Acculturative Stress and Social Support Among Immigrant Arab American Adolescents in East Tennessee

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved parents, my parents -in- law, my supportive husband, Dr. Nashwan Nashwan, and my sweet daughters Riyam, Liyan, and Rand.

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated sources and levels of acculturative stress among immigrant Arab American adolescents, and sources of social and emotional support that may mitigate acculturation-related stressors. The purposive sample (N=230) consisted of Arab American youth, 11-17 years of age, most of whom attended public schools in a moderate-sized city in East Tennessee, USA. Respondents were balanced in terms of gender, most were 13-17 years old, and were middle and high school-aged students. Over half were born in one of 16 different Arab countries, mainly Iraq, Egypt, and Syria. They had lived in the United States for 1-17 years, with a mean of 9.4 years, and most had lived in the State of Tennessee for 1-2 years. Using a non-experimental, cross-sectional survey design, the investigator used a modified instrument based on Kang (1996) and Thomas & Choi's (2006) surveys that measured acculturative stress and social support. Participants were found to have experienced moderate to high levels of acculturative stress, particularly related to racial prejudice and stereotypes. Strongest sources of social support were from parents and friends, and the lowest levels were from American social organizations and religious organizations. Parent social support had an inverse relationship with acculturative stress, but Arab cultural organizations and American social organizations were found to increase acculturative stress. The research highlighted the pervasiveness of immigrant acculturative stress among this group and the potential for negative mental health consequences. Implications are discussed regarding the need for evidence-based and culturally appropriate interventions for immigrant Arab American youth and strategies for mitigating acculturative stressors they face, including those manifested by bullying and harassment in schools. The study also highlights the need for Arab-friendly curricula in schools that celebrate and respect Arab history and culture, and teach similar values to young people in attendance.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In light of the limited knowledge base, scholarly research, and literature on families of Arab descent living in the United States, the purpose of this study was to examine the phenomenon of immigrant acculturation by this population to American society and culture. More specifically, the study investigated acculturation-related stress and stressors experienced by immigrant Arab American adolescents, a subgroup who has been neglected to a large degree in the scholarly literature. Additionally, the research assessed the level and sources of social and emotional support received by respondents that may serve as buffers to mitigate acculturative stress and its negative outcomes that have been documented in the literature to be effective. Finally, the study seeks to assess whether significant relationships exist between acculturative stress and social support variables, and to ascertain which demographic or social support variables are the strongest predictors of acculturative stress among immigrant Arab American adolescents. The data for the study were obtained by utilizing a cross-sectional survey a purposive sample of 230 immigrant Arab American children and adolescents in East Tennessee, ranging in age from 11-17 years. The study represents the first of its kind that directly examines acculturative stress and social support using reliable behavioral rating scales designed to specifically assess and analyze the two constructs within this subgroup of adolescents.

Statement of the Problem

The Arab American population in the United States was estimated by the U.S. Census Bureau (2000) to be between 850,000 and 870,000 individuals in 1990 (See Table 1). In the view of some scholars (Abraham, 1995; Zogby International, 2000) this was an undercount, since some Arab Americans were counted as Caucasians and other concealed their ethnic

affiliation because of government distrust. This challenge was also supported by the Arab American Institute Foundation (2003), who estimated the Arab American population to be 2.5 million at that time. Arab Americans are also not considered to be an official minority group, according to the U.S. Government, and some scholars consider this in the undercount allegation. In spite of the controversy over the exact count of Arab Americans, one thing is clear: the number of Americans of Arab descent has grown substantially in the last twenty-five years.

The Census Bureau (2000) officially estimated that the Arab American population had increased by 38.3% to 1.2 million in 2000, and the American Community Survey (Asi & Beaulieu, 2013) for 2006-2010 estimated the number to exceed 1.5 million. The Census Bureau's updated American Community Survey also estimated that there were 511,000 Arab households in the United States at that time, an increase of approximately 76% since 1990 (See Table 2). The majority of the Arab American population (37%) consists of Lebanese, followed by persons who identify as Arabs "in general" (20%), Egyptians and Syrians (12%), Palestinians (6%), and Moroccan and Iraqi 6.5%) (Sumhan, 2007). Again, the calculations for deriving these population figures are sometimes confusing. The ACS Survey (2013), for instance, includes individuals from eight of the 22 Arab nations. The 2009 Census Report, however, lists 15 specific nations of origin for Arab Americans and other separate categories that include "All other Arab Reports," "Specific Arab Ancestry," "Other Specific Arab Ancestry," and General Arab Ancestry," among others.

The target populations for the current study are immigrant Arab American adolescents 11-17 years of age, who live with their families in the Knoxville and the East Tennessee region. The focal issues and variables for this research are acculturative stress and social support. Specifically, acculturative stress that immigrants routinely experience as members of an

underrepresented ethnic group in the united States, and the different types of Social Support – friends, peers, parents, social and cultural organizations – that may play an important role in buffering or mitigating their experiences with acculturative stress.

Acculturative Stress, Defined

One of the psychological responses to acculturation among immigrant families is acculturative stress, defined by Wei et al. (2007) as stress that occurs in relation to life events surrounding acculturation, or the process of adapting and adjusting to a new culture, new customs, and/or new social norms. Acculturative stress has been characterized by Williams & Berry (1991) as stress resulting from transitioning and adapting to a new social environment. The challenges include linguistic difficulties, external pressures to assimilate into the host culture, separation from family, experiences with prejudice and discrimination, and intergenerational conflicts. Negative outcomes associated with acculturative stress include anxiety symptoms, depression, identity confusion, cultural marginality, and suicidal ideation, among other issues (Crockett et al., 2007; Hovey, 2000; Walker et al., 2008).

Social Support, Defined

Social support is defined as material, psychological, and/or emotional resources that may serve as stress-reduction mechanisms that enhance healthy behavioral responses to acculturative stress (Cohen & Willis, 1985). Studies in the literature have consistently demonstrated the positive impact of social support among immigrant adolescents , as well as the negative impact resulting from low levels of social support in the midst of acculturative stress (e.g., Solberg, Valdez, & Villarreal, 1994; Proceidano & Heller, 1983; Marin & Marin, 1991; Schneider Ward, 2003; Ahmed, Kia-Keating, & Tsai, 2011).

Significance

The problem is particularly significant for immigrant Arab American adolescents and their families. The global and United States Arab community is quite varied and distinct in their native ethnic, cultural, religious, socioeconomic status, and other characteristics in relation to their respective countries of origin. In spite of this, Arab Americans have historically and continuously been stereotyped and portrayed by many Americans within a very narrow and negative framework that has contributed to common and consistent prejudice and discrimination wherever they have lived in the United States (Shaheen, 2001; Sulieman, 2004; Tehranian, 2009; Wingfield, 2006).

There is clear and pervasive evidence that the racism, harassment, and related acts of hostility against Arab Americans have been exacerbated since the 9/11 attacks in the United States and the subsequent U.S. military responses in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other part of the world (Council on American-Islamic Relations, 2004; Ibish, 2003). Esses, Dovidio, and Hodson (2002) expounds on the intense feelings that the 9/11 attacks evoked against individuals of Arab descent, the strong feelings of threat from which it emanates, and the subsequent negative attitudes and actions directed toward members of the perceived target of the threats – in this case, immigrant Arab Americans.

Immigrant Arab American youth have been subjected to and targeted by this externally-imposed societal and individual behavior to a great degree, combined with acculturation related stressors that are normally experienced by all immigrant groups to the United States. Ahmed et al. (2011) refers to these cumulative risk factors faced by Arab American youth and adolescents as socio-cultural adversities. They also expand on the psychological outcomes of this

phenomenon, and how it may be counteracted by cultural resources, specifically ethnic identity, religious coping, and religious support.

Other reasons the current study is significant is (1) the dearth of research on the impact of acculturative stress as it relates to immigrant Arab Americans, and (2) there is currently no research in the literature that specifically examines Arab American adolescents, acculturative stress, and the direct impact of social support using specific, directed, and reliable scales with which to assess the mitigating or buffering impact of social support variables. Most likely because of their large population size and availability in the United States, almost of the current scholarly literature that examines immigrant adolescents and acculturative stress has focused on Asian Americans (Mehta, 1998; Yeh, 2003; Wei, 2007; Sandhu & Sarabi, 1994); Kang, 2006; Thomas & Choi, 2006), Latinos (Solberg, Vakdez, & Villarreal, 1994; Cuellar, Harris, & Jasso, 1980; Schneider & Ward, 2003; Rodriguez et al., 2003), or mixed groups with small subsamples of immigrant Arab American adolescents (e.g., Flanagan, 2009; Wray-Lake, Syvertsen, & Flanagan, 2008). Research by Ahmed et al. (2011) most closely parallels the current study in examining general psychological distress and the manner in which cultural resources may alleviate it among a sample of Arab American adolescents in high school. This study is distinguished, however, in the following ways: (1) the sample here consisted of adolescents ranging in age from 11-17, meaning it included elementary, middle school, and high school age respondents; (2) the behavioral rating scales in the current study were designed specifically to assess different types of acculturative stress and social support versus a combination of measures designed to assess psychological distress and cultural resources; and, (3) The current study is the only known research to assess acculturative stress and social support among immigrant Arab American adolescents in a relative small, predominantly Caucasian community in the

southeastern United States that has a negligible population of Arab American families. Ahmed et al.'s (2011) research occurred in metropolitan Detroit, Michigan, which has the largest population of Arab Americans in the United States. While their study therefore provided invaluable knowledge and findings on the topic, the current research offers new perspectives on immigrant Arab American adolescent acculturative stress, as well as social support dynamics that cannot be captured in large American cities with large Arab American populations.

Finally, the growth in the Arab American population means that more attention needs to be given to the Arab American community to assure culturally-sensitive, appropriate, and competent social work and human service to the Arab American community-at-large. Very little has been written in the scholarly literature to guide the intervention of school professionals who work with Arab American adolescents, or enhance knowledge regarding Arab American family and cultural values as it relates to religion, education, mental health, acculturation, or social support at the individual or systems level to promote health and safer learning environments (Haboush, 2007). Al-Krenawi and Graham (2000) cites a need to examine different facets of Arab clientele, their patterns of mental health utilization, and assessment of acculturation levels to facilitate appropriate guidelines for mental health supervision, and learning to integrate modern and traditional health care systems. Nobles and Sciarra (2000) emphasize the need among clinical therapists for general information on Arab American families, including their roots in their countries of origin, their traditions, language, religion, their varied political histories and how it impacted them in their countries of origin. They also cite a need for information on their immigration patterns, the effects of negative stereotyping and discrimination on their psychological well-being, and specific integrative treatment issues. Similarly, Graham, Bradshaw, & Trew (2009) point out the need for American social service agencies to promote a

professional atmosphere conducive to mutual sensitivity, respect and cooperation for social workers and their clientele who come from different Arab countries, cultures, religions, and traditions, and to establish and maintain a work environment free of racial or ethnic bias and discrimination.

In short, it is crucial that further research be conducted that examines and informs intervention issues related to acculturation dynamics among Arab American families. This can lead to a springboard of additional knowledge being generated to further build on existing studies such as Ahmed et al. (2011), and to explore different Arab American subgroups (e.g., Christians, Muslims, elders), explore gender differences with respect to a variety of social phenomena, examine issues such as alcoholism and substance abuse, and assess different perspectives on acculturative stress, social support, and coping on differential adolescent subgroups and adult sample respondents. Finally, it can lead to the dissemination of new knowledge to social work and other human service professionals and educators with the goal of increasing the level of services and quality of services that are provided to the immigrant Arab American community in the United States.

Plan of Report

Chapter One of this dissertation provides an outline of the general issue under study, i.e., acculturative stress and social support among immigrant Arab American adolescents in East Tennessee, USA. It provides general information on the study purpose, a Statement of the Problem, and its significance for research and social work practice with immigrant Arab American youth, families and communities. Chapter Two reviews the literature and scholarship on the Arab world from a global perspective, historical immigration trends of Arabs to the United States, and the population and characteristics of Arab Americans in the United States.

The chapter also includes a discussion on widespread negative perceptions and stereotypes of the Arab community in the United States, racial prejudice against Arab American youth and adolescents, related racial dynamics, and research on general immigrant acculturation, acculturative stress, and social support among immigrant adolescents from various countries.

Chapter Three presents theoretical perspectives from the literature that are most applicable to the current study. They include discussion regarding (1) Acculturation Theory and acculturative stress; (2) Attachment Theory; (3) Ethnic Identity Theory; and (4) Adolescence and Self-Concept Theory. This section also delineates the research questions for the study, definitions of key conceptual variables, and a listing of key demographic variables.

Chapter Four explains the research methodology used for the study, including detail on research design; instrumentation; subjects; sampling procedures; inclusion criterion; human subjects review, participant access, and informed consent protocols; and, data analysis.

The study results are presented in Chapter Five. The first section includes a summary of survey respondent characteristics and a report of reliability outcomes for the Acculturative Stress Scale, the Social Support Scale, and the Social Support subarea subscales. The next section includes results of statistical analyses and findings for the four research questions.

Finally, Chapter Six includes an extended discussion and interpretation of the study results, implications for social work practice, recommendations for future research, and study strengths and limitations.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

Overview and Characteristics of the Arab World

The Arab world is divided into three major regions: Arabs from Northern Africa, from the Mediterranean region, and from the Arabian Gulf region (Al-Hazza & Lucking, 2005). Each of these regions has distinct characteristics in dress, food, music, and language dialect. Cultural cuisines cover also the range from very spicy foods in the Gulf regions to more mild foods in countries near the Mediterranean. The music in each region varies in the same way the music varies in the United States (e.g., Rap, Country, and Jazz). The Arabic language comes in two forms: classical and colloquial. Classical Arabic is used worldwide for written language and in the media, and colloquial Arabic is used in everyday social life. Colloquial Arabic has many different dialects, which ranging widely according to country and city. Syrian dialect, for example, is different from the Lebanese dialect. Furthermore, even within Syria, people from Damascus have a distinct dialect than people from Aleppo. Like other ethnic minority groups, Arab Americans tend to be collectivist, meaning that families rely on each other for financial and emotional assistance. Children typically do not leave their parent's house until they get married or until they have a family of their own. Children are expected to take care of their parents when they are elderly and also provide them with financial and emotional support for them. The immediate and extended families are very important, valued, and respected in Arab families. Arab Americans generally share certain cultural traits including generosity, hospitality, courage, and respect for the elderly (Al-Khatab, 1999).

Arab Americans come from multiple religious backgrounds including Jewish, Christian, and Muslim. Contrary to popular belief among many Westerners, the majority of Arab

Americans practice the Christian faith (Arab American Institute Foundation, 2003) with 35% Roman or Eastern Catholic, 18% Eastern Orthodox, and 10% Protestant. Only 24% of Arab Americans practice the Muslim faith. Thirteen percent of Arab Americans are labeled as "other religion" or no affiliation.

The Arab American culture is often misunderstood and misrepresented through the media and different sources. A popular misconception is that all Arabs are of the Muslim faith, all Muslims are Arabs, and that the two terms are interchangeable (Al-Hazza & Lucking, 2005). Although the Islamic and Arab cultures are very similar in many ways, these terms are in no way interchangeable. The misconception disregards the aforementioned Arab religious groups, including those of the Christian and Jewish faith. The reality is that only 20% of the world's populations of Muslims are Arabs. There are also large populations of Arab Christians, Arab Coptics, Arab Melokites, Arab Maronites, Jewish Arabs, and Arab Druze (Suleiman, 2000). After the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States (9/11), the misconception that all Arabs are Muslims was further "validated" due to the majority of the terrorists being Muslim Arabs. This incident further intertwined the constructs of "Arab "and "Muslim" and resulted in widespread portrayals of all Arabs as the common enemy. The 9/11 terrorist attacks made the Arab culture more misunderstood than ever before, and the Arab culture has generally been portrayed in a negative light, but after 9/11, the portrayals become even worse (Abu El-Haj, 2006).

Arabs in the United States: Historical Immigration Trends

Arab Americans have been immigrating to the United States for over a century. There were three major waves of Arab immigration to America (Erickson & Al-Timimi, 2004). Between the 1880s and World War I, the first wave of immigrants were mostly Christian

merchants and farmers from the Greater Syria region, now known as Syria and Lebanon. When Israel was created in 1948, a second wave began that included more professionals, Muslims, and Palestinian refugees, most of whom settled in Northeastern urban areas in the United States, and in Midwestern industrialized cities. The third wave began after the Arabs were defeated in the Arab-Israeli war 1967. The majority population of this wave Consisted of Muslims, and they settled in areas all over the United States (Erickson & Al-Timimi, 2004).

Arab Americans come from a vast cultural and religious background. They come from twenty-two different Arabic speaking countries in the Middle East: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen (Palacios & Trivedi, 2009). Arab Americans are diverse with respect to culture, race, and identity, as well, making it difficult to define them as one specific ethnic group. The literature on Arab Americans in the United States is relatively scarce, as compared to existing studies on other ethnic minority groups. Suleiman (1996) suggests that "the literature that provides an objective and comprehensive account about the Arab Americans is almost missing" (p. 9). Similar to the African, Latino, and Asian American populations, Arab Americans descended from different religious and cultural backgrounds. Arab Americans practice various religions with the majority practicing Christian, Muslim, and Jewish faiths. The idea of cultural conditioning (Suleiman, 2000) is germane to the current study of Arab American immigrants. Cultural conditioning refers to the process by which people acquire attitudes and values that are passed on by society (Henderson, 1988), and the process by which people socialize according to their surroundings and current cultural values (Lim & Ang, 2008). This process affects the way people think about and act, react, and behave towards other people. It is taught through family interaction,

government, media, schools, and other surroundings, and is required to successfully integrate into a host society.

Numbers and Characteristics of Arabs in the United States

The ten states with the largest Arab American population are California, Michigan, New York, Florida, New Jersey, Illinois, Texas, Ohio, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania. California has an estimated population of 715,000 Arab-Americans, with the majority residing in Los Angeles County. Michigan's estimated population is 490,000, with the majority in the metropolitan Detroit area. At number three, New York has 405,000 estimated Arab Americans with the majority residing in Kings County. Florida has approximately 255,000, with the majority living in Miami-Dade County. New Jersey's estimated Arab American population is 240,000, with the majority in Hudson and Bergen Counties. The Arab American population in Illinois is an estimated 220,000, with the majority in Cook County. Texas has an estimated 210,000 Arab Americans, with the majority living in Harris County. Ohio ranks eighth with an estimated population of 185,000, with the majority residing in Cuyahoga and Franklin Counties. Massachusetts and Pennsylvania have an estimated 175,000 and 160,000 Arab Americans, with the majority living in Middlesex and Allegheny Counties, respectively (Arab American Institute Foundation, 2003).

