Graduate School Form 30
Updated 1/15/2015

PURDUE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL
Thesis/Dissertation Acceptance

This is to certify that the thesis/dissertation prepared

By Kadriye El-Atwani

Entitled
Cultivating Multicultural Education in Islamic Schools in the U.S.: Teachers' Perspectives about Diversity in Islamic Schools

For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Is approved by the final examining committee:

JoAnn Phillion
Chair

Anatoli Rapoport

Ayse Ciftci

Suniti Sharma

To the best of my knowledge and as understood by the student in the Thesis/Dissertation Agreement, Publication Delay, and Certification Disclaimer (Graduate School Form 32), this thesis/dissertation adheres to the provisions of Purdue University's "Policy of Integrity in Research" and the use of copyright material.

Approved by Major Professor(s): JoAnn Phillion

Approved by: Phillip VanFossen 5/1/2015

Head of the Departmental Graduate Program Date

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

CULTIVATING MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION IN ISLAMIC SCHOOLS IN THE U.S.: TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES ABOUT DIVERSITY IN ISLAMIC SCHOOLS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty

of

Purdue University

by

Kadriye El-Atwani

In Partial Fulfillment Of the

Requirements for the Degree

of

Doctor of Philosophy

August 2015

Purdue University

West Lafayette, Indiana

المنارة للاستشارات

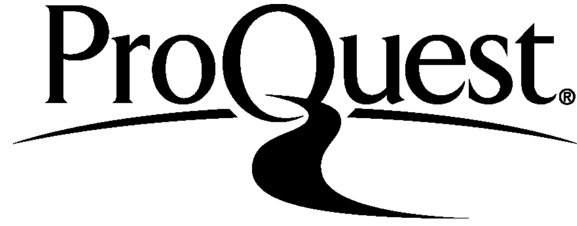
www.manaraa.com

ProQuest Number: 3735801

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS
The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript
and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed,
a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 3735801

Published by ProQuest LLC (2015). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.
This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

At the end of any journey, you must thank those who helped you to make your dreams come true.

First and most importantly, I must thank all six Islamic school teachers who participated in my research for spending their precious time to discuss their experiences and knowledge. Without their valuable input, this study would never have been possible.

It is hard to reveal how much I am indebted to my academic adviser Professor JoAnn Phillion. With her friendly character, stimulating ideas, encouragement, excellent personal guidance, good company and extreme support, I could finish my PhD degree with a successful dissertation and also have several first author publications. I also would like to thank my committee members, Dr. Anatoli Rapoport, Dr. Ayse Ciftci, and Dr. Suniti Sharma, whose corrections and comments enabled the completion of this study.

I am also deeply thankful to my editor Ms. Amelia Chesley. She is an excellent editor who spent a considerable amount of time to edit my chapters. I appreciate all that she has done for me during the past five months.

I would like to express my thankfulness to the staff members of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction in the College of Education at Purdue University.

I would like to express my warm thankfulness and warm feelings to my family. I thank my sisters for their valuable and great support, and I want to acknowledge and thank my father and mother for teaching me morals, values, and love of learning and guiding my life continuously with their love.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Many lovely thanks to my husband, Dr. Osman El-Atwani. I would never have completed this dissertation without his encouragement.

Last but not least, I wish to thank my little angels, Ruwaida and Kenan, for being the sunshine and source of power for my life. I hope that one day they will benefit from this research and from whatever I try to teach them.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES ix

LIST OF FIGURES x

ABSTRACT.. xi

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION 1

1.1. The Personal Story Behind My Research 1

1.2. The Need for Investigating Multicultural Education Context in Islamic Schools in the U.S. 6

1.3. Dissertation Outline 8

CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE 12

2.1. Muslims in the U.S. 14

2.1.1. Indigenous Muslims in the U.S. and Nation of Islam 15

2.1.2. Immigrant Muslims in the U.S. 18

2.2. Diversity among Muslims in the U.S. 21

2.2.1. Race...22

2.2.2. Class..24

2.2.3. Nationality..25

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

Page

2.2.4 Gender 26

2.2.5. Language 28

2.3. The Education of Muslims in the U.S. 30

2.3.1. American Muslim identity construction 30

2.3.2. Muslim students in public schools. 32

2.4. Islamic Education in the U.S. 34

2.4.1. Perspectives of Islamic Education 36

2.5. Islamic Schools in the U.S 43

2.5.1. Educational Issues in Islamic Schools in North America 45

2.6. Multicultural Religious Education 48

2.7. Teacher Education and Islamic Schools 51

2.8. Conclusion 53

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK 57

3.1. Research Design 57

3.1.1.Research Paradigm 57

3.1.2. The Transformation Approach in Multicultural Education 58

3.1.3. Rationale 60

3.1.4. Research Questions 62

3.2. The Case Study as a Research Method. 63

3.2.1. Selection of Research Sites and Participants 67

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

Page

3.2.2. Data Collection Methods 70

3.2.3. Data Analysis 75

3.3. The Role of the Researcher..78

3.3.1. Ethical Considerations 79

3.3.2. Validation..80

3.3.3. Educational Implications 81

CHAPTER 4. PORTRAITS OF SIX ISLAMIC SCHOOL TEACHERS IN THE U.S....84

4.1. Rania 85

4.2. Sonia 90

4.3. Amira 96

4.4. Salma..101

4.5. Zainab 106

4.6. Amal..110

CHAPTER 5. FINDINGS..114

5.1. Islamic Schools (Theme 1) 116

5.1.1. Funding of Islamic Schools 117

5.1.2. Islamic Education..118

5.1.3. School Rules 121

5.1.4. Parents..123

5.1.5 Teachers 124

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

Page

5.2. Diversity (Theme 2) 126

5.2.1. Race...126

5.2.2. Class...127

5.2.3. Nationality...130

5.2.4. Gender...134

5.2.5. Language...136

5.3. Multicultural Education (Theme 3) 138

5.3.1. School Approaches to Multicultural Education 138

5.3.2. Personal Approaches to Multicultural Education 144

CHAPTER 6. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, and CONCLUSION 150

6.1. Summary of Key Findings and Analyses...151

6.2. In-Depth Discussion of Findings 153

6.2.1. Diversity...153

6.2.2. Envisioning Multicultural Education in Islamic Schools 160

6.2.3. Transformational Approach and Critical Pedagogy for Promoting Multicultural Religious Education in Islamic Schools in the U.S. 164

6.3. Implications and Future Research...168

6.4. Conclusion 174

REFERENCES 177

APPENDIX: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL 192

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

Page

VITA 194

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

Table 3.1. Key Concepts 76

Table 3.2. Examples of Operational Definitions 77

Table 4.1. Participants' Teaching Experiences in Islamic Schools 85

Table 5.1. Cross Case Analysis...115

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

Figure 5.1. General Themes 116

Table 5.2. Diversity Analysis in Islamic Schools in the U.S. 149

Table 6.1. Religious Multicultural Education Analysis in Islamic Schools 167

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

ABSTRACT

El-Atwani, Kadriye. Ph.D., Purdue University, August 2015. Cultivating Multicultural Education in Islamic Schools in the U.S.: Teachers' Perspectives about Diversity in Islamic Schools. Major Professor: JoAnn Phillion.

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of six teachers who have taught in Islamic schools in the U.S. to comprehend the general context of multicultural education in Islamic schools. This study was designed as a descriptive collective case study primarily to investigate how racial, class, national, language and gender diversity were observed in six different Islamic schools' climates and classrooms. Designing this research as a collective case study fostered the exploration of various social dynamics among Muslim communities in the U.S., and exemplified different characteristics of Muslim communities through the six cases. Key findings and analyses have found that multicultural education and its improvement were not promoted effectively in six Islamic schools in the U.S.; which implied that multicultural education in Islamic schools cannot be conceptualized without peeling back the layers of pluralism in Muslim communities. The discussion of key findings and analyses concluded that the contexts of each difference (race, class, nationality, language, and gender) are part of a complex dynamic that depends on the Muslim community, administrator, teachers, parents, and policies of Islamic schools. The experiences and descriptions of six Islamic school teachers, most of whom had graduate degrees in education, showed that multicultural education curriculum cannot be generalized for Islamic schools in the U.S.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

but can be improved through strengthening understandings of critical pedagogy and transformational approach in these school.

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I discuss personal experiences that have led me to conduct doctoral research on the topic of diversity and multicultural education in Islamic schools in the U.S. I explain my personal experiences in two contexts— teaching predominantly white, conservative, and middle class preservice teachers and also living in a small but highly diverse Muslim community in a college town. I also discuss the need for investigating the multicultural educational contexts of Islamic schools in the area of educational research. Then, I summarize two pilot studies which have played significant roles in the design of my research. To conclude, I provide the outline of my dissertation.

1.1. The Personal Story Behind My Research

Going to public schools and a university throughout my educational life in Turkey left me somewhat unprepared for the beginning of my Master's degree at a research-based college in the U.S. One challenge came from my unfamiliarity with student-centered and discussion-based classroom environments. During my entire educational life in Turkey, I was supposed to listen, take notes, and to not share my own perspectives in the classroom, not even in the courses I took for my college degree. The situation in the graduate courses in my Master's degree was completely different. I cannot forget the experiences I had during the first classroom-based course in my graduate career. In addition to the new language, it took so much time for me to get used to a classroom

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

culture where the course instructors open a discussion and expect graduate students to facilitate that discussion. Similar to my learning experiences, my teaching experiences in Turkey had mostly been teacher-centered and had included direct teaching methods that did not promote classroom discussion. With the help of my colleagues and course director, I eventually learned to create classroom environments where my students fully engaged in classroom discussions and expressed their beliefs and thoughts comfortably.

I faced another challenge that could not be resolved as easily as my teaching and learning challenges, and this had to do with how many preservice teachers in my classrooms lacked knowledge about religious diversity. The general profile for the undergraduate students in my classrooms was predominantly white, conservative, and middle class. These students were not familiar with diversity. Although my students were mostly respectful and good to me, there were often interesting questions from my freshman students about my religious identity. For example, my *hijab*—a scarf that covers the head and chest—and my Muslim identity prompted students to ask questions such as: Are you from Iran? Is corporal punishment common in your country? Can you give some examples of how teachers punish students in your country? Do you always put on your headscarf? What do you do if your child pulls on your headscarf? All these experiences guided me toward research that contributes to improving preservice teachers' understandings about Muslims in the U.S.

In addition to my teaching experiences in college classrooms, living in a small but diverse Muslim community in a small town in the Midwest led me to investigate cultural, national, and racial differences among Muslims in the U.S. In Turkey, education is governed by a national system. Since the establishment of a new state, the national

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

education policy of Turkey is informed and established by 'orientalists' in Turkey who hold the responsibility of bringing modernity and spreading Islamic, ethnic and rural knowledge which is outside the '*sphere of modernity'* (Zeydanlioglu, 2008). This type of uniform education ignores the presence of ethnic minorities and provides a school experience that does not address subcultures' norms, histories or values (Sancar, 2010). Being raised in such an environment created challenges for me when I came to the U.S. Since I was married to an Arab man, I was connected to an Arab Muslim community. In the local *masjid* (mosque), all Muslims in that small community practiced Islamic culture, including daily prayers, Friday prayers, *Eid* (religious holiday) prayers and celebrations. However, I observed that the community was divided into smaller communities in accordance with nationality, ethnicity, and culture. For example, most of my Turkish friends who were practicing Muslims were not connected to the local *masjid* (mosque) because of ideological differences. During *Eid* prayers, my Turkish friends went to another *masjid* 50 miles away from their neighborhood. Another example of these divisions was the small groups belonging to specific cultures and nationalities that emerged among the Arab Muslims in that small community. After the Arab Spring, national groups among Arabs also divided into sub groups according to their political views. All these observations and experiences showed me that there is a lack of solidarity among Muslims even in such a small community.

