” Ghuman, 2003, #1).

For MYARQ questions on religiosity (RLG), two sources in the literature were used. MYARQ RLG #1, RLG #2, RLG#3 were derived from Ghuman’s (2003) questionnaire: I should eat halal Muslim/ethnic food all the time (“I would rather eat Indian/Pakistani food all the time” Ghuman, 2003, #6); I feel comfortable celebrating Christmas just as I celebrate Eid (“We should celebrate Christmas as we celebrate our own religious festivals “ Ghuman, 2003, #8); I should attend the Mosque and weekend religious school (“(We should attend our places of worship (gurdwara, mandir, mosque” Ghuman, 2003, #3). RLG #4 Muslims should be allowed to practice their daily prayers in school or at work was created from Carter (1999) suggestion that Muslim students should be permitted to pray at school as a recommendation to teachers and counselors who want to help Muslim students be successful at school.

For MYARQ questions on individuation from family (IFF), Berry et al., (2006) and Ghuman (2003) were the main sources. MYARQ IFF #1, IFF #2, IFF #3, IFF #4 were derived from Berry, et al., (2006) Immigrant Adolescent Questionnaire: Muslim children should always

obey their parents (“Children should obey their parents” Berry, et al., 2006, #G-3); I believe parents know what is best for their children (Parents always know what is best” Berry, et al., 2006, #G-10); Muslim children should look after the parents in their old age (“It is a child’s responsibility to look after the parents when they need help” Berry, et al., 2006, #G-8); Muslim boys should live with their parents until they marry (“Boys should live at home until they marry” Berry, et al., 2006, #G-14); Muslim girls should live with their parents until they marry (“Girls should live at home until they marry” Berry, et al., 2006, #G-13). IFF #5 The interests of my family should come before mine was derived from Ghuman’s questionnaire (“The interest of the family should come before the individual (self)” Ghuman, 2003, #31).

For MYARQ questions on belongingness (BLG), two questions were derived from Ghuman’s questionnaire: BLG #1 I should change my Muslim name so that others can say my name easily (“We should change our names so that teachers can say them easily” Ghuman, 2003, #16); and BLG #2 I am uncomfortable socializing with non-Muslim Americans (“I feel very uneasy with white Australians” Ghuman, 2003, #23). In their study with 1.5 Asian American college students, Kim, Brenner, Liang and Asay (2003) also indicated that many immigrants felt uncomfortable socializing with the host population and often only made close relationships with other Asians similar to them. Therefore, BLG #3 and BLG #4 “My closest friends are Muslims”, “I have both Muslim and American/non-Muslim friends” were created to address this issue. BLG #5 and BLG#6 (I wish I lived in a Muslim country, not in America; I am not happy living as a Muslim in America) were derived from several questions that Ghuman (2003) asked regarding how respondents felt about living in ethnic communities versus host communities (“I have no wish to go back to live in the country my parents came from,” “We are better off living

with people from our community,” “ I would prefer to live in an area where there are families from our community,” “ The quality of Australian life is better than that of India/Pakistan.”)

For MYARQ questions on perceived discrimination (PD), PD#1 and PD#2 were derived from Berry, et al., (2006) Immigrant Adolescent Questionnaire: I have been teased or insulted because I am Muslim (“I have been teased or insulted because of my ethnic background” Berry, et al., 2006, #H-4); I feel accepted by my non-Muslim American friends (“I don’t feel accepted by (national group)” Berry, et al., 2006, #H-2.) PD #3 and #4 (I and/or my family have been discriminated against because we are Muslims; Being Muslim has had a negative impact on me and/or my family) were created from the literature given by Berry, et. al., (2006) who emphasized the impact of perceived discrimination in the acculturation experiences of immigrant groups. Ali, Liu, and Humedian (2004), Kim, et al., (2003), and Roysircar (2003) espoused the negative stereotyping that Muslims face living in America which led to the creation of PD #5: Some non-Muslim Americans don’t like my culture and religion.

Shown in Table 3-1 are primary sources for each of the items in the attitudinal subsection of the MYARQ.

In order to inhibit response sets, positive and negative wordings, and associated forward (SA=1, A=2, U=3, D=4, and SD=5) and backward (SA=5, A=4, U=3, D=2, and SD=1) item response weightings are used such that higher scores indicate that the issue is more problematic for the respondent. The MYARQ total score is achieved by summing the respective item response weights. For the thirty one items of the MYARQ attitudinal section, the highest possible score is 123 and the lowest possible score is 63. The assumption that this study makes with the response sets is that the higher the total score, the more problems the respondent has with regard to acculturation issues.

Prior to initiation of the sampling procedures for the study, a pilot study was conducted with between eight American Muslim parents and youth in the Alachua County, Florida, area. Solicitation of participants for this pilot study was made through a local Islamic center. The purpose of the pilot study was to determine if the participant solicitation and online participation procedures are fully functional; data from the pilot study was included in the final data set for this study.

Table 3-1. Referenced issues for the MYARQ

| Issues and MYARQ Item Numbers  | Reference(s)   |
|--|--|
| <b>Religiosity</b>   |  |
| Muslim youth should attend Mosque and weekend religious school (#22)                 | Ghuman (2003); Hedayat-Diba, 2000  |
| Muslim youth should celebrate Christmas (#17)  | Ghuman (2003); Hedayat-Diba, 2000  |
| Muslims should be allowed to practice their daily prayers in school or at work (#19) | Carter (1999)  |
| Muslims should eat Halal Muslim/Ethnic food all the time (#10)                       | Ali, Liu, & Humedian (2004); Carter (1999); Roysircar (2003)   |
| <b>Gender Roles</b>  |  |
| Muslim girls and boys are treated the same in family (#14)                           | Ali, Liu, & Humedian (2004); Ghuman (2003); Hedayat-Diba (2000); Shaw, 2000; Talbani and Hasanali (2000) |
| Muslim men make all the important decisions (#15 )                                   | Ali, Liu, & Humedian (2004); Ghuman (2003); Hedayat-Diba (2000); Shaw, 2000 Talbani and Hasanali (2000)  |
| Muslim women should be allowed more personal freedom (# 6)                           | Faragallah, Schumm, & Webb (1997); Musleh (1983); Shaw, 2000; Talbani and Hasanali (2000)                |
| Muslim women should stay home and take care of family (#11)                          | Faragallah, Schumm, & Webb (1997); Musleh (1983).  |
| Muslim women should work outside the home (#16)                                      | Faragallah, Schumm, & Webb (1997); Musleh (1983).  |

Table 3-1 Continued.

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|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Belongingness</b>  |   |
| Muslim students should change their names so that others can say it easily (#3) | Ghuman (2003)   |
| Muslim youth are uncomfortable socializing with White Americans (#4)            | Ghuman, (2003), Kim, Brenner, Liang, & Asay (2003)  |
| Muslims should wish they lived in a Muslim country, not America (#23)           | Ghuman (2003)   |
| Muslims are not happy living in America (#25)                                   | Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder (2006)   |
| Muslims' closest friends are Muslim (#20)                                       | Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder (2006); Kim, Brenner, Liang, & Asay (2003)   |
| Muslims should have Muslim and American/non-Muslim friends (#27)                | Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder (2006)   |
| <b>Individuation from family</b>  |   |
| The interests of family should come before personal interests (#12)             | Ali, Liu & Humedian (2004); Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder (2006); Brilliant (2000); El-Islam, 1983; Hedayat-Diba (2000); Ibrahim & Ohnishi, 1997; Sadowsky, Lai & Plake (1991) |
| Muslim children should always obey their parents (#9)                           | Ali, Liu & Humedian (2004); Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder (2006); Brilliant (2000); El-Islam, 1983; Hedayat-Diba (2000); Ibrahim & Ohnishi, 1997                               |
| Muslim children should look after their parents in their old age (#21)          | Ali, Liu & Humedian (2004); Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder (2006) Brilliant (2000); Hedayat-Diba (2000); Ibrahim & Ohnishi, 1997  |
| Muslim parents always do what is best for their children (#13)                  | Ali, Liu & Humedian (2004); Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder (2006) Brilliant (2000); Hedayat-Diba (2000)   |
| Muslim boys should live with their parents until they marry (#29)               | Ali, Liu & Humedian (2004); Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder (2006);  |
| Muslim boys should live with their parents until they marry (#30)               | Brilliant (2000); Hedayat-Diba (2000)   |

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Table 3-1 Continued.

| <b>Interpersonal/Peer Relations</b>  |   |
|--|---|
| Muslims boys and girls should be allowed to go out on group dates (#7)                       | Ghuman, 2003; Timimi, 1995; Wakil, Siddique, & Wakil (1983)   |
| Marriage should be arranged by my family (#8)  | Adudabbeh, 2005; Ghuman, 2003; Timimi, 1995; Wakil, Siddique, & Wakil (1983)  |
| It is acceptable for Muslim girls and boys to talk to each other (#31)                       | Ali, Liu & Humedian (2004); Hedayat-Diba (2000); Talbani and Hasanali (2000); Timimi, 1995; Wakil, Siddique, & Wakil (1983) |
| Muslims should marry within their ethnic group (#1)  | Adudabbeh, 2005; Ghuman, 2003; Sadowsky, Lai & Plake (1991); Wakil, Siddique, & Wakil (1983)                                |
| Muslim teenagers should behave like “American students” to be more successful in school (#2) | Ghuman, 2003; Wakil, Siddique, & Wakil (1983)   |

### **Data Analyses**

Two major but different types of data analyses were conducted using the current version of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 16). Differences in MYARQ Total scores based on (a) gender, (b) country of birth, (c) ethnicity, and (d) primary language spoken in the home, and (e) type of high school were examined using one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Post hoc multiple comparisons for ethnicity, primary language and type of high school were done using Least Significant Differences (LSD) and Bonferroni. The relationships among MYARQ Total scores and (a) respondent’s age, (b) respondent’s number of years in the U.S., (c) respondent’s father’s number of years in the U.S., and (d) respondent’s mother’s number of years in the U.S. were examined using non-parametric pairwise correlations. For those analyses that were statistically significant, univariate Analysis of Variance were done to examine any significant interaction effects. Cronbach’s alpha was computed to establish an internal reliability coefficient for the MYARQ Total Score.