The median age for Arab Americans is 30.8, which is younger than the overall American population. There is a higher male to female ratio, a slightly higher marriage rate, and a lower divorce rate in the Arab American population, when compared with the American population as a whole. The average household size of Arab Americans is higher than that of the average American household, with more than one-third having over four members. Over 80% of Arabs who live in America are U.S. citizens, fifty-four percent are natural born citizens, and 40% are

foreign born. Arab Americans generally have higher median incomes than the national average. About 30% of Arab Americans have annual household incomes of more than $75,000, as compared to 22% for all Americans. In terms of education achievement, approximately 85% of Arab Americans graduate with a high school degree, and over 40% have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 24% of Americans in general. At almost twice the American average, 17% of Arab Americans have postgraduate degrees. As far as children are concerned, thirteen percent of the school-age population is in preschool, 58% are in elementary or high school, 22% are enrolled in college, and 7% are enrolled in graduate studies (Samhan, 2007).

The primary language used by Arab Americans is Arabic, and they typically come from countries in the Middle East where the Arabic language has been traditionally spoken (Al-Krenawi & Graham, 1998). Ethnic Arabs have one of the world's highest rates of population growth. There are 255 million people in 22 Arab countries in North Africa and the Middle East, and Arabs constitute a sizable and growing population in Western countries such as Australia (210,000), Canada (80,000), France (2 million), Britain (210,000), and the United States (700,000) (Al-Boustani & Farques, 1991; Al-Krenawi & Graham, 1998; UNESCO, 1996). A notable proportion of Arabs are Muslim, and Islam is the world's second most practiced religion after Christianity, with one of the highest annual increases in the number of practitioners. Today there are an estimated 6 million Muslims in the United States, and nearly 15 percent are people of Arab ethnic origin (Saloom, 2005).

Negative Images of Arabs in the U.S

The complex nature of social work practice with Arab American immigrants is muddled by negative images of Arab Americans and Arab culture in the popular media. Underlying the importance of scientifically examining these issues, reaching evidence-based conclusions, and

disseminating the information to the professional social work community. This information can be synthesized and used for the identification and assessment of previously-unrecognized stressors among immigrant Arab American youth. The next logical steps will be the design, development and implementation of culturally specific social service strategies and buffering interventions.

American citizens from Arab culture have been labeled as "terrorists" and "enemies of the West." In the political realm, in the popular media, and in much of academia, the notion of culture continually recasts Arabs and other Muslims outside of the confines of civilization, and as enemies of freedom, tolerance, and pluralism. Islam is described as being inimical to Western values and traditions, and representing an essential clash of civilizations (Abu El-Haj, 2006). As noted above, common stereotypes of Arabs exist because of the popular images portrayed in the media, and they are often portrayed as villains and terrorists in films, even prior to 9/11. Movies such as *Siege, Delta Force, Patriot Games, Back to the Future,* and *True Lies*, are illustrative of the portrayals of Arab Americans in Hollywood films (Wingfield, 2006). Another misconception is that all countries in the Middle East are Arab. While the majority are Arab, there are several non-Arab countries in that geographical region, including Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. Moreover, not everyone living in Arab countries are Arab. These countries consist of other races and ethnic groups including Kurds, Assyrians, Armenians, Kildanis, Blacks, and Berbers (Suleiman, 2000).

These stereotypes of Arabs particularly occur in American society. Negative images of Arab American people and their culture in the media have permeated American society at all levels even though most information that Americans have received about Arabs, their countries, and their culture is through the media (Suleiman, 1996). "In the United States, anti-Arab

propaganda is a hot commercial item… and the media have done their part to encourage Arab-bashing" (Anderson, 1991, p. 29).

The majority of what the American public sees in the media about Arab people and their culture is unflattering, and because they generally have minimal contact with Arabs to contradict these images they are usually viewed as representing reality (Suleiman, 2000). "Negative images about Arabs have been incubated in the minds of the public and carried into today's classrooms" (p. 7). In other words, American people have been culturally conditioned to see the Arab culture and its people in negative ways. Consequently, since Americans have been conditioned to view Arabs negatively, it is difficult for Arabs in America to view themselves positively (Suleiman, 2000). This cultural conditioning, combined with the historical standard of misinformation and misrepresentation of the Arab American culture, has increased the risk or threat of a negative impact on immigrant Arab American children's social and academic growth in their host society (Suleiman, 1996).

Racial Prejudice against Arab Youth and Adolescents

Flanagan, Levine, & Settersten (2009) studied the experiences of prejudice among Arab American, African American, Latino American, and European American youth. Sixty-six percent of both Arab American and African American youth reported experiences of prejudice, while less than half of Latino and European American youth reported such experiences. Experiences of prejudice based on race were common among all ethnic groups, but more African American and Arab Americans in their sample reported this type of prejudice than Latino Americans or European American youth. Stereotypes and ethnic discrimination of Arab Americans has become common in public schools, leading to the maltreatment of Arab American students. The American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee indicates Arab

American students reporting experiences of physical violence, threats, harassment, and bias in their schools. These incidents occurred even before 9/11, but even increased afterward (Sulieman, 2000). Students with such experiences also experienced traumatic stress and anxiety because of the incidents in school.

This is consciously or unconsciously exacerbated by the fact that the Arab culture is rarely included in the multicultural curriculum in schools. This in itself is considered a form of discrimination by ignoring that this culture exists (Suleiman, 2000). Other major cultures are represented in the schools, but the Arab culture is minimized, dismissed, or even worse, misrepresented. This allows the culture to remain a mystery of sorts with no clarification throughout continued generations of children. The continued negative perceptions of Arab Americans in the schools have been reported by Wray-Lake et al. (2008) and Flanagan et al. (2009).

Wray-Lake et al. (2008) conducted a study with adolescent youth of diverse backgrounds, including European Americans, African Americans, Arab Americans, Latino Americans, and others, to investigate their perceptions of Arab Americans. The authors used open-ended questionnaires to collect data on sensitivity to images as enemies of America (e.g., "These days what groups do you think are shown as enemies of America?"), experiences of prejudice and discrimination (e.g., "Have you or someone close to you ever experienced prejudice?"), and times when participants felt American. Arab American student data were compared to the other group data, and over 69% of the Arab sample believed that Arabs are portrayed as enemies of America. Furthermore, results indicated that regardless of ethnic background, Arabs were perceived as enemies of America more than any other group. Almost two-thirds of the sample of Arab American students reported personally experiencing prejudice, including "being physically

or outwardly identified as Arab" (p. 89). The authors suggest that these negative experiences make it difficult for Arab American youth to identify with being an American citizen, and they have to learn what it means to be American through "the context of negative images of their ethnic group" (p. 91).

Arab American Youth and American Racial Dynamics

In a discussion on race with Arab Americans, Saloom (2005) suggests that there is much confusion in the examination of race and Arab Americans, and that this confusion is further fueled by interchanging the terms of Arab and Muslim. The fact that Arab Americans are classified as Caucasian or White is also a tremendously problematic issue. Some scholars contend that Arab-Americans are only considered White in an 'honorary' sense and that whenever a relevant national crisis occurs, that 'honorary' status is "revoked" (p. 59). This honorary white status is highly problematic because Arab-Americans are thereby "whitewashed," (p. 59), and claims of racism and discrimination are not taken seriously.

There is a very little research on Arab Americans' views of being labeled under the "White" designation. One study provides some insight on this issue with a small sample of Arab American adolescents who participated in focus groups over a ten-day period with Arab American and Muslim adolescents. The participants formed a continuum of identity with the terms "boater" and "White" at either extreme, and placed themselves as being somewhere in the middle. A "boater" was a person who was defined as a recent immigrant to the United States and who was not yet familiar with the dominant culture (Ajrouch, 2004).

The term "White" was also heavily connected with symbols of femininity. "The adolescents focused their discussion of "White" on the behavior of individual girls and the interactions among girls as well as between girls and boys" (p. 381). The author also stated that

the category suggests a racialized identity formed by the adolescents. The terms “boater” and “White” were used to describe what the adolescents had identified as the “others,” and terms which they used to differentiate from being themselves.

Ajrouch (2004) concluded that the Arab American adolescents in this study distinguished themselves from white America, in spite of them being classified as such by the United States government. Arab American girls in this study further separated themselves from White girls, which suggest that gender also has a major role in identity formation for Arab American adolescent girls. This finding is similar to findings with children of immigrants from Ireland, Poland, Italians, Asian Indians, Mexicans, and Filipinos. This similarity in experiences among second-generation immigrants from a different of cultures implies that a similar process of ethnic identity formation operates through gender relations, and lends evidence to the role of girls as cultural carriers, transmitters, and bearers of identity (p. 387).

Acculturation Research

When an immigrant comes in contact with the host culture the acculturation process begins (Williams & Berry, 1991). Berry (1986) defined acculturation as the process of change a group or individuals undergo when in continuous contact with a culture that differs from their own. This process of adjustment has psychological consequences because of the physical, financial, spiritual, social, and linguistic demands that immigration imposes on the individual” (Mui & Kang, 2006, p. 57). When this process occurs, individuals may experience acculturative stress (Berry, 1980), which is defined as “a reduction in the health status of individuals that may include physical, psychological and social aspects” (Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987, p. 493). Acculturative stress may result over time in anxiety, depression, and alienation. Immigrants face stressful life events and daily hassles (common to all populations), in addition to the stress

produced by the process of living in and adjusting to a new culture and environment. The process of acculturation is complex, and is associated with mental health problems on all levels (Williams & Berry, 1991).

Immigrants invariably go through processes of "adapting" and "adjusting" to life in a new country (Ng, 1998). Ethnic Arab immigrants to Western countries are known to experience divided loyalties between the norms of the new host country and those of their old country, and the dilemma "of whether to reject or embrace assimilation, secularism, and Western education" (Fares, 1991, p. 43), among other phenomena. This dynamic is also influenced by ongoing debates in the host country over assimilation of ethnic minority cultures versus a more pluralist and multicultural approach. Lambert and Taylor (1990) argued that in the United States in particular, a fine line exists "between retaining one's ethnic identity and being considered" (p. 55) not part of that country. Arabs are thought to embrace multiculturalism over assimilation with greater intensity than some other ethnic minority cultures. While some ethnic Arab communities in the West have been characterized as "a nation in exile rather than as immigrants" (Stockton, 1985, p. 123), it is probably more realistic to emphasize the heterogeneity of acculturation within specific Arab communities and among Arab individuals, in general. Among Arab Americans, acculturation can even conceivably differ from one family member to another.

At the same time, research has provided evidence that some factors may be associated with Arabs' greater acculturation to and life satisfaction in some Western countries. These factors include longer residence in a host country, younger age at immigration, infrequent visits to one's Arab country homeland, and being of a Christian religious background (Faragallah, Schumm, & Webb, 1997). It is essential to emphasize therefore how various Arab cultural values may manifest themselves differently with Arab social work clientele, depending in part on level of

acculturation and different associative variables. Regarding family functioning, it is well known that periods of family conflict are common after arrival in a new country, and as familial role patterns change (Eldering & Knorth, 1998). Some findings suggest that males may be better acculturated than in some Arab cultures than females. But for both gender groups, acculturation was positively related to better mental health (Ghaffarian, 1987). In terms of religion, Amer and Hovey (2007) found differences in acculturation and depression based on religious identification in a study of second generation Arab Americans. They discovered that Christians were more likely to report higher levels of assimilation and integration than Muslims (as measured by the Arab Acculturation Scale), and Muslims reported a higher level of separation than their Christian counterparts.

There is evidence that acculturation preferences or styles are related to the academic performance of children. Farver et al. (2002) found that adolescents with integrated acculturation styles had better grades and higher scores on the self-perception profile than adolescents with separated or marginalized acculturation styles. Jain and Belsky (1977) studied the influence of acculturation and involvement of fathers among Indian immigrant. Less acculturated men were less likely to be involved in fathering children, while more acculturated fathers were more extensively engaged in fathering. This supported the notion that the acculturation process may be selective and multidimensional in nature and that traditional social norm and cultural resources are either given up or maintained exclusively. Instead, they appear to be reshaped and redefined for better harmonious functioning of the family.

Acculturative Stress and Social Support Among Immigrant Adolescents

Ahmad, Keating and Tsai (2011) examined the role of socio-cultural adversities (discrimination and acculturative stress) and cultural resources (ethnic identity, religious support

and religious coping) in terms of their direct impact on psychological distress. Using structural equation modeling, the proposed model was tested with 240 Arab American adolescents. Results indicated a strong positive relationship between socio-cultural adversities and psychological distress. Furthermore, their study supported a promotive model of cultural resources, and where a negative association between cultural resources and psychological distress was found. Understanding the way socio-cultural adversities and resources are linked to psychological distress can inform the development of culturally appropriate interventions that can buffer mental health concerns for immigrant Arab American adolescents and other understudied and vulnerable populations.

Choi (1997) examined Indian and Korean adolescents and found high levels of acculturative stress to be strongly correlated with lack of social support. Social support not only alleviated acculturative stress, but it also moderated stress levels, resulting in less depressive symptomatology. Census studies indicate that 58% of the Arab American population are in elementary or high school (Samhan, 2007), indicating an urgent need to help them to feel and become an active part in society with minimal acculturative stress and mental health issues. This also points out the need for helping professionals to develop culture-specific knowledge and competencies in service provision when working with clients from other cultural contexts. It is important therefore to acquire and enhance knowledge regarding acculturation experiences of the rapidly-expanding population of immigrant Arab American families and their children.

Similar findings were echoed in a study by Park (2009), who investigated acculturative stress, parental attachment, self-esteem, social support and psychological adjustment. One of the key findings of the study was that the combination of parental care and self-esteem played a very significant role in psychological adjustment among Korean adolescents in America. The author

also found that social support from friends was found to have a significant role in mediating between acculturative stress and depression.

Several researchers examined social support systems and protective processes during adolescence (Furukawa, 1995; Garnefski & Diekstra, 1996; Garmezy, 1993; Hoffman, Levy-Shiff, & Ushpiz, 1988). In the domain of perceived support, studies consistently emphasize the important role of family support in promoting psychological well-being among adolescents, reducing problem behavior, and buffering the emotional effects of stress (Gore & Aseltine, 1995; Liang & Bogat, 1994). Mehta (1998) found that perceived acceptance and cultural orientation played a crucial role in the mental health of Asian Indians. Feeling accepted and being involved with American culture was found to be correlated with improved mental health. Cultural integration seemed to have an impact on mental health and studies indicated that Asian Indians prefer integration as the most preferred acculturation style. Krishnan and Berry (1992) found for instance, that acculturation stress was positively correlated with separation and marginalization but negatively correlated with integration. Similarly, Farver, Narang and Bhadha (2002) reported higher levels of conflicts in families where parents had a separated or marginalized style of acculturation than those parents who had an integrated or assimilated acculturation style. These findings demonstrate that an integrated style of acculturation for Asian immigrants was optimum with their sample.

Yeh (2003) studied 319 immigrant Korean and Japanese junior high school students from a large urban setting on the East Coast. He used several different measurements: an assessment of demographic characteristics; the Suinn–Lew Asian American Self-Identity Acculturation Scale; (Suinn, Ahuna, & Khoo, 1992; Suinn, Rickard-Figueroa, Lew, & Virgil, 1987), the Cultural Adjustment Difficulties Checklist; (Sodowsky & Lai, 1997); and, the Symptom

Checklist–90–Revised (Derogatis, Rickels, & Rock, 1976). The data were been analyzed by T-test analysis, post hoc one-way analyses of variance, and hierarchical regression analyses. The results indicate that acculturative stress had the largest effect on reported general mental health problems for the entire sample, and intercultural competence concerns did not. Korean immigrant students in the sample were found to have higher levels of mental health symptoms in compared to their Chinese and Japanese counterparts. Age was a significant predictor of mental health symptoms, whereas gender was not. Older students reported more general mental health symptoms. The results also supported the hypothesis that more American-identified Asian youths report fewer mental health symptoms than Asian immigrants who are more Asian identified.

Wei (2007) used online surveys obtained from 189 Chinese international students from China and Taiwan at a large public university in the Midwest. He measured acculturative stress using the Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). Maladaptive perfectionism was measured with the Discrepancy subscale of the Almost Perfect Scale—Revised (Slaney et al., 2001). Depression was assessed with the Center for Epidemiological Studies—Depression Scale (Radloff, 1977). The data were analyzed by using correlations and hierarchical regression analysis. Results showed that there were significant main effects of acculturative stress and maladaptive perfectionism on depression, no significant two-way interactions, and a significant three-way interaction, indicating that acculturative stress, maladaptive perfectionism, and length of time in the United States interacted to predict depression. Low maladaptive perfectionism buffered the effect of acculturative stress on depression only for those who had been living in the United States for a relatively longer period of time.

Eighty two Korean immigrant adolescents and eight three Indian immigrant adolescents residing in the U.S. participated in a study by Thomas & Choi (2006). Participants were selected through convenience sampling of Korean and Indian immigrant adolescents from California, Florida, Illinois, and Massachusetts who were between the ages 10 and 20 years. They used the Acculturation Scale for Asian American Adolescents (Kang, 1996) to measure levels of acculturative stress. They also developed and used instrument for measuring social support. The researchers identified five sub-areas from which adolescents generally receive social support, namely, support from friends, support from parents, support from religious organizations, support from social organizations, and support from cultural associations. The researchers used t-tests, correlation, and multiple regressions to identify the most significant variables that predicted acculturation stress. Findings showed that respondents experienced low to moderate level of acculturative stress. Social support activities tended to reduce the level of acculturative stress among the sample. Social support from parents was the most important predictive factor in determining the level of acculturative stress.

Solberg, Valdez, and Villarreal (1994), conducted a study of Latino college students using a convenience sample of 126 men and 268 women to assess social support and stress. The Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, Kamarck, Mermelstein, 1983) was used, in addition to a variety of other measures for the study. Social support was measured by using the Social Provisions Scale (Russell & Curtona, 1984). Cultural pride was measured by selecting items from the Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican American (Cuellar, Harris, & Jasso, 1980). College adjustment was assessed using selected items from the Student Adjustment to College Questionnaire (Baker, Siryk, 1984). Results indicated that academic stress, social stress, and perceived availability of social support collectively accounted for 59% of the variance in the

college adjustment ratings. Social support, however, was not found to moderate the relationship between stress and adjustment.

Schneider & Ward (2003) conducted a study with 35 Latino students (26 females, 9 males) at the State University of New York at Geneseo. They measured Ethnic Identification (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992), Perceived Social Support (Schneider & Ward 2003), and Adjustment to College (Baker & Siryk, 1984). Correlations and multiple regression were used to analyze the survey data. The results indicated that the perceived support model accounted for as much as 51% of the variance in attachment, with different types of support contributing uniquely to different types of adjustment. Perceived support mediated the relationship between ethnic identification and adjustment. Highly identified Latinos were less adjusted to college, in part because they perceived lower support than less identified Latinos. There were important differences found between Latino peer support and general peer support for Latinos' college adjustment.