My research combined the experiences that I had in my teaching to the ones that I observed in my community. Choosing Islamic schools as a site to research allowed me to contribute knowledge to both Muslim education and preservice teachers' education in the U.S. Similar to local mosques, Islamic schools were the only places where I could

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

explore the dynamics of diversity among Muslims and then could contribute knowledge to teacher education and educational research in the U.S.

The two pilot studies I conducted in different Islamic schools, along with volunteering to serve as principal in a weekend Islamic school for a year, guided me in my choice of an appropriate and effective research method for my study and gave me an insider's perspective. The first pilot study I conducted, in small a weekend Islamic school in Indiana, showed that teachers who taught Islamic studies, Arabic, and the Quran were not informed about multicultural education and did not necessarily know how to teach Muslim students from diverse backgrounds. The second pilot study was conducted in a full-day Islamic school in New Mexico. I interviewed the school principal, school secretary, and two teachers in the school. Observations in this study allowed me to see the extreme diversity in such a school environment, even one that has only 80 students. Moreover, data analysis in this study showed that the struggles of the school were mainly related to lack of funding, inadequate physical facilities, and limited professional development. One of the teachers I interviewed was American and not Muslim. She had just graduated from college and been hired by the Islamic school in New Mexico. The experiences she had in this Islamic school allowed her to reflect on how the teacher education program at her college prepared her to teach in diverse classrooms. For example, she stated:

> During the multicultural class that I took in my college degree, I did not relate to it. And now I do, and now I understand. Now I think honestly multicultural education in my college really could be improved. Because looking back, that was kind of a joke. They did not give the experience.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

> So, it has changed now completely. It has made me more practical, it has made me really have to focus on what I am doing and challenges me as a teacher.

This second pilot study did inform me about the educational environments within Islamic schools in the U.S., but it also only represented one example. Repeating this kind of research experience in several Islamic school settings would be difficult and impractical, as there were not many full-day Islamic schools in the region where I lived. The nearest Islamic school was sixty miles away. I contacted the school principle of that school about conducting my research; but my research proposal was rejected without any reason. This experience also showed me that gaining access to Islamic school climates as an outsider may not be easy. Therefore, I designed my research as a collective case study to explore different Islamic school environments in the U.S. from the perspectives of Islamic school teachers.

In addition to my initial pilot studies, I volunteered as a principal in a weekend Islamic school. This experience did not expand my knowledge much in terms of observing the diversity among Muslims, but it did allow me to see how complicated it could be to find a happy medium to satisfy parents from different cultures. My Turkish identity and religious knowledge were always questioned by the Arab families and teachers in the school. While I was volunteering as principal, my husband was the director of the Arabic curriculum in the school. I saw that most of the Arab families were not bringing program-related issues and problems to me, but they were informing my husband about those problems, even though I was in a higher position than him. I witnessed that after I turned my position over to a converted American Muslim, and once

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

my husband also left his position, many Arab families pulled their children from the school. My experience as principal in an Islamic weekend school showed that finding an Islamic curriculum that meets all the expectations of Muslims from diverse backgrounds is extremely complicated in the U.S. I also observed that Arab Muslims in the community considered themselves the most fit to direct and guide Islamic schools and local mosques because of their culture, language, and Islamic knowledge.

1.2. The Need for Investigating Multicultural Education Context in Islamic Schools in the U.S.

U.S. society seems to become more and more diverse day by day; this increasingly plural dynamic influences the demands of education. Therefore, educational research agendas that focus on multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching are a priority in many educational institutions and Colleges of Education. Educational issues related to African American and Latino communities have been represented in numerous studies over the years, particularly with regard to the intersections of class, race, and academic achievement. On the other hand, Muslim communities have been studied more in political research in efforts to assist social activism, reforms and policy.

The educational needs of these diverse communities highlight the necessity of critical pedagogy and multicultural education since the 1960's; however, in the 1990's, the terms of segregation, intolerance, and white privilege turned again into the arena of schooling under the slogan of "family values" (Sleeter & McLaren, 1995). Then, the public education system in the U.S. was seen as a sign of modernity, one separated from religion and power. However, the reality of U.S. public school classrooms did not match the intent of the legislation; methods of liberal teaching could not conceptualize the fine

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

line between asserting and imposing a world view (Ahlquist, 1992). As a consequence, minority groups explored their own ideas about their cultures and their own ways of handling their education (Marret, Mizuna, & Collins, 1992). Multicultural education curricula then began to be positioned according to the needs of diverse students. However, meeting the needs of Muslim students in U.S. public schools drew different conjectures than the ones for other diverse students as practicing of Islamic culture contradicted the secular reason of public schooling. The needs of Muslim students have been ignored or downplayed. In response, Islamic schools became an option; these schools are administrated like other religious schools in the U.S., specifically geared toward meeting the needs of Muslim students, parents, teachers and communities.

Characteristics of U.S. Muslim communities have shaped the organization and the structure of Islamic schools. Today, the U.S. Muslim Society in North America is a diverse community including immigrants and large numbers of converts from over 80 nations (Al-Romi, 2000; Haddad, Senzai, & Smith, 2009; Sensoy, 2009). With financial contributions from parents and local mosques, the first Islamic schools in North America were established in the late 1970s (Merry, 2007). The first Islamic schools in the Midwest were established in the late 1980s (Memon, 2009). Thereafter, the number of Islamic schools increased rapidly. Recent research indicates that the number of Islamic schools in the U.S. is more than 200, with student enrollment as high as 60,000 (Haddad, Senzai, & Smith, 2009; Keyworth, 2009; Niyozov & Pluim, 2009).

There are no Islamic curriculum standards that guide the goals and educational philosophies of Islamic schools in the U.S. Usually the local mosques (*masjids*) and their interpretations of Islam determine the schools' pedagogy. Also, the increase of Islamic

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

schools in the U.S. raises the need to consider the structure and the role of Islamic schools related to the highly diverse characteristics represented by enrolled students. Niyozov (2010) explains how Islamic schools in Canada, where Islamic schooling mostly resembles the context of Islamic schools in the U.S., expected to celebrate the diverse Muslim cultures while providing a religiously-based education. Research by Haddad, Senzai, and Smith (2009) addresses the fact that Islamic schools in North America have striven to provide an Islamic education independent of culture, ethnicity, language and politics. As educational researchers, we need to suggest opportunities that give voice to Islamic school teachers to understand the needs and hopes of all Muslim students in Islamic schools in the U.S. Therefore, this study not only aimed to investigate diversity among Muslims in the U.S., but at the same time to amplify the voices of Islamic school teachers and make Islamic schools more visible in multicultural educational research.

1.3. Dissertation Outline

In this dissertation, I use a descriptive collective case study approach. I begin with the history of Muslims in the U.S. and then specifically deal with race, class, nationality, language, and gender differences among Muslims in this country. I then focus on the problems Muslim students face in public schools and explain the rationale behind Islamic schooling in the U.S. Through discussing six Islamic school teachers' experiences about teaching in diverse classrooms and school climates, my dissertation provides information about educational problems and issues in Islamic schools in the U.S. I then focus on an in-depth analyses of the school cases represented by all six Islamic school teachers; these cases reveal details about the diversity and multicultural education development in these schools. The following is an outline of each chapter.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

In chapter one, I discussed how my personal and professional experiences led me to choose Islamic schools as a research site. Then I explained the need to investigate diversity in Islamic schools in the U.S. In chapter two, I explored existing scholarly literature to examine the contexts of multicultural education in Islamic schools. Chapter two was divided into five sections. The first section focused on the history of Muslims in the U.S., from indigenous and immigrant Muslims perspectives. The second section provided detail on the diversity among Muslims in the U.S., with specific information about class, gender, nationality, language and racial diversity. The next section summarized issues in the education of Muslims in the U.S., such as American Muslim identity construction and public schools. The fourth section specifically emphasized the contexts of Islamic education in the U.S.; I explained some of the perspectives on Islamic education, Islamic schools, and issues in Islamic schools in the U.S. The following section elaborated multicultural religious education and the need to improve multicultural education in Islamic schools in the U.S. The next section discussed teacher education and Islamic schools. The last section of this chapter concluded the reviewed literature.

In chapter three, I synthesized findings from the literature review on diversity among Muslims in the U.S., on the education of Muslim students in the U.S., on Islamic schools, and on multicultural religious education. In that chapter, I discussed my theoretical framework, research paradigm, and data collection and analysis. The chapter was divided into three sections. Section one justified the choices of research paradigm and theoretical framework, presented the rationale of my research, and provided my research questions. Section two detailed my research design by explaining my chosen research methodology, participants, data collection process, and data analysis. The last

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

section focused on my role as a researcher, ethical considerations, validation, and educational implications.

In chapter four, I presented an in-depth description and individual portrait of each Islamic school teacher's experiences regarding teaching in a diverse climate. The six portraits created for this chapter described each teacher's case using three contexts: personal and family background, the Islamic school, and multicultural education in general. Each portrait included specific information about how Islamic school environments might be different in terms of school facilities, diversity, Islamic education philosophy, and multicultural education focus. Each portrait also gave details about the personal, familial, and educational background of the participant.

In chapter five, I provided a discussion of my data analysis. This chapter gave a comprehensive analysis of each participant's interview data; at the same time, I compared findings from each interview with those gathered from the five other participants. The data analyses and key findings of this research are categorized under three general themes. Moreover, the sub-themes represented in this chapter provided ways of discussing and determining possible factors that may impact multicultural educational development in Islamic schools in the U.S.

In chapter six, I discussed my findings along with some implications of this study, and the conclusion of my research. This chapter was divided into four sections. The first section summarized key findings and analyses. The second included an in-depth discussion of these findings and analyses, detailed in three parts—diversity in terms of race, class, nationality, gender, and language in Islamic Schools in the U.S.; multicultural education in Islamic schools envisioned via six cases; and transformational approaches

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

and critical pedagogy for promoting multicultural religious education in Islamic schools in the U.S. The third section included implications and suggestions for future research. The last section formed the conclusion.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

"The average American knows more about Islam and Muslims abroad (e.g., in Iraq) than about Islam and Muslims in the United States."

—Samual Rashid

Even though recent fallout events have caused negative racial profiling of Muslims in the U.S. (Kincheloe, Steinberg, & Stonebanks, 2010; Salili & Hoosain, 2014), research in the post–9/11 period has raised awareness about Muslims in U.S. society (Bonett, 2011). Some of this research emphasizes the results of this critical event and its future implications (Abu El-Hajj, 2007; Maira, 2004), while other work highlights why the tragedy happened (Kincheloe, Steinberg, & Stonebanks, 2010). Both types of research have recognized the importance of the historical and current status of the Muslim community in the U.S.

Additionally, education of Muslim students has been highlighted by numerous researchers after 9/11 (Haddad, Senzai, & Smith, 2009; Hodge 2002; Jackson, 2011; Merry, 2005; Sabry & Bruna, 2007; Sirin, Ryce, & Mir, 2009; Zine, 2001, 2009). Some research compares public and Islamic schools documenting why Muslim parents prefer Islamic schools in the U.S. and how Islamic schools meet the needs of Muslim students and parents (Al-Romi, 2000; Sabry & Bruna, 2007; Zine 2001). Other researchers focus on the curricula of Islamic schools and how Islamic school teachers and administrators

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

adopt state standards and secular education in their educational policy and philosophy (Haddad, Senzai, & Smith, 2009; Merry, 2005). Some emphasize the identity development of Islamic school students and how 9/11 has influenced the hybrid identities—Muslim identity and American identity—of Islamic school students (Leonard, 2003). The increase in the number of Islamic schools has become visible and has given rise to educational research in Islamic schools (Keyworth, 2009).