### **Methodological Limitations**

A methodological limitation for this study is the participating students have no direct incentive to respond to the MYARQ or to respond to it openly, honestly, or completely. However, receiving the MYARQ materials from school counselors, who by virtue of their positions in schools should be viewed as helpful and caring adults, should impart to potential respondents that the survey and research are important and legitimate. In addition, the requirement for parental permission for participation necessarily means that parents must be aware of their children's participation and may serve to motivate their children to respond to the MYARQ. This could also possibly affect the respondents to provide socially desirable responses. Most important, however, is the realization among most American Muslims that there is great need for better understanding of them and of their lives by the general population of the U.S., which should serve as a strong motivation to participate in the study.

A similar limitation applies to the participating school counselors. That is, they too do not have any direct incentive to assist with the study. However, most practicing school counselors, as dedicated professionals, recognize the need for and value of substantive research that has good potential for application in the school counseling profession. Therefore, it is likely that those school counselors who agree to participate will do so to the best of their respective abilities.

## CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to determine demographic characteristics and the extent to which high school-age Muslim students experience different issues believed to be associated with the acculturation process. Presented in this chapter are the results from the surveys used by students to provide their perceptions of various, relevant acculturation issues presented in the literature. Demographic data are presented, including age, gender, ethnicity, country of birth, primary language spoken at home, Muslim by birth or conversion, type of high school attended, number of years the student has lived in the country, and number of years the student's father and mother have lived in this country. Next, the results of analyses of differences in MYARQ total scores by gender, ethnicity, country of birth, primary language, Muslims by birth or conversion and type of high school attended total are provided. Finally, the relationships among MYARQ total score and age and number of years lived are provided.

### **Demographic Characteristics**

The demographic data for the respondents are presented in Table 4-1. The total number of respondents was N=144. However, data from only 143 were used because of incomplete data from one of the respondents. Of the 143, 35% were male and 65% were female. In regard to ethnicity, 40% indicated they were of South Asian descent (Indian, Pakistani, or Bangladeshi); 43% indicated they were of Arab descent (Egyptian, Iraqi, Yemeni or Lebanese); 5% indicated they were African American; and 12% indicated they were of "Other" ethnicity (which included American, Turkish, Albanian, Iranian, and Multi/Biracial). For their country of birth, 68% of the respondents were born in the United States, while 32% were born in another country. Two of the respondents did not provide this information. In regard to primary language spoken at home,

57% indicated English, 9% indicated Urdu, 23% indicated Arabic, and 11% indicated another language (including Turkish, Farsi, Swahili, and Albanian).

In regard to origin of religion, 96% indicated they were Muslim by birth, and the remaining 4% were Muslim by conversion. Two of the respondents did not provide this information. In regard to type of high school attended, 67% indicated public schools, 24% indicated Islamic high schools, 7% indicated private high schools, and 2% indicated “Other” (e.g., home-schooled). One respondent did not report this information.

Table 4-1. Respondents’ Demographic Characteristics

| Variable                   | Percentage (N) |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Gender</b>              |                |
| Male                       | 35% (50)       |
| Female                     | 65% (94)       |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>           |                |
| South Asian                | 40% (58)       |
| Arab                       | 43% (62)       |
| African American           | 5% (7)         |
| Other                      | 12% (17)       |
| <b>Country birth</b>       |                |
| U.S.                       | 68% (96)       |
| Other                      | 32% (46)       |
| <b>Primary language</b>    |                |
| English                    | 57% (82)       |
| Urdu                       | 9% (13)        |
| Arabic                     | 23% (33)       |
| Other                      | 11% (16)       |
| <b>Origin of Religion</b>  |                |
| Birth                      | 96% (137)      |
| Conversion                 | 4% (5)         |
| <b>Type of High School</b> |                |
| Public                     | 67% (96)       |
| Islamic                    | 24% (34)       |
| Private                    | 7% (10)        |
| Other                      | 2% (3)         |

Response frequencies for the 31 attitudinal items MYARQ is shown in Appendix G.

Table 4-2 shows the average age of the respondents, average number of years that the respondents had lived in America, average number of years that the respondents' father had lived in America, and average number of years the respondents' mother had lived in America.

Table 4-2. Respondent's Age and Length of Residence and Respondents' Parents length of Residence

| Variable     | <i>N</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | Minimum<br>Yrs | Maximum<br>Years |
|--------------|----------|----------|-----------|----------------|------------------|
| Age          | 143      | 15.84    | 1.27      | 13.0           | 18.0             |
| Years in U.S | 142      | 13.16    | 4.58      | 1.0            | 18.0             |
| Years Father | 132      | 14.70    | 14.52     | 0.0            | 57.0             |
| Years Mother | 125      | 12.95    | 13.15     | 1.0            | 60.0             |

### Response Summary

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used for all data summarizations and analyses. The alpha level was  $p = .05$  for all analyses. For the 144 participants, their mean MYARQ total score was 93.09 ( $SD = 11.29$ ). Boxplot and Stem Leaf analyses of the respondents' total scores showed that the sample had a relatively normal distribution of MYARQ total scores.

Table 4-3. Response Means for MYARQ Total Score

| Respondents | Mean Score           | Lowest Score | Highest Score |
|-------------|----------------------|--------------|---------------|
| 144         | 93.09 ( $SD=11.29$ ) | 64           | 114           |

### **H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no difference in MYARQ Total Score based on respondent gender.**

Shown in Table 4-4 are the MYARQ Total score data by gender. An independent samples t-test (see Table 4-5) was computed to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in respondent MYARQ total scores based on gender. It was found that  $t = 2.28$  ( $df = 142$ ;  $p = .024$ ). Therefore, male respondents had a statistically significantly higher MYARQ total score mean than did the female respondents, and the first null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 4-4. Means by Gender for MYARQ Total Score

|             | Gender | N  | Mean    | Std. Dev | Std. Error Mean |
|-------------|--------|----|---------|----------|-----------------|
| Total Score | M      | 50 | 96      | 10.5772  | 1.4958          |
|             | F      | 94 | 91.5426 | 11.4118  | 1.177           |

Table 4-5. Independent Samples *t* test for MYARQ Total Scores by Gender

|                |                                | Levenes's<br>Test for<br>Equality<br>of<br>Variances |      | t-test for Equality of Means |         |                        |                    |                          |  |        |
|----------------|--------------------------------|--|------|------------------------------|---------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--|--------|
|                |                                | F  | Sig. | t                            | Df      | Sig.<br>(2-<br>tailed) | Mean<br>Difference | Std. Error<br>Difference | 95%<br>Confidence<br>Interval of the<br>Difference |        |
|                |                                |  |      |                              |         |                        |                    | Lower                    | Upper  |        |
| Total<br>Score | Equal<br>variances<br>assumed  | .183   | .669 | 2.288                        | 142     | .024                   | 4.4574             | 1.9483                   | .6060  | 8.3089 |
|                | Equal variances<br>not assumed |  |      | 2.342                        | 106.876 | .021                   | 4.4574             | 1.9034                   | .6841  | 8.2308 |

**H<sub>0</sub>2: There is no difference in MYARQ Total Score based on respondent ethnicity.**

Shown in Table 4-6 are the MYARQ Total Score data by ethnicity. A one way analysis of variance (see Table 4-7) was calculated to compare respondent MYARQ total score means by ethnicity. For this analysis, it was found that  $F = 1.64$  ( $df = 3, 140$ )  $p = 0.182$ . Therefore, there was no statistically significant difference based on ethnicity and the second null hypothesis was not rejected.

Table 4-6. MYARQ Total Score Means by Ethnicity

|                  | N   | Mean  | Std. Deviation | STD. Error | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean |             | Minimum | Maximum |
|------------------|-----|-------|----------------|------------|----------------------------------|-------------|---------|---------|
|                  |     |       |                |            | Lower bound                      | Upper bound |         |         |
| South Asian      | 58  | 91.74 | 11.74          | 1.54       | 88.65                            | 94.83       | 68.00   | 114.00  |
| Arab             | 62  | 95.40 | 1.05           | 1.40       | 92.59                            | 98.21       | 65.00   | 114.00  |
| African American | 7   | 91.14 | 7.73           | 2.92       | 83.99                            | 98.29       | 83.00   | 103.00  |
| Other            | 17  | 90.06 | 11.03          | 2.67       | 84.38                            | 95.73       | 64.00   | 109.00  |
| Total            | 144 | 93.09 | 11.29          | .94        | 91.23                            | 94.95       | 64.00   | 114.00  |

Table 4-7. One Way Analysis of Variance for MYARQ Total Score by Ethnicity

|                | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F     | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups | 619.988        | 3   | 206.663     | 1.642 | .182 |
| Within Groups  | 17621.838      | 140 | 125.870     |       |      |
| Total          | 18241.826      | 143 |             |       |      |

**H<sub>03</sub>: There is no difference in MYARQ Total Score based on respondent country of birth.**

Table 4-8 shows MYARQ Total Score data by country of birth. An independent samples t-test (see Table 4-9) was computed to compare respondent MYARQ total score means by country of birth. It was found that  $t = -0.11$  ( $df = 140$ ;  $p = .916$ ). Therefore, there was not a statistically significant difference in MYARQ total score means based on country of birth, and the third null hypothesis was not rejected.