Rodrigues et al. (2003), examined social support among 338 Latino college students attending a public university in the southwestern United States. A demographics questionnaire was used to obtain information on ethnicity, gender, age, their parents, and grandparents, place of birth, number of years living in the United States, years enrolled in college, parental education and income, family size, and college residence information. Several scales were used for this study: Level of acculturation was assessed using the Multidimensional Acculturation Scale (Rodriguez et al., 2000), Language proficiency was assessed by asking participants to rate their ability to read, write, understand, and speak English. Generic college stresses were assessed using the College Stress Scale (Rodriguez, Myers, Morris, & Cardoza, 2000). Minority-status stress was assessed using short version of the 37-item Minority Student Stress Scale (Smedley et

al., 1993), acculturative stress was measured using the Acculturative Stress Inventory (Rodriguez et al., 2000, and Perceived social support from family and friends was assessed using a revised version of the Perceived Social Support From Family and Friends Scales (Procidano & Heller, 1983). The two multiple regression analyses, controlling for gender, socioeconomic level, acculturation level, and stresses (generic college, acculturative, and minority status), showed that friend support made a slightly higher contribution to well-being than family support, and friend support versus family support protected against psychological distress. Neither family nor friend support was found to moderate the effects of stress on psychological adjustment.

Cohen and Willis (1985) posited that social support involves the provision of psychological and material resources, and may serve as a buffer against stress by preventing situations from being appraised as stressful in the first place or by providing a solution to a stressful problem, minimizing its perceived importance, or facilitating healthy behavioral responses. Vega, Hough, and Miranda (1985) proposed a model of Latino mental health where factors including social support moderated the relations between stress and adjustment. In their model, the effect of stressors depends on availability of external resources (including social support) and the individual's use of coping strategies. Persistent strain (e.g., acculturative stress), therefore, is more likely to be associated with elevated symptomatology if social support and internal coping resources are low.

The stress-buffering effects of social support have been documented in past studies of the general population, but with different ethnic groups, studies of Latino college students have shown mixed results. Solberg, Valdez, and Villarreal (1994), for instance found that social support moderated the association between college-related stress and psychological distress. Consistent with the stress-buffering hypothesis, stress was associated with increased distress

among students reporting low levels of social support but not among those reporting high social support. Other studies with predominantly Latino college samples did not find evidence that social support moderated the association between stress and measures of either college adjustment or psychological distress (Alvan, Belgrave, & Zea, 1996).

Social support can be derived from multiple sources, and different sources may provide different levels and types of support (Procidano & Heller, 1983). For example, Latino culture emphasizes "familismo," which involves strong feelings of attachment, shared identity, and loyalty among family members (Marín & Marín, 1991). Latino families provide emotional support, which protects members against external stressors (Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam, 1999; Vega, Kolody, Valle, & Weir, 1991). Consistent with this notion, better family functioning and emotional support from family members have been linked to lower levels of depressive symptoms among Latino adolescents and adults (Hovey & King, 1996;Vega et al., 1991), and to better emotional adjustment among Latino college students (Schneider & Ward, 2003). Peer support may also be important for Latino college students. They can provide emotional, informational, and instrumental support. This may result from their being immediately available (on campus, for instance), and being more likely to have information relevant to negotiating the college environment (Rodriguez et al., 2003). Consistent with this, studies of Latino college students found that emotional support from peers was associated with better social adjustment (Schneider & Ward, 2003) and that support from friends, as opposed to family, predicted lower levels of psychological distress (Rodriguez et al., 2003). As it relates to Arab Americans, Ramaswamy et al. (2011) confirmed that perceived support from family, friends and school personnel is positively related to assistance- seeking and coping. This is consistent with scholarship in the literature that asserts the importance of social support for immigrant Arab

American adolescents' social and emotional well-being. In the same regard, Hilliard, Ernst, Gray, Saeed, & Cortina (2011) support the idea of family as the central component in Arab life, positing the notion that the family unit (including the extended family) may even be esteemed above the individual.

Henry, Stiles, and Hinkle (2008) found that Arab culture includes various subcultures, all of which stem from diverse traditions representative of the 22 Arab nations. They argue, however, that when major discrepancies exist, most Arab families share common attitudes and behaviors including retaining the notion of the family as the primary support system. Furthermore, problem resolution and solutions to intrafamilial strife may be sought within the family prior to seeking support from external support systems, such as community-based organizations, schools and government institutions (Dwairy & Achoui, 2006). In a similar vein, Frank, Plunket, & Otten (2010) argued that significant others such as parents are paramount for the shaping of perceptions by adolescents of themselves and their future. The authors also concluded that perceived parental support was positively associated with higher levels of general self-efficacy.

The crucial nature of parental support during adolescence is highlighted by Surjadi, Lorenz, Wickrama, and Conger (2011). They examined trajectories of mastery over the course of ten years. Results indicated that during adolescence, higher levels of perceived parental support were associated with higher levels of sense of mastery. Surjadi et al. (2011) indicated that adolescence is a time that is critical for a number of reasons, including the fact that it is a period of transition that creates greater vulnerability to social and psychological problems. Additionally, throughout the course of adolescent development, peers may engage in negative behaviors that may be avoided or prevented if positive parental support is perceived in primary areas. While the

support of parents is clearly of momentous importance, some immigrant families are at a disadvantage in comparison to well-acculturated or assimilated families. Witkow and Fuligni (2011), for instance, note that many adolescents from immigrant families have parents who may not have the ability—either due to language or social issues to make informed decisions about their children's educational careers, even if they themselves place great value on and strongly promote educational achievement. This may be due in part to the fact that they are unfamiliar with the U.S. educational system. The role of parental support among immigrant adolescents and their academic development is further skewed because immigrant parents may feel uncomfortable interfacing with school personnel or engaging in the school community altogether (Witkow & Fuligni, 2011).

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Acculturation Theory and Acculturative Stress

The basic principles of acculturation theory assess whether acculturation is a uni-dimensional, bi-dimensional, or a multi-dimensional process (Van Oudenhoven, Ward, & Masgoret, 2006). With the uni-dimensional approach, the individual loses their original cultural identity and gains the cultural identity of the new culture. The host culture is acquired, since it is considered to be "psychologically problematic" to accept both cultures (Berry, 2006). With the bi-dimensional approach, a person can find a balance in accepting a new culture without losing his or her identification with the original culture. The multidimensional process includes attitudes, values, behaviors, language, and cultural identity where the immigrant does not disregard the values of their original country, but rather adjusts values while adapting to those of the new host society (Van Oudenhoven et al., 2006; Thomas & Choi, 2006).

Researchers generally agree that acculturation is multidimensional, and Berry (2006) provides a comprehensive approach to acculturation is his classification of acculturation strategies. The author posits that acculturation strategies consist of daily behaviors and attitudes shaped by both the dominant and non-dominant cultures. These strategies take into consideration the variety of immigrant psychological responses to their new dominant culture, recognizing that not of them want to increase contact or achieve cultural resemblance with the dominant cultural group. Individual immigrant preferences include "maintaining one's heritage and identity or having contact with and participating in the larger society along with other ethnic groups" (p. 34).

Van Oudenhoven et al. (2006) effectively captures this decision-making process with the following questions: “Is it of value to maintain my cultural heritage?.” or “Is it of value to maintain relations with other groups?” (p. 641). When faced with these questions, four different acculturation strategies can be utilized: (a) assimilation, which places most emphasis on daily positive interactions with the host society, versus maintaining one’s cultural identity; (b) separation, which involves maintaining one’s original culture while minimizing interaction with others; (c) integration, which represents a desire to maintain one’s original culture and have positive interactions with the host society; and (d) marginalization, which occurs when an individual makes a decision to neither maintain the original culture or adopt the new culture.

According to Yeh (2003), one strategy may not necessarily be more effective than another since there are differences in acculturation strategies selected by “native people, ethnic groups, immigrants, refugees, and sojourners” (p. 35). Though some immigrants welcome the acculturation process, others will have less choice in this migration process, especially refugees forced to leave their original country (Hovey, 2000). Strategies vary according to their desire for contact with the new country, the experience of the relocation process, and the length of contact (Yeh, 2003). Ying and Lee (1999) found that the use of acculturation strategies varied, depending on the stage of adolescent development among Asian youth. Asian adolescents reflected a state of separation that was consistent with uni-dimensional status, whereas older adolescents appeared more integrated, which reflected a bi-dimensional approach. The authors conclude that younger adolescents prefer separation or assimilation because they are less cognitively demanding, whereas older adolescents can cognitively manage integration. Acculturation levels therefore, may also depend on the age or developmental status of an immigrant individual.

Berry (2006) found these strategies to be viable when immigrants can freely select among them. This is not always the case, however, when the dominant group creates restrictions that prevent immigrants from gaining access to the dominant culture. Immigrants are therefore less likely to welcome acculturation when they experience personal rejection due to ethnic or physical features that distinguish them from the larger society. Berry also notes that when "the immigrant group adopts the basic values of the larger society while the dominant group adapts its basic institutions (e.g., health or education) to meet the needs of the immigrant group" (p. 36) a viable multicultural society can exist. He concludes that a host society needs to provide the following psychological conditions for integration to occur: (a) cultural diversity, (b) low levels of prejudice, and (c) positive regard among ethnocentric groups.

Acculturative Stress and Acculturation Theory

One of the psychological responses to acculturation is acculturative stress. It is therefore important to identify factors that create acculturative stress, the outcomes of acculturative stress, the strategies needed to control acculturative stress, and to assess the impact of acculturative stress on different immigrant groups. The concept of acculturative stress can be used to explain some of the mental health conditions experienced by immigrants. Wei et al. (2007) defines acculturative stress "as a stress reaction in response to life events that are rooted in the experiences of acculturation, the psychological difficulties in adapting to a new culture, or psychological stressors resulting from unfamiliarity with new customs and social norms" (p. 386). The concept of stress is preferred over culture shock because of the potential of developing coping strategies to buffer or mitigate the stressors (Berry, 2006). During the acculturation process, an individual can experience changes in behavior, attitudes, and identity based on

different ways in which they experience the acculturation process, which leads to distinct outcomes.

Williams and Berry (1991) found that "societal disintegration" (p. 75) occurs when previously learned cultural norms are not found in the new culture and the change creates a personal crisis. They also found negative outcomes of acculturative stress, including anxiety, depression, somatic complaints, identity confusion, feelings of marginality, and identity confusion. Jamil, Nassar-McMillan, and Lambert (2007) discovered post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, panic, depression, and dysthymia in their study of recent Iraqi immigrants. Hovey (2000) found a correlation between acculturative stress, depression, and suicidal ideation among adult Mexican immigrants. Berry's (2006) research concluded that anxiety and depression were the most common negative psychological responses to acculturative stress. Williams and Berry (1991) identified specific preexisting factors that can lead to higher or lower levels of acculturative stress, including the "ability to speak the new dominate language, prior knowledge of the culture, motives for contact, attitudes towards acculturation, level of education, values, and or self-esteem" (p. 635). They added that type of contact and the level of contact can also mediate acculturative stress. For example, positive contacts with the host society can lead to reduced levels of acculturative stress. The levels of stress can increase, however, when an immigrant encounters a discrepancy between their expectations and what they actually experience in the new country.

Several studies have isolated multiple factors that can diminish or improve acculturative stress. Longer time periods, in the new country, for instance, generally leads to reduced levels of acculturative stress (Wei et al., 2007). Other research has also found that social support from friends, families, and or social institutions can reduce acculturative stress (Hovey, 2000; Thomas

& Choi, 2006; Wei et al., 2007; Williams & Berry, 1991). Hovey and Magana (2002) found that socioeconomic status, the sense of control one's decision to immigrate, and willingness of a host country to accept cultural diversity are some of the factors that contribute to different levels of acculturative stress. Yeh (2003) also expressed the finding that immigration at younger ages correlates with less mental health symptoms among Asian youth, and Hovey (2000) found a connection between lack of language proficiency and acculturative stress.

Berry (2006) identifies two distinct coping strategies for managing acculturative stress: problem-focused coping (ways to solve or change the problem) and emotion-focused coping (an individual gaining a sense of control over emotions connected to the problem). He found that when coping strategies are adequately used in response to high levels of stress, the overall level of stress remains low. When unresolved stressors are overwhelming, however, stress levels can lead to personal crises and subsequent depression and anxiety symptoms. Researchers who study acculturative stress generally conclude that a sense of cognitive control and positive coping skills produce better mental health outcomes as an individual acculturates to a new society. Immigrants who experience the acculturation process with positive outcomes can also experience better mental health outcomes (Berry, 2006; Williams & Berry, 1991). It should be noted that cognitive control may not always be enough for positive results during an immigrant's acculturation process. For example, Wei et al. (2007) suggest that internal regulation may not sufficiently diminish acculturative stress when its source is an external issue such as racial discrimination.

Not all immigrants are negatively affected by acculturative stress. For some individuals, the acculturation process can lead to increased opportunities in the new country and produce less acculturative stress (Hovey, 2000; Hovey& Magana; 2003; Williams & Berry, 1991).

Additionally, integration has been found to be connected to lesser stress levels, while assimilation is connected to intermediate levels of stress (Williams & Berry, 1991). In contrast, those immigrants who feel marginalized and separated from their ethnic culture, as well as the dominant culture, experience higher levels of stress (Thomas & Choi, 2006; Williams & Berry, 1991). In summary, the levels of acculturative stress depend on the mode of acculturation, acculturation attitudes, phases of acculturation, acceptance of multiculturalism in the host society, and characteristics of the individual.

Attachment Theory

Attachment theory provides another perspective for explaining the experiences of immigrants, particularly the concepts of separation and loss ([Bowlby, 1969], cited by Van Oudenhoven et al., 2006) developed attachment theory based on observations of mother-child bonding. Researchers have applied attachment theory to the psychology of immigration, especially as it relates to acculturation strategies and immigrant acculturative stress. According to Attachment Theory principles, secure attachment occurs when a child perceives his or her caregivers as available and responsive. Children who have ambivalent or avoidant attachment styles perceive their caregivers as inconsistently responsive or unavailable. As a result, the child's experiences with caregivers create mental schemas of their own self-worth and dependence on others. These attachment styles influence adult relationships, school achievement, and behaviors toward strangers (Van Oudenhoven et al., 2006). Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) and others conceptualized an adult model of attachment styles that include the following categories: (a) securely attached (positive self-image and able to trust others); (b) fearfully attached (avoids contact with others); (c) dismissively attached (positive self-image but distrusts others); and, (d) preoccupied attached (negative self-image but can trust others). When

exploring the attachment styles of those who wish to immigrate, Van Ecke (2005) noted that they are motivated by the potential for higher achievement in the host country.

Van Oudenhoven et al. (2006) found that acculturation strategies of immigrants are connected to specific types of attachment. Securely attached immigrants possess a positive self-image, trust others, and seek contact with members of the host society in search of integration. Immigrants with attachment styles classified as dismissing and fearful tend to avoid members of the host society, thereby selecting separation as an acculturation strategy in the host society. Immigrants with preoccupied attachment may prefer to assimilate. The authors also found that immigrants with secure attachment were more likely to integrate and have less stress during the acculturation process.

Hofstra, Van Oudenhoven, & Buunk (2005) found the following attitudes among members of the host society towards the adaptation strategies of immigrants: (a) Securely attached adults engage in social interactions with confidence and respond positively to immigrant acculturation strategies that promote integration; (b) fearfully attached individuals tended to distrust others, including immigrants, but do value assimilation among immigrants; (c) dismissively attached adults will avoid social contact with immigrants; and, (d) preoccupied adults accept the assimilation of immigrants, but will reject their efforts to separate. They concluded that secure attachment is correlated with positive attitudes towards efforts to integrate by immigrants.

When linking mental health outcomes with different post-immigration attachment styles, positive connections were found among those who were securely attached and psychologically adjusted (Van Oudenhoven et al., 2006). The securely attached immigrants do not deny their feelings of pain related to separation from their country of origin, but tend to focus less on the

needs of others than the preoccupied attached immigrant (Van Ecke, 2005). Preoccupied attachment styles are directly related to negative psychological adjustment, and can lead to higher levels of post-immigration distress. Immigrants with a dismissive attachment style demonstrate lower levels of distress, since they are accustomed to autonomy and distant relationships while denying feelings of discomfort.

The use of defense strategies to deny emotions makes it difficult to connect the dismissive attachment style to a specific psychological outcome (Van Oudenhoven et al., 2006; Van Ecke, 2005). Acculturative stress can be viewed as separation that can lead to protest and despair. When the separation from country of origin is combined with the feelings of separation experienced by an immigrant in a new host society, an attachment trauma can result and lead to mental disorders (Van Ecke, 2005). The author also notes that "immigrants who experience years of multiple losses and separations are subject to attachment-related risk factors" (p. 473) that remain in spite of the greater opportunities found in the new country. The author adds that immigrants with pre-immigration traumas might be accompanied by poor attachment styles along with their immigration experience, subsequently leading to significant mental distress.

Ethnic Identity Theory

Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder (2001) provide a multi-dimensional theory of identity development that is applicable to the ethnic identity of immigrant groups. The author's work acknowledges that multiple factors can influence ethnic identity. The model includes a process whereby the immigrant questions whether or not to retain his or her "ethnic label," or choose to select the label of the host country. Phinney's (1990) theory consists of three stages for shaping ethnic identity in a host country: (a) unexamined ethnic identity (unexplored positive or negative view of one's ethnic group), (b) ethnic identity search or exploration (searching for

what it means to be a member of a particular ethnic group), and (c) achieved ethnic identity (having a clear meaning of ethnicity within one's life (French, Seidman, Allen & Aber 2006). Researchers found that ethnic identity is not altered much in first-generation immigrants, but subsequent generations often choose to be bi-cultural. Phinney et al. (2001) use Berry's (2006) theory of acculturation and acculturation strategies to describe variations in ethnic identity. Immigrants are perceived as having either developed or under-developed identities. An integrated ethnic identity occurs when immigrants who maintain a strong ethnic identity with their country of origin are still capable of identifying with the host culture. A separate identity emerges when the immigrant maintains a strong connection with the country of origin, but does not necessarily identify with the new host culture. Those who give up the original ethnic identity and identify only with the host culture are considered to have assimilated their identity. These forms of acculturation can occur only if the host society creates an environment allowing for the healthy exploration of an individual's ethnic identity.

Phinney et al. (2001) also discuss the psychological well-being that can result from the explorations of ethnic identities. They concluded that if a positive ethnic identity is clearly connected to how the underrepresented group and majority groups are viewed, it can then be assumed that ethnic identities are also connected to self-esteem. Phinney (1990) found a correlation between high self-esteem and positive ethnic identity among adolescents and adults. Therefore, an individual's ethnic identity is perceived as unsatisfactory or connected to low self-esteem, they have the choice of seeking another ethnic identity that is more positively regarded. Studies that use Phinney's (1990) ethnic identity theory to assess immigrant adolescents contend that the immigration status of adolescents can lead to (a) a weak ethnic identification with the host group due to a strong connection with their culture of origin; (b) a weak connection with the

dominant ethnic group due to immigration status, which can promote ethnic identity exploration; or, (c) a desire by later generation adolescents to reconnect with the culture of origin. Another study by French et al. (2006) found that ethnic identity is more important among underrepresented racial groups than among European Americans, who are the majority. Ying and Lee (1999) found that Asian female adolescents have an achieved ethnic identity that leads them toward integration faster than their male Asian counterparts. They attribute it to the adolescent females' greater level of maturity, and their embrace of a dominant culture that supports more gender equality than traditional Asian cultures.