My dissertation explores the perspectives of Islamic school teachers about how they observe and explain diversity issues (race, class, gender, nationality, and language) in the Islamic schools in which they have worked. I analyze the cases of six Islamic school teachers who worked in different Islamic schools in the U.S. Before I discuss my research project, I will explore specific information about the history of Muslims in the U.S.in general, diversity among U.S. Muslims, and the education of Muslim students in the U.S.in particular. I significantly focus on revealing the history, diversity, and context of Islamic education to point out that Islamic Schools in the U.S. have been established to maintain an Islamic environment for educating Muslim students from diverse backgrounds. Meanwhile, I attempt to show that the context of diversity among Muslims in the U.S. does not come only from differences in race, class, nationality, and language; but additionally reflects the history, and the different practices of Islam. My dissertation does not include any connection to how Islam is taught in Islamic schools in the U.S.; but it examines how differences regarding race, class, nationality, gender, and language are contextualized in these schools. Therefore, my literature review does not include ideological differences that represent different types of Islam such as radical Islam,

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

modern Islam, or political Islam. My research considers Islamic education only as a schooling option that aims to strengthen Muslim identity. Therefore, the literature review I present in this chapter provides information about Islam simply as a religion. I have divided this chapter into five sections. In the first section, I provide information about the history of Muslims and general characteristics of Muslim communities in the U.S. In the second section, I provide a literature review that discusses diversity specifically related to race, class, nationality, gender, and language among Muslim communities in the U.S. In the third section, I discuss the education of Muslim students in the U.S., and what kind of educational problems Muslim students face within public schools in the U.S. In the fourth section, I discuss the context of Islamic education in the U.S. in terms of traditional, revivalist, and critical perspectives; and detail also the educational issues in Islamic schools in the U.S. In the final section, I discuss the literature in multicultural religious education to highlight the role of religious schools in developing multicultural societies, and cultivating multicultural education understanding of pre-service teachers.

2.1. Muslims in the U.S.

Reviewed literature demonstrates that the Muslim community in the U.S. is divided into two major groups: the indigenous Muslim community and the immigrant Muslim community (Haddad, 1991; Haddad & Smith, 1994; Memon 2009; Merry 2007; Rashid, 2013). Despite the fact that these two groups share the same religion, Muslim solidarity in the U.S. has not been maintained due to historical, cultural and political differences among Muslims in the U.S. (Haddad, Senzai, & Smith, 2009; Rashid, 2013).

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

2.1.1. Indigenous Muslims in the U.S. and Nation of Islam. Within the sociology and anthropology literature, “indigenous Muslims” refers to non- immigrant Muslims and non-immigrant Muslims’ offspring, which is generally an African American population (Haddad & Smith, 1994; Khalifa & Gooden, 2010). The history of African American Muslims goes back to the 15th century when the first Muslims came to the continent of America, not specifically to the U.S., as slaves (Al-Romi, 2000; Moore, 2007; Rashid, 2013). Ten to fifteen percent of African slaves were Muslim; some slave-owners allowed them to practice their religious beliefs, but most tried to prevent the transmission of religious culture from one generation to another (Rashid, 2013). During the antebellum period, African American Muslims were exposed to racism and oppression in their communities (Khalifa & Gooden, 2010; Rashid, 2013).

The Nation of Islam (NOI) is a black American movement established to diminish the racial segregation of African American Muslims; and to improve their social status (Memon, 2009). Elijah Muhammad is the founder and the spiritual leader of the movement. Elijah Muhammad’s political and ideological appeals are based on the ideas of black supremacy and the unity of black people against the white man (Al-Shingiety, 1991; Rashid, 2013). Elijah Muhammad and his wife Clara Muhammad opposed the public education system in the U.S. which forced African American students to withdraw their life experiences and conceal their African American Muslim identities (Rashid & Muhammad, 1992). According to Elijah Muhammad, in order to create unity, African American Muslims should pursue a type of education that values Muslim identity and

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

history, and curricula that will teach African American Muslims to be independent from white men (Rashid, 2013).

> We the black people here in America, we never have been free to find out what we really can do! We have the knowledge and experience to pool to do for ourselves! All our lives we have farmed—we can grow our own food. We can set up factories to manufacture our own necessities! We can build other kinds of businesses, to establish trade and commerce—and become independent as other civilized people. (Haley, 1964, p. 256, as cited in Al-Shingiety, 1991)

Although NOI's religious philosophy in the time of Elijah Muhammad's leadership included some concepts from Islam such as cleanliness, self-pride and self-determination (Rashid & Muhammad, 1992), Al-Shingiety (1991) states that Islam as an ideology, practice, and social orientation was almost absent in NOI. "The organization did not stress the fulfillment or the practice of any of the five pillars of Islam. The *Qur'an* (Islamic holy book) was present only as a symbol in their temples and was rarely opened and read" (Al-Shingiety, 1991; p. 58).

In 1935, Clara and Elijah Muhammad established the first Muslim educational institution in the U.S., called the University of Islam, where the philosophy of knowledge based on self-improvement and ideal personality paved the way for developing curricula for K-12 parochial schools (Rashid & Muhammad, 1992). By the death of Elijah Muhammad in 1975, the number of parochial schools associated with the University of Islam schools across the U.S. reached 41 (Memon, 2009). In smaller cities, the parochial schools provided pre-school and elementary education whereas the schools in the

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

northern cities such as Chicago, and states such as Ohio and Pennsylvania could afford to offer higher degrees with more comprehensive facilities (Khalifa & Gooden, 2010). After the death of Elijah Muhammad, a change in the educational philosophy of NOI and the name of Elijah Muhammad's educational institution occurred (Al-Shingiety, 1991). The son of Elijah Muhammad, Warith Deen Muhammad, took his father's place but followed the orthodox Al-Islam rather than his father's black nationalist heterodox beliefs (Haddad, Senzai, & Smith; 2009) and renamed the parochial schools as Sister Clara Muhammad Schools (Merry, 2007). While the students in these schools continued to be taught about African American heritage and culture, "their religious education was to become consistent with the belief system embraced by over one billion Muslims throughout the world" (Rashid & Muhammad, 1992, p. 182). According to Memon (2009), the rationale behind the establishment and growth of Sister Clara Muhammad Schools among the African American Muslim community must be understood within an anti-racist and anti-colonial perspective so that the image of Sister Clara Muhammad schools is an example of protest against "colonial powers"—not always foreign—which impose and dominate the culture of white male supremacy in public schools.

While Warith Deen Muhammad led NOI, the ideology of the organization highlighted humanity and peace, embraced *Qur'an* and *Hadiths* (reports of statements or actions of Prophet Muhammad) and became less hateful (Memon, 2009). In 1978, one of the most prominent leaders in this society parted ways with Warith Deen Muhammad and returned to the original doctrine of Elijah Muhammad. This caused internal diversity of belief within African American Muslim society (Rashid & Muhamnad, 1992) and significantly influenced the progress of Sister Clara Muhammad Schools such as

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

narrowing the programs that the schools provided and even closing some schools (Haddad, Senzai, & Smith; 2009). According to Haddad and Smith (1994), the parochial schools of NOI are more organized and established than other Islamic schools operated by immigrants; and Sister Clara Muhammad Schools are more welcoming to the children of African Americans, Latino Americans and American- converts. As of 2010 there were 38 Clara Muhammad Schools across the United States (Khalifa & Gooden, 2010).

2.1.2. Immigrant Muslims in the U.S. Exploring Muslim immigration history in the United States is problematic since not everyone who migrates to the U.S. from Muslim countries is a Muslim (Al-Romi, 2000). Moreover, the U.S. constitution separates the church and the state, so that religious information is not taken by the U.S. Census Bureau. Smith (1999) describes the Muslim immigration to the U.S. as four historical periods or waves. According to Smith (1999), the earliest wave occurred between 1875-1912 and brought immigrants from the region where Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Palestine are located today. Smith (1999) states that the majority of this wave was Christian, but there were also a small number of Muslim groups. Even though immigrants of this wave desired to return to their home after having enough money to support their families, they began to settle in Midwest and along the Pacific and Atlantic coasts (Memon, 2009).

The second historical period spans the time between World War I, with the demise of the Ottoman Empire and Western colonization of Arab World, to 1938 (Smith, 1999). Due to the ideological, political, and economic conflicts between Muslims and post-colonialism in the Arab World, a significant number of Muslims immigrated to the West in order to keep their ideologies and political views and to sustain economic status

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

(Pipes & Duran, 2002). They followed the steps of Muslim immigrants of the first period settling mostly in the same regions (Smith, 1999). In 1924, U.S. immigration law implemented a national quota system that limited the number of immigrants. Like first wave Muslims, most of the second wave Muslims did not return to their countries and included immigrants from countries such as Yugoslavia, Albania, Turkey, India, and Pakistan as a result of 1953's Immigration National Act.

Unlike the first and second waves, the third period's Muslim immigrants (between the 1940s and 1960s) settled and lived in urban cities such as New York and Chicago. They were also quite different than previous waves' Muslims in terms of socio-economic status and educational background; most of them were from wealthy families and seeking more educational and professional knowledge. During this period, Islam began to be visible in U.S. society as immigrants in the Muslim communities built mosques in Detroit (Michigan), Gary (Indiana), and Cedar Rapids (Iowa). Moreover, Muslim Student Associations (MSA) were developed and then were replaced by broader and more centrally controlled Muslim organizations like Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) during this period (Haddad & Smith 1994; Memon, 2009; Pipes & Duran, 2002; Smith, 1999).

During the fourth-wave, from 1967 to the present, Muslims emigrated from Asia, the Arab world, and Africa (Al-Romi, 2000; Smith, 1999). Due to the many changes in immigration law during the Johnson administration, and the requirements of U.S. labor market, this period's Muslim immigrants were mainly highly educated and Westernized (Haddad & Smith, 1994; Smith, 1999). However, specific historical events in their home countries such as the Arab-Israeli War, Lebanese Civil War, and Iranian Revolution also

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

gave Muslims reasons to immigrate to the U.S. (Keyworth, 2009). Until the last decades of the 20th century, emigration from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh was not as significant as that from the Middle East and the Arab World. At that point Pakistanis, Indians and Bangladeshis became visible within the Muslim population in the U.S. These Muslim immigrants were employed as engineers, doctors, and lawyers. Most of the Muslim pioneers into the political arena are from Pakistan and India (Leonard, 2003; Smith, 1999).

Since the U.S. Census does not track religious affiliation, the number of Muslims in the U.S. is speculative. According to Pew Research (2007), the estimated number of Muslims living in the U.S. is 2 million to 7 million. According to the same research, one third of this population is African American Muslims, and the rest includes Arabs, South (Asians Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, and Afghanis), Turks, Iranians, Bosnians, Malays, Indonesians, Nigerians, Somalis, Liberians, Kenyans, and Senegalese, among others. Although it is possible to see Muslims in every state, the majority of Muslims are settled along the two coasts, in the upper Midwest and in major metropolitan areas such as New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Detroit/Dearborn (Moore, 2007; Pew Research 2007). Other than these demographics, Pew Research (2007) gives specific information about the educational level, income, age and gender distribution. For example, it shows that Muslim population in the U.S. is highly educated when it is compared to general population, and nearly half of this population is between 30 and 49 years old.

Reviewed literature shows that the Muslim population in the U.S. consists of numerous ethnic groups, languages, cultures, socio-economic, and political groups. In the

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

next section I will discuss the diversity in this Muslim community from the perspectives of race, class, nationality, gender, and language.

2.2. Diversity among Muslims in the U.S.

Investigating the educational demands of Muslims in the U.S. is a new era in educational research. There are examples of research that compare Islamic education and public education, discuss the educational and psychological needs of Muslim students in public schools, and describe American identity development in Islamic schools (e.g. add in some references). However, there is minimal research about how Islamic schools in the U.S. reflect the diversity among Muslims. The diversity among Muslims in the U.S. usually has been studied more in political science research to assist social acts, reforms, and policy development. The key component of this section is to focus on how the literature about Muslim communities in the U.S. informs us about the diversity among U.S. Muslims; and how this literature can be interpreted to conceptualize multicultural education in Islamic schools in the U.S.