Table 4-8. Means for MYARQ Total Score by Country of Birth

|             | COBIRTH         | N  | Mean    | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|-------------|-----------------|----|---------|----------------|-----------------|
| Total score | United States   | 96 | 93.0938 | 11.1119        | 1.1341          |
|             | Another Country | 46 | 93.3043 | 11.2128        | 1.6532          |

Table 4-9. Independent Samples t test on MYARQ Total Score by Country of Birth

|                |                                | Levenes's<br>Test for<br>Equality<br>of<br>Variances |      | t-test for Equality of Means |        |                        |                    |                          |  |        |
|----------------|--------------------------------|--|------|------------------------------|--------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--|--------|
|                |                                | F  | Sig. | t                            | Df     | Sig.<br>(2-<br>tailed) | Mean<br>Difference | Std. Error<br>Difference | 95%<br>Confidence<br>Interval of the<br>Difference |        |
|                |                                |  |      |                              |        |                        |                    |                          | Lower  | Upper  |
| Total<br>Score | Equal<br>variances<br>assumed  | .026   | .871 | .105                         | 140    | .916                   | -.2106             | 1.9984                   | -.4.1616   | 3.7404 |
|                | Equal variances<br>not assumed |  |      | .105                         | 88.079 | .917                   | -.2106             | 2.0048                   | -4.1948  | 3.7736 |

**H<sub>0</sub>4: There is no difference in MYARQ Total Score based on respondent primary language spoken in the home.**

Shown in Table 4-10 are the MYARQ Total Score data by primary language spoken in the home. A one way analysis of variance (see Table 4-11) was calculated to compare MYARQ total score means across categories of primary language spoken in the respondent's home. It was found that  $F = 6.521$  ( $df = 3, 140$ )  $p = 0.000$ . Therefore, the fourth null hypothesis was rejected. Subsequently, a Least Significant Difference (LSD) and Bonferroni post hoc comparison (see Table 4-12) revealed that primary home language of English and "Other" language were not statistically significant from each other and that the primary home languages of Urdu and Arabic were not statistically significant from each other. However, the primary home languages of Urdu and Arabic were statistically significant from the primary home language of English

Table 4-10. Means for MYARQ Total Score by Primary Language in the Home

|         | n   | Mean    | Std. Deviation | Std. Error | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean |             | Minimum | Maximum |
|---------|-----|---------|----------------|------------|----------------------------------|-------------|---------|---------|
|         |     |         |                |            | Lower Bound                      | Upper Bound |         |         |
| English | 82  | 89.8171 | 1178.5866      | 1.2795     | 87.2712                          | 92.3629     | 64.00   | 114.00  |
| Urdu    | 13  | 99.4615 | 12.3397        | 3.4224     | 92.0047                          | 106.9184    | 71.00   | 114.00  |
| Arabic  | 33  | 98.0000 | 8.4668         | 1.4739     | 94.9978                          | 101.0022    | 75.00   | 113.00  |
| Other   | 16  | 94.5625 | 8.2054         | 2.0514     | 90.1901                          | 98.9349     | 78.00   | 106.00  |
| Total   | 114 | 93.0903 | 11.2945        | .9412      | 91.2298                          | 94.9508     | 64.00   | 114.00  |

Table 4-11. One Way Analysis of Variance for MYARQ Total Score by Primary Language in the Home

|                | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F     | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups | 2236.402       | 3   | 745.467     | 6.521 | .000 |
| Within Groups  | 16005.424      | 140 | 114.324     |       |      |
| Total          | 18241.826      | 143 |             |       |      |

Table 4-12. *Post Hoc* LSD and Bonferroni Comparison of MYARQ Total Score by Primary Language in the Home

|     | (I) PRIMLAN | (J) PRIMLAN | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig.   | 95% Confidence Interval |             |
|-----|-------------|-------------|-----------------------|------------|--------|-------------------------|-------------|
|     |             |             |                       |            |        | Lower Bound             | Upper Bound |
| LSD | English     | Urdu        | -9.6445(*)            | 3.1919     | .003   | -15.9551                | -3.3339     |
|     |             | Arabic      | -8.1829(*)            | 2.2042     | .000   | -12.5408                | -3.8251     |
|     |             | Other       | -4.7454               | 2.9222     | .107   | -10.5228                | 1.0320      |
|     | Urdu        | English     | 9.6445(*)             | 3.1919     | .003   | 3.3339                  | 15.9551     |
|     |             | Arabic      | 1.4615                | 3.5012     | .677   | -5.4606                 | 8.3836      |
|     |             | Other       | 4.8990                | 3.9924     | .222   | -2.9942                 | 12.7923     |
|     | Arabic      | English     | 8.1829(*)             | 2.2042     | .000   | 3.8251                  | 12.5408     |
|     |             | Urdu        | -1.4615               | 3.5012     | .677   | -8.3836                 | 5.4606      |
|     |             | Other       | 3.4375                | 3.2572     | .293   | -3.0023                 | 9.8773      |
|     | Other       | English     | 4.7454                | 2.9222     | .107   | -1.0320                 | 10.5228     |
|     |             | Urdu        | -4.8990               | 3.9924     | .222   | -12.7923                | 2.9942      |
|     |             |             | Arabic                | -3.4375    | 3.2572 | .293                    | -9.8773     |

Table 4-12 Continued

|            |         |         |            |        |       |          |         |
|------------|---------|---------|------------|--------|-------|----------|---------|
|            |         | Urdu    | -9.6445(*) | 3.1919 | .018  | -18.1869 | -1.1020 |
|            | English | Arabic  | -8.1829(*) | 2.2042 | .002  | -14.0820 | -2.2839 |
|            |         | Other   | -4.7454    | 2.9222 | .640  | -12.5661 | 3.0753  |
|            |         | English | 9.6445(*)  | 3.1919 | .018  | 1.1020   | 18.1869 |
| Bonferroni | Urdu    | Arabic  | 1.4615     | 3.5012 | 1.000 | -7.9087  | 10.8317 |
|            |         | Other   | 4.8990     | 3.9924 | 1.000 | -5.7858  | 15.5838 |
|            |         | English | 8.1829(*)  | 2.2042 | .002  | 2.2839   | 14.0820 |
|            | Arabic  | Urdu    | -1.4615    | 3.5012 | 1.000 | -10.8317 | 7.9087  |
|            |         | Other   | 3.4375     | 3.2572 | 1.000 | -5.2798  | 12.1548 |
|            |         | English | 4.7454     | 2.9222 | .640  | -3.0753  | 12.5661 |
|            | Other   | Urdu    | -4.8990    | 3.9924 | 1.000 | -15.5838 | 5.7858  |
|            |         | Other   | -3.4375    | 3.2572 | 1.000 | -12.1548 | 5.2798  |

\* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

**H<sub>0</sub>5: There is no difference in MYARQ Total Score based on respondent Muslim belief origin.**

Because such a small proportion of the respondents had become Muslim by conversion, the data were insufficient to allow appropriate data analysis. Therefore, this hypothesis could not be evaluated in this study

**H<sub>0</sub>6: There is no difference in MYARQ total score based on respondent type of high school attended**

Because there were so few respondents who attended private (other than Islamic) high schools, the data from those respondents was combined with that of respondents who attended public high schools. Shown in Table 4-13 are the MYARQ Total Score data by type of high school following the clustering. A one way analysis of variance (see Table 4-14) was calculated to compare respondent MYARQ total score means by school type. It was found that  $F = 0.223$  ( $df = 2, 140$ ;  $p = 0.801$ ). Therefore, there was not a statistically significant difference in MYARQ total score means based on school type, and the sixth null hypothesis was not rejected

Table 4-13. Means Description of MYARQ Total Score and Type of School Attended

|       | n   | Mean    | Std. Deviation | Std. Error | 95% Confidence Interval for the Mean |             | Minimum | Maximum |
|-------|-----|---------|----------------|------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|---------|---------|
|       |     |         |                |            | Lower Bound                          | Upper Bound |         |         |
| 1.00  | 106 | 92.9245 | 12.1167        | 1.1769     | 90.5910                              | 95.2581     | 64.00   | 114.00  |
| 2.00  | 34  | 93.5000 | 8.3130         | 1.4257     | 90.5995                              | 96.4005     | 78.00   | 113.00  |
| 4.00  | 3   | 89.0000 | 10.8167        | 6.2450     | 62.1299                              | 115.8701    | 77.00   | 98.00   |
| Total | 143 | 92.9790 | 11.2547        | .9412      | 91.1185                              | 94.8395     | 64.00   | 114.00  |

Table 4-14. One Way Analysis of Variance for MYARQ Total Score and Type of School

|                | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | f    | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|------|------|
| Between Groups | 57.041         | 2  | 28.520      | .233 | .801 |
| Within Groups  | 17929.896      | 40 | 128.071     |      |      |
| Total          | 17986.937      | 42 |             |      |      |

**H<sub>0</sub>7: There are no statistically significant interactions for MYARQ Total Score among respondent characteristics**

To examine the relationship between respondent gender and primary language spoken in the home, a univariate ANOVA was conducted. Results revealed a significant main effect for primary language  $F(3, 136) = 5.78, p < .001$ , although the gender,  $F(1, 136) = 1.88, p = .17$ , and the gender by primary language interaction were not significant  $F(3,136) = .384, p = .77$ . Thus, the null hypothesis was not rejected

**H<sub>0</sub>8: There is no relationship between MYARQ total score and respondent age.**

Because the range of respondent ages was restricted, a Spearman rank order (rho) correlation was computed (see Table 4-15) to determine the relationship between MYARQ total score and respondent age. For this analysis, it was found that  $\rho = -0.006$  ( $df = 143; p = .947$ ). Therefore, the eighth null hypothesis was not rejected.