Adolescence and self-concept theory

There are varying opinions in the literature as to at what age adolescence actually begins (Ellis & Davis, 1982). Generally the age range is considered to be between 13 and 18 years of age, but researchers have not come to an agreement on precisely when adolescence begins because each child develops differently. One child, for example, may reach puberty at 12 years of age, and another might not reach that level until the age of 14 years. The age ranges in this discussion are therefore not specified because there is no set age range for the three stages of adolescence.

During the earliest adolescent period, the self becomes increasingly differentiated with an abundance of selves that change, depending on different social situations, including the self with friends, classmates, teachers, siblings, parents, and the self as a student, employee, athlete, and so forth (Ellis & Davis, 1982). This multi-dimensional aspect of self leads to adolescents having differing (and at times conflicting) views of themselves within different social contexts. Adolescents, for instance, may like themselves a lot with friends, but dislike themselves with parents. These conflicting feelings could be due to their perceptions of positive support from

friends, but perceived negative support from their parents. In addition to having different feelings about themselves in different contexts, they are also likely to be treated differently by individuals in the different social contexts. As a result, "adolescents become very sensitive to the potentially different opinions and standards of the significant others in each context" (Harter, 1999, p. 67). The content of self-representations among early adolescents focuses on their social skills that affect interactions with significant others, or their social appeal and interpersonal characteristics (Damon & Hart, 1988).

During the middle adolescent period, young people become overly consumed with what others think of them (Harter, 1999). The self becomes further multiplied and differentiated with various social contexts. The adolescent, for instance, defines herself/himself differently with different groups, really close friends, a general group of friends, family members, and so forth. This further complicates development for adolescents, making it more confusing and challenging to decide who or what they are, especially if they receive sometimes conflicting messages from others in their differentiated social context, and possibly become confused about which attributes to adopt. They begin to recognize that they have both positive and negative characteristics, and this sometimes can lead to instability, confusion, and inaccuracies in their perceptions of their self (Harter, 1999).

Adolescents in this period begin to compare themselves with others in differential social contexts. For example, Buddin (1998) found that adolescents will develop different levels of self-worth with their mothers versus their fathers in relation to the perceived feedback they received from each source. Additionally, adolescents sometimes attempt to alter their behavior in order to seek approval from their social sources. Harter (1999) expresses the situation in this manner: "if an adolescent wanted to start doing her homework more often to please her parents,

she may also be displeasing her friends by doing well in school despite pleasing her parents" (p .43). This example is illustrative of the struggles that adolescents experience during this period while trying to gain approval from two contradictory social contexts. They struggle to decide which one to adopt.

"During the late adolescent period, contradictory characteristics described in the previous period are no longer seen as contradictory, as the adolescent accepts these differences as something that is normal" (p. 44). The inconsistencies in their differentiated selves begin to become normalized. Adolescents proceed to find value in their inconsistent differentiated selves (Damon & Hart, 1988). They gradually realize over time that it is normal to be different in various roles with others. Adolescents' characteristics in this period begin to "reflect personal beliefs, values, and moral standards that have become internalized or, alternatively, constructed from their own experiences" (Harter, 1999, p. 47).

Research Questions

The literature makes it clear that in the process of acculturation, i.e., learning to adapt to a new culture, immigrant individuals, families, and groups experience substantial anxiety, which researchers refer to as acculturative stress (Berry, 2006). Thomas (1995), Williams and Berry (1991) and other scholars conducted studies that affirmed this idea, and developed an acculturative stress framework for immigrants and refugee populations. The literature also established that immigrant Arab American youth are at-risk of experiencing acculturative stress because of discrimination, prejudice, and related behaviors by members of the mainstream host community. Lack of social support was found to be strongly correlated with acculturative stress (Choi, 1997). Additionally, social support systems have been found to be serving as a buffer and protective mechanism against the emotional effects of stress among immigrant adolescents

(Furukawa, 1995; Gaenefski & Diekstra, 1996; Garmezy, 1993; Gore & Aseltine, 1995; Kang, 1996). With these findings in mind, this study was designed to address four related research questions:

Research Question #1:

What is the extent and types of acculturative stress experienced by immigrant Arab American adolescents in East Tennessee?

Research Question #2:

What is the extent and types of social support experienced by immigrant Arab American adolescents in East Tennessee?

Research Question #3:

To what extent do statistically significant relationships exist between acculturative stress and social support among immigrant Arab American adolescents in East Tennessee?

Research Question #4:

What specific respondent demographic and social support variables are the strongest predictors of acculturative stress among immigrant Arab American adolescents in East Tennessee?

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

Design

This study utilized a non-experimental, cross-sectional survey design. This design allows for exploratory and descriptive research, and allows reasonable inferences to be made about processes and queries if interest (Rubin & Babbie, 2008). This method permits classification of respondent attitudes, beliefs, and behavior on clearly understood dimensions of interest.

Subjects

The units of analysis in this study are individuals. The targeted populations for the study were immigrant Arab American adolescents in greater Knoxville, and East Tennessee.

Sampling Procedures

A purposive sampling method was used for this study. This sampling strategy deliberately targets individuals with specific characteristics and provides the most reasonable and accessible manner for obtaining appropriate study subjects, i.e., "typical" immigrant Arab American adolescents. The sample for the study consists of immigrant Arab American adolescents who live with their families in the greater Knoxville and East Tennessee region of the United States. The final sample size for this study was 230 participants.

Inclusion Criterion

Study participants had to meet following criterion to be included in this study:

1. Their country of origin must be one of the 23 Arab nations;
2. They must have the documented consent of their parents or legal guardians;
3. They must be at least 11 years of age and less than 18 years of age;

4. They must be immigrants to the United States, regardless of citizenship, resident, or other immigration status; and,
5. They must be resident in the greater Knoxville and East Tennessee region of the United States.

Human Subjects Review, Compliance, and Approval

The Principal Investigator coordinated with the University of Tennessee Office of Research in completing the required Form B Application, and it was reviewed by the Dissertation Proposal Committee Chair and Research Advisor prior to submission. The Form B was reviewed and approved through the College of Social Work Departmental Review Committee, and received final approval from the University of Tennessee Institutional Review Board on May, 2, 2013 (See Appendix A).

Participant Access, Notification, and Informed Consent Protocols

Access to participants was facilitated through collaborative efforts with the Muslim Community [Center] of Knoxville (MCK). They notified parents and youth participants at the Center about the proposed study, and were successful in generating their interest and support with the research. When the study was approved from the research office, an advance email (See Appendix B) was sent to the parents advising them of such, and formally requesting their participation and consent for their child (ren) to participate. The email included copies of the parental consent and student assent forms, as well as a copy of the study survey that provided a succinct overview of the research and its purpose. The consent letter, student assent letter, and parental email notification was translated to the Arabic language to give parents and participants a choice to use a language they were most comfortable with.

The youth counselor at the MCK assisted in encouraging adolescents at the Center to participate in the study. They provided a location and meeting place for study participants to complete survey forms in a comfortable environment. They also provided access to a separate "homework room" in their facility that was used for respondents completing surveys. Inside the room there was a sealed "drop-off box" in which respondents placed their completed surveys. The youth and parents then physically met by the (bilingual) Principal Investigator, who gave an overview of the study, its purpose, and how it will benefit them, their families, and the Arab American community. They were then advised about the survey, its contents, and how to complete the survey. After their questions were satisfactorily answered, their participation was formally requested. At that point, parental consent and student assent forms were re-distributed (See Appendices C, D, E and F). Parents then returned a signed consent "receipt" and their children kept their assent forms as informal acknowledgement of their participation. At that point their children received surveys and proceeded to the separate room to complete it, without their parents being present to observe them.

Instrumentation, Key Study Variables, and Scale Reliability

The data collection instrument utilized for this study was the *Survey of Stressful Events and Social Support among Arab American Adolescents and Teenagers* (See appendixes G and H). The survey is a combination of demographic items, and items that measure the two key study variables: (1) acculturative stress, and (2) social support.

Acculturative Stress

The key **dependent variable** for this study was acculturative stress. It was measured by using a modified version of the Acculturation Scale originally developed by Kang (1996) for assessing levels of acculturative stress among Asian American adolescents. The items were

modified to reflect situations faced by immigrant Arab American adolescents. The 34 items on the modified scale described examples of stressful situations which adolescents may experience in daily life. Respondents were asked to rate their feelings about each item on a 4-point scale. The numbers from represent varying degrees of stress: (0 = Never stressful, 1 = A little stressful, 2 = somewhat stressful, 3 = Very stressful). The author reported a reliability coefficient of .91 for the Acculturation Scale.

Social Support

The key **independent variable** in the study was social support. It was measured by the use of a modified Social Support Scale (Choi & Thomas, 2006), originally used with a sample of Korean and Indian adolescents. The authors reported a reliability coefficient of .92 for the original scale. Both the original and modified scale includes five sub-areas from which adolescents generally receive social support, namely support from friends, from parents, religious organizations, American organizations, and from cultural organizations.

There were a total of 15 items in the original five sub-areas, with three items in each sub-area. The modified version has 27 items. Respondents were asked to rate their feelings about each item on a 5-point scale, with the numbers representing varying degrees of frequency with which they interacted with friends, organizations, parents, religious organizations, American social organizations, from Arab cultural organizations, and the varying degrees to which they viewed it as a source of social or emotional support. The Social Support Scale was also modified (updated) to include questions about use of cellphones, texting, email, and social media as communication methods. Additionally, it was revised to use more adolescent-appropriate terms with the inquiries (e.g., “hang out with friends,” as opposed to “interact with friends.” There are two different response patterns on parts I and II of the Social Support Scale:

1 = Never	1 = Very little
2 = Seldom	2 = A little
3 = Occasionally	3 = Somewhat
4 = Frequently	4 = A lot
5 = Very frequently	5 = Very Much

Demographic Variables

There were 15 items on the survey that collected participant demographic data, including gender, age, country of birth; years of residency in the U.S. and State of Tennessee; perceived fluency in the English language; languages spoken most often at home, outside of home, and in school; number of siblings; and religion. The demographic variables were used on the study survey to conduct an aggregate profile analysis of the sample and to assess the impact of salient variables identified in the limited literature as possible predictors or correlates of acculturative stress among immigrant Arab American adolescents.

Data analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences), Version 20. The investigator used frequency distributions, measures of central tendency, and measures of dispersion to assess demographic characteristics of the sample and ascertain response patterns. Additional analyses included correlation analyses and multiple regression to assess whether statistically significant relationship existed between study variables, and to determine the most influential predictor variables for acculturative stress among the sample.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

Respondents Demographic Characteristics:

In terms of respondent demographic characteristics, over half of the respondents (52.2%) were female, and almost 48% were male. Their ages ranged from 11-17 years, with the mean age being 14.2 (SD=1.92) (See Table 3). The largest group category (17%) was 15 years old, followed by 17 years old (16.5%), 14 years old (15.7%), 12 years old (14.3%), 16 years old (13.9%), and 13 years old (13.5%). The smallest group consisted of 11 year old, who represented 9.1% of the sample. Most of the respondents were in the seventh (17.4%) and ninth (17.0%) grades, followed by 16% in the tenth grade, 13.0% in the sixth grade, and 12.2% in the eighth grade.

Most of the sample (54.3%) was born in an Arab country. The remaining respondents (45.2%) were born in the United States. A single individual was born in Turkey, a non-Arab country. Almost all respondents who were born outside of the United States were from 16 different Arab countries. Most of this group (47.4%) was born in Iraq. The next largest percentages from this group were from Egypt (10.5%), Syria (5.3%), Yemen (4.4%), Lebanon (4.4%), and Jordan (4.4%). Other countries had negligible representation among the sample. Almost 26% of the respondents were from refugee families. Most of the refugee families (47.3%) came to U.S from Iraq, followed by Syria (18.2%), Jordan (14.5%), Turkey (10.9%), Kuwait (5.5%), and Somalia (3.6%).

Over 76% of the respondents indicated that their mother was an American citizen. The countries where their mothers were born, however, were quite varied, and included the United States, as well as Arab and non-Arab countries. Most of the sample reported that their mothers

were born in Iraq (23%), followed by the United States (10.9%), Palestine (9, 6%), Egypt (9.1%), and Jordan (9.1%). Over 75% of the respondents indicated that their father was an American citizen. Their father's places of birth were predominantly Arab countries. The Arab countries in which participants fathers were born included Iraq (24.8%), Jordan (12.2%), Palestine (10.9 %), and Egypt (9.6%). The number of years that the respondents have lived in the United States ranged from 1-17 years, with a mean of 9.4 years (SD=5.37). Most of the sample (25.2%) have lived in the State of Tennessee for 1-2 years. The second highest percentage (9.1%) have lived in Tennessee for five years, followed by 8.3% who have lived in Tennessee for three years and 8.3% who have lived there for 12 years. Seventy percent of respondents had two to three siblings living with them. Approximately 15% had only one sibling in the family, 13% had four siblings, and 1.7% had five siblings.

In terms of perceived English language proficiency, 67.4% of the respondents reported that they speak excellent English, and almost 24% speak English very good. Just over 7% of the sample reported their command of English was fair, and 7% reported that they speak poor English. The respondents were also asked what language they speak most of the time in the home, outside home, and while in school. The majority of the sample (37.4%) speaks both the Arabic and the English language. Approximately 32 % speak the Arabic language most of the time at home, and 28.3 % speak the English language most of the time at home. Slightly more than 2% of the sample speaks a language other than Arabic or English most of the time at home. Outside of the home, the vast majority (90%) speak the English language, and only 1.7% speaks the Arabic language most of the time outside of their home. Approximately 8% of the sample speak both Arabic and English languages most of the time outside of their home. Over 97% reported that they only speak the English language when attending school. Slightly over 2% of

the respondents speak both languages most of the time in school, and only one single respondent, 0.4% reported speaking the Arabic language most of the time while attending school. Finally approximately 86% of respondents reported that they are Muslims, and the remaining 14% reported that they practice the Christian religion.

Missing Item Responses

All 230 participants completed all the items on the survey. Participants were allowed to Skip certain demographic questions that were not applicable on them.

Instrument Reliability

The SPSS reliability procedure was used to assess the reliability of scores obtained from participants who responded to the items on the Acculturative Stress Scale and the Social Support Scale. A reliability analysis was also conducted for the scores from the five subscales of the Social Support Scale. The instrument reliability results are presented in Table 4. There were 34 items on the Acculturative Stress Scale and the estimated alpha coefficient for scores on this scale was .93. The scores on the Social Support Scale had an estimated reliability coefficient of .86. For the scores on the Social Support subscales, the alpha coefficients ranged from .77 to .96. The three subarea subscales with the strongest alpha coefficients were the American organization support subscale and the religious organization support subscale (both with .96), followed closely by the Arab cultural support subscale (.95). The parent social support subscale and friends/peers social support subscale had coefficients of .86 and .77, respectively.

Research Question #1: **What is the extent and types of acculturative stress experienced by Arab American immigrant adolescents in East Tennessee?**

A two-tiered approach was used to answer research question #1. First, the collective scores of each of the 34 Acculturative Stress Scale items were calculated to ascertain a mean score for each one. The mean item scores were then then ranked from the highest to the lowest. The second part of the analysis was an assessment of the prevalent themes that emerged from respondent answers to the Acculturative Stress Scale queries. The themes were derived by examining and categorizing specific acculturative stress items that addressed similar facets of stress-generating behaviors that they responded to in the survey.

Mean scores were calculated to ascertain the level of acculturative stress experienced by the adolescent respondents. Table 5 indicates each of the Acculturative Stress Scale item numbers, the mean scores for each item, its ranking, (highest to lowest mean score), and the thematic categories for each item. The overall rating for each item of acculturation situations ranged from .79 to 1.66. Among the acculturation situations, the item rated as the most stressful was, "If I sometimes think that some people having insulting things to say about Arab people, it makes me feel… " (Mean= 1.66, SD=.99). The item rated the second highest was, "If I sometimes think that some people have insulting thoughts about Arab people, it makes me feel…" (Mean= 1.64, SD=.99). The third highest item was, "If I sometimes feel that I do not belong anywhere, it makes me feel…." (Mean= 1.63, SD=1.03). On the other hand, the item rated as the least stressful situation was, "if I don't speak English as well as some of my Arab and non- Arab peers, it makes me feel…" (Mean= .74, SD=.93). The item rated the second lowest was "If I am not as outgoing as my non-Arab peers, it makes me feel…." (Mean= .91, SD=.84). The third lowest was "If my parents do not look like most American parents, it makes me feel…" (Mean= .94, SD=.93).

When a thematic analysis was conducted for the responses to the Acculturative Stress Scale, seven dominant themes emerged for the Arab American youth and adolescents: (1) Language Issues; (2) Perceptions of being "Americanized;" (3) Cultural Appearance and Behavior; (4) Peer Relations; (5) Alienation and Marginalization; (6) Family Values and Interaction; and, (7) Racial Prejudice and Stereotypes (See Table 6). These seven themes are described below:

Language Issues: This issue involves the inability of respondents to speak English as well as Arabic with non- Arab peers; difficulty with a language barrier between respondents and their parents; and pressures to speak the Arabic language more fluently.

Peer Relations: This theme involves respondents not having as many Arab and non-Arab friends as they would like; friends thinking that they depend too much on their family, and not being as outgoing as their non- Arab peers.

Perception of Being too "Americanized:" This occurs when respondents receive criticism from Arab friends or relatives for being too "Americanized;" unfair treatment by Arab people who are more "Americanized" than them; and not knowing how to act among Arab people who are more "Americanized" than themselves.

Cultural Appearance and Behavior: This involves respondents being ridiculed by peers and classmates and having difficulty fitting in because of Arab appearance and behavior; not knowing enough about Arab culture; being overlooked because of Arab appearance; observing non-Arab persons discussing their thoughts more freely; not knowing how to act among Arab people perceived as more "Americanized" than themselves; perceptions of parents as "very Arab;" being questioned about their ethnicity; being treated unfairly by people who are "more

Arab" than them; perceiving that their parents do not look or act like most American parents; and perceiving that non-Arabs do not understand their Arab culture.

Family Values and Interaction: This theme is based on parental expectations of obedience from respondents without questioning; parental comparisons of them to other young people regarding obedience, manners, and lack of self-discipline; the expressed inability to communicate with their parents because of different or conflicting beliefs and values, and parental expectations of unqualified respect to them no matter what the circumstances.

Alienation and Marginalization: This theme is based on respondents feeling that they are neither a part of Arab culture or American culture; feeling that they do not belong anywhere; feeling that the United States is really not their home; and often feeling that they are "different."

Racial Prejudice and Stereotyping: This final theme is centered on respondents' perceiving that people have insulting thoughts about Arab people; perceiving that people make insulting comments about Arab people; and expectations by others that they should be successful in school because of their Arabic background.