Islam is expected to be the second largest religion in the U.S. during the twenty first century (Huda, 2009). As I stated in the previous section, thirty five percent of this population is African American (Huda, 2009; Rashid, 2013), while the remaining population includes a broad spectrum of immigrants (from first through second-third generations of citizens), ethnicities/races (Latinos, Caucasions, Asians, etc.) and sects (*shi'aa, sunni, sufi, etc*). What binds these millions of individuals are the fundamentals of Islam-called the five pillars- which include 1) Testimony (*Shahadah)*—to testify that

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

there is nothing worthy of worship except *Allah* (God), and Muhammad is the messenger of *Allah* (God); 2) Daily prayers (*Salah)*—ritual prayers at five different times through the day; 3) Fasting (*Siyam)*—to fast during the holy month, Ramadan, from sunrise till sunset; 4) Alms giving (*Zakat)*—to pay compulsory tax which is distributed in the community to support impoverished Muslims; and, 5) Pilgrimage (*Hajj)*—to perform a journey to Mecca at least once in a life time when physical and financial requirements allow. Despite the centrality of these core beliefs, the actual day-to- date practices of Muslims often vary widely according to ethnicity, region and religious/ political views (Afridi, 2002; El-Haj 2002; Emerick, 1999; Haddad 1991; Haddad & Lummis, 1987; Sanjakdar, 2011; Rashid, 2013). Considerable research in different research areas shows that different practices of Islam, different values about family, modesty, morality, nutrition, and conflicts between religious and political identities, can often cause U.S. Muslim communities to divide into small social networks that share similar cultures, languages, practices, and political views. The following part of this section emphasizes the literature review which investigates race, class, and nationality diversity among Muslim communities in the U.S.

2.2.1. Race. Although the terminology of "indigenous Muslims" in the U.S. means non-immigrant Muslims and includes African Americans, Latinos and Caucasian converts, it is mostly used for African Americans. The anthropological study of Haddad and Smith (1994) points out that the tension between African American Muslim community and immigrant Muslim community goes back to time when immigrant Muslims build mosques that reflect their culture and language during 1960s; this situation

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

excluded black Muslims to have their own mosques (or temples), and imams. The history of black Muslims in the U.S. is ignored by most immigrant Muslims, and black Muslims in the U.S. are profiled as "converts" and less religious although their history in America goes back to fifteenth century (Ahmad, 2012; McCloud, 1995; Rashid 2013). Another common misconception among immigrant Muslims is that Islam has disappeared in the African American Muslim community in the U.S. for a long time, so that African American Muslims religious practices should be guided by immigrant Muslims (Rashid 2000,2013). Another point claimed by Rashid (2013), sheds critical lights on the negotiation of the religious identity and the political identity among black Muslims and immigrant Muslims. Rashid highlights how religion plays a primary role in black Muslims' youth identity development while the second or the third generation immigrant Muslims identify themselves first as Americans. This determination strengthens the idea that a larger number of recent converts come from the African American community in the U.S. Duran (1997) details Muslim identity development among African American Muslims as " Many African- American Muslims prefer to call themselves reverts rather than converts, because some of their ancestors were Muslims so they are reverting to their original faith, not converting to a new one." (p. 64). Although 9/11 gave hope for African American Muslims and immigrant Muslims to defend the civil rights of Muslims in the U.S. cooperatively, Leonard (2003) acknowledges that the racism is the main reason for the gap between immigrant and African American Muslim communities.

Meanwhile, the voices and concerns of Latinos Muslims and Caucasian Muslims are not visible. Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) and Sánchez (2012) report the

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

growing number of Latino Muslims in the U.S. However, like in the case of black Muslims, Haddad and Lummis (1987) and Ahmad (2012) note that the spirituality of Latino Muslims and converts are always questioned by immigrant Muslims and appeared as unauthentic. Ahmad (2012) discusses the attempts of Islamic society of North American and other Islamic associations created by Muslim immigrants as unrealistic as they do not provide sufficient solutions to close the gap between indigenous Muslims and immigrants Muslims.

2.2.2. Class. Reviewed literature states that there is also dissimilarity between African American Muslims and immigrant Muslims in the U.S. in terms of socio economic status (Ahmad, 2012; Haddad & Smith, 1994; Leonard, 2003; Pipes & Duran, 2002; Rashid 2013; Smith, 1999). According to The Muslim West Fact Project directed by Gallup in 2009, the U.S. Muslim population represents highly educated individuals when it is compared to other religious communities in the U.S. However closer examination of socio economic class among Muslims in the U.S. falls again in two camps—indigenous (black Muslims, Latino and Caucasian converts) and immigrant Muslims. For example Kelley (1994) discusses the socio-economic difference between Muslim and African American Muslims immigrants in Los Angeles and profiles the majority of African Americans as working class and rooted in poverty, and immigrant Muslims of Los Angeles as business people. Similarly, Elliot (2006) provides details about the story of *Imam* who works in African American Muslim community, and goes to Islamic Center of Long Island in the immigrant Muslim community to raise fund for his mosque.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

On the other hand, the socio economic status of immigrant Muslims does not draw the same picture for all. For example, immigrant Muslim who came to the U.S. because of civil war and political conditions in their original countries have more vulnerable economic situation among other immigrant Muslims (Haddad, 1991; Memon, 2009; Pew Research, 2007). To summarize, socio economic status lets immigrant and indigenous Muslims in the U.S. live in their own ghettos (Rashid, 2013).

2.2.3. Nationality. Islam is a dominant religion across a vast territory, from Malaysia to Afghanistan (Sirin, Ryce, & Mir, 2009). Muslims from different countries have different ways of practicing Islam and dissimilar religious beliefs (Sanjakdar, 2011). Muslims over 60 nations reexamine their faiths and practices in the U.S. since they live as a minority in U.S. culture (Hodge, 2002). Some Muslims prefer to separate Islam from homeland culture and ethnic trappings; some prefer to establish a life style that melts the religion and homeland culture at the same time (Kelley, 1994). This causes the existence of minor groups within the Muslim community in the U.S. (Haddad & Smith, 1994; Leonard, 2006). For example the collected chapters in Haddad and Smith (1994) show how the Muslim population in North America struggles to define the ideal unity of Islam because the ideal definition cannot be freed from cultural and geographic influences. Further, Bilgè (1994) and Sonn (1994) argue how immigrants' values and aspirations differ between Turkish Muslims and Arab Muslims, even the separation of mosques. Barboza (1994) recalls these mosques as "homesick mosques". Sonn (1994) also provides specific information about nationalism among Arab Muslims and notes "Pakistanis taught their children that Pakistanis were the best Muslims, Egyptians taught that Egyptians

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

were the best Muslims, and so on" (p.286). Cultural and national differences among immigrant Muslims become more complicated as the political views and religious ideology are involved in this context (Kelley, 1994). For example, reviewed literature supports that Sunni and Shi communities—two main denominations in Islam—in North America have their own separate mosques, community services, and schools (Haddad, 1991; Haddad & Smith, 1994; Memon, 2009; Merry, 2005) despite having the same nationality.

2.2.4. Gender. "Gendered Islamohobia" is a form of negative stereotype which indicates oppression of Muslim women in every aspect of social life (Kincheole, Shirley & Stonebanks, 2009; Zine, 2009). There are several studies that include examples of "Gendered Islamophobia" and how experiencing this has influenced the identity development and representation of Muslim women who live in Western societies (Callaway, 2010; Hodge, 2002). Discussion of gender in Islam is a broad and complicated discourse, and is formed according to individuals' religious ideology, political view, culture and the understanding of Islam. However, for this section, how Islamic schools conceptualize "gender" in their policy and school curriculum is an important element to understanding the "gendered identity" norm in Islamic schools.

Due to the lack of knowledge about Islam, public school classrooms in the U.S. do not represent welcoming environments for Muslim students, especially for females. Therefore, the number of female students in Islamic schools outnumbers the male students (Merry, 2007; Niyozov 2010; Zine, 2009). Islamic school environments provide more secure environments for female students as allowing them to wear Islamic dress

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

code comfortably, not feeling like "others" (Al-Romi, 2000). The education in U.S. Islamic schools is adapted according to the needs of students who are " frequently left to negotiate issues of culture and identity between conflicted spaces of school, home, community and even nation" (Sanjakdar, 2011, p. 36). From a religious perspective, Islam informs Muslims about gender roles and differences, but also refers equal rights for both males and females in almost every aspect of life including education (Hoodfar, 1993). Also appropriate gender behaviors are shaped by the pedagogy of Muslim families and schooling (Zine, 2009). Zine's research (2009) focused on gendered identity among Muslim students, where the context of gender is discussed in the narratives of teachers, parents, female and male students in several Islamic schools in Canada. The discussions demonstrated how school policies, informed by religious perspectives, structured the social interactions between female and male students. According to Zine (2009), the policies of the Islamic schools may include some inequalities for female students such as limited availability of school resources (most of the female students and parents complained about how physical education activities were structured for the boys while the girls were in non-structured programs like free play during physical education sessions), the "degree of surveillance placed on girls" (girls were not feeling comfortable when the unwritten school policy was to keep an eye out for them). The teacher's voices in Zine's book also showed the pedagogical conflict between teachers and school administrations regarding gendered issues. Importantly, one teacher narrative discussed how parents' religious understandings made it hard to find realistic solutions for gendered issues in Islamic schools.

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

Reviewed literature shows that one part of identity negotiations that Islamic students experience is gender construction, which is formed in the triangle of family—where religious beliefs are established according to culture and nationality, school—where school policy and curriculum is informed by the Islamic beliefs of school board members/administrators, and society—where they are exposed to sexism and oppression by “gendered Islamophobia” in their communities.

2.2.5. Language. Although Muslims use the Arabic language when they pray; this does not mean that all Muslims speak and understand Arabic. Muslims speak the language of their home countries such as Urdu, Bengali, Turkish, Arabic, Persian, Spanish, English, and French (Niyozov & Pluim, 2009). When the linguistic diversity of the Muslim population in the U.S. is considered, several studies (Haddad & Smith, 1994; Pew Report 2007; Pipes & Duran, 2002; Zine 2009) have proven it to be a reason for the lack of unity among U.S. Muslims. According to Haddad and Smith (1994), preferring to speak the language of home country stimulated immigrant Muslims to have their own national associations in which they can represent themselves comfortably. In fact, national associations of immigrant Muslims went to some degree to have mosques that provide practice of Islam in different languages rather than Arabic. For example, Sonn (1994) notes, “There are linguistic and overall cultural differences. The *khutba* (sermon) at the Turkish mosque is delivered in Turkish whereas at the African American mosque is delivered in English” (p. 280). On the other hand, Adeney and DeMaster (1994) illustrates the perspective of the Islamic Center in Seattle, about delivering worship and *khutba* (sermon) in a combination of Arabic and English, which claims how it is

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

important to have religious knowledge and practice in English or Arabic rather than in Turkish, Persian, Urdu or other languages as this is the only way to have strong American Muslim identity. However, this situation may cause U.S. Muslim communities to stereotype Arabic as a sign of strength in religion as Pipe and Duran (2002) exemplifies, "Because they speak the language of the Quran, Arabs sometimes display an impatience bordering on arrogance toward the Islamic practices of Non-Arabs" (p. 56).

Different perspectives on language diversity also cause curriculum issues in Islamic schools in the U.S. The work of Hermansen (1994) shows how parents of students in an Islamic school in San Diego have different perspectives about teaching Arabic in the Islamic school. While the parents who have a traditional understanding of Islam stress the necessity of Arabic, other parents who have a more liberal understanding of Islam consider teaching of Arabic language as an unnecessary attempt. Therefore, reviewed literature provides specific knowledge on how language diversity among Muslim communities across North America, and specifically in the U.S., plays an active role in the structure of Muslim communities in the U.S. which increases the possibility of observing cases related to linguistic context in U.S. Islamic school.