**H<sub>0</sub>9: There is no relationship between MYARQ Total Score and respondent years in the United States.**

A Spearman correlation also was computed (see Table 4-15) to determine the relationship between MYARQ total score and respondent length of residence in the United States. For this analysis, it was found that  $\rho = -0.024$  ( $df = 142$ ,  $p = .776$ ). Therefore, the ninth null hypothesis was not rejected.

**H<sub>0</sub>10: There is no relationship between MYARQ Total Score and respondent's father's years in the United States.**

A Spearman's rank correlation was computed (see Table 4-15) to determine the relationship between MYARQ total score and respondent's father's length of residence in the United States. It was found that  $\rho = .296$  ( $df = 132$ ;  $p = .001$ ). Therefore, the tenth null hypothesis was rejected.

**H<sub>0</sub>11: There is no relationship between MYARQ Total Score and respondent's mother's years in the United States.**

A Spearman's rank correlation was computed (see Table 4-15) to determine the relationship between MYARQ total score and respondent's mother's length of residence in the United States. It was found that  $\rho = .217$  ( $df = 125$ ;  $p = .015$ ). Therefore the eleventh null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 4-15. Spearman Correlation Coefficients of MYARQ Total Scores with Respondent Age, Length of Residence, Respondent's Father's Length of Residence, and Respondent's Mother's Length of Residence.

|                |             | Total Score             | AGE      | YRSLIVED | YRSF     | YRSM     |          |
|----------------|-------------|-------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Spearman's rho | Total score | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000    | -.006    | -.024    | .296(**) | .217(*)  |
|                |             | Sig.(2-tailed)          | .        | .947     | .776     | .001     | .015     |
|                |             | N                       | 144      | 143      | 142      | 132      | 125      |
|                | AGE         | Correlation Coefficient | -.006    | 1.000    | .434(**) | .064     | .054     |
|                |             | Sig.(2-tailed)          | .947     | .        | .000     | .470     | .553     |
|                |             | N                       | 143      | 143      | 142      | 131      | 124      |
|                | YRSLIVED    | Correlation Coefficient | -.024    | .434(**) | 1.000    | .255(**) | .408(**) |
|                |             | Sig.(2-tailed)          | .776     | .000     | .        | .003     | .000     |
|                |             | N                       | 142      | 142      | 142      | 131      | 124      |
|                | YRSF        | Correlation Coefficient | .296(**) | .064     | .255(**) | 1.000    | .786(**) |
|                |             | Sig.(2-tailed)          | .001     | .470     | .003     | .        | .000     |
|                |             | N                       | 132      | 131      | 131      | 132      | 122      |
|                | YRSM        | Correlation Coefficient | .217(*)  | .054     | .408(**) | .786(**) | 1.000    |
|                |             | Sig.(2-tailed)          | .015     | .553     | .000     | .000     | .        |
|                |             | N                       | 125      | 124      | 124      | 122      | 125      |

\*\*Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

\*Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

Finally, a Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was calculated to determine the internal consistency of the MYARQ. It was found to be 0.70 for the MYARQ Total Score for this group of respondents which is considered adequate in most social science research situations (Heppner, Kivlighan, & Wampold, 1992).

## CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which high school age Muslim students experience various acculturation issues that have been presented in the professional literature. In addition, differences in the extent to which they experienced the various issues based on gender, ethnicity, country of birth, primary language, origin of religion and type of high school attended were examined, as were the relationships between the extent to which they experienced those issues and the number of years that the respondent and each of the respondent's parents have lived in America. The extent to which the respondents experienced acculturation issues was made operational as the total score on the Muslim Youth Acculturation Rating Questionnaire (MYARQ), a self-report instrument developed by the author that comprised of items that reflected acculturation issues as presented in the professional literature.

Although much research has been done about acculturation for immigrant adults (e.g., Amer, 2005; Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987; Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989; Phinney, 1990; Sam & Berry, 1995), and some for immigrant youth (e.g., Ghuman, 2003; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001), little attention has been focused on the cultural adaptation of Muslim youth (Alghorani, 2003; Hedayat-Diba, 2000). However, Muslim youth face a distinct acculturation process because of their "allegiance" to both traditional cultural values and religious beliefs and the social influences of their American peers. Additionally, since the historic events of September 11th, 2001, Muslims have had to endure intense scrutiny as members of the greater American society. These unique stressors impact the acculturation process of Muslims, especially adolescents who also are experiencing other developmental changes and engaging in identity development. Therefore, this study surveyed Muslim adolescents to determine the extent to which they experience various acculturation issues presumed to be common in the

acculturation process. Presented in this chapter are the limitations, conclusions, implications, and recommendations that evolved from this research.

### **Generalizability Limitations**

The purpose of this survey research was to gather information from high school age Muslim students about their experiences of issues in their acculturation process. The initial plan was to access the high school students by contacting high school counselors and Islamic centers to disseminate information about the study by means of a flyer. The flyer requested that parents contact the researcher for the link to the online survey (with the password provided as the informed consent for their child to take the online survey). Therefore, high school counselors who were members of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) and resided in the nine states with the largest Muslim populations (i.e., California, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Texas) were contacted via email. Islamic Centers in the same nine states also were sent email information about and participation requests for the study. However, collectively these processes generated only twenty respondents over a three-month period, even though a reminder email was sent to the school counselors and Islamic centers every month. Therefore, thereafter “snowball sampling” was used to increase the response rate. Snowball sampling is deliberate sampling that typically proceeds after a study begins and takes place when the researcher asks participants to recommend other individuals to participate in the study (Creswell, 2002). This method helped to increase the final sample to 144. Although the desired sample size was not fully achieved, this sample is sufficient for valid data analyses, and substantial relative to the restricted population from which it was drawn.

Another adjustment to the proposed procedures was to provide a paper version of the survey for those participants who requested it. The third adjustment was an addition to the type of high school attended by the respondents. Initially, it was intended that only students from

public high schools would be sampled, based on the assumption that those Muslim students who were “main-streamed” adolescents would face the common acculturation issues. However, feedback and interest from parents and directors of Islamic schools who received the information about the study from their Islamic centers suggested that students in Islamic schools also experienced acculturation issues frequently. Therefore, students from public, private, and Islamic schools all were included in the study. Again, although this was a change from the original plan, the inclusion of students from Islamic high schools in effect allowed the sample to represent an even broader sample of Muslim adolescent students.

It was anticipated that the gender ratio among respondents would be approximately 50:50. However, the gender ratio for the sample was 65% female and 35% male. It may be that more females than males responded to the MYARQ as they tend to be more compliant and conforming than males. However, while females are to some extent overrepresented among the respondents, there were sufficient numbers of respondents for each gender to allow valid gender difference analyses.

### **Conclusions**

A higher score on the MYARQ reflected greater extent to which the respondent experienced acculturation issues. Therefore, lower MYARQ scores are associated with higher acculturation (i.e., lesser extent of acculturation issues) while higher scores imply lower acculturation (i.e., greater extent of acculturation issues). The lowest possible MYARQ score was 63 and the highest possible score was 123. For this study the lowest total score by a respondent was 64 and the highest score was 114.

The first hypothesis addressed differences in MYARQ Total Score based on gender. There was a statistically significant difference in mean MYARQ total score, with male respondents having a higher mean score than female respondents. This result indicates that male

Muslim adolescents had greater intensity of acculturation issues than the female Muslim adolescents.

A second major finding of this study was that the mean difference for primary language spoken in the home was statistically significant. The primary difference was among respondents from homes in which Urdu and Arabic were the main languages spoken at home and those in which English was the main language spoken at home, with students in the former having greater intensity of acculturation issues than in the latter.

The third major finding in this study was that of the positive and statistically significant correlations between the number of years that both the respondent's father and mother had lived in the U.S. and MYARQ Total Score. Apparently, parental duration in the U.S. is inversely associated with their adolescent's experience of acculturation issues.

Statistically significant differences were not found for MYARQ Total Score based on ethnicity, country of birth, and type of high school.

The variable "country of birth" was included to investigate whether there were differences based on being born in the U.S. While a majority (68%) of the respondents was born in the U.S., many of them had not lived in the U.S. their entire lives; the total number of years lived in the U.S. for the respondents were often different than their actual age. Presumably, discontinuity of time lived in the U.S. could have impacted the intensity of their experiences with acculturation. However, there was not a statistically significant difference for this variable.

One of the initial assumptions of this study was that public school students have greater exposure to mainstream America, and therefore would be a more accurate representation of the average or typical Muslim adolescent in America. Islamic school students' educations follow strict Islamic rules, which include segregation of the sexes, wearing a school uniform, intense

study of religion, and daily prescribed prayers (Alghorani, 2003). Therefore, it would be easy to assume that these students have had a completely different experience of daily school, interpersonal, religious, and social life than the public school students. However, there were no statistically significant differences in intensity of acculturation experience based on school type.