Table 6 lists the seven themes, the specific survey items clustered in each theme, the mean respondent score for each item, and the average for all mean scores in each theme. The table also ranks each theme from the highest to the lowest average mean score. The predominant stressful experiences reported by respondents involved their feelings related to individuals making insulting comments about the Arab-American population -- racial prejudice and stereotypes -- (theme #7), and how it made them feel. This was followed by the theme of respondents feeling alienated and marginalized (theme # 2). The Acculturative Stress Scale items that were ranked as the least stressful in the study were respondent feelings about speaking

the English language (theme #1)), and as well relations with their Arab-American and non-Arab-American peers (theme #4).

Research Question #2: What is the extent and types of Social Support stress experienced by Arab American immigrant adolescents in East Tennessee?

The overall scores for the Social Support Scale ranged from 2.09 to 3.60 (See Table 7). When the individual Social Support Scale item scores were examined for the sample, it was found that the highest levels of social support were derived from their parents. The majority of the respondents (29%) reported that they "very much" see their parents as a source of social support, followed by their friends (22%), religious organizations (11%), Arab cultural organizations, (8%) and American organizations (5%). The mean scores for questions about the extent they saw their parents as sources of social and emotional support were 3.60 and 3.65, respectively, which were the highest collective mean scores of any other items on the scale. The specific scale items reflecting the lowest scores for social support among the sample were questions regarding American social organizations as sources of social and emotional support. The mean scores for these two items were 2.16 and 2.09.

Consistent with Kang's (1996) study that examined immigrant adolescent sources of social support, the Social Support Scale items were individually grouped into five different sub-areas (subscales), or types of social support: (1) parent support; (2) friends support; (3) American social organization support; (4) religious organization support; and, (5) Arab cultural organization support. Table 7 indicates the specific subscale category, the number of items it includes, the specific item numbers (from the survey) and collective mean scores for the sample, the average of the mean scores, and the ranking of the highest to the lowest of the average mean

scores. As the table indicates, the strongest ranking of perceived social support was parent support (average mean score [AMS] = 3.35) and friend support (AMS = 3.07), followed by Arab cultural organization support (AMS = 2.52), [Arab] religious organization support (AMS = 2.51), and American organization support (AMS = 2.16).

Research Question #3: To what extent do statistically significant relationships exist between acculturative stress and social support among Arab immigrant adolescents in East Tennessee?

The correlation analysis produced three social support variables that had statistically significant relationships with acculturative stress (Table 8). The three variables were (1) parental support; (2) Arab organization support, and (3) American organization support. The strongest statistically significant social support correlate was parental support, which had an inverse relationship with acculturative stress ($r= -.254$, $p <.001$, 2-tailed test). As scores for parent social support increased, acculturative stress scores subsequently decreased. Arab organization support ($r=.186$, $p=.005$, 2-tailed test) and American organization support ($r=.156$, $p=.018$, 2-tailed test) had direct relationships. When scores for Arab organization and American organization support scores increased, acculturative stress scores increased.

Research Question #4: What specific demographic and social support variables are the strongest predictors of acculturative stress among Arab American adolescents in East Tennessee?

The social support variables which were the strongest predictors of acculturative stress among the sample (Table 9) were parent support ($b=-.987$, $t (214) = -3.721$, $p < .001$, partial $r = -.247$, R-square increase = .048) and Arab cultural organization support ($b= .819$, $t (214) = 2.305$, $p = .82$, partial $r = .156$, R-square increase = .018). Parental support uniquely explained

4.8 percent of the variance in acculturative stress among the respondents, controlling for all other variables. Arab cultural organization support uniquely explained 1.8 percent of the variance in acculturative stress among the respondents, controlling for all other variables. Also for every one unit increase in parent support, there is about one unit decrease in acculturative stress, and for every one unit increase in Arab organizations support, there is approximately (.82) increase in acculturative stress. Cook's D values were all less than 1.0, suggesting no influential observation.

Assessment of Assumption of OLS Regression

Investigations of the OLS residuals suggested no substantial violations of the assumption of OLS regression. An investigation of the normal p-plot of residuals suggested no significant violations of the assumption of Normality of Residuals (Figure 1).

Homogeneity of Variance Assumptions

Inspection of a plot of the standardized residuals versus the standardized predicted values suggested no significant violations of the homogeneity of variance assumptions (Figure 2).

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

The first research question addressed the extent and types of acculturative stress experienced by Arab immigrant adolescents in East Tennessee (Table 5). The statistical analysis generated mean sample scores for each acculturative stress survey item, indicating the level of acculturative stress for the respondents on a Likert scale of "0" (never stressful) to "3" (very stressful). The item with the highest mean scores were (1) respondents thinking that some people have insulting things to say about Arab individuals (M=166, SD=.99); (2) respondents thinking that some people have insulting thoughts about Arab people (M=1.64, SD=.99); and (3) respondents feeling sometimes that they do not belong anywhere (meaning not a part of American or Arab culture) (M=1.63, SD=1.03). The acculturative stress survey items rated as least stressful were (1) respondents not being able to speak English well as some of their Arab and non-Arab peers (M=.74, SD=.93); (2) respondents not being as outgoing as their non-Arab peers (M=.91, SD=.84); and (3) respondents concerns that their parents do not look like most American parents (M=.94, SD=.93).

An analysis of dominant themes in the survey and among the sample respondents resulted in seven themes: (1) Language issues; (2) Perception of being "Americanized:" (3) Cultural appearance and behavior; (4) Peer relations; (5) Alienation and Marginalization; (6) Family values and interaction; and (7) Racial Prejudice and stereotypes. The themes are defined and elaborated upon in the results section and the paper. After ranking the aforementioned themes by the highest and lowest mean Acculturative Stress survey scores, the results suggested that the predominant stressful experiences were a result of racial prejudice and stereotypes against Arab Americans (theme # 7), and how it made them feel (Table 6). This finding among the sample

suggested a high level of perceived anti-Arab racial prejudice and discrimination among the respondents and was consistent with findings from previous studies (Ahmed et al., 2011; Amer & Hovey, 2007; Sulieman, 2000). It seemed to be a reflection of the persistent negative stereotypes of Arabs in the United States that portray them as terrorists, suicide bombers, and so forth. These portrayals, in large part, stem from images from the mass media, Hollywood, and so forth, which portray the Arab community in a negative light; as well as common perceptions of many Americans in relation to the Arab-American community. These stereotypes are further fueled by the ongoing and very public military conflicts that continue in Middle Eastern countries, Pakistan, and Africa (Ahmed et al., 2011; Esses, Dovidio, & Hodson, 2002). These were followed next by the theme of respondents feeling Alienated or Marginalized in the American society (theme # 5).

The Acculturative Stress Scale item that was ranked as the least stressful in the study involved respondent feelings about speaking the English language as well as their Arab-American and non-Arab-American peers (Theme #1). This was supported by the observation that the vast majority of the study participants chose to complete the English version of the study survey, as opposed to the version that was translated to Arabic. This finding suggests that the comfort level of knowing the English language was an important factor in mitigating acculturative stress in the current study. A relationship with their Arab American and non-Arab American peers (theme # 4) was the category ranked as second least stressful among the sample.

Research question # 2 queried the extent and types of social support experienced by the sample of Arab immigrant adolescents. The social support scale (Thomas & Choi, 2006) was utilized to answer this question (1= lowest score, 5= highest score). The analysis results showed mean social support scale item scores that ranged from (2.09) to (3.60). Parents were reported by

most respondents (29 %) as being the strongest sources of social support. The mean scores for queries about parents as sources of social and emotional support were (3.60) and (3.65), respectively. These were the highest mean scores reported for the sample. Other sources of social support receiving high scores ("very much") were friends (22% of the sample), religious organizations (11%), Arab cultural organizations (8%), and American social organizations (5%). The mean scores for American social organizations as sources of social and emotional support were (2.16) and (2.09), respectively.

The social support scale was categorized into five subareas indicating different types of social support: parents, friends, American social organizations, religious organizations, and Arab cultural organizations (Table 7). Similar to the scores for individual social support scale items, the strongest subarea ranking for perceived social support was parental support (Average mean scores [AMS] = 3.35) followed by friends support (AMS = 3.07), Arab cultural organizations support (AMS = 2.52), religious organizations support (AMS = 2.51), and American social organizations support (AMS = 2.16).

Research question # 3 assessed whether statistically significant relationships existed between acculturative stress and social support among the sample. Three social support variables were found to have statistically significant relationships with acculturative stress: (1) parental support; (2) Arab cultural organizations support; and (3) American social organization support. The strongest statistically significant social support correlate was parental support, which had an inverse relationship (r= -.254, $p < .001$, 2-tailed test). When scores for parent social support increased, acculturative stress decreased. Arab cultural organization support (r=.186, p =.005, 2-tailed test) and American social organization support (r=.156, p =.018, 2-tailed test) had direct

relationships. When scores for Arab cultural organizations and American social organizations support increased, acculturative stress scores increased (Table 8).

The fourth research question determined which specific demographic or social support variables were the strongest predictors of acculturative stress among the sample of Arab immigrant adolescents (see Table 9). The social support variables which were the strongest predictors of acculturative stress among the sample were parent support (b=-.987, t (214) = -3.721, $p < .001$, partial r = -.247, R-square increase = .048) and Arab Cultural organizations support (b= .819, t (214) = 2.305, $p = .022$, partial r = .156, R-square increase = .018). Parental support uniquely explained 4.8 percent of the variance in acculturative stress among the respondents, controlling for all other variables. Arab cultural organizations support uniquely explained 1.8 percent of the variance in acculturative stress among the respondents, controlling for all other variables.

One of the most important findings of the study was the degree of reported acculturative stress among the sample that resulted from racial prejudice and apparent stereotyping from mainstream American children. As mentioned above, the thematic category on the Acculturative Stress Scale had the highest ranking, in terms of negative acculturative stress scores. The issues that fell into this category included perceptions that people have insulting thoughts and comments about Arab Americans, and expectations of school success because of respondent's Arab background and culture. This finding was consistent with several previous studies in the literature, including Flanagan's (2009) research, which determined that two-thirds of Arab adolescent respondents in the sample reported experiences of prejudice directed toward them. This study also supported the findings of Wray-Lake et al. (2008), where almost 70% of Arab American students were perceived by their American peers to be enemies of the United States.

Additionally, Suleiman (2000) found that prejudice and discrimination was a major issue, and reported physical violence, threats, and harassment against Arab American adolescents, and resultant traumatic stress and anxiety.

There were also similarities in the literature and the current study with respect to the issue of alienation and perceived marginalization among the study sample. This thematic category had the second highest, in terms of being a source of acculturative stress experienced by the sample. Marginalization was related to respondents not feeling like they did not belong to either American culture or Arab American culture, not feeling that the United States is really their home, and feeling like they are "different" from others in the host this country. (Wray-Lake et al. (2008) also found this ambivalence among immigrant adolescents, and reported confusion among them trying to identify as American citizens in the midst of externally imposed racial prejudice and discrimination. Fares (1991) and Lambert & Taylor (1990) also reported the phenomena of Arab Americans facing the dilemma of whether to embrace or reject their host Western culture in the midst of negative experiences from the host country citizenry.

There were some contradictory findings in this study, in terms of what has been previously found in the literature on immigrant adolescent experiences. Choi (1997), for instance, discovered that social support was a moderator of stress among immigrant adolescents and appeared to lead to lower levels of depressive symptomology. The current study was consistent with this finding, as it related to parental support. A recent study by Ahmed et al. (2011), however, examined cultural resources (including religious support) and their impact on psychological distress among Arab American adolescents, and discovered an inverse relationship between Arab cultural organizations and acculturative stress. Their finding regarding the effects of cultural resources in that study went in the opposite direction of the current study. The current

study found that respondent involvement with Arab cultural organizations tended to increase acculturative stress, rather than reduce it.

The dependent variable in the study by Ahmed and colleagues (2011) was general psychological distress, versus the more specific dependent variable of acculturative stress in this study. They utilized three measurements to capture psychological distress: (1) the Child Behavior Checklist-Youth Self Report (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); (2) The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (Radloff, 1977); and, (3) the State Trait Anxiety Inventory (Speilberger, 1983). The scales were different, but they were similar enough to raise questions regarding the two distinctly different study outcomes. On the surface, this seemed to be counterintuitive to reasonable expectations, but upon closer examination, there may be an explanation for such an outcome. To a great degree, the different outcomes are probably attributable to their study being conducted in a metropolitan Detroit, Michigan neighborhood which is located in one of the largest Arab communities in the United States. The current study was conducted in a moderate-sized city in East Tennessee, with a negligible population of Arab Americans. Unlike metropolitan Detroit, there was a single organization in the city devoted to social activity and advocacy for Arab Americans and Muslims, and its predominant mission was religious in nature. In fact, the authors called for new research (such as the current study) in communities where Arab Americans are under-represented numerically and politically to assess whether their findings would hold elsewhere. In the current study, they obviously did not.

The findings of the current study that confirmed the important role of parents in buffering acculturative stress were consistent with Park's (2009) research that examined immigrant Korean adolescents in the United States. This particular study emphasized the crucial role of parental attachment and social support from friends in facilitating psychological adjustment in America

and reducing the negative impact of acculturative stress. This was also found in studies by Gore & Aseltine (1995) and Liang & Bogat (1994). In the current research, parental support was clearly a very important factor in buffering acculturative stress among the Arab American children, and this was followed closely by the buffering impact of friends and peers. Parental support was one of three Social Support Scale variables that had a statistically significant relationship with acculturative stress, and the only one that had an inverse relationship, i.e., when parental support increased, acculturative stress decreased (Research Question #3). Finally, parental support was found to be the strongest predictor of acculturative stress (Research Question #4), had an inverse relationship, and uniquely explained 6.1 percent of the variance among respondents, controlling for all other variables.

Despite this finding and the substantial literature that demonstrates the importance of parental and family support in mitigating acculturative and related stressors, some findings in the current study were somewhat paradoxical. Specifically, when examining the Acculturative Stress Scale themes and mean scores, Family Values and Interaction had the third highest average mean scores among the seven thematic categories. This classification involved obedience to parents, communication problems with parents due to conflicting beliefs and values, and parental expectations of unconditional obedience from their children. The mean acculturative stress scores in this group were higher than the Cultural Appearance and Behavior, Perception of Being "Americanized," Language Issues, and Peer Relationship categories.

The lowest levels of social support were associated with Arab cultural organizations and American social organizations, with the latter receiving the lowest scores on the Social Support Scale. This could be a result of parental influence on the adolescents in the study, and efforts to involve them in Arab social organizations. For instance, immigrant Arab American parents may

have a desire to steer their children away from some aspects of American adolescent culture that they perceive as negative, and instead instill within them traditional cultural values from their native countries. Some examples may include early dating and sexuality practices that have become common and normative in the U.S., at least in the view of American youth and adolescents. It is conceivable that Arab American parents try to prevent their children from experiencing problems and consequences encountered by many American adolescents, including a negative self-concept, sexually-transmitted diseases or teenage pregnancy.

Many Arab American parents—particularly those who are Muslims—may keep their children away from American social organizations to prevent intermixing among males and females, which may be normative practices in their native countries and cultures. This is not necessarily an issue for younger children, but after the 3rd or 4th grade of elementary school, gender separation is the custom in many Arab countries. Even during the data collection phase of the current study, the author found that many parents wanted males and females to be in separate rooms while completing the survey instrument. Some parents even opted to complete their surveys in their own homes to assure gender separation.

The situation with Arab cultural organizations receiving the second lowest Social Support Scale scores was more unusual and unexpected, and different from the findings of Ahmed et al. (2011). This may be related to the aforementioned finding of a positive correlation between Arab cultural organizations and acculturative stress. Parents of Arab American children are considered to be "gatekeepers" of their homeland cultures and traditions, and feel a responsibility for transmitting it to their children in an unfiltered manner. They may work in conjunction with Arab cultural organizations in efforts to maintain their cultural norms in a host country and prevent their children from internalizing American cultural values they perceive as negative or

undesirable. Additionally, the parents may fear that too much involvement with American organizations may diminish their children's Islamic faith and increase the probability of them converting to another religion in the future. Another explanation may be that in some respects, there was a "blurred line" between Arab cultural organizations and Arab religious organizations. The MCK was the major community organization in East Tennessee that advocates for Muslim Americans families – including Arab American Muslim families – as part of the larger community. There was virtually no other Arab American advocacy or social service organizations in East Tennessee.

The study results suggest that adolescents may resist these types of actions, or at least experience ambivalence about it. On the one hand, for instance, the adolescents may be reluctant to participate with American social organizations because of prejudicial actions stemming from their physical appearance and/or Arabic accent. On the other hand, the adolescents - particularly those who are older - may desire to interaction with their American classmates and peers to learn the English language and increase their own circle of friends from their new adopted homeland. This proposition is supported by the study finding that friends had the second highest scores as sources of social support, and the finding that the lowest scores on the Acculturative Stress Scale were associated with relations with the Arab American and non-American peers (theme #4), and speaking the English language (theme #1). The children and adolescents in the sample, therefore, may experiences "pulls and pushes" in several different directions intermingling with their own normal stages of adolescent development and associated behaviors. These dilemmas are reflective of those reported in previous literature (Ahmed et al. (2011); Wray-Lake et al. (2000); Fares (1991); and Lambert & Taylor (1990). This ambivalence may also account for the

Family Values and Interaction thematic category having high scores on the Acculturative Stress Scale.

Implications for Social Work Practice

The study findings make it evident that acculturative stress is a very real issue among immigrant Arab American adolescents, and that there are clear differences in the types of social support that may serve a buffering function to its negative consequences, especially as it relates to their normal functioning and mental health. Parents, family members, and friends play a major role in mitigating acculturative stress, and it is important that its significance is recognized among social workers, mental health practitioners, and other human service workers who work with immigrant Arab American adolescent youth and their families. These findings can then be considered and incorporated into interventions with this population at all levels. The study findings also point out that human service organizations do not necessarily play a supportive role in helping to alleviate acculturative stress even when it is their intent. This was found to be the case whether the organization was American, Arab American, or religious in nature. The findings may be peculiar to moderate-sized communities with small Arab American communities, but it still raises concerns about assumptions made by leaders of social service agencies that work with Arab American youth, and whether these assumptions can be universally applied in different American communities. Evidence-based and culturally-appropriate interventions need to be designed that recognize the unique cultural nuances of Arab American families, their family and community values and bonds, and how these factors can be integrated into program designs to buffer acculturative stressors that their children regularly endure.

The professional social services community also needs to recognize that immigrant Arab American youth have to deal with many acculturation-related stressors, combined with the

normative developmental challenges faced by teenagers. This means recognizing the unique prejudices, harassment, and possible bullying that many face from their American peers, especially in smaller communities such as those in East Tennessee. Additionally, social workers must recognize that the prejudices they face are oftentimes introduced to their peers and reinforced by their parents and other family members who have been influenced by media stereotypes about Arabs, misunderstandings about Arab cultures and Islam as a religion, and the ongoing military and political conflicts between the United States and some Middle Eastern nations.