Besides language diversity among Muslim communities, there is another important issue to be considered in U.S. Islamic schools which is how language diversity among U.S. Islamic school students influences English instruction in other subjects such as English Literature, mathematics and so on, to meet the demands of state standards. Zine (2009) states how Canadian Islamic schools—which resemble U.S. Islamic

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

schools—face some difficulties such as lack of English language teaching materials for ESL students and specialist teachers in ESL.

This section represented the literature review about the diversity among Muslims in the U.S. and illustrated the issues regarding gender and language in Islamic schools related to these differences. Both educational researchers and Islamic education researchers need to know more about Islamic schools and its social structures to conceptualize multicultural education development in these schools. The following section provides detailed information about the education of Muslim students in the U.S. to conceptualize the rationale behind Islamic schooling.

2.3. The Education of Muslims in the U.S.

Reviewed literature shows the education of Muslim students has been highlighted by numerous research after 9/11. (Haddad, Senzai, & Smith, 2009; Hodge 2002; Jackson, 2011; Merry, 2005; Sabry & Bruna, 2007; Sirin, Ryce, & Mir, 2009; Zine, 2001; Zine 2009). Reviewed literature shows that there are two main issues in education of Muslim students in the U.S. which are American Muslim identity construction, and challenges of public schooling.

2.3.1 American Muslim identity construction. Muslim parents are more concerned with developing Muslim identity and how the U.S. public school environment influences it (Hodge, 2002). Identity generally is described as a sense of individuality regarding oneself, group affinity, and social status and individual identity can change across time due to personal experiences and social dynamics (Peek, 2005). Frable (1997) and Howard (2000) emphasize the social bases of identity, particularly gender, racial,

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

ethnic, sexual, and class identities. Although religion is not as central to the field of identity students as race, class and gender (Peek, 2005), Haddad and Lummis (1987) investigated the role of religion in maintaining group identity and solidarity among Muslim immigrants. Muslim parents in the U.S. seek to encourage the development of Muslim identity through their children's spiritual growth and character development. Niyozov and Pluim (2009) and Sanjakdar (2011) discuss that Muslim parents strengthen their children's religious identities by showing Islamic practices and good examples at home. The reviewed literature indicates that the secular environment of public schools in the U.S. represents an example for Muslim students contrary to their family values (Al-Romi, 2000; Abu El-Hajj, 2002; Bayaoumi, 2008). Besides religious concerns, Muslim parents also want to conserve ethnic values. Yahiya Emerick (1999) describes parents' concerns:

> The children are rejecting the ethnic culture of their parents and adopting the American culture they experience every day. The mother and father want their child to be like them; eating kabobs, wearing a *shalwa*r or *jilbab*, speaking Urdu or Arabic and identifying with the customs and ways of the old country with respect to marriage, family structure and social interaction.

Sanjakdar (2011) states that the tension between Western and Muslim identity causes fear among Muslims so that they prefer to stay within the community. Sabry and Bruna (2007) found that Muslim parents' fears, which are based on the political atmosphere and hostility against Muslims after 9/11, cause a lack of involvement in their children's

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

school lives. Salili and Hoosain (2014) state that construction of identity will be more difficult for the Muslim youths who came from ultra religious families than the ones from liberal minded families. For example, conservative Muslim immigrant families in the U.S. may send their children back to their home country or divide their families during teenage years to embrace their Muslim and national identity (King, Nuseibeh, & Nuseibeh, 2014). Reviewed literature shows that both Muslim parents (especially immigrants) and their children experience anxiety and frustration to adapt their religious and ethnic valued to American culture. Salili and Hoosain (2014) explain this situation as:

> Muslim parents feel a religious obligation to protect their children and families from cultural values different from their own. Therefore, their children often experience having to "betray" their parents while they try to assimilate into the majority culture. (p. 42)

All these problems and issues also impact the academic success of Muslim children in their schools. Especially, the students in public schooling may have more difficulty as public schools provide ineffective interventions to adjust Muslim students to the school environment due to the lack of knowledge about the culture of Muslims in the U.S. (Carter, 1999).

2.3.2. Muslim students in public schools. The literature shows that the lack of basic knowledge about Islamic culture causes misunderstanding and negative stereotypes of Muslims students in public schools. For example, the case study conducted by Ahmad and Szpara (2003) illustrates that the achievements of Muslim students in New York City

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

metro area public schools have been affected negatively by the limited knowledge of public school teachers and their classmates. In another study, Sabry and Bruna (2007) focused on the biased curriculum used by ignorant and uncooperative teachers for the Muslims students in a suburban Midwestern city in the U.S. According to Mirza and Bakali (2009), Muslim students can feel discomfort when the school administrator and teachers are unaware of the practices of the basic principles of Islam.

The literature also suggests that the injustices and discrimination towards Muslim students became more visible after 9/11: “While Islamophobia was present before 9/11, Muslim students have long been subjected to racialized treatment; these experiences have become more acute after 9/11” (Bonett, 2011, p. 49). The research studies provide specific examples of how the U.S. public school system shows hostility towards Muslim students and parents. Abu el-Hajj (2007) reports that Muslim female students who wear *hijab,* a veil that covers the hair and neck, not only experience harassment in public schools but are also subject to negative profiling from public school teachers. In a similar way, Bayoumi (2008) discusses the identity negotiations of young Arab-Americans in a hostile environment in Brooklyn. Zine ‘s (2001) study highlights the specific findings concerning the representation of Muslim identity and how it caused negative racial profiling, verbal harassment for religious dress, ignorance of academic success, and low academic expectations for Muslim high schools students in public schools in Canada.

Today, the majority of Muslim students as well as 80-90% of Muslims students in North America enroll in the public schools to pursue their education (Elbih, 2012). Although the environment of public schools may not be welcoming for Muslim students

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

in terms of curriculum and school practice, Muslim parents choose public schooling because of the lack of Islamic schools in the region, distrust towards Islamic schools regarding academic success, and discontent towards strict regulations of Islamic schools (Al-Romi, 2000). Moreover, some Muslim parents prefer public schools, as they believe the public schools in the U.S. help Muslim students to adjust to the U.S. society by providing them with a multicultural environment (Merry, 2007).

Although most of Muslim students are in public schools, Islamic schools are the first choice of Muslim parents to provide Islamic environment, religious education, and to preserve Muslim identity (Badawi, 2006). Recently, due to the increasing number of Islamic schools, some attention has been directed to Islamic schools from the media, public, and academia.

2.4. Islamic Education in the U.S.

According to Memon's (2009) study of oral histories about Islamic schools in the U.S., Muslim student associations were on the forefront of shaping American Muslim identity and informing other people about Islamic culture. In 1963, 75 Muslim students from different colleges attended a meeting at the University of Illinois, which established the national Muslim Student Associations (MSA) to coordinate their activities (Haddad, 1991; Memon, 2009; Mubarak 2007).

Within a few years, the MSA became central to Muslim community activities, such as organizing *Ju'mah* (Friday) prayers in communities that do not have a mosque, organizing community social gatherings for Muslim students and Muslim families, and publishing *Horizons* magazine (Mubarak, 2007). Although in the first years of the MSA only male students were most visibly active in all branches of MSA in colleges, female

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

students and women became more active after 1970 (Memon, 2009). For example, the MSA's women's committee began to establish weekend Islamic school programs; when student numbers became substantial, they started to systematize formal Islamic education (Memon, 2009).

In 1971, MSA organizations were tied to the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA). At first, Islamic schools in North America were pilot projects of the ISNA. One of these pilot projects was in Mississauga, Ontario, and the other was in Bridgeview, Chicago. During these projects, scholars from the disciplines of Education and Islamic Studies discussed and developed a common Islamic school curriculum and policy to meet the needs of the Muslim community (Merry, 2007; Memon, 2009). Despite having difficulties generalizing education to accommodate a diverse Muslim community, the first Islamic school, Al-Aqsa School, started as a full time Islamic school in Bridgeview, a Chicago suburb (Memon, 2009).

The number of Islamic schools increased rapidly. According to a study conducted by the ISNA, there were 49 U.S. Islamic schools in 1989. By 2001, there were 180 Islamic schools in the U.S. (Al-Rami, 2000). A six-year study conducted by Keyworth (2009) shows how complicated it is to ascertain the correct number of Islamic schools in the U.S. for several reasons, such as the lack of sources that keep statistics concerning Islamic schools, and the unstable situations of new Islamic schools. The Islamic Schools League of America announced that the number of students in Islamic schools has increased by 25% since 2006. Recent research indicates that the number of Islamic schools in the U.S. is more than 200, with a student enrollment as high as 60,000 (Haddad, Senzai, & Smith, 2009; Keywoth, 2009; Niyozov & Pluim, 2009).

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Another factor that makes counting the number of Islamic schools difficult is the decentralized nature of Islamic schools. According to Keyworth (2009), some Islamic schools operate without accreditation. Additionally, there is no set of Islamic curriculum standards that would codify and clarify the goals and educational philosophy of the schools (Elbih, 2012; Merry, 2007; Niyozov & Pluim, 2009). Typically the local mosque (*masjid*) practice and beliefs determine the school pedagogy (Haddad, 1991). This close relationship between schools and mosques also results in an increase in the number of Islamic schools (Merry, 2007). For example, while the mission of Islamic schools in the Midwest follows the understanding of *tawhid* which is "normally translated as the unity of God but by extension also signifies the unity of humankind and unity of people and the nature" (Sanjakdar, 2011, p. 37), Islamic schools on the East coast aim for superior academic achievement in light of standards mandated by the Department of Education (Merry, 2007). The spread of Islamic schools in the U.S. also raises questions about the structure of these schools and what roles they play in the education of Muslim students. The purpose of Islamic education for Muslims clarifies the rationale of Islamic schools in the U.S.

2.4.1 Perspectives of Islamic Education. Islamic educational theories and suggestions by Muslim scholars influence the curricula and Islamic education trends of U.S. Islamic schools (Memon, 2009). There is not enough research that discusses critical pedagogy in Islamic schools, except Zine's (2009). However, some theoreticians and scholars support the idea of critical pedagogy in order to build and sustain social justice, tolerance, and mutual understanding among Muslim students. On the other hand, some

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

scholars advocate for the preservation of Islamic values and support traditional Islamic education. Below, I will discuss the perspectives of Islamic education theorists from three distinct lenses—traditional, revivalist, and critical—on the education and roles of Islamic schools in North America

***The Traditional Perspective*.** One well-known scholar who supports "Islamic traditions" in education is Sayeed Hussein Nasr. According to Nasr, "tradition" does not mean something is outdated or only belonging to the past; on the contrary, the traditional understanding of Islam provides important guidance for today's life (Memon, 2012). Nasr specifically stresses the effects of colonial periods in Muslim countries and how colonial powers changed Muslims' understandings of "science" and "modernism" (Smith, 1991). According to Nasr, colonial powers established educational systems that promoted the concrete separation of faith and science, which in turn obstructed the integration of Islam into every aspect of life. Therefore, Nasr sheds light on the importance of "Islamic tradition," which requires a deep understanding of *tawhid* (unity) to help learners connect every piece of information to the *Quran* (the Muslim holy book), and *hadiths* (reports of the statements or actions of Prophet Muhammad) (Memon, 2011). As Nasr received his early education in Tehran and immigrated to the U.S., his educational background is informed by his personal experiences of negotiating faith-based and secularized educational contexts (Memon, 2009). He describes one of his experiences in Memon (2009):

> For several years I went to Christian secondary school in the United States as a young boy sent from Iran, and while on Sunday you would go to

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

> church, on Monday you studied physics like at any other school in the United States, this physics, had no relation to what you were taught on Sunday. (p. 14)

As for an Islamic philosophy of education, Nasr supports the idea of creating classrooms that allow the full integration of theory into experience. He advocates for the structure of traditional *madrasas*—an Islamic educational system from the Golden Age of Islam that articulates Islamic education as a lifestyle—where students live with their teachers and learn the "ethics of knowledge," where teachers serve as role models.