### **Interpretations**

The variables examined in this study were developed from the literature on theory and research related to acculturation of immigrants. In particular, Berry's theory of acculturation states that demographic variables such as age, gender, ethnicity, length of residence, and parents' length of residence have been shown as possible sources of variation in the acculturation process (Berry & Sam, 1997). Intercultural variables such as language proficiency and use, social contacts, perceived discrimination and family relationship values have been researched within the context of Berry's theory, and found to have substantive relationships with acculturation process level of adaptation (Berry, et al., 1989; Berry, Phinney, Kwak, & Sam, 2006).

Berry's (1980) theory of acculturation includes that all issues are applicable to all persons experiencing the acculturation process. Further, for adolescents in immigrant families, acculturation attitudes are shaped by families, peers, their school experiences, and other adults with whom they interact (Phinney, et al., 2006). Thus, differences in preferences for acculturative change are dependent on contextual factors, any discrimination that they may experience, and personal characteristics (Phinney, et al., 2006). Because both the nature and extent of the acculturation issues with which a person is confronted change over time (Berry, et al., 2006), it is important that research on adolescents be conducted before they become adults. This study therefore contributes to the research and theory associated with the literature on acculturation of adolescent immigrants.

The result of gender difference in acculturation found in this study is in accord with the research of Berry, et al. (2006) and Ghuman (2003) who also found acculturation differences based on gender. Interestingly, Berry, et al., (2006) found in their study of acculturation, identity, and adaptation of immigrant youth living in 13 societies around the world that immigrant boys had slightly better psychological adaptation than immigrant girls, but there was poorer sociocultural adaptation for girls. Psychological adaptation in their study included factors such as life satisfaction, self-esteem, and psychological problems and sociocultural adaptation included factors such as school adjustment, and behavior problems. They concluded that:

“girls are more likely to internalize problems and have higher levels of depression, whereas boys are more likely to externalize problems and act out. In schools, girls have the same opportunity as boys for exposure to the new society. Girls are likely to find school a congenial atmosphere, both because they typically do better in school than boys... and because a school atmosphere that promotes gender equality may allow them greater freedom than they experience at home. Positive attitudes toward school may contribute to the better school adjustment of girls...an orientation toward integration might create more stress at home, especially when parents want their daughters to remain close to the cultural traditions of the family.... Stress at home may be a factor in the poorer psychological well-being of girls.” (Phinney, et al., 2006, p.221).

Ghuman’s (2003) study on South Asian youth living in four Western countries reported that girls had the most to gain from accepting the norms and practices of gender equality, especially when the cultural and religious norms within their family did not allow for them to be treated the same as the boys. This may explain why the girls in the present study scored lower on

the MYARQ (which implies lesser intensity of problems) because they stand to gain more by adopting Western values with regard to gender equality and treatment from others.

In regard to primary language spoken in the home, previous research (Swaiden, et.al, 2001) has shown that among Muslims in America, the more frequent the use of native language, the greater the desire to retain native culture and remain “separated” from mainstream American culture. Ghuman (2003) found that Muslims in particular in his study were more dedicated to learning, speaking, and keeping their primary language than the other religious groups. Similarly, Berry, et al., (2006) concluded that Muslim immigrant youth were the largest group among the ethnic profile groups in which the orientation was toward high ethnic identity, ethnic language proficiency and usage, and ethnic peer contacts.

Language proficiency speeds the acculturation process (Swaiden, et al., 2001), a proposition supported by the respondents in this study having higher scores MYARQ scores being the ones who were primarily speaking languages other than English at home.

Previous research by El-Badry and Poston (1990), El-Sayed (1986), and Musleh (1983) found a positive relationship between length of residence and acculturation success for Arab immigrants to the U. S. Immigrants who had been in the U.S. for a shorter period suffered more problems than immigrants who had been in the U.S. for longer periods of time (Penaloza, 1994; Swaiden, et al., 2001). However, apparently the potential acculturation adaptation benefits derived from longer residence in the U.S. is not transmitted directly, or at least uniformly, from parents to their children. A possible explanation is that, in general, the basic religious and cultural values of Muslims espouse the authority of the father in the household. Further, gender roles are clearly defined and hierarchical. Therefore, the father usually makes all the important decisions in the household, which could include the amount of contact the family has with the

larger society, the activities in which the children are involved in at school or outside of school, and the interpersonal relationships allowed for the children and/or the family in general.

Another plausible explanation for this finding may be the repercussions for Muslims in general following the events of September 11th, 2001. September 11th has dramatically altered the way Muslims live in the U.S. (Abdo, 2006). In the post “9-11 era,” Muslims have become more religious and more conservative because they feel an urgent need to embrace their beliefs and to establish an Islamic identity as a unified community. For example, Abdo (2006) reported that there are more mosques, more women wearing headscarves, and more Muslims taking time to perform their daily prayers at work than in the decade prior to September 11th, 2001.

And finally, most of the previous studies that showed a positive relationship between length of residence and acculturation success were conducted in the 1980s and 1990s. Acculturation success may have had different influences based on the historical events preceding that time. Now, however, Muslims are more frequently “keeping to their own ethnic groups” because of distrust and anxieties related to national and media propaganda against Muslims. On September 11th, 2001, the respondents in this study were only between six and 11 years of age. After that date, their parents may have tried to “protect” their children more by keeping them separated from the larger society and the onslaught of negative stereotyping of Muslims. Abdo (2006) reported that young Muslims who were born or raised in the U.S. are often more observant of Islamic practices than their parents. Therefore, the respondents in this study may have had more intensity of acculturation issues regardless of how long their parents have lived longer in the U.S.

With regard to the lack of significant difference based on ethnicity, it is important to recognize that not all Muslims are alike. In the world at large, Muslims are comprised of several

ethnic groups, but in the U.S. they are primarily comprised of three main groups: Arab Muslims, South Asian Muslims, and African Americans Muslims (Pew Research Center, 2007).

Considering that these three groups are vastly different in primary language, cultural mores, and historical background, it was expected that there would be differences in the intensity of their acculturation issues as well. However, that was not the case in this study. There is no readily apparent explanation for this lack of difference.

Most recent studies of Muslims (e.g., Ahmed, 2005; Barry, 2001, 2002, 2005; Ghuman, 2003; Mansour, 2000) have been focused only on one ethnic group (Arab or South Asian) or on other mental health issues (such as identity development, religiosity, or depression), and therefore did not address acculturation issues across different ethnic groups. An exception was Berry, et al., (2006) who investigated ethnicity as a variable in the acculturation process of immigrant youth in four of 13 different countries in their study. They concluded that there were strong differences in ethnic orientation and ethnic behaviors, and in turn in predicted adaptation outcomes. Therefore, the present study was distinctive in investigating potential differences in intensity of acculturation issues based on ethnicity, and also in not finding differences based on ethnicity.

The correlation between age and MYARQ score was not statistically significant. Berry, et al., (2006) found no age differences in acculturation adaptation in their study. They suggested that age may have been confounded with age of arrival which was not studied with their participants. Therefore, although it might seem reasonable to suggest that older students would have less intense experiences in acculturation, apparently that is not the case.

A basic issue in acculturation research is whether immigrants experience an essentially linear change from complete identification and involvement with their original ethnic culture to

more or less complete identification and involvement with their new host culture (Berry, 1980, 1984). Berry, et al., (2006) found that change was not a linear progression, that is, that with longer residence, adolescents are more likely to be bicultural and integrated rather than assimilated. The majority of the respondents in this study were born in the U.S. It is possible that there was not a statistically significant correlation because they had already integrated and become bicultural to a large extent.

### **Implications**

A gender difference in the extent to which Muslim adolescents experience acculturation was found. Boys generally had higher scores, which indicate they had greater intensity of involvements with acculturation issues. In addition, Muslim adolescents who primarily spoke Urdu and Arabic at home had higher scores than those who primarily spoke English at home. And finally, there was a positive correlation between intensity of issues experienced and the length of time the parents had lived in the U.S. Therefore, the results of this study generally support the generalized application of the theory of acculturation in regard to some demographic factors, such as gender and length of residence and intercultural factors, such as language(s) used, but not others such as ethnicity and country of birth and contextual variables like type of high school.

With regard to implications for research in acculturation, the results of this study support previous research that showed gender differences in acculturation and the impact of language in the acculturation process. However, also found in this was information that is contrary to previous findings in regard to the relationship between length of residence and acculturation adaptation. Thus this study contributes new information in regard to acculturation of second generation Muslim adolescents.

With regard to implications for training of counselors, the results of this study are beneficial to counselor educators because of its' results pertinent to gender, primary language, and parents' length of residence and how those factors are associated with the acculturation process of Muslim adolescents. Often in the counselor preparation, the emphasis is on generalized multi-cultural education about an ethnic group, their worldviews, and their presenting issues. This study adds further depth to the known information about Muslims and their religious and cultural worldviews, and therefore contributes to better understanding of the personal characteristics and contextual variables that impact Muslims adolescents' acculturation and integration into their schools and the larger society. Also, because Muslims present in different ethnicities, this study helps to clarify that across the different ethnicities, gender differences impact how adolescents develop. For example, speaking two languages is potentially beneficial for culture retention and ethno-cultural pride. Counselor educators should know that primary language use impacts cultural adaptation and that school counselors should provide services that support both the adolescent and their families. Because it was found that parents' length of residence had a positive correlation with the intensity of experience of acculturation issues, school counselors should be advised to consider the underlying reasons.

With regard to implications for practice, school counselors and other educators should take into account their Muslim students' cultural values, religious beliefs, and acculturative influences that impact their psychological and behavioral functioning in schools. While research on other cultural groups has found acculturation to increase with time spent in the host society, found in this study was that Muslims may be different in this regard, and in particular in regard to parents' length of time in this country. Parents are always an obvious component in ensuring the success of students in schools. Therefore, school counselors and other educators should always take into

consideration the potential impact of parental acculturative variables that may in turn impact their child's acculturative experience and realize that it may vary among individuals.