This challenge also applies to teachers and educators in America, who are uniquely positioned to embrace and demonstrate respect for Arab and all subcultures in the United States, just as other underrepresented racial groups have been embraced and celebrated with cultural and historical celebratory events. Creation of inclusive and culturally-sensitive curricula in schools regarding Arab culture is an example. Of course, this would entail the professional groups making their own conscientious efforts to increase their awareness about the Arab world, its cultures, history, and societal dynamics related to immigration and acculturation. A starting point may be the development and dissemination of training materials for professionals who work with and in Arab American communities to reduce the questions, fears, and "mystique" surrounding Arab and Muslim individuals, families, and communities. It is also vital to recognize that all immigrant groups do not experience the same acculturative stress issues or have identical social support responses. This study has cited scholarly research, for instance, that pointed out differential acculturative stress experiences among ethnic groups, and even between different religions in the same ethnic group. Similarly, the literature points out how different immigrant groups use different sources for social support. Family practitioners and social

workers who incorporate support systems into their interventions with immigrant youth must therefore be cautious not to use "cookie cutter" approaches, since different cultures may exhibit unique social support patterns.

Future Research Recommendations

In many respects, the current study indirectly raised many compelling questions that can set the foundation for future research regarding immigrant Arab American adolescent, acculturative stress, and social support. What is the difference in perceived acculturative stress among recent immigrant adolescents versus those who have been in the United States for 5-10 years? What role do demographic factors such as socioeconomic status, age, gender, and so forth play in acculturative stressors and social support buffers? What differences exist when comparing the experiences of acculturative stressors and social support mechanisms of immigrant youth from Latino, Asian, and African nations? Studies that pursue these and related research questions would generate valuable information on the topic. Similarly, studies would be useful that: (1) compared the acculturative stress experiences and social support of immigrant Arab American adolescents in East Tennessee with those who live in cities such as metropolitan Detroit, Michigan; (2) utilized a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to explore the topic, which would allow for more detailed, ethnographic descriptions of what youth are experiencing to compliment the behavioral rating scales; (3) examined immigrant Arab Americans adolescent, acculturative stress, and social support utilizing a longitudinal study design to capture changes that occurred over time; and, (4) compared the intra-familial experiences related to acculturative stress and social support to ascertain and compare the unique perspectives of mothers, fathers, and children.

Study Strengths and Limitations

The study has several strengths worthy of mentioning. First, it is the first known study that specifically addresses the issues of acculturative stress and social support among immigrant Arab American adolescents using specific scales that directly measure the two variables. Second, it is the only study that examines the topics in the state of Tennessee and possibly any other small southern city with a small Arab American population. Third, it has a good sample size (N=230), as well as a variety of age ranges (11 – 17 years) among its respondents. Fourth, the survey instruments utilized and all correspondence to respondents and their families was translated to Arabic, thus providing them with the option to read it in English, and minimizing the chance of misinterpretations. Finally, the Acculturative Stress and Social Support Scale had excellent reliability coefficients of .93 and .86, respectively. Additionally, the alpha coefficients for the five social support subareas had a range of .77 to .96, and a mean coefficient of .90.

The study had limitations that should be noted, as well. The modified scales used in the current study were designed for immigrant adolescent populations from ethnic groups other than Arabs. Some scholars have argued that acculturation scales should be specifically designed for a particular ethnic group. Very few studies have examined the phenomenon with immigrant Arab American adolescents using a culturally-specific scale, so that was not practical for the current research. Acculturation scales that measure specific aspects of Arab culture need to be developed for use in quantitative and qualitative research. A mixed method study would also yield important aspects of acculturation among the sample that cannot be captured with a cross-sectional research design. The majority of the respondents for the current study (86%) came from families who self-identified as practitioners of the Muslim religion. The findings do not necessarily reflect the experience of their Christian counterparts, who make up the majority of

the Arab American population. Finally, the study findings here cannot be generalized to the larger body of immigrant Arab American adolescents who live in the State of Tennessee or the United States, since the purposive sample was limited to the greater Knoxville and East Tennessee community. The findings of this study, however, should be useful for social work professionals in need of knowledge about acculturative stress among the immigrant Arab American adolescent population, and therefore strengthen the quality of interventions that they are provided.

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Appendices

Table 1
Arab Population by Ancestry: 1990-2000

Subject	1990		2000		Change, 1990 to 2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total population	248,709,873	100.00	281,421,906	100.00	32,712,033	13.2
Total Arab Population and Ancestry[1] Total Arab Population	860,354	0.35	1,189,731	0.42	329,377	38.3
Lebanese	394,180	45.82	440,279	37.01	46,099	11.7
Syrian	129,606	15.06	142,897	12.01	13,291	10.3
Egyptian	78,574	9.13	142,832	12.01	64,258	81.8
All other Arab Reports	268,378	31.19	476,863	40.08	208,485	77.7
Specific Arab Ancestry	132,066	15.35	239,424	20.12	107,358	81.3
Palestinian	48,019	5.58	72,112	6.06	24,093	50.2
Jordanian	20,656	2.40	39,734	3.34	19,078	92.4
Moroccan	19,089	2.22	38,923	3.27	19,834	103.9
Iraqi	23,212	2.70	37,714	3.17	14,502	62.5
Yemeni	4,093	0.48	11,683	0.98	7,590	185.4
Kurdish	2,181	0.25	9,423	0.79	7,242	332.0
Algerian	3,215	0.37	8,752	0.74	5,537	172.2
Saudi Arabian	4,486	0.52	7,419	0.62	2,933	65.4
Tunisian	2,376	0.28	4,735	0.40	2,359	99.3
Kuwaiti	1,306	0.15	3,162	0.27	1,856	142.1
Libyan	2,172	0.25	2,979	0.25	807	37.2
Berber	530	0.06	1,327	0.11	797	150.4
Other Specific Arab Ancestry	731	0.08	1,461	0.12	730	99.9
General Arab Ancestry	136,312	15.84	237,439	19.96	101,127	74.2
Arab or Arabic	127,364	14.80	205,822	17.30	78,458	61.6
Middle Eastern	7,656	0.89	28,400	2.39	20,744	271.0
North African	1,292	0.15	3,217	0.27	1,925	149.0

[1] Source: U. S. Census Bureau, 2000

Table 2
Total Arab Population and Households by Selected Arab Ancestry Group: 2006-2010

Ancestry Group	Total Population		Total Households		Average Household Size	
	Number	Margin of error (±)	Number	Margin of error (±)	Number	Margin of error (±)
Total	303,965,272	(X)	114,235,996	248,114	2.59	0.01
Total Arab	1,517,664	17,397	511,102	5,035	2.93	0.02
Lebanese	485,917	6,375	181,127	2,437	2.66	0.03
Egyptian	179,853	4,999	60,137	1,731	2.95	0.05
Syrian	147,426	3,950	56,040	1,432	2.67	0.04
Palestinian	83,241	4,035	25,679	1,163	3.50	0.10
Moroccan	74,908	3,183	23,365	1,170	2.75	0.07
Iraqi	73,896	4,162	22,979	1,189	3.27	0.10
Jordanian	60,056	3,797	18,134	1,088	3.42	0.11
Yemeni	29,358	2,618	6,812	550	4.34	0.21

Source: Asi, M., & Beaulieu, D. (2013). *Arab Households in the United States: 2006-2010. American Community Survey briefs.*

Washington, DC: U. S. Census Bureau

Table 3
Participant's Demographic Characteristics Profile

Characteristic	Classification	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	110	47.8
	Female	120	52.2
Age	11	21	9.1
	12	33	14.3
	13	31	13.5
	14	36	15.7
	15	39	17.0
	16	32	13.9
	17	38	16.5
School Grade	4	1	0.4
	5	13	5.7
	6	30	13.0
	7	40	17.4
	8	28	12.2
	9	39	17.0
	10	36	15.7
	11	22	9.6
	12	21	9.1
Place of birth	Arab country	125	54.3
	United States	104	45.2
	Other country	1	0.4
Refugee status	Yes	59	25.7
	No	171	74.3
American citizenship/mother	Yes	175	76.1
	No	55	23.9
American citizenship/father	Yes	173	75.2
	No	57	24.8

Table 3 (continued)

Characteristic	Classification	Frequency	Percent (%)
Years of living in U.S.	1	24	10.4
	2	20	8.7
	3	10	4.3
	4	16	7.0
	5	10	4.3
	6	1	0.4
	7	0	0
	8	0	0
	9	1	0.4
	10	27	11.7
	11	13	5.7
	12	24	10.4
	13	23	10.0
	14	17	7.4
	15	17	7.4
	16	15	6.5
	17	12	5.2
Year living in Tennessee	1	27	11.7
	2	31	13.5
	3	19	8.3
	4	11	4.8
	5	21	9.1
	6	7	3.0
	7	10	4.3
	8	5	2.2
	9	3	1.3
	10	15	6.5
	11	12	5.2
	12	19	8.3
	13	11	4.8
	14	13	5.7
	15	12	5.2
	16	7	3.0
	17	7	3.0

Table 3 (continued)

Characteristic	Classification	Frequency	Percent (%)
Language spoken at home	Arabic	74	32.2
	English	65	28.3
	Both	86	37.4
	Other	5	2.2
Language spoken outside home	Arabic	4	1.7
	English	207	90.0
	Both	19	8.3
Language spoken at school	Arabic	1	.4
	English	224	97.4
	Both	4	2.2
Number of siblings	1	35	15.2
	2	90	39.1
	3	71	30.9
	4	30	13.0
	5	4	1.7
Religion	Christianity	32	13.9
	Islam	198	86.1
English proficiency	Poor	4	1.7
	Fair	17	7.4
	Good	22	9.6
	Very good	32	13.9
	Excellent	155	67.4

Table 4
Scale(s) and Subscale(s) Reliability and Number of Items

Scale	N	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Acculturative Stress Scale	230	34	.93
Social Support Scale	230	22	.86
Friends/Peers Support Subscale	230	7	.77
Parental Support Subscale	230	6	.86
American Social Organizations Support Subscale	230	3	.96
Religious Organizations Support Subscale	230	3	.96
Arab Cultural Organizations Support Subscale	230	3	.95

Table 5
Acculturative Stress Scale Item Means, Item Ranking, Item Number, and Thematic Category

Acculturative Stress Scale Item Mean	Item Ranking	Item Number	Acculturative Stress Thematic Category
1.66	1	37	Racial prejudice and stereotype
1.64	2	36	Racial prejudice and stereotype
1.63	3	31	Alienation and marginalization
1.50	4	45	Family values and interaction
1.46	5	47	Language issues
1.43	6	40	Cultural appearance and behavior
1.38	7	23	Cultural appearance and behavior
1.37	8	22	Alienation and marginalization
1.34	9	38	Alienation and marginalization
1.32	10	26	Cultural appearance and behavior
1.32	11	34	Family values and interaction
1.30	12	21	Cultural appearance and behavior
1.26	13	19	Perception of being “Americanized”
1.26	14	20	Cultural appearance and behavior
1.25	15	46	Language issues
1.25	15	43	Cultural appearance and behavior
1.24	16	48	Family values and interaction
1.23	17	35	Alienation and marginalization
1.22	18	18	Perception of being “Americanized”
1.21	19	28	Perception of being “Americanized”
1.20	20	39	Racial prejudice and stereotype
1.17	21	27	Cultural appearance and behavior
1.13	22	25	Peer relations
1.10	23	24	Peer relations
1.07	24	30	Peer relations
1.06	25	33	Cultural appearance and behavior
1.03	26	32	Cultural appearance and behavior
1.02	27	29	Cultural appearance and behavior

Table 5 (continued)

Acculturative Stress Scale Item Mean	Item Ranking	Item Number	Acculturative stress thematic category
1.00	28	49	Family values and interaction
.97	29	17	Perception of being “Americanized”
.96	30	42	Cultural appearance and behavior
.94	31	41	Cultural appearance and behavior
.91	32	44	Peer relations
.74	33	16	Language issues

Table 6
Acculturative Stress Scale Themes, Item Numbers/Mean Scores, Average of Mean Scores, and Ranking

Acculturative Stress Scale Themes	Item (Mean Item Score)	Average of Mean Scores	Ranking
Racial prejudice and stereotypes	36 (1.6391) 37 (1.6609) 39 (1.2000)	1.5	1
Alienation and marginalization	22 (1.3739) 31 (1.6261) 35 (1.2348) 38 (1.3391)	1.3934	2
Family values and interaction	34 (1.3174) 45 (1.5043) 48 (1.2435) 49 (.9957)	1.2652	3
Cultural appearance and behavior	20 (1.2565) 21 (1.3043) 23 (1.3783) 26 (1.3217) 27 (1.1652) 29 (1.0217) 32 (1.0348) 33 (1.0565) 40 (1.4304) 41 (.9435) 42 (.9609) 43 (1.2522)	1.1771	4
Perception of being “Americanized’	17 (.9739) 18 (.2174) 19 (1.2609) 28 (1.2087)	1.1652	5

Table 6 (continued)

Acculturative Stress Scale Themes	Item (Mean Item Score)	Average of Mean Scores	Ranking
Language issues	16 (.7391) 46 (1.2522) 47 (1.4609)	1.1507	6
Peer relations	24 (1.0957) 25 (1.1348) 30 (1.0696) 44 (.9130)	1.0532	7

Table 7
Social Support Subscales, Item Number/Mean Scores, Average of Mean Scores, and Ranking

Social Support Subscales	Number of Items	Item Number/Mean Scores	Average of Mean Scores	Ranking
Parent support	6	59 (3.31) 60 (3.12) 61 (3.05) 62 (3.35) 63 (3.60) 64 (3.65)	3.35	1
Friends support	7	51 (3.25) 52 (2.85) 53 (3.07) 54 (2.23) 55 (3.40) 56 (3.44) 57 (3.28)	3.07	2
Arab cultural organizations support	3	74 (2.56) 75 (2.50) 76 (2.50)	2.52	3
Religious organizations support	3	70 (2.55) 71 (2.50) 72 (2.49)	2.51	4
American social organizations support	3	66 (2.24) 67 (2.16) 68 (2.09)	2.16	5

Table 8
Statistically Significant Acculturative Stress and Social Support Correlations

Social Support Subscale Correlates	**r**	***P* value**
Parent support	-.254	$P < .001$** (2-tailed)
Arab cultural organizations support	.186	.005** (2-tailed)
American social organizations support	.156	.018* (2-tailed)

*.05 level

**.01 level

Table 9
Demographic and Social Support Variables that are Strongest Predictors of Acculturative Stress

Predictors valuables	**t**	***p* value**	**Partial r**	**R square increase**
Parent Support	-3.721	*P* <.001	-.247	.048
Arab cultural organizations support	2.305	.022	.156	.018

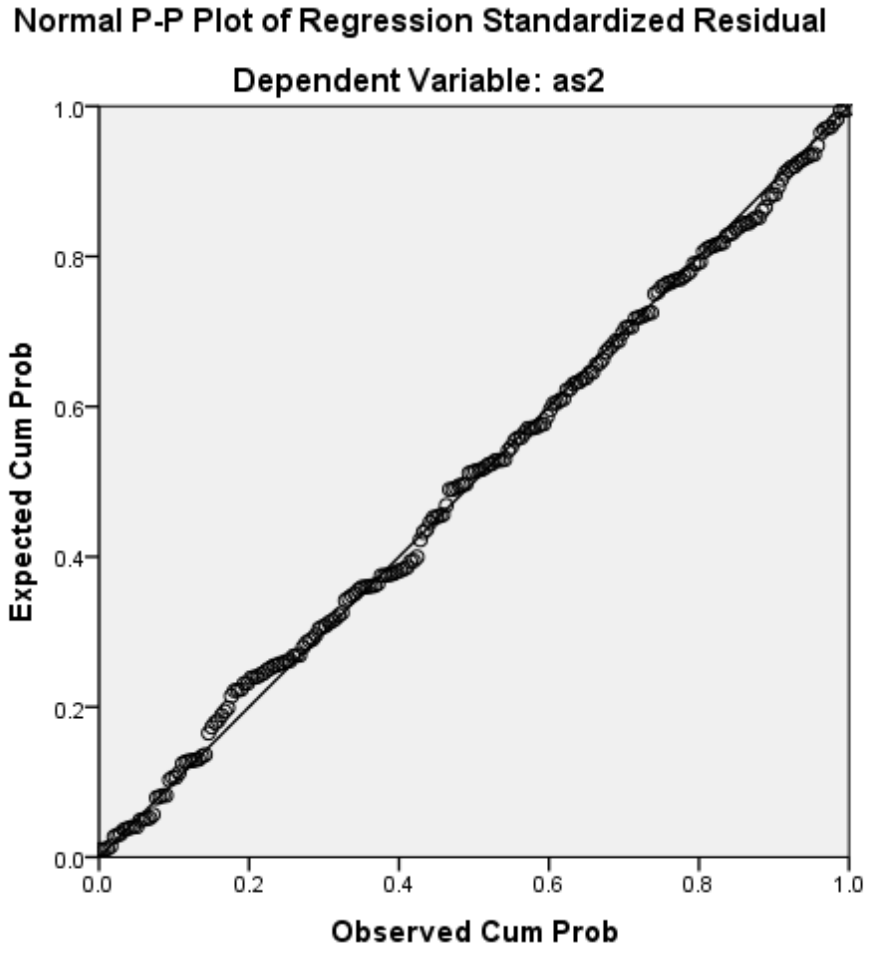

Figure 1: Normal P-Plot Residuals from Regression Model

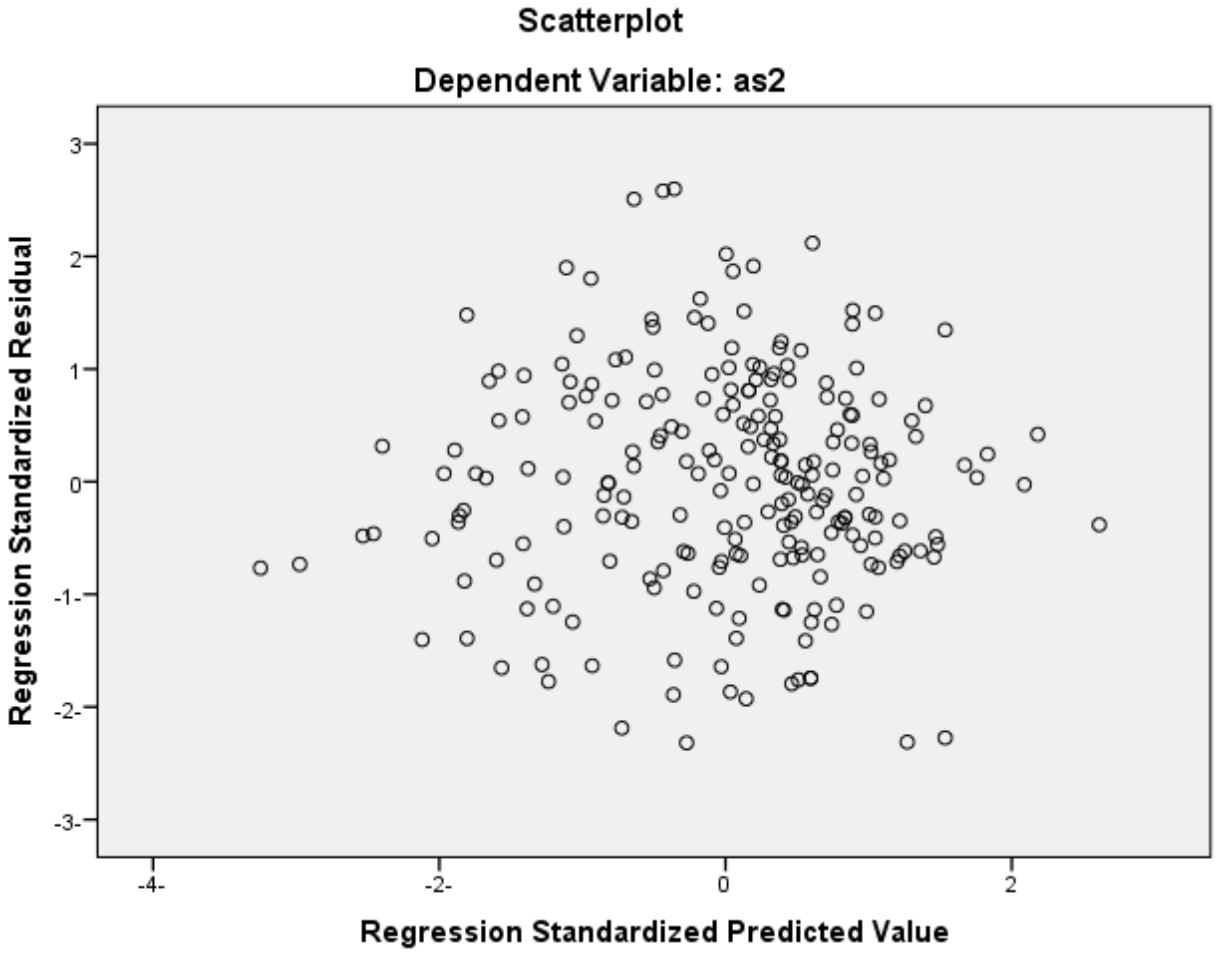

Figure 2: **Standardized Residual Verses the Regression Standardized Predicted Value**