Regarding the general aim of Islamic education in non-Muslim communities, Nasr disagrees with the integration of non-Islamic traditions into Islamic practice so Islam fits into a "modern" context, but he does advocate learning Western thoughts in order to weigh them against Islamic perspectives and decide on integration or rejection (Memon, 2009, 2012). For example,

> If you have a fifteen-year old Muslim boy sitting in a chemistry class, he will have to be taught about atoms, ions, molecule, valences, and so forth. But there are different ways to teach the subject: that is the point. He could be taught in such a way so as to counter and reject rather than accept blindly the statement of the famous founder of modern chemistry. (Memon, 2009, p. 21)

Moreover, Nasr strongly believes that the teachers who work in Islamic schools in North America should undergo professional training which provides knowledge of Islamic civilization, Islamic thought and intellectual tradition, Islamic sciences, and Islamic literature (Memon, 2011). In keeping with this ideal, Sayyed Huseein Nasr currently takes a part in the "Islamic Teacher Education Program" which empowers

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Islamic school teachers to put Islamic vision into practice by integrating Islamic thought into their pedagogy (Memon, 2009).

The Revivalist Perspective. Another foremost scholar in Islamic education in North America who supports the integration of Islamic thought is Ismail Faruqi (Haddad, 1991). He advocates for the transformation of natural, physical, and social science curriculum in Islamic philosophy. Like Nasr, Faruqi came to the U.S. as an immigrant. He brought the revivalist idea of Islamization. He claims that the traditional Islamic education system and construction of traditional Islamic thought had been slaughtered and had thus decayed during the colonial period. He believes that during the post-colonial period, “the solution to Islam revival is the Islamization of modern intellectual discourse in political, social, and natural sciences” (Memon, 2009, p. 196). One of Faruqi’s most important achievements was to establish the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IITT) in 1981. The projects of IITT, like “Islamization of Knowledge Project” and “Developing textbooks for every discipline from an Islamic perspective,” have informed the vision and agenda of Islamic schools founded by immigrant Muslims (Esposito, 1991).

Although the indigenous Muslim community also heavily relied on traditional and revivalist ideology, the most influential philosopher among African American Muslims is Imam Warith Deen Muhammad, son of Elijah Muhammad and the leader of Nation of Islam (Rashid & Muhammad, 2012). The perception of Warith Deen stands apart from revivalist ideology in the way it defines Islamization (Haddad & Smith, 1994). According to Warith Deen, there is no need to integrate Islamic knowledge and secularized knowledge; all knowledge comes from God, so all knowledge is Islamic. The language

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

used by Imam Warith Deen connects people from diverse ideologies to the root of humanity, which is inclusive (Memon, 2009). Although Warith Deen took on the legacy of his father, the founder and spiritual leader of the Nation of Islam, he followed orthodox Al-Islam rather than his father's black nationalist heterodox belief (Khalifa & Gooden, 2010). Actually, Warith Deen instituted several reforms that tie African American Muslims and culture to the universal values of Islam as a religion and a way of life. For example, he changed the movement's name from the Nation of Islam to the World Community of Islam in the West the centers became temples instead of mosques; and the parochial schools connected to the University of Islam, Elijah Muhammad's educational institution, became Sister Clara Muhammad Schools (Al-Shingiety, 1991).

The community of Imam Warith Deen basically defined Islamic tradition to follow the *Qur'an,* holy book, and *hadith;* rather than accepting terms such as "sunni tradition" or "*shi'a* tradition" which would cause feelings of inferiority among the community (Memon, 2009). Warith Deen attempted to build a bridge between Muslim communities in West and East by organizing trips to Muslim countries to visit or study, and cooperating on projects with other Muslim leaders and governments. The influence of Warith Deen was strong in African American Muslim communities until the number of immigrant Muslims in North America became significant. Jackson (2005) states that the religious authority in North America shifted "to the sources, authorities, and interpretive methodologies of historical Islam" (p. 4) after the Muslim immigration waves to North America. From the Islamic education perspective, Sister Clara Muhammad Schools, even today, have been recognized with no presentation of traditional Islam, and

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

more secularized curricula; therefore Islamic schools established by immigrant Muslims adopted curricula which emphasize an Islamization model of education (Memon, 2009).

The Critical Perspective. In the contemporary moment, philosophies of Islamic education in the U.S. or Canada are monopolized by neither immigrant Muslim scholars nor African American Muslim scholars; Memon (2009) argues that today, the most influential authorities in the context of Islamic education and the schooling of Muslim students in North America are convert Muslims like Sheikh Hamza Yusuf (Hamza Yusuf Hanson) and Ingrid Mattson. Sheikh Hamza Yusuf, a California-born convert who founded Zaytuna College, an Islamic College in Berkeley, ranked 42 on the 2012 list, "The Muslim 500: The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims," compiled by the Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre (Sacirbey, 2012). Regarding Islamic education and schooling in Islam, the ideas of Sheikh Hamza Yusuf provide more critical reflections on Muslims in the West and East. Sheikh Hamza Yusuf also points out the importance of equity, social justice, peace, and tolerance (Memon, 2009).

What makes Sheikh Hamza Yusuf different from other scholars is that he does not talk specifically about Islamic education in the United States or West, but he comprehends education as a concept, discussing what "education" and "educated" mean, and looking at how Islam promotes education. One of the conferences listed by Memon (2009) was titled "Beyond Schooling" which Sheikh Hamza Yusuf co-directed with John Taylor Gatto. In that conference, Gatto and Sheikh Hamza Yusuf spoke to teachers, educators, parents and students from different regions of the U.S., not specifically from Islamic schools, explaining why U.S. students are incapable of thinking and reasoning—a fact which is reflected in the international test scores of the U.S. students. Through this

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

conference discussion, Sheikh Hamza Yusuf promoted a practice of homeschooling that does not force all children to think in the same ways. Consequently, homeschooling has become a popular option among Muslim parents. In addition, Sheikh Hamza Yusuf, with the support of John Taylor Gatto, established Kinza Academy to provide homeschooling curriculum and instructional materials to parents (Memon, 2009).

In the context of Islamic and Westernized education, Sheikh Hamza Yusuf argues that Islamic education has been already in the West, it was a part of it. One critique of Sheikh Hamza Yusuf related to critical social consciousness of Islamic education involves the idea that Muslims in the West should practice resistance through active engagement in society rather than resistance through disengagement (Memon, 2009). In response to this critique, Sheikh Hamza Yusuf encourages the critical thinking as an instructional method and conceptualizes education as an effort to "pursue truth," not to "pursue money." He asserts that the ultimate goal of Muslim education should be to teach children and others how to carry themselves in different aspects of social life in keeping with Islamic tradition. According to him, Islamic education should promote self-reflection and self-assessment to apply critical pedagogy.

The reviewed literature suggests that there is no common Islamic education understanding among Islamic scholars, so the roles of Islamic schools remain specific and vital at local levels but not in general terms. Through the literature review, I have found that there are numerous Islamic institutions, Islamic programs, Islamic foundations, and Muslim student associations in the U.S., which helps me understand how conceptualizations of Islam and Islamic education from different perspectives cultivates critical thinking and critical intellectual engagement among U.S. Muslims.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

After I analyzed the reviewed literature about Islamic education, for the purpose of my study I define Islamic education as cultivating Muslim children's mind and souls by providing opportunities for them to see and practice Islamic beliefs, values, manners, and rights which are acknowledged according to *Qur'an* (holy book) and *hadith* (The Prophet Muhammad's words). According to Zine (2009), establishing one center in the understanding of Islamic education would be useless in the diverse atmospheres of Canada and the U.S. Actually, Zine (2009) and Abu el Fadl (2002) argue that misunderstandings of Islam in the West are not only due to extremist people in the West, but to extremist Muslims of the East as well; Zine (2009) notes, "The gatekeepers of Islamic authority have closed the door on critical thought and engagement and have led Muslims culture into a state of intellectual paralysis and decline" (p. 317). In her doctoral research, Zine (2009) suggests "developing a multicentric framework for Islamic knowledge" that focuses on unraveling the politics of faith, gender, knowledge, and identity in Canadian Islamic schools.

2.5. Islamic Schools in the U.S.

One of the misconceptions about Islamic schools in the U.S. is that the education provided therein works against U.S. sentiments (Haddad, Senzai, & Smith, 2009; Jones, 2008; Sensoy & Stonebanks, 2009). This inaccurate assumption about Islamic education gives rise to many more misconceptions among the U.S. public (Kincheloe, Steinberg, & Stonebanks; 2010). For example, Haddad, Senzai, and Smith (2009) states that U.S. society compares Islamic schools with "Islamic Religious Schools called '*madrasas*.'" After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, *madrasas* in Pakistan were presented as schools where Al-

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Qaeda members learned radical anti-Americanism (Blanchard, 2008). In light of this perception, Islamic schools were assumed to be sister schools of *madrasas* schools in Pakistan.

Before looking at the differences or similarities between *madrasas* and Islamic schools, it is helpful to know about the role of *madrasas* in Muslim countries. The history of *madrasas* can be traced back as early as the 10th century when the first known *madrasa* was established in Bagdad (Memon, 2009; Nasr, 2012). Until the Western colonization of Muslim countries, *madrasas* were the most influential educational institutions, offering a religious curriculum centered on teaching the *Quran*, sayings (*hadith)* of the Prophet Muhammad, jurisprudence (*fiqh)*, and law (Reagan, 2000) and providing free food and lodging (Blanchard, 2008). However, during and after the colonial period, the *madrasas* were compared with missionary private schools. This jeopardized and weakened the role of *madrasas* in Muslim countries, "especially when the colonial forces took over the endowments (*awqaf)* that used to fund *madrasas* (Memon, 2012; p. 10). Today, there are about 20,000 *madrasas* all over the world, the majority of which are located in Pakistan. The structures of most *madrasas*—such as those in Egypt, Singapore, and India—is different from original, pre-colonial models. Moreover, *madrasas* have already died out in some Muslim countries such as Turkey (Blanchard, 2008; Memon, 2012).

Islamic schools in the United States do not resemble traditional *madrasas* schools (Haddad, Senzai & Smith, 2009; Keyworth, 2009). It should not be forgotten that Islamic schools in the U.S. represent the education of minorities; therefore, the religious needs of the Muslim minority in the U.S. direct the policies of Islamic schools. According to

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Haddad, Senzai, and Smith (2009), only 1 out of more than 200 Islamic schools in the U.S. is based on the traditional *madrasas* system.

The majority of U.S. society has misconceptions and prejudices about Islamic education, and accuses Islamic schools of segregating Muslim students from non-Muslims (Joseph & Riedel, 2008). According to Jones (2008), Islamic schools in the U.S. are not accepted the way Jewish and Christian schools are. “Many Americans who pass Catholic, Jewish, and Christian schools every day might cast a somewhat more suspicious eye toward a Muslim school constructed in their neighborhood” (p. 135).