### **Recommendations**

This study is among the few that have investigated the acculturation experience of immigrant adolescents, and possibly the only one that has specifically examined the acculturation experiences of Muslim immigrant and second-generation adolescents post September 11th, 2001, in the U. S. Some of the results from this study are supported in previous literature but the new results found may be especially pertinent for future studies.

Existing acculturation theory takes into account the importance of gender and primary language as impacting the acculturation process. However, from this study, it is recommended that theory also take into account how Muslim parents' length of residence is associated with acculturation of adolescents. While most immigrant parents achieve a higher degree of acculturation with a longer stay in the host country, Muslim parents may be seeking to shield their adolescent children from having similar experiences. While September 11th, 2001, is typically given only cursory attention in the professional literature related to discrimination against Muslims, further research to explore the extent of the problems experienced by Muslims relative to this tragic event is greatly needed to understand the full impact on their lives.

As indicated, this study is one of, if not the only one, on the acculturation of adolescent Muslims. Clearly more studies in this regard are needed. In particular, studies having larger sample sizes and/or samples from different populations are needed to broaden the basis of cultural knowledge about adolescent Muslims in the U.S. Collaboration among Muslim educators, counselors, and local leaders is highly recommended to systematically specify and study pertinent acculturation issues. Also, more research is needed on the psychometric properties of the MYARQ; specifically, the subscales of the MYARQ can be further developed

using factor analyses. Further research is also recommended in comparing immigrant Muslims pre-September 11th and post-September 11th. This could identify more clearly the acculturation experiences for Muslims related to this important event in America.

A strong recommendation is made for including Muslims as a distinct group within multicultural education and training for school counselors and counselor educators. The Muslim population is growing rapidly in the United States (Bagby, 1994; U.S. Department of State, 2001). Such training should include the differential experiences of immigrant Muslim adults and second generation Muslim children. Increasing and correcting the information about Muslims in the American society in general and acknowledging their unique issues would help Muslims have better acculturation experiences.

In school settings, school counselors should take the initiative to learn about the adolescent Muslim population, and then provide workshops to others about what they learned. Counselor educators also can help by providing factual, research-based information about Muslim adolescents to students in school counselor preparation programs and by encouraging further relevant research. Research also can be used to provide community education workshops. If society as a whole, including government and educational institutions, provide acceptance, openness and support for Muslim adolescents to thrive, then adolescent Muslims can seek to be more involved in the life of the larger society, which in turn promotes the integrative model of acculturation (Berry, et al., 2006; Ghuman, 2003).

### **Summary**

Muslims are fast becoming a significant and common component of the American society. However, there is not yet enough accurate information about this population in general, and about the youth of this population in particular. This study sought to determine the extent to which Muslim adolescents are experiencing acculturation issues in the U.S. and to investigate

some variables associated with their acculturation experiences. In many respects, the results from this study support previous research findings. However, new information also was found. Therefore, further research is highly recommended to explore the nature of acculturation among Muslim adolescents.

APPENDIX A  
INVITATION TO SCHOOL COUNSELORS

Dear Colleague,

My name is Shifa Hussain. I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Counselor Education at the University of Florida. You may remember me from the April, 2007 issue of ACA's *Counseling Today* that featured the article Muslim "Teens Leading Double Lives" for which I was interviewed. As a high school counselor for over eight years, I have worked in a variety of roles and with diverse populations, including Muslim students and parents. My dissertation research is entitled, "Acculturation issues of Muslim high school students in the United States." It involves American Muslim high-school-age students responding to an online and survey about acculturation issues they may be facing. It should take the students approximately 10 minutes to respond.

I am writing to ask if you would assist my research by distributing information about my research and survey to any Muslim students in your school. All you are asked to do is to contact any Muslim students in your school known to you and give each of them a flyer to take home to their parent(s). The flyer for the parent is attached for your perusal and for sharing with the appropriate school administration for approval of distribution of the flyers.

***Please reply to this email stating your interest and willingness to participate in this study. I also request for you to please include in your reply your school administration's approval for this flyer to be distributed to the Muslim students.*** I will send an appropriate number of flyers about the research via the U.S. postal service as soon as possible. The flyer is intended for distribution to the parent(s) of each Muslim student, so each student contacted should be asked to take the flyer home to his/her parent(s). If more convenient, you can print the flyer and give to your student to take home to his or her parent.

This study is funded in part by the by the Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC), a division of the American Counseling Association.

I would appreciate your response to this email.

Respectfully,

*Shifa Podikunju Hussain*

Shifa Podikunju Hussain, M.Ed., Ed.S.,  
Doctoral Candidate  
University of Florida  
[shifaph@ufl.edu](mailto:shifaph@ufl.edu) or 352-339-4588

Larry Loesch, Ph.D., NCC.  
Professor, Counselor Education  
University of Florida

APPENDIX B  
INFORMATIONAL FLYER FOR PARENTS OF AMERICAN MUSLIM HIGH SCHOOL  
STUDENTS

*In the tradition of greeting in the Muslim faith,  
Assalaamu Alaikum  
(Peace be upon you)*

Dear Respected Parent,

My name is Shifa Podikunju Hussain. I am a doctoral candidate in the school counseling program in the Department of Counselor Education at the University of Florida. I write to request your help in my research on adolescent Muslim students living in the U.S.

My doctoral dissertation research is entitled, “**Acculturation issues of Muslim high school students in the U.S.**” This study received funding in part from the Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling, a division of the American Counseling Association. The major research activity is completion of an approximately 10-minute, online survey by high school-age Muslim students. I am contacting you because you are the parent of a student eligible to participate in my study, and your consent is need for your student to participate.

As an American Muslim and a high school counselor for more than eight years, I have worked with Muslim and other bi-cultural teens who face issues associated with adaptation to mainstream American society. I am aware that parents often feel overwhelmed when faced with the deluge of cultural differences that affect their children in schools and in society. This study is intended to be a foundation of discovery for actual issues that young Muslims face growing up in America. *I am interested in learning about Muslim high school students’ opinions in topics such as relationships with peers including Muslims and non-Muslims, the roles of boys and girls in family life growing up in America, how Muslims are treated in America, and how connected Muslim boys and girls feel growing up in America.*

The results from this study should be helpful to educators, parents, children, and educational professionals in ways beneficial to all. It also may be that this research will help alleviate some of the misconceptions that the larger society may have about Muslims living in America. *If you have any other questions or would like to contact me regarding this study or the survey, you can welcome to call me at 352-339-4588 at any time, or my supervising professor at the University of Florida, Dr. Larry Loesch at 352-392-0731, extension, 225.*

*This study is not connected to your school and will not impact the academic standing of your student in any way. The school is asked to only distribute this informational flyer to Muslim students known to the school counselor.*

Muslim high school age students from across the United States are being requested to participate in this research by completing an approximately 10-minute online survey.

*If you are willing for your child to participate in this 10-minute survey, [please email me at hussain.shifa@gmail.com](mailto:hussain.shifa@gmail.com) for information on the survey website address and the Personal Identification Number (PIN) needed to participate. All participants receive the same standard*

***PIN number and therefore cannot be identified by this PIN.*** Use of the PIN number is part of the informed consent process. **By providing the URL and PIN to your child, you are acknowledging informed consent for your child to participate in my search.** You may withhold consent simply by not providing this information to your child. This procedure has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Florida (**Protocol #2007-U-1056**).

***I would appreciate your participation in this pioneering study on the acculturation issues faced by the Muslim children growing up in America.***

I thank you in advance for your generous participation and your contribution to the literature on Muslims and their needs in America.

*In the tradition of the Muslim faith,  
Jazakallahu Khair,  
(May God grant you good)*

Shifa Podikunju Hussain M.Ed., Ed.,S.,  
Doctoral Candidate  
University of Florida  
[shifaph@ufl.edu](mailto:shifaph@ufl.edu) or 352-339-4588

Larry Loesch, Ph.D., NCC  
Professor, Counselor Education  
University of Florida

APPENDIX C  
ONLINE PARENTAL CONSENT

Dear Respected Parent,

I am a doctoral candidate in the school counseling program in the Department of Counselor Education at the University of Florida under the supervision of Dr. Larry Loesch.

The purpose of this study is to find out how Muslim high school students feel about acculturation issues related to growing up in the United States. The results from this study should be helpful to educators, parents, children, and educational professionals in ways beneficial to all. It also may be that this research will help alleviate some of the misconceptions that the larger society may have about Muslims living in America. There are no known risks to your child.

***This study is not connected to your school and will not impact the academic standing of your student in any way. The school is asked to only distribute this informational flyer to Muslim students known to the school counselor.***

Muslim high school age students from across the United States are being requested to participate in this research by completing an approximately 10-minute online survey. With your permission, I would like to ask your child to participate in this research.

The survey asks the child to choose whether they agree or disagree with statements that the research literature has stated as relating to acculturation issues of ethnic and religious minority groups. **I am interested in learning about Muslim high school students' opinions in topics such as relationships with peers including Muslims and non-Muslims, the roles of boys and girls in family life growing up Muslim in America, how Muslims are treated in America, and how connected Muslim boys and girls feel growing up in America.**

The email you received contains **a standard personal identification number (PIN)** that allows access to the survey. Use of the PIN number is part of the informed consent process. **By entering the PIN to your child, you are acknowledging informed consent for your child to participate in my search.** You may withhold consent simply by not providing this information to your child. This procedure has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Florida (protocol # 2007-U-1056).