Appendix A

IRB Approval

THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE UT
KNOXVILLE
Office of Research & Engagement
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)

1534 White Ave.
Knoxville, TN 37996-1529
865-974-7697
fax 865-974-7400

May 2, 2013

IRB#: 9171 B

Title: Acculturative stress and social support among Arab immigrant adolescents in East Tennessee

Ayat Nashwan	Stan L. Bowie
Social Work	Social Work
711 Morrison Way, #214	326 Henson Hall
Knoxville, TN 37919	Campus - 3333

Your project listed above has been reviewed and granted IRB approval under expedited review.

This approval is good for a period ending one year from the date of this letter. Please make timely submission of renewal or prompt notification of project termination (see item #3 below).

Responsibilities of the investigator during the conduct of this project include the following:

1. To obtain prior approval from the Committee before instituting any changes in the project.

2. If signed consent forms are being obtained from subjects, they must be stored for at least three years following completion of the project.

3. To submit a Form D to report changes in the project or to report termination at 12-month or less intervals.

The Committee wishes you every success in your research endeavor. This office will send you a renewal notice (Form R) on the anniversary of your approval date.

Sincerely,

Glenn Graber
Chair, Institutional Review Board

Enclosure

Big Orange. Big Ideas.

Appendix B

Letter of Support

MUSLIM COMMUNITY KNOXVILLE

P.O. Box 51511 * Knoxville, TN * 37950-1511
865.637.8172 * directors@muslimknoxville.org

Dear Parents and Families of the MCK:

The MCK is requesting your assistance with a research project that is very important to the Arab American community in Knoxville and East Tennessee. Ayat Nashwan, a doctoral student at the University of Tennessee, is conducting a study that examines (1) how Arab American youth are affected by culture-related stress; and, (2) How and where they find social support to manage any stress they may experience related to living in American culture. We fully support her efforts with this study. Her study will benefit the Arab American community by helping us better understand what culture-related stressful situations Arab American children and adolescents may be experiencing. It will also help MCK and other social service agencies to design and improve programs that improve the lives of Arab American children, as well as improve relationships between young people from different cultures and religions.

Of course, your children are not required to participate with the research project. The MCK administrators and employees will not know which children completed the survey, and they will not know which children did not complete the survey. The surveys will also be turned in without any child's name or any way of identifying them. If you want additional information or have ANY questions about the project, Please contact Ayat Nashwan, who can be reached at anashwan@utk.edu.

Thank you very much!

Appendix C: Student Assent Form (English Version)

Dear Student:
My name is Ayat Nashwan. I am a doctoral student enrolled at the University of Tennessee College of Social Work. I am doing a study that looks at stress and relationships among Arab American teenagers. I am asking you to help me out, and fill out a survey for the study. Your parents have given us permission to ask you to do the survey. The survey takes about 15 minutes.
The study is very important to the Arab American community. It will help me to better understand how young Arab Americans feel about things, and help us to get opinions and thoughts directly from you. This will help us design services and programs that will make life better for young people and teenagers. It will also help improve relationships between young people from different cultures and religions.

The survey will ask questions about things in Knoxville and America that make you uncomfortable, or cause you to sometimes feel stressed out. It will also ask questions about your relationships with family and friends in Tennessee, and cultural or religious organizations where you go to hang out with friends or socialize.

We do not need your name, and your responses will not be shared with your parents. The surveys and all information are confidential, and will only be seen by me and my supervisor from the University of Tennessee. They will be kept in a locked file cabinet in a locket office closet. The surveys will be destroyed and thrown away when the work is completed in June 2013.
Your participation in the study is strictly voluntary. It is okay if you do not want to complete the survey. There will be no penalty. If completing the survey causes you to feel stressed out in any way, we have a youth counselor working with us at the MCK that you can contact and talk to. Anything you say to the counselor is strictly confidential. His name and contact information is:

AbdelRahman Murphy
MCK Youth Director
arm.mck@gmail.com

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me (865-356-0397 or anashwan@utk.edu).
Thank you for your help with this important project!

Sincerely,

Ayat Nashwan
Doctoral Student
The University of Tennessee
College of Social Work
Knoxville, Tennessee

Appendix D: Student Assent Form (Arabic version)

نموذج موافقة الطالب – الطالبة

عزيزي الطالب- الطالبة

:تحية طيبة ... وبعد

أنا الباحثة آيات نشوان – طالبة دكتوراه في جامعة تنيسي – قسم العمل الاجتماعي ... أقوم حالياً بإجراء دراسة حول القلق والعلاقات ضمن العرب الأمريكان المراهقين... وأود منكم مساعدتي في ذلك بتعبئة الاستبانة , لقد حصلنا على إذن من أهلكم للقيام بسؤالكم لتعبئة الاستبانة والتي ستستغرق 15 دقيقة فقط.

هذه الدراسة مهمة جداً للجالية العربية في أمريكا ... وسوف تساعدني في كيفية فهم العرب الأمريكان وشعورهم تجاه الأشياء, كما تساعدنا على الحصول على آراء و أفكار مباشرة منكم , وهذا سوف يساعدنا في تصميم خدمات وبرامج هدفها المساهمة في توفير حياة أفضل للشباب والمراهقين.

تتضمن الاستبانة أسئلة حول أشياء في نوكسفيل وأمريكا تجعلك لا تشعر بالراحة وتسبب لك التوتر في بعض الأحيان, كما تتضمن أسئلة حول علاقاتك بالعائلة والأصدقاء في تينيسي, والمنظمات الثقافية والدينية التي تتواصل اجتماعياً من خلالها.

لا نحتاج أن تذكر اسمك, كما لن يتم مشاركة اجاباتك مع والديك. جميع الاستبانات و المعلومات سرية , وسوف نطلع عليها أنا ومشرفي في جامعة تينيسي فقط . سيتم حفظ الاستبانات في خزانة محكمة الإغلاق و سيتم التخلص منها حال انهاء الدراسة في حزيران 2013.

إن مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة اختيارية , ولديك الحق في عدم اكمال الاستبانة بدون أي عقوبة .. وفي حال شعورك بالقلق , فإن بإمكانك التواصل مع مسؤول الشباب الذي سوف يساعدك في التعامل مع القلق ... وسيتعامل معك بسرية تامة ..يمكنك التواصل معه على:

عبد الرحمن مرفي

مسؤول الشباب- المجتمع المسلم في نوكسفيل

Arm.mck@gmail.com

:الرجاء إن كان لديك أي استفسار أو سؤال أن تتواصل مع الباحثة على

آيات نشوان 0397-356-865 or anashwan@utk.edu

مع شكرنا الجزيل لمساهمتكم في إنجاح هذه الدراسة

آيات نشوان

طالبة دكتوراه

جامعة تينيسي

قسم العمل الاجتماعي

نوكسفيل – تينيسي

Appendix E: Parental Consent Form (English version)

Dear Parent(s) or guardian(s):
My name is Ayat Nashwan. I am a doctoral student enrolled at the University of Tennessee College of Social Work. I am conducting a study that examines stress among the Arab American immigrant youth population. I am respectfully requesting that you allow your child to participate in the study.
The specific activity involves your child completing a survey that asks questions about stressful life situations they may experience as Arab American youth and teenagers living in Knoxville and the East Tennessee region. The survey also asks questions about family, friends, and cultural or religious organizations that Arab American immigrant youth use for social support. The surveys will be completed at the Muslim Community of Knoxville Center (MCK), in a comfortable, enclosed room which will be provided. If you prefer another location for completing surveys, that will be arranged. No one will see their answers to the survey, and no one will be able to identify them in reports coming from the survey. The surveys should take 15-20 minutes to complete.
None of the surveys will have identifying information, and all information will be anonymous and confidential. Only my faculty advisor (Dr. Stan L. Bowie) and I will have access to the surveys. The surveys will be kept in a locked file cabinet in a locked office closet. The surveys will be shredded and discarded upon completion of the study.

The study will be of great potential benefit for Arab American families with children. It will help us to better understand the feelings of young Arab Americans, and what types of situations are stressful to them. It will also help us understand how they handle stress. There will be no direct benefit to you or your child or teenager, but this information will help social workers to design and improve community services for Arab and Middle Eastern families who live and work in the United States.
Your participation in the study is strictly voluntary. If you approve your child's participation, we will also ask them for their agreement to participate. If your child needs help completing the survey, I will be available to assist. It is okay if you or your child chooses not to participate at any time, and there will be no penalty. There are also no foreseeable risks for participating in the study.
If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me (865-356-0397 or anashwan@utk.edu), Dr. Bowie 865-974-0692 or sbowie@utk.edu), or the UTK Research Compliance Officer, Brenda Lawson (865-974-3466 or blawson@utk.edu).

Thank you for your assistance in this important research project!

- Please sign the second page and handle it to the researcher, and keep the first page for your records.

I give permission to my child/ children to participate in this study.

Parent / guardian name:…….

Name of Child/ren: ……

Parent/ guardian signature ……

Date ……..

Appendix F: Parent Consent Form (Arabic version)

Original Translation to Arabic

نموذج موافقة الأهل

الآباء / الأمهات الأفاضل

:تحية طيبة ... وبعد

أنا الباحثة آيات نشوان – طالبة دكتوراه في جامعة تنيسي – قسم العمل الاجتماعي ... أقوم حالياً بإجراء دراسة حول القلق المقترن بالهجرة ضمن أبناء العرب الأمريكان المهاجرين... وأرجو من حضرتكم التكرم بالسماح لابنكم / ابنتكم بالمشاركة في هذه الدراسة.

تتضمن الدراسة قيام ابنكم / ابنتكم بتعبئة استبانة تحتوي أسئلة حول مواقف الحياة اليومية التي يعيشونها كشباب عرب يعيشون في نوكسفيل ومنطقة شرق تنيسي . وتحتوي الاستبانة أيضاعلى أسئلة حول العائلة , الأصدقاء والمؤسسات الثقافية والدينية التي تزودهم بالدعم الاجتماعي. سيتم تعبئة الاستبانة في مركز الجالية المسلمة في نوكسفيل أو في أي مكان آخر بما يتناسب مع ظروفكم ورغبتكم ... علماً بأن مدة تعبئة الاستبانة تتراوح بين 15 - 20 دقيقة.

نود إعلامكم بأن الاستبانات لن تتضمن أي بيانات تعريفية .. وستبقى جميع المعلومات سرية ولأغراض الدراسة العلمية فقط . وستحفظ الاستبانات في ملف مغلق وسيتم التخلص من الاستبانات وإتلافها حال اكمال الدراسة

من المتوقع أن تفيد هذه الدراسة الشباب والعائلات ... وأن تساعد على تقديم فهم أفضل للشباب العربي القادم من عائلات مهاجرة و المقيم حالياً في شرق تنيسي, كما ستفيد في التعرف على أنواع الضغوطات والتوترات المحيطة بهم و كيفية التعامل معها, إضافة لذلك فإن هذه الدراسة سوف تساعد الباحثين الاجتماعيين في تصميم وتحسسين الخدمات الاجتماعية المقدمة للعائلات العربية التي تعيش وتعمل في الولايات المتحدة.

إن مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة اختيارية, وفي حال تفضلك بالسماح لابنك / ابنتك بالمشاركة فاننا سنقوم بسؤالهم عن موافقتهم للمشاركة في الدراسة, وإذا احتاجوا أي مساعدة عند تعبئة الاستبانة سوف أكون موجودة للمساعدة. لن يكون هناك أي مشكلة في حال قررت أنت أو ابنك / ابنتك عدم المشاركة في أي وقت أثناء إجراء الدراسة ... كما لا يوجد أية مخاطر من مشاركته في الدراسة.

:الرجاء إن كان لديك أي استفسار أو سؤال أن تتواصل مع الباحثة على

Ayat Nashwan 865-356-0397 or anashwan@utk.edu

:أو مع الأستاذ المشرف على الدراسة

Dr. Stan Bowie 865-974-0692 or sbowie@utk.edu

:أو مع مسؤولة مكتب البحث على

Brenda Lawson 865-974-7697 or blawson@utk.edu

مع شكرنا الجزيل لمساهمتكم في إنجاح هذه الدراسة

الرجاء من حضراتكم في حال الموافقة على مشاركة ابنكم / ابنتكم التكرم بالتوقيع على ذلك في الصفحة الثانية وتسليمها للباحث والاحتفاظ بالصفحة الأولى في سجلاتكم.

لا مانع لدي من مشاركة ابني / ابنتي في الدراسة , وعلى ذلك أوقع :

اسم ولي الأمر.....

اسم الإبن / الابنة.....

توقيع ولي الأمر..... .التاريخ.....

Appendix G: Student Survey (English version)

A SURVEY OF STRESSFUL EVENTS AND SOCIAL SUPPORT AMONG ARAB ADOLESCENTS

1. Are you male or Female?

_____ Male _____ Female

2. What is your **age**? _____

3. What school **grade** are you in? (Circle 0ne) 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

4. **Where** were you born?

Arab country **(Write name)** _____

_____ United States Other country **(Write name)** _____

5. Are you a refugee? ____ Yes ____ No 5A. If yes, from what country _____

6. Is your mother an American citizen? ___ Yes ___No 6A. What country was your mother born in? _____

7. Is your father an American citizen? ___ Yes ___No 7A. What country was your father born in? _____

8. How long have you lived in the **United States**? (In years) _____

9. How long have you lived in the **State of Tennessee**? (In years) _____

10. What language do you speak most of the time **at home**?

____ Arabic language ____ English language ____Both ____ other (write in)_____

11. What language do you speak most of the time **outside of your home**?

____ Arabic language ____ English language ____Both ____ other (write in)_____

12. What language do you speak most of the time **when you are in school**?

____ Arabic language ____ English language ____Both ____ other (write in)_____

13. How many siblings (brothers and sisters) do you have? _____

14. What is your religion?

_____ Christianity _____ Islam Other (write in) _____

15. How well do you think you speak the English language?

_____ Poor _____ Fair _____ Good _____Very good _____Excellent…

The next section of the survey asks you questions about things that might cause you to feel stressful. Please read the question, and put a check in the box to tell me how much stress it causes you:

	Never Stressful	A little Stressful	Somewhat Stressful	Very Stressful
16. If I do not speak English as well as some of my Arab and non-Arab peers, ***it makes me feel*:**				
17. When Arab **friends** criticize me for being too "Americanized" ***it makes me feel:***				
18. When **relatives** criticize me for being too "Americanized" ***it makes me feel:***				
19. When I have not been treated fairly by Arab people who are more "Americanized" than me, ***it makes me feel:***				
20. When my peers and classmates make fun of me because of my **Arab appearance and language*, it makes me feel:***				
21. When I find it hard to fit in with my peers and classmates because of my **Arab appearance and language**, ***it makes me feel:***				
22. When I sometimes **do not** feel like either a part of Arab culture **or** American culture***, it makes me feel:***				
23. When I do not know as much about the Arab culture as I would like**, *it makes me feel:***				
24. If I do not have as many **non-Arab friends** as I would like, ***it makes me feel:***				
25. If I do not have as many **Arab friends** as I would like, ***it makes me feel:***				
26. If I think that I am sometimes **overlooked** because of my Arab appearance, ***it makes me feel:***				
27. If non-Arab people talk more freely about their thoughts than I do, ***it makes me feel:***				
28. If I do **NOT** know how to act among Arab people who are				

more Americanized than me, ***it makes me feel:***				

	Never Stressful	A little Stressful	Somewhat Stressful	Very Stressful
29. When I do **NOT** know how to act among Arab people who are **"more Arab"** than me, ***it makes me feel:***				
30. If my friends think I depend too much on my family, ***it makes me feel:***				
31. If I sometimes feel that I **do NOT** belong anywhere, ***it makes me feel*:**				
32. When I think that my parents are "**very Arab**," ***it makes me feel:***				
33. When I am asked by people what **race or ethnic group** I belong to, ***it makes me feel:***				
34. If my parents expect me to **do what they want** without questioning**, *it makes me feel:***				
35. If I sometimes feel that as if the U.S. is really **NOT** my home, ***it makes me feel:***				
36. If I sometimes think that some people have **insulting** thoughts about Arab people ***, it makes me feel:***				
37. If I sometimes think that some people have **insulting** things to say about Arab people ***, it makes me feel:***				
38. When I often feel that I am "different," ***it makes me feel:***				
39. When people expect me to **do well in school** because of my Arabian background**, *it makes me feel:***				
40. When Arab people who are "**more Arab**" or more traditional than me have NOT treated me fairly, ***it makes me feel:***				
41. If my parents **do NOT look** like most American parents, ***it makes me feel:***				
42. If my parents **do NOT act** like most American parents, ***it makes me feel:***				
43. If non-Arab people **do NOT** always understand the Arab				

part of who I am, ***it makes me feel:***				

	Never Stressful	A little Stressful	Somewhat Stressful	Very Stressful
44. If I am **NOT** as outgoing as my non-Arab peers, ***it makes me feel:***				
45. If my parents **compare me** to other young people my age about things like obedience, better manners, and having more self-discipline, ***it makes me feel:***				
46. If I am **NOT** able to communicate as well as I would like to with my parents because of our language barrier, ***it makes me feel:***				
47. If Arab adults ask me why I **do NOT** speak Arabic language more fluently, ***it makes me feel:***				
48. If I am sometimes **NOT able** to communicate with my parents because of our different beliefs and values, ***it makes me feel*:**				
49. When my parents expect me to show them respect **NO matter what**, ***it makes me feel:***				

50. How many close friends do you have? _____

51. How much do you "hang out" with your friends?

_____ Never
_____ Seldom
_____ Occasionally
_____ Frequently
_____ Very frequently

52. How much do you talk to your friends on your **cellphone** **or** **home** **telephone**?

_____ Never
_____ Seldom
_____ Occasionally
_____ Frequently
_____ Very frequently

53. How much do you **text** your friends?

_____ Never
_____ Seldom

_____ Occasionally
_____ Frequently
_____ Very frequently

54. How much do you use **email conversations** to talk with your friends?
_____ Never
_____ Seldom
_____ Occasionally
_____ Frequently
_____ Very frequently

55. How much do you use **social media** (Example: Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to talk with your friends?