2.5.1. Educational Issues in Islamic Schools in North America. Islamic schools provide a comfortable environment that allows Muslim students to practice their religion, but most Islamic schools do not meet all the needs of Muslim students and parents (Merry, 2005; Niyozov & Pluim, 2009; Zine, 2009). The main issue is about funding. Islamic schools in the U.S. do not receive federal or state funding since they are considered private schools. Thus, Islamic schools’ budgets depend mostly on tuition received from families, and partially on donations received from *masjids*—local mosques—and Islamic organizations in the U.S. or overseas (Keyworth, 2009; Memon, 2009; Merry, 2007; Zine, 2009). Having a limited budget narrows the range of educational facilities a school can provide. Schools may not be able to have facilities like science laboratories, libraries, gyms; or the lack of special educational classes (Niyazov & Pluim, 2009). In most Islamic schools, administrator, teacher and staff salaries are also negatively influenced by limited budgets. Merry (2007) sheds light on teacher profiles in U.S. Islamic schools, describing how Islamic schools do not provide teachers with the

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

same benefits as public or other private schools due to economic constraints. Haddad, Senzai, and Smith (2009) note how U.S. and Canadian Islamic school administrators tend to leave their jobs because of unsatisfactory salaries. This situation points toward another challenge: teachers in Islamic schools may not be as qualified as those in public schools, since Islamic schools do not provide the same salaries and benefits as public or other private schools do (Haddad, Senzai, & Smith, 2009). Moreover, many Islamic school teachers are not necessarily qualified for the U.S. educational system, especially if they do not have teaching certificates from U.S. institutions (Keyworth, 2009; Memon, 2009, 2011; Merry, 2005). Muslim parents consider all of these factors in deciding whether or not their children will attend Islamic schools (Al-Romi, 2000, Sabry & Bruna, 2007). Another consideration is educational policy in Islamic schools. Educational policy in Islamic schools is usually informed by local mosques, which are often ineffective in determining the needs of Muslim students who live in a Western society (Haddad &; Merry, 2007; Niyazov & Pluim, 2009; Sanjakdar, 2011; Smith, 1994). Merry (2007) explains the complicated politics in the mosque /school relationship as: "The question of mosque affiliation also continues to be a difficult one for schools. Independence from the mosque means more freedom to organize the school according to the aims of the school board, but independence also brings with it daunting challenges for school budgets" (p. 39). Additionally, Emerick (1999) discusses how the educational approaches followed by mosques create a cultural gap between Muslim parents and their children, explaining how many immigrant Muslim parents set educational expectations for their children according to the education and culture that they had back home. According to Imam (2009), the

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

cultural gap between Muslim parents and their children is mainly caused by the tension between Islam as theology and Islam as practice.

Religious practices in U.S. Muslim communities are more diverse than in cultures where Islam is dominant (Haddad, Senzai, & Smith, 2009). Therefore, unsurprisingly, the curricula and educational policies of Islamic schools in Western countries do not meet the needs of all Muslim parents, nor do they reflect their diverse cultures and religious backgrounds (Merry, 2007). For example, teachers and administrators often ignore parents' ways of practicing Islam and attempt to push students to understand Islam according to the dominant Islamic school ideology as favored locally or, more precisely, as practiced by those members in administrative positions or on the boards of the schools (Haddad, Senzai, & Smith, 2009; Merry, 2005). Since Islamic schools in the U.S. lack connection and association, Islamic education pedagogy taught in these schools depends on the religious leaders (*imams)* in local community. For example Senzai (2009) reports that an Islamic school in New Jersey was closed down because the *imam* did not find the school sufficiently Islamic.

The reviewed literature shows that teachers lack the knowledge and experience necessary for handling the issues of having extraordinarily diverse students (Memon, 2011; Merry, 2007; Niyozov, 2009). Although educational research has recently begun to address Islamic schools in North America more often (Badawi, 2006), a research line focusing on the multicultural educational contexts in these schools is still very limited. Diversity among Muslims in the U.S. and the educational circumstances in Islamic schools show the necessity of more research to investigate multicultural educational

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

context in these schools. Since it is a new area for educational research, reviewing the literature about how diversity and multicultural education are investigated in other religious schools in North America such as Catholic or Jewish schools, is significant. The following section of this chapter provides relevant information about the roles of multicultural religious education and religious schools in creating multicultural societies and cultivating the multicultural educational understandings of pre-service teachers.

2.6. Multicultural Religious Education

Maintaining unity in a diverse society through practices of civic equality, social justice, tolerance, and mutual understanding defines new multiculturalism in the 21st century (Banks, 2006, 2010; Kim, 2012; May & Sleeter, 2010). Citizenship education should be reviewed and transformed according to cultural, ethnic, religious, racial, and language diversity in most nations in the world (Banks, 2006). Kymlicka (2010) has critically discussed the rise and fall of multiculturalism in the last sixty years, and has suggested that sustainable improvements in multiculturalism can be found by constructing a set of public policies that supports multiculturalism rather than considering multiculturalism as a cultural sensibility. The knowledge about Islam and its role in the U.S. should be considered by multicultural education to create social justice and tolerance in society (Bennett, 2007). Exposure the accurate information about Islam as theology will lead the US public toward greater tolerance and mutual understanding (Moore, 2009). Unfortunately, the significance of religion in multicultural education was not considered as central as that of race and ethnicity; most teachers in public schools in the U.S. are unprepared to teach material about religious diversity and less able to understand

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

the needs of religious minority students (Moore, 2009; Nord & Haynes, 1998). Although the number of research is very limited, religion is discussed by multicultural education research in two research lines.

One line of research specifically focuses on why religious education in public schools is important for strengthening a culturally pluralistic democracy in the U.S.; and the other line examines the role of religious schools in educating multicultural citizens. As it is mentioned in previous sections, educational research in Islamic schools is a new area, and finding research studies with a focus on multicultural education is difficult. To have better understanding , I also reviewed the literature on research in other religious schools. One source that helped me understand the role of religious schools in multicultural education is a book edited by Graham P. McDonough, Nadeem A. Memon, and Avi I. Mintz (2013). The book, *Discipline, Devotion, and Dissent: Jewish, Catholic, and Islamic Schooling in Canada,* provides critical perspectives about how faith-based schools in Canada meet the expectations of the secular education system in Canada while negotiating tensions arising from denominational differences among Catholics, Jews, and Muslims.

Moreover, the book offers a starting point for investigating the roles and aims of faith-based schools in raising multicultural citizens in Canada, where recent political negotiations have highlighted faith-based school controversies. More importantly, *Discipline, Devotion, and Dissent: Jewish, Catholic, and Islamic Schooling in Canada* sheds light on denominational differences in religious schools and explores how these differences can be effective tools in teaching respect for multiple views and perspectives. Despite a general misconception that religious schools act as a threat to the celebration of

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

differences, this book demonstrates that religious schools can be fruitful places for multicultural education research. All chapters point out critical perspectives on religious schools in Canada in terms of teaching social justice, tolerance, and respects for differences; however, the final chapter by Avi I. Mintz provides a clear explanation of the role of diversity in faith-based Canadian citizenship education. For example, he notes that the "communal deliberation that results from the conflict of diverse perspectives on educational options can be a powerful source of democratic education, both for a community's children and adolescents and for the community as a whole" (p. 240). According to Mintz, diversity in faith-based schools provides critical thinking and social reproduction rather than replication. Mintz's remarks in this chapter show that Canadian faith-based schools can be practical and fruitful environments in which to practice and reflect on democratic practices and to create democratic citizens—and this in spite of misunderstandings that consider faith-based schools obstacles to social cohesion. In *Discipline, Devotion, and Dissent: Jewish, Catholic, and Islamic Schooling in Canada,* there are three chapters specifically focused on Canadian Muslim identity construction and the struggles of Islamic schools in Canada. For example, the chapter written by Asma Ahmad points out that Islamic schools in Canada should apply critical thinking in their religious education curricula as a way of teaching multicultural citizenship while preserving Muslim identity.

To focus more on multicultural citizenship education in Islamic schools, in another study, Saada (2013) examines the perspectives of Islamic school teachers on the concept of citizenship education and the challenges of teaching unity and diversity while preserving students' Muslim identities. The findings of Saada (2013) show that building a

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

sense of belonging in American society is difficult for social science teachers in Islamic schools; students in these schools do not recognize themselves as Americans, largely because of negative perspectives and Islam-phobia in popular media, which show Muslims as aggressive terrorists. Saada (2013) shows that the concept of citizenship education is more complex in Islamic schools in the U.S. compared to other religious schools in the U.S.; Islamic schools and the students in these schools are often negatively stereotyped and considered enemies of democratic values by general society.

Multicultural educational research and its contextualization in religious schools will be discussed more in chapter 3; this section has generally shown the lack of research considering multiculturalism in religious schools, in order to highlight the importance of my research.

2.7. Teacher Education and Islamic Schools

The previous sections discussed how Islamic school teachers experience challenges when integrating Islamic educational philosophies into their courses. The points discussed above such as the construction of Muslim American identity and negative media stereotypes of Muslims in the U.S.—compound the struggles Islamic school teachers face in preparing their students to maneuver among all these social contexts. Moreover, other struggles may exist like receiving unsatisfactory compensation, lacking standards, tracking state standards with limited educational facilities. Giving voice to the struggles of Islamic school teachers has not been discussed in general teacher education research. However, in recent years, some scholars have attended to how Islamic school teachers should integrate Islamic education with their specialization to

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

provide a meaningful Islamic school education. For example, the Islamic Teacher Education Program provides online courses on integrating Islamic education into school teachers' teaching. The program aims to educate teachers about how to meet the needs of Islamic schooling contexts in Canada or the U.S. The faculty profiles vary and include Islamic school principals, curriculum developers, Islamic Studies scholars, and professors in teacher education or religious education. Three main courses (Islamic Education: Purpose and Pedagogy; Designing Curriculum for Islamic Schools; Implementing Islamic Pedagogy in Schools) are offered by the program. The main purpose of the program, as it is mentioned in their website, is to "make your Islamic school more *Islamic*".

Memon (2011) sheds critical light on the importance of Islamic school teacher education for raising the standards of Islamic schooling in North America; he also discusses how Islamic school teachers should be trained to work in Muslim communities with complex diversity. Memon (2011) shows that teachers in Islamic schools agree that "Islam must be taught with some semblance of balance and sensitivity when addressing cultural, sectarian, and ideological differences within Muslim communities and Islamic history" (p. 293). Another critical analysis which Memon (2011) provides concerns the identity crises Muslim youth experience and how Islamic school teachers should be informed in other educational theories, strategies, and development to meet the educational needs of Muslim students in North America.

> Muslim students are not the first, nor the only, demographic to experience discrimination and marginalization as a result of socio-political circumstances. A teacher training program for Islamic school teachers must, therefore, not simply rely on the Islamic tradition for answers but

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

consider the way existing theories, approaches, and strategies in the field of education can contribute to the development of Islamic schools. (p. 296)

Niyozov (2010) describes multicultural teacher education and Muslim students from two perspectives: 1) Muslim students in public schools or non-Muslim teachers teaching Muslim students, and 2) teachers in Islamic schools teaching diverse Muslim students. The participating teachers' perspectives presented in this study show how non-Muslim teachers make an effort to learn about different denominations and ideologies in Islam, and how Islamic school teachers' knowledge about Islam is subject to scrutiny by students, parents, administrators, and religious leaders. According to Niyozov (2010), teacher education in pluralistic societies should require teachers to "pose difficult questions for everyone rather than play it safe, to examine critically their own beliefs and practices before enabling their students to do so" (p. 37).