There is no compensation for participation in the study. Your child's participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your child does not have to answer any question that s/he does not wish to answer. **No school personnel will know if your child participated or not, and choosing not to participate will in no way affect your child's academic standing.**

The individual student responses will be anonymous as there are no personal identifiers in the survey. Results will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law through a numerical coding system. Only group results will be shared with the doctoral committee and any future research publications and presentations. If you are interested to learn more about the results of this study or have any other questions, you may contact me ([shifaph@ufl.edu](mailto:shifaph@ufl.edu)) or my supervisor,

Dr. Larry Loesch, at [lloesch@coe.ufl.edu](mailto:lloesch@coe.ufl.edu). Questions or concerns about your child's rights as research participant may be directed to the IRB02 office, University of Florida, Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611, (352) 392-0433.

Shifa Podikunju Hussain M.Ed., Ed.,S.,  
Doctoral Candidate  
University of Florida  
[shifaph@ufl.edu](mailto:shifaph@ufl.edu) or 352-339-4588

Larry Loesch, Ph.D., NCC.  
Professor, Counselor Education  
University of Florida

I have read the procedure described above. By entering the PIN number, I voluntarily give my consent for my child to participate in Shifa Podikunju Hussain's study of acculturation issues of high school Muslim students in the United States.

Enter PIN here

CLICK to go to next page

### **Online Child's Assent**

My name is Shifa Podikunju Hussain and I am a doctoral student at the University of Florida. I am trying to learn about how high school Muslim students feel about growing up Muslim in America. Muslim high school age students from across the United States are being requested to participate in this research by completing an approximately 10-minute online survey.

There are no known risks to participation. The results from this study should be helpful to teachers, parents, children, and other educational professionals in ways beneficial to all. It also may be that this research will help lessen some of the misconceptions that the larger society may have about Muslims living in America. You do not have to take part in this study or answer any question that you don't want to. No one will know who you are as the students are not asked for their personal information. Only group results will be shared with the researchers involved and presented as such. **No school personnel will know if you participated or not, and choosing not to participate will in no way affect your academic standing.**

Your parents have given their permission for you to participate. Would you be willing to participate in this study?

YES [Click to continue]

NO [Click to end]

APPENDIX D  
PARENTAL INFORMED CONSENT (PAPER VERSION)

Dear Respected Parent,

I am a doctoral candidate in the school counseling program in the Department of Counselor Education at the University of Florida under the supervision of Dr. Larry Loesch.

The purpose of this study is to find out how Muslim high school students feel about acculturation issues related to growing up in the United States. The results from this study should be helpful to educators, parents, children, and educational professionals in ways beneficial to all. It also may be that this research will help alleviate some of the misconceptions that the larger society may have about Muslims living in America. There are no known risks to your child. ***This study is not connected to your school and will not impact the academic standing of your student in any way. The school is asked to only distribute this informational flyer to Muslim students known to the school counselor.***

Muslim high school age students from across the United States are being requested to participate in this research by completing an approximately 10-minute online/paper survey. With your permission, I would like to ask your child to participate in this research.

The survey asks the child to choose whether they agree or disagree with statements that the research literature has stated as relating to acculturation issues of ethnic and religious minority groups. **I am interested in learning about Muslim high school students' opinions in topics such as relationships with peers including Muslims and non-Muslims, the roles of boys and girls in family life growing up Muslim in America, how Muslims are treated in America, and how connected Muslim boys and girls feel growing up in America.**

There is no compensation for participation in the study. Your child's participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your child does not have to answer any question that s/he does not wish to answer. **No school personnel will know if your child participated or not, and choosing not to participate will in no way affect your child's academic standing. Your child should enclose the survey in the envelope that is attached to the survey, in order to ensure confidentiality, before giving it back to the school counselor or the assigned personnel at the Islamic Centers.**

The individual student responses will be anonymous as there are no personal identifiers in the survey. Results will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law through a numerical coding system. Only group results will be shared with the doctoral committee and any future research publications and presentations. If you are interested to learn more about the results of this study or have any other questions, you may contact me ([shifaph@ufl.edu](mailto:shifaph@ufl.edu)) or my supervisor, Dr. Larry Loesch, at [lloesch@coe.ufl.edu](mailto:lloesch@coe.ufl.edu). Questions or concerns about your child's rights as research participant may be directed to the IRB02 office, University of Florida, Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611, (352) 392-0433.

Shifa Podikunju Hussain M.Ed., Ed.,S.,  
Doctoral Candidate  
University of Florida  
[shifaph@ufl.edu](mailto:shifaph@ufl.edu) or 352-339-4588  
**PARENT KEEPS THIS PAGE**

Larry Loesch, Ph.D., NCC.  
Professor, Counselor Education  
University of Florida

**PLEASE RETURN THIS PAGE TO:**  
**SHIFA P. HUSSAIN,**  
**2901 SW 13<sup>th</sup> Street, #217,**  
**Gainesville, FL 32608**

**Parental Informed Consent**

I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily give my consent for my child, \_\_\_\_\_, to participate in Shifa Podikunju Hussain’s study of acculturation issues of high school Muslim students in the United States. I have received a copy of this description.

---

Parent’s signature

Date

**Child’s Assent**

My name is Shifa Podikunju Hussain and I am a doctoral student at the University of Florida. I am trying to learn about how high school Muslim students feel about growing up Muslim in America. Muslim high school age students from across the United States are being requested to participate in this research by completing an approximately 10-minute online/paper survey.

There are no known risks to participation. The results from this study should be helpful to teachers, parents, children, and other educational professionals in ways beneficial to all. It also may be that this research will help lessen some of the misconceptions that the larger society may have about Muslims living in America. You do not have to take part in this study or answer any question that you don’t want to. No one will know who you are as the students are not asked for their personal information. Only group results will be shared with the researchers involved and presented as such. **No school personnel will know if you participated or not, and choosing not to participate will in no way affect your academic standing.**

**Please enclose the survey in the envelope that is attached to the survey, in order to ensure confidentiality, before giving it back to the school counselor or the assigned personnel at the Islamic Centers.**

Your parents have given their permission for you to participate. Would you be willing to participate in this study?

---

Child’s Signature

Date

APPENDIX E  
REQUEST TO ISLAMIC CENTERS TO HELP DISSEMINATE RESEARCH  
INFORMATION

*Assalamu Alaikum*  
(Peace be upon you)

Dear Respected Islamic Center Director,

My name is Shifa Podikunju Hussain. I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Counselor Education at the University of Florida. I am writing to request your help in disseminating information about my dissertation research on adolescent Muslim students living in the United States to the Muslim ummah (community) living in your area. I would be very grateful if you would pass this information along via your usual method of informing people, e.g., by email, posting on bulletin boards, or announcement.

My dissertation research is entitled, “Acculturation issues of Muslim high school students in the United States.” This study received (partial) funding from the Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling, a division of the American Counseling Association. The major research activity is for high-school-age Muslim students to complete an approximately 10-minute, online questionnaire about acculturation issues they may be facing.

As an American Muslim and a high school counselor for more than eight years, I have worked with Muslim and other bi-cultural teens who face issues associated with adaptation to mainstream American society. I am aware that parents often feel overwhelmed when faced with the deluge of cultural differences that affect their children in schools and in society. This study is intended to be a foundation of discovery for actual issues that young Muslims face growing up in America. *I am interested in learning about Muslim high school students’ opinions in topics such as relationships with peers including Muslims and non-Muslims, the roles of boys and girls in family life growing up in America, how Muslims are treated in America, and how connected Muslim boys and girls feel growing up in America.*

The results from this study should be helpful to educators, parents, children, and educational professionals in ways beneficial to all. *Insha Allah* (God Willing), it also may be that this research will help alleviate some of the misconceptions that the larger society may have about Muslims living in America.

Parents of Muslim students across the United States are being sent this flyer that invites their child to participate in the online survey. Interested parents can contact me at [hussain.shifa@gmail.com](mailto:hussain.shifa@gmail.com) . I will email the parent **a standard PIN NUMBER and the URL that will allow access the online questionnaire.** *All participants receive the same standard PIN number and therefore cannot be identified by this PIN.* Use of the PIN number is part of the informed consent process. A parent indicates informed consent by providing the PIN to the student or withholding of consent by not providing it to the student. This procedure has been approved by the University of Florida Institutional Review Board (**Protocol # 2007-U-1056**).

There is no risk associated with participating in this research. The benefits include having a clearer understanding of issues involving growing up Muslim in America.

I thank you in advance for your generous participation and contribution to the literature on Muslims and their needs in America.

*In the tradition of the Muslim faith,  
Jazakallahu Khair,  
(May God grant you good)  
/s/ Shifa Podikunju Hussain*

Shifa Podikunju Hussain M.Ed., Ed.,S.,  
Doctoral Candidate  
University of Florida  
[shifaph@ufl.edu](mailto:shifaph@ufl.edu) or 352-339-4588

Larry Loesch, Ph.D., NCC  
Professor, Counselor Education  
University of Florida

APPENDIX F  
MUSLIM YOUTH ACCULTURATION RATING QUESTIONNAIRE (MYARQ) PAPER  
VERSION

Please provide the following information about yourself.

1. I am: male  female
2. My age is: \_\_\_\_\_.
3. My ethnicity is: Indian  Arab  Other  (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_.
4. I was born in: Unites States  Another country  (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The primary language spoken in my home is: English  Urdu  Arabic  Other  (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_.
6. I have lived in the United States for \_\_\_\_\_ years.
7. My father has lived in the United States for \_\_\_\_\_ years.
8. My mother has lived in the United States for \_\_\_\_\_ years.
9. I am a Muslim  By Birth  By Conversion.
10. I attend Public high school  Islamic high school  Private high school  Other  (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_.