_____ Never
_____ Seldom
_____ Occasionally
_____ Frequently
_____ Very frequently

56. How much would you say **your friendships** are sources of **social support for you**?

_____ Very little
_____ A little
_____ Somewhat
_____ A lot
_____ Very much

57. How much would you say **your friendships** are sources of **emotional support for you**?

_____ Very little
_____ A little
_____ Somewhat
_____ A lot
_____ Very much

58. Do you have both parents living at home with you?

_____ Yes _____ No

59. How much do you **discuss school and education issues** with your parents?

_____ Never
_____ Seldom
_____ Occasionally
_____ Frequently
_____ Very frequently

60. How much do you **discuss home and family issues** with your parents?

_____ Never
_____ Seldom
_____ Occasionally
_____ Frequently
_____ Very frequently

61. How much do you **discuss cultural issues** with your parents?

_____ Never
_____ Seldom

_____ Occasionally
_____ Frequently
_____ Very frequently

62. How much do "**hang out" with your parents and family** to have **family fun and just enjoy yourselves**?

_____ Never
_____ Seldom
_____ Occasionally
_____ Frequently
_____ Very frequently

63. How much do you see your **parents** as a source of **social support**?

_____ Very little
_____ A little
_____ Somewhat
_____ A lot
_____ Very much

64. How much do you see your **parents** as a source of **emotional support**?
_____ Very little
_____ A little
_____ Somewhat
_____ A lot
_____ Very much

65. Do you participate in the activities of **American social organizations**? (Examples: YMCA, YWCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, Boy and Girl Scouts, etc.)

_____ Yes _____ No **(if your answer to #65 is No, please go to question #69 and continue.)**

66. If **YES**, how much do you **participate in the activities** of these organizations?

_____ Never
_____ Seldom
_____ Occasionally
_____ Frequently
_____ Very frequently

67. How much do you see these **American social organizations** as sources of **social support**?

_____ Very little
_____ A little
_____ Somewhat
_____ A lot
_____ Very much

68. How much do you see these **American social organizations** as sources of **emotional support**?

_____ Very little
_____ A little
_____ Somewhat
_____ A lot
_____ Very much

69. Do you participate in activities with any **religious organizations**?
_____ Yes _____ No **(if your answer to #69 is No, please go to question #73 and continue.)**

70. If **YES**, how much do you **participate in the activities** of these **religious organizations**?
_____ Never
_____ Seldom
_____ Occasionally
_____ Frequently
_____ Very frequently

71. How much do you see these **religious organizations** as sources of **social support**?

_____ Very little
_____ A little
_____ Somewhat
_____ A lot
_____ Very much

72. How much do you see these **religious organizations** as sources of **emotional support**?

_____ Very little
_____ A little
_____ Somewhat
_____ A lot
_____ Very much

73. Do you participate in any **Arab cultural activities**? (Examples: Arab Association, MCK Center, school activities, etc.)

_____ Yes _____ No **(if your answer to #73 is No, please stop here.**

74. If **YES**, how much do you **participate** with these **Arab cultural activities**?

_____ Never
_____ Seldom
_____ Occasionally
_____ Frequently
_____ Very frequently

75. How much do you see these **Arab cultural activities** as sources of **social support**?

_____ Very little
_____ A little
_____ Somewhat
_____ A lot
_____ Very much

76. How much do you see these **Arab cultural activities** as sources of **emotional support**?

_____ Very little
_____ A little
_____ Somewhat

_____ A lot
_____ Very much

Thank you for your support!

Appendix H: Student Survey (Arabic version)

Original to Arabic Translation

استبانة الأحداث المقلقة و الدعم الاجتماعي ضمن المراهقين العرب في شرق ولاية تنيسي (النسخة العربية)

1- هل أنت ذكر أم أنثى؟
ذكر_____ أنثى _____

2- ما هو عمرك؟ _____

3- في أي صف أنت الان ؟ (اختر واحد)
4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

4- أين ولدت ؟
دولة عربية (اكتب الاسم) _____ الولايات المتحدة _____دولة أخرى _____

5- هل أنت لاجئ ؟ نعم _____ لا _____ 5 أ إذا كانت الإجابة (نعم) من أي دولة ؟_____

6- هل والدتك مواطنة أمريكية ؟ نعم _____لا_____ 6 أ ما هي الدولة التي ولدت فيها والدتك ؟ _____

7- هل والدك مواطن أمريكي ؟ نعم _____لا_____ 7 أ ما هي الدولة التي ولد فيها والدك ؟ _____

8- ما هو طول المدة التي عشتها في الولايات المتحدة ؟ (بالسنوات) _____

9- ما هو طول المدة التي عشتها في ولاية تنيسي ؟ (بالسنوات)_____

10- ما هي اللغة التي تتحدثها معظم الوقت في البيت ؟
اللغة العربية _____اللغة الإنجليزية _____كلاهما _____ لغة أخرى (اذكرها)_____

11- ما هي اللغة التي تتحدثها معظم الوقت خارج البيت ؟
اللغة العربية _____اللغة الإنجليزية _____ كلاهما _____ لغة أخرى (اذكرها)_____

12- ما هي اللغة التي تتحدثها معظم الوقت عندما تكون في المدرسة؟
اللغة العربية _____اللغة الإنجليزية _____ كلاهما _____ لغة أخرى (اذكرها)_____

13- كم هو عدد أشقائك (إخوة وأخوات) ؟ _____

14- ما هي ديانتك ؟
المسيحية _____ الإسلام _____ أخرى (اذكرها)_____

15- كيف تعتقد مدى طلاقة تحدثك باللغة الإنجليزية ؟

ضعيف _____ متوسط_____ جيد_____ جيد جداً _____ ممتاز _____

القسم التالي من الاستبانة يتضمن أسئلة حول أشياء قد تجعلك تشعر بالقلق. الرجاء قراءة الأسئلة ووضع إشارة في المربع الذي يدل على مقدار القلق

.

	غير قلق أبداً	قلق قليلاً	قلق إلى حد ما	قلق جداً
16-إذا لم أتحدث اللغة الانجليزية مثل أقراني من العرب وغير العرب فإنني أشعر:				
17- عندما ينتقدني أصدقائي العرب ويصفوني بأني " متـأمرك " جداً فإنني أشعر:				
18- عندما ينتقدني أقاربي ويصفوني بأني " متـأمرك " جداً فإنني أشعر:				
19- عندما لا يتم معاملتي بشكل عادل من العرب الذين يعتبرون متأمركين أكثر مني فإني أشعر:				
20- عندما يقوم أقراني ورفاق صفي بالاستهزاء بي بسبب مظهري ولغتي فإنني أشعر:				
21- عندما أشعر بأنه من الصعب علي الانسجام مع أقراني ورفاق صفي بسبب مظهري ولغتي فإنني أشعر:				
22- عندما لا أشعر في بعض الأحيان بأنني جزء من الثقافة العربية أو الثقافة الأمريكية فإنني أشعر:				
23- عندما لا أعرف كثيراً عن الثقافة العربية كما أود أن أعرف فإن هذا يجعلني أشعر:				
24-عندما لا يكون لدي عدد من الأصدقاء غير العرب .. كما أود أن يكون فإنني أشعر :				
25 - عندما لا يكون لدي عدد من الأصدقاء العرب .. كما أود أن يكون فإنني أشعر:				
26-عندما أعتقد بأنني ملفت للأنظار بسبب مظهري العربي فإنني أشعر:				
27-عندما يتحدث الأشخاص غير العرب عن أفكارهم بحرية أكثر مما أفعل فإن ذلك يجعلني أشعر:				

28-عندما لا أعرف كيف أتصرف ضمن الأشخاص المتأمركين أكثر مني فإنني أشعر:				
29-عندما لا أعرف كيف أتصرف ضمن الأشخاص الذين هم عرب أكثر مني فإنني أشعر:				
30-عندما يعتقد أصدقائي بأنني أعتمد بشكل كبير على عائلتي فإنني أشعر:				
31- عندما أشعرفي بعض الأحيان بأنني لا أنتمي إلى أي مكان .. فإنني أشعر:				
32- عندما أفكر بأن والداي متمسكين بالثقافة العربية بشكل كبير فإنني أشعر:				
33-عندما يسألني الناس عن العرق او الجماعة الإثنية التي أنتمي إليها فإنني أشعر:				
34- عندما يتوقع مني والداي القيام بما يريدون بدون أي سؤال مني فإن ذلك يجعلني أشعر:				
35-عندما أشعر في بعض الأحيان وكأن الولايات المتحدة ليست وطني فإنني أشعر:				
36-عندما أفكر أحياناً بأن بعض الناس لديهم أفكار مهينة عن الأشخاص العرب فإنني أشعر:				

	غير قلق أبداً	قلق قليلاً	قلق إلى حد ما	قلق جداً
37-عندما أفكر أحياناً بأن بعض الناس لديهم أشياء مهينة يقولونها عن الأشخاص العرب فإنني أشعر:				
38-عندما أشعر أحياناً بأنني مختلف .. فإنني أشعر:				
39-عندما يتوقع مني الناس أن يكون أدائي في المدرسة على أحسن حال لأنني من أصول عربية .. فإنني اشعر:				
40-عندما يعاملني الأشخاص العرب أو الأكثر تمسكاً بالتقاليد العربية بصورة غير عادلة .. فإنني أشعر:				
41- إذا لم يبدو والداي مثل الأباء الأمريكيين فإن هذا يجعلني أشعر:				
42-إذا لم يتصرف والداي مثل الأباء الأمريكيين فإن هذا يجعلني أشعر:				
43-إذا لم يفهم الأشخاص غير العرب الجزء المتعلق بكوني عربياً .فإنني أشعر:				
44-إذا لم أكن ودياً مثل أقراني من غير العرب فإنني أشعر:				
45-عندما يقارني أهلي بأقراني الذين هم في عمري في أمور مثل الطاعة , الأخلاق, تـأديب الذات, فإن ذلك يجعلني أشعر:				
46-عندما أشعر بأنني لست قادراً على التواصل مع والداي كما أود بسبب حاجز اللغة .. فإنني أشعر:				
47-عندما يسألني العرب البالغين لماذا لا أتحدث اللغة العربية بشكل أكثر طلاقة فإنني أشعر:				
48- إذا كنت أحياناً غير قادر على التواصل مع والداي بسبب اختلاف المعتقد و القيم ... فإنني أشعر				
49- عندما يتوقع مني والداي أن أظهر لهم الاحترام ..بغض النظر عن أي شيء فإنني أشعر:				

50- كم صديق حميم لديك ؟ _____

51- ما هو مقدار الوقت الذي تقضيه مع أصدقائك ؟
أبدا (لا أقضي أي وقت) _____
نادراً _____
بعض الأحيان _____
بشكل متكرر _____
بشكل متكرر جدا _____

52- ما هو مقدار الوقت الذي تتحدث فيه مع أصدقائك عبر الخلوي أو هاتف المنزل ؟
أبدا (لا أقضي أي وقت) _____
نادراً _____
بعض الأحيان _____
بشكل متكرر _____
بشكل متكرر جدا _____

53- ما هو مقدار الوقت الذي تقضيه في إرسال رسائل هاتفية للأصدقاء ؟
أبدا (لا أقضي أي وقت) _____
نادراً _____
بعض الأحيان _____
بشكل متكرر _____
بشكل متكرر جدا _____

54- ما هو مقدار الوقت الذي تقضيه في محادثات عبر الإيميل مع أصدقائك ؟
أبدا (لا أقضي أي وقت) _____
نادراً _____
بعض الأحيان _____
بشكل متكرر _____
بشكل متكرر جدا _____

55- ما هو مقدار الوقت الذي تقضيه في استخدام الإعلام الاجتماعي (الفيس بوك , تويتر, الخ) للتحدث مع أصدقائك ؟
أبدا (لا أقضي أي وقت) _____
نادراً _____
بعض الأحيان _____
بشكل متكرر _____
بشكل متكرر جدا _____

56- إلى أي حد تستطيع القول بأن صداقاتك مصدر للدعم الاجتماعي بالنسبة لك ؟
قليل جدا _____
قليل _____
إلى حد ما _____
كثير _____
كثير جدا _____

57- إلى أي حد تستطيع القول بأن صداقاتك مصدر للدعم العاطفي بالنسبة لك ؟
قليل جدا _____
قليل _____
إلى حد ما _____
كثير _____
كثير جدا _____

58- هل يتواجد كلا والديك للعيش معك في نفس البيت ؟
نعم _____ لا_____

59- ما هو مقدار الوقت الذي تقضيه في النقاش مع والديك حول قضايا المدرسة والتعليم ؟
أبدا (لا أقضي أي وقت) _____
نادراً_____
بعض الأحيان _____
بشكل متكرر_____
بشكل متكرر جدا_____

60- ما هو مقدار الوقت الذي تقضيه في النقاش مع والديك حول قضايا البيت والعائلة ؟
أبدا (لا أقضي أي وقت) _____
نادراً_____
بعض الأحيان _____
بشكل متكرر_____
بشكل متكرر جدا_____

61- ما هو مقدار الوقت الذي تقضيه في النقاش مع والديك حول القضايا الثقافية ؟
أبدا (لا أقضي أي وقت) _____
نادراً_____
بعض الأحيان _____
بشكل متكرر_____
بشكل متكرر جدا_____

62- ما هو مقدار الوقت الذي تقضيه في مع والديك والعائلة للحصول على المرح و لإسعاد أنفسكم ؟
أبدا (لا أقضي أي وقت) _____
نادراً_____
بعض الأحيان _____
بشكل متكرر_____
بشكل متكرر جدا_____

63- كيف ترى والديك كمصدر للدعم الاجتماعي بالنسبة لك ؟
قليل جدا _____
قليل _____
إلى حد ما _____
كثير _____
كثير جدا_____

64- كيف ترى والديك كمصدر للدعم العاطفي بالنسبة لك ؟
قليل جدا _____
قليل _____
إلى حد ما _____
كثير _____
كثير جدا_____

65- هل تشارك في نشاطات المنظمات الاجتماعية الأمريكية ؟ (مثل نوادي الأولاد والفتيات , الكشافة ... الخ)
نعم _____ لا _____(إذا كانت الإجابة على السؤال 65 (لا) .. الرجاء الانتقال إلى سؤال 69 مباشرة)

66- إذا أجبت بنعم, ما هو مقدار الوقت الذي تقضيه في أنشطة هذه المنظمات ؟
أبدا (لا أقضي أي وقت) _____
نادراً _____
بعض الأحيان _____
بشكل متكرر _____
بشكل متكرر جدا _____

67- كيف ترى مشاركتك مع المنظمات الاجتماعية الأمريكية كمصدر من مصادر الدعم الاجتماعي بالنسبة لك ؟
قليل جدا _____
قليل _____
إلى حد ما _____
كثير _____
كثير جدا _____

68- كيف ترى مشاركتك مع المنظمات الاجتماعية الأمريكية كمصدر من مصادر الدعم العاطفي بالنسبة لك ؟
قليل جدا _____
قليل _____
إلى حد ما _____
كثير _____
كثير جدا _____

69- هل تشارك في أي نشاطات مع أي منظمات دينية ؟
نعم _____ لا _____(إذا كانت الإجابة على السؤال 69 (لا) .. الرجاء الانتقال إلى سؤال 73 مباشرة)

70- إذا أجبت بنعم, ما هو مقدار الوقت الذي تقضيه في أنشطة هذه المنظمات الدينية ؟
أبدا (لا أقضي أي وقت) _____
نادراً _____
بعض الأحيان _____
بشكل متكرر _____
بشكل متكرر جدا _____

71- كيف ترى مشاركتك مع المنظمات الدينية كمصدر من مصادر الدعم الاجتماعي بالنسبة لك ؟
قليل جدا _____
قليل _____
إلى حد ما _____
كثير _____
كثير جدا _____

72- كيف ترى مشاركتك مع المنظمات الدينية كمصدر من مصادر الدعم العاطفي بالنسبة لك ؟
قليل جدا _____
قليل _____
إلى حد ما _____
كثير _____
كثير جدا _____

73- هل تشارك في أي نشاطات ثقافية عربية ؟(مثل : المؤسسات العربية , المجتمع المسلم - نوكسفيل, النشاطات المدرسية)
نعم _____ لا _____(إذا كانت الإجابة على السؤال 73 (لا) فالرجاء التوقف هنا.

74- إذا أجبت بنعم, ما هو مقدار الوقت الذي تقضيه في هذه النشاطات الثقافية العربية ؟

أبدا (لا أقضي أي وقت) _____

نادراً _____

بعض الأحيان _____

بشكل متكرر _____

بشكل متكرر جدا _____

75- كيف ترى مشاركتك في هذه النشاطات الثقافية العربية كمصدر من مصادر الدعم الاجتماعي بالنسبة لك ؟

قليل جدا _____

قليل _____

إلى حد ما _____

كثير _____

كثير جدا _____

76- كيف ترى مشاركتك في هذه النشاطات الثقافية العربية كمصدر من مصادر الدعم العاطفي بالنسبة لك ؟

قليل جدا _____

قليل _____

إلى حد ما _____

كثير _____

كثير جدا _____

شكراً على دعمكم

VITA

Ayat Nashwan is the first woman from Jordan to gain PhD in social work from United States. She graduated with Bachelor and Master degrees of Sociology from the University of Jordan in 2005 and 2008. Ayat worked as a school social worker for four years and Instructor for Sociology, Arabic - Islamic civilization, and History in Jordan. Her primary field of research interest is social work practice across the lifespan with Arab American, Muslim, and Middle Eastern immigrant families and communities. Her second area of interest is acculturative stress and sources of social support among Arab American children and adolescents in United States. She presented in many local and international conferences.