Marks, Binkley, and Daly (2014) state that there is a serious gap in pre-service teachers' knowledge about religious diversity. The survey applied in their study shows that pre-service teachers in the U.S. lack knowledge not only about other religions, but also about the First Amendment's stance on religion. Subedi (2006) pays attention to the lack of research focusing on the role of teaching religious diversity to pre-service teachers. Actually, Subedi (2006) highlights how discussions about the concept of religion in teacher education intersect with other critical discussions on topics such as racism, power dynamics, and homophobia; Subedi (2006) also suggests that expanding teacher education research about religious diversity can play a key role in raising culturally responsive teachers.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

2.8. Conclusion

Growing amounts of research in multicultural education critically focus on preparing teachers to work in diverse educational settings (Ladson-Billings, 2000). According to Merryfield (1998) and Sleeter (2008), the great majority of the teachers in the U.S. lacks knowledge of teaching diverse students and has poor understanding of the multicultural dimensions of their students' families and cultures. There is a gap between white, middle-class teachers and the children of "others" who are immigrants, low-income workers, and racial, ethnic, and religious minorities in the U.S. (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Lee, 2005; Phillion & Malewski, 2011). In addition, pre-service teachers in rural areas, who grew up in white-dominant cultures often resist practicing culturally responsive teaching since they expect to teach in communities like their own (Phillion & Malewski, 2011). To provide a better understanding of the social contexts of schools and classrooms, most teacher education programs develop multicultural courses that focus on race, class, gender, and language. Within the fields of teacher education and multicultural education research, there is limited research in investigating the role of teacher knowledge about religious diversity. Marks, Binkley, and Daly (2014) show that the lack of knowledge of pre-service teachers about religious diversity should be urgently considered by teacher education programs in the U.S., not only for teaching culturally responsive pedagogy but also for allowing pre-service teachers to practice reflective thinking about their own beliefs.

In much post-multiculturalism research, liberal multiculturalism is characterized as celebrating diversity, focusing on ethnic minorities, and exploring different cultures, traditions, music, and cuisine (Jackson, 2002; Kymlicka, 2010). For example, Alibha and

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Brown (2000) describe these multiculturalism approaches in Britain as a 3S model--samosas, steel drums, and saris. Kymlicka (2010) presents several of the critiques which liberal multiculturalism receives. For example, the liberal approach to multiculturalism reinforces power inequalities, considers minorities as “others”, and does not provide a deep understanding of the challenges of minority groups (Kymlicka, 2010). In liberal multiculturalism approaches, multicultural education is considered a watchword that promotes learning about other cultures by celebrating holidays and tasting different foods (Marrett, Mizuno, & Collins, 1992). However, May and Sleeter (2010) state that critical multicultural education requires a deeper understanding of cultures by peeling back the layers of identity to demonstrate the diversity within communities. Similarly, Banks (2006) states that “multicultural education is a way of viewing reality and a way of thinking not just content about various ethnic, racial, and cultural groups” (p. 8).

Literature reviewed in this chapter shows that developing a single approach to multicultural education for all Islamic schools would not be effective since these schools do not all share same educational and social contexts. Nevertheless, as discussed by Kim (2012), Memon (2009), Merry (2007), Niyozov (2010), Subedi (2006), Zine (2009), multicultural education in Islamic schools should definitely ensure the transformation of cultural, national, and political beliefs. In other words, multicultural education in Islamic schools should focus on “*prejudice reduction*” (Banks, 2006) to enforce critical thinking that will strengthen the transformation of beliefs and thoughts both in the Muslim community and general community. Teaching strategies applied in Islamic schools in the U.S. should highlight “equity pedagogy” in all courses, in addition to teaching Islamic studies and *Quran* (Banks, 2006).

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Teachers play a vital role in developing more democratic educational contexts for Islamic schools in the U.S. To specify, teachers in Islamic schools strengthen unity in school communities and facilitate the transformation of local mosques' Islamic education philosophies according to the needs of Muslim communities in the U.S. Memon (2011), Niyozov (2010), and Zine (2009) stress the importance of Islamic teacher education programs; they also describe how Islamic education should be implemented in course curricula. The reviewed literature shows that Islamic school teachers also struggle to handle issues arising from the diverse cultures and perspectives of students and parents (Sanjakdar, 2011; Zine 2009) and to adapt Islamic pedagogy in their lesson plans.

Under these circumstances, two questions arise regarding improving multicultural education in Islamic schools.

1. What kinds of multicultural education perspectives should inform the improvement of multiculturalism in Islamic schools and Muslim communities in the U.S. while helping this group maintaining their own culture?
2. How should Islamic education pedagogy be organized to be appropriately applied in multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching?

In the following chapter, I examine the methodological framework applied in my research, and present a descriptive collective case study on the perspectives of six Islamic school teachers from different states in the U.S. This case study investigates the demands of multicultural religious education in Islamic schools.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

In chapter two, I synthesized findings from a literature review of studies on diversity among Muslims in the U.S., education of Muslim students in the U.S., Islamic schools, and multicultural religious education. In this chapter, I discuss the theoretical framework and research paradigm, and data collection and analysis. The chapter is divided into three sections. Section one justifies my research paradigm and theoretical framework choices, presents the rationale of my research, and provides my research questions. Section two details my research design by explaining research methodology, participants, data collection, and data analysis. Section three focuses on my role as researcher, ethical considerations, validation, and educational implications and provides conclusion for this chapter.

Section 1

3.1. Research Design

3.1.1. Research Paradigm. Guba and Lincoln (1994) discuss the major paradigms and perspectives in educational research. According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), a paradigm represents a set of basic beliefs that structures the *worldview* of

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

researchers and sheds light on the ontological, epistemological, and methodological questions of any research. Constructivism was chosen as the research paradigm for this study due to the following reasons. First, the ontology of constructivism requires *relativism,* which rejects nominalism and idealism as explanations of ideas (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, 2005). The reviewed literature revealed that the educational environment of Islamic schools in the U.S., and the personal background and professional knowledge of Islamic school teachers vary. In these circumstances, my research does not aim to provide an ideal multicultural educational approach that will inform all Islamic schools in the U.S., but points to the importance of multicultural education development in Islamic schools in the U.S.

3.1. 2. The Transformation Approach in Multicultural Education. James Banks, the most well known scholar in multicultural education, articulated four approaches to integrating multicultural perspectives into the curriculum. According to Banks, curriculum reforms must allow students to develop "clarified cultural, national, and global identifications" (Banks, 2006, p. 59). Banks (2006) suggests four approaches to integrate ethnic content in multicultural education curriculum. These four approaches are 1) *The Contrubutions Approach,* 2) *The Ethnic Additive Approach,* 3) *The Transformation Approach, and* 4) *The Decision-Making and Social Action Approach.* The first two approaches aim to modify existing curriculum with the addition of ethnic content, concepts, themes, and perspectives. These additions integrate the heroes or holidays of other ethnic groups to increase students' global knowledge. In these approaches, the mainstream curriculum does not change in terms of goals, standards, and

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

structure. Although these approaches are easy to implement, they do not provide comprehensive understanding for students to understand the dynamics of other cultures (Banks, 2006). Both approaches are reminiscent of perspectives in liberal multiculturalism, discussed in the previous chapter. The next two approaches, *The Transformation Approach* and *The Decision-Making and Social Action Approach,* are fundamentally different from the other approaches. For example, *The Transformation Approach* “changes the basic assumptions of the curriculum and enables students to view concepts, issues, themes, and problems from several ethnic perspectives and points of view” (Banks, 2006; p. 61). *The Transformation Approach* aims to extend students’ knowledge about the nature and complexities of U.S. social structure by infusing several perspectives from various groups rather than adding long lists of heroes or holiday celebrations from different cultures. *The Decision-Making and Social Action Approach* is similar to *The Transformation Approach,* but requires social action projects as ways of allowing students to gain political efficacy by making decisions, taking action, and playing a role in policy changes.

My research is centered around how *The Transformation Approach* can help us conceptualize multicultural educational improvement in Islamic schools in the U.S. Banks (2006) states that a transformative curriculum enables students from minority groups to stand on their own ethnic and historical backgrounds in society. He notes:

> A transformative curriculum designed to empower students, especially those from victimized and marginalized groups, must help students develop the knowledge and skills needed to critically examine the current

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

> political and economic structure and the myths and ideologies used to justify it. Such a curriculum must teach students critical thinking skills, the ways in which knowledge is constructed, the basic assumptions and values that undergird knowledge systems, and how to construct knowledge themselves. (p. 209)

In transformative classrooms, students are encouraged to express their own opinions on historical and contemporary issues, and to reflect on other voices in the classroom. In such classrooms, all learners learn to "cope with the issue of translating their many voices, and in the process they will join in creating culture—not simply receiving it" (Stars, 1988; as quoted in Banks, 2006, p. 210).

According to Banks (2006), transformative curriculum and its empowerment effects must be implemented by the teachers who synthesize their own personal and cultural values to teach a "clarification of social, historical, and political realities" (p. 218).

3.1.3. Rationale. As U.S. society becomes increasingly diverse, the demands of the demographic imperative underscore the cultural divide between teachers and their students, complicating the practices of culturally responsive teaching (Zeichner, 2009). Therefore, educational research must focus on multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching as priorities for increasingly diverse educational settings, such as U.S. Islamic schools. Educational research on issues of class, race and academic achievement have represented various U.S. communities, yet there is a lack of such research with regards to the U.S. Muslim community. Educational research on Islamic

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

schools in the U.S. will benefit the involved communities, and will have implications for the broader study of multicultural education outside of U.S. Muslim communities. It has been argued that understanding the education of Muslim students is key to understanding the Muslim population in the U.S. (Memon, 2009). An investigation of circumstances in Islamic schools regarding multicultural education can be related to several trends in multicultural research, such as balancing diversity with unity, cultural pluralism, critical race theory, and citizenship education. More specifically, research in exploring the context of multicultural education in Islamic schools in the U.S. can also inform multicultural teacher education; reviewed literature shows that teaching students with diverse cultural, national, ethnic, racial, and language backgrounds is a challenge for teachers in these schools.

To summarize, exploring the multicultural education context in Islamic schools intersects with several important issues in multicultural education and teacher education. Unfortunately, there is extremely limited research on this specific topic; during the literature review process I noticed that most research into Muslims and Islamic schools in the field of education of have been conducted by people attached to Muslim communities in the U.S. This shows that most research examples carry the personal enthusiasm of community-based participatory research; however it may also—sadly—indicate that the education of Muslims and discussions of multicultural education for Muslim students and Islamic schools are not considered important by those outside these communities. I strongly believe that investigating diversity in Islamic schools in the U.S. and considering the perspectives of teachers in these schools are definitely important, worthwhile topics

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

in multicultural education. A combination of theoretical and practical research can improve educational contexts in Islamic schools, and contribute knowledge to multicultural education research in general.

3.1.4. Research Questions. Stake (2010) states that the development of research questions is more critical than the selection of research methods in qualitative research; he thereby suggests stating research questions before inquiry methods. Richards (2005) points out that qualitative research does not start with hypotheses as quantitative research does, but it is still not acceptable for qualitative research to begin research without a plan. Agee (2009) also suggests conceptualizing research questions in all types of research inquiry, even in grounded theory. Creswell (2007) states that "our questions change during the process of research to reflect an increased understanding of the problem" (p. 43). Similarly, Agee (2009) indicates that research questions change according to how researchers position themselves in relation to their inquiry method. My research questions have been reviewed in accordance with knowledge and experience gained during my graduate courses and the pilot studies I conducted. My first pilot study was conducted in a Sunday School in Indiana, and the second was conducted in a full day Islamic school in New Mexico. These two studies showed me that Islamic school environments vary in terms of physical conditions, educational perspectives, Islamic educational approaches, and diversity. Therefore, I altered my research questions in order to avoid privileging any kind of ideal multicultural approach for Islamic schools in the U.S.

Reviewed literature shows examples of micro-moments—diversity within diversity—of race, class, nationality (ethnicity), language, and gender among U.S.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Muslims. However in spite of these differences, all Muslim communities in the U.S. share a strong common purpose that is assuring comprehensive education for their children. Though we know of the growing diversity, and numbers, of Muslims (and thus Muslim youth) in the U.S., we know little about how religion and culture influence their education, both general and religious. The purpose of my dissertation is to examine the perspectives of teachers who have taught in Islamic schools and investigate the multicultural educational context of those schools in the U.S. To accomplish this, the following questions guided my research:

1- How do teachers in Islamic schools in the U.S. experience the diversity of