---

Please read each of the following statements carefully and then mark the response that indicates **the extent to which you agree with each statement as it applies to you personally**. Please be as honest as possible. Remember that your personal responses will not be shared with anyone. Use the following scale for your response to each item:

**SA means** STRONGLY AGREE  
**A means** AGREE  
**U means** UNDECIDED  
**D means** DISAGREE  
**SD means** STRONGLY DISAGREE

- |   | <b>SA</b>             | <b>A</b>              | <b>U</b>              | <b>D</b>              | <b>SD</b>             |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Muslims should marry only within their religious group.  | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Muslim teenagers should behave like non-Muslim American teenagers so that they can be more successful in school. | <input type="radio"/> |

|  | <b>SA</b>             | <b>A</b>              | <b>U</b>              | <b>D</b>              | <b>SD</b>             |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 3. I should change my Muslim name so that others can say my name easily.               | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. I am uncomfortable socializing with non-Muslim Americans.                           | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Some non-Muslim Americans don't like my culture and religion.                       | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Muslim women should be allowed personal freedom.                                    | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Muslim boys and girls should be allowed to go on group dates with other Muslims.    | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. My marriage should be arranged by my family.  | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. Muslim children should always obey their parents.                                   | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. I should eat <i>halal</i> Muslim/ethnic food all the time.                         | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. Muslim women should stay home and take care of their family when they get married. | <input type="radio"/> |
| 12. The interests of my family should come before mine.                                | <input type="radio"/> |
| 13. Muslim parents know what is best for their children.                               | <input type="radio"/> |
| 14. Muslim girls and boys are not treated the same.                                    | <input type="radio"/> |
| 15. Muslim men should make all the important decisions in the family.                  | <input type="radio"/> |
| 16. Muslim women should not work outside the home.                                     | <input type="radio"/> |

|   | <b>SA</b>             | <b>A</b>              | <b>U</b>              | <b>D</b>              | <b>SD</b>             |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 17. I should celebrate Christmas just as I celebrate Eid.                               | <input type="radio"/> |
| 18. I and/or my family have been discriminated against because we are Muslims.          | <input type="radio"/> |
| 19. Muslims should not be allowed to practice their daily prayers in school or at work. | <input type="radio"/> |
| 20. My closest friends are Muslim.  | <input type="radio"/> |
| 21. Muslim children should look after the parents in their old age.                     | <input type="radio"/> |
| 22. I should attend the Mosque and weekend religious school.                            | <input type="radio"/> |
| 23. I wish I lived in a Muslim country, not in America.                                 | <input type="radio"/> |
| 24. I have been teased or insulted because I am Muslim.                                 | <input type="radio"/> |
| 25. I am not happy living as a Muslim in America.                                       | <input type="radio"/> |
| 26. Being Muslim has had a negative impact on me and/or my family.                      | <input type="radio"/> |
| 27. I have both Muslim and American/non-Muslim friends.                                 | <input type="radio"/> |
| 28. I don't feel accepted by my non-Muslim American friends because I am Muslim.        | <input type="radio"/> |
| 29. Muslim boys should live with their parents until they marry.                        | <input type="radio"/> |
| 30. Muslim girls should live with their parents until they marry.                       | <input type="radio"/> |

31. It is okay for Muslim girls and boys to talk to each other whenever they want to.

APPENDIX G  
MYARQ ITEM FREQUENCIES, MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS

Table G-1. The MYARQ item frequencies means and standard deviations

| Item | Strongly agree<br># (%) | Agree<br># (%) | Undecided<br># (%) | Disagree<br># (%) | Strongly disagree<br># (%) | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|------|-------------------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------|-----------|
| 1    | 8(5.6)                  | 22(15.3)       | 19(13.2)           | 47(32.6)          | 48(33.3)                   | 3.73     | 1.23      |
| 2    | 1(.7)                   | 2(1.4)         | 17(11.8)           | 44(30.6)          | 80(55.6)                   | 4.09     | .80       |
| 3    | 1(.7)                   | 3(2.1)         | 6(4.2)             | 33(27.1)          | 95(66.0)                   | 4.56     | .74       |
| 4    | 73(50.7)                | 53(36.8)       | 7(4.9)             | 3(2.1)            | 8(5.6)                     | 1.75     | 1.04      |
| 5    | 12(8.3)                 | 27(18.8)       | 22(15.3)           | 71(49.3)          | 12(8.3)                    | 3.31     | 1.12      |
| 6    | 71(49.7)                | 45(31.5)       | 16(11.2)           | 8(5.6)            | 3(2.1)                     | 1.79     | .99       |
| 7    | 15(10.5)                | 42(29.4)       | 29(20.3)           | 27(18.9)          | 30(21.0)                   | 3.10     | 1.32      |
| 8    | 56(38.9)                | 31(21.5)       | 28(19.4)           | 22(15.3)          | 7(4.9)                     | 2.26     | 1.26      |
| 9    | 2(1.4)                  | 7(4.9)         | 10(6.9)            | 55(38.2)          | 70(48.6)                   | 4.28     | .90       |
| 10   | 8(5.6)                  | 19(13.3)       | 17(11.9)           | 29(20.3)          | 70(49.0)                   | 3.94     | 1.28      |
| 11   | 51(35.4)                | 46(31.9)       | 30(20.8)           | 12(8.3)           | 5(3.5)                     | 2.13     | 1.10      |
| 12   | 3(2.1)                  | 21(14.6)       | 38(26.4)           | 64(44.4)          | 18(12.5)                   | 3.51     | .96       |
| 13   | 0(0)                    | 14(9.8)        | 28(19.6)           | 67(46.9)          | 34(23.8)                   | 3.85     | .90       |
| 14   | 42(29.0)                | 51(29.4)       | 17(11.9)           | 26(18.2)          | 7(4.9)                     | 2.34     | 1.22      |
| 15   | 41(28.5)                | 59(41.0)       | 16(11.1)           | 19(13.2)          | 9(6.3)                     | 2.28     | 1.19      |
| 16   | 84(58.7)                | 47(32.9)       | 8(5.6)             | 2(1.4)            | 2(1.4)                     | 1.54     | .79       |
| 17   | 5(3.5)                  | 9(6.3)         | 19(13.2)           | 31(21.5)          | 80(55.6)                   | 4.19     | 1.10      |
| 18   | 16(11.1)                | 49(34.0)       | 14(9.7)            | 51(35.4)          | 14(9.7)                    | 2.99     | 1.24      |
| 19   | 47(32.6)                | 11(7.6)        | 13(9.0)            | 35(24.3)          | 38(26.4)                   | 3.04     | 1.64      |
| 20   | 12(8.3)                 | 29(20.1)       | 14(9.7)            | 43(29.9)          | 46(31.9)                   | 3.57     | 1.34      |
| 21   | 0(0)                    | 2(1.4)         | 4(2.8)             | 35(24.3)          | 103(71.5)                  | 4.66     | .60       |
| 22   | 0(0)                    | 7(4.9)         | 21(14.7)           | 74(51.7)          | 41(28.7)                   | 4.04     | .80       |
| 23   | 37(25.7)                | 58(40.3)       | 23(16.0)           | 17(11.8)          | 9(6.3)                     | 2.33     | 1.16      |
| 24   | 30(21.0)                | 38(26.6)       | 13(9.1)            | 47(32.9)          | 15(10.5)                   | 2.85     | 1.36      |
| 25   | 84(58.3)                | 40(27.8)       | 14(9.7)            | 1(.7)             | 5(3.5)                     | 1.63     | .94       |
| 26   | 81(56.6)                | 46(32.2)       | 7(4.9)             | 6(4.2)            | 3(2.1)                     | 1.63     | .92       |
| 27   | 91(62.8)                | 46(31.9)       | 1(.7)              | 3(2.1)            | 3(2.1)                     | 1.48     | .80       |
| 28   | 58(40.3)                | 22(15.3)       | 10(6.9)            | 24(16.7)          | 30(20.8)                   | 2.63     | 1.63      |
| 29   | 23(16.0)                | 42(29.2)       | 27(18.8)           | 31(21.5)          | 21(14.6)                   | 2.90     | 1.32      |
| 30   | 21(14.6)                | 34(23.6)       | 21(14.6)           | 37(25.7)          | 31(21.5)                   | 3.16     | 1.39      |
| 31   | 13(9.0)                 | 25(17.4)       | 25(17.4)           | 47(32.6)          | 34(23.6)                   | 3.44     | 1.27      |

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Shifa Podikunju Hussain was born in 1972, in Kollam, India. The youngest of seven children, she lived in India, Brunei, and Singapore before coming to the United States for higher education. She earned her B.S. in psychology and her M.Ed. and specialist's degrees in school counseling and guidance at the University of Florida.

Upon graduation in 1997, she began work as a high school counselor at Eastside High School in Gainesville, Florida. Her work responsibilities included Testing Coordinator, College and Career Counselor, Department Chair, International Baccalaureate counselor, site host and supervisor for University of Florida counseling interns.

At the University of Florida, Shifa has taught undergraduate courses in Stress and Anxiety Management, Interpersonal Communication Skills and Career Development over Lifespan. She has also served as Teaching Assistant in graduate courses such as Multicultural Counseling, Counseling Adolescents and Children and Supervision for Practicum and Internships. Shifa has presented at the university, state, regional, national and international levels in counseling and working with Muslims in America.

Shifa has been married to Mohammad Zaheed Hussain for 12 years. They have two daughters: Zamirah, age 9; and Sabreen, age 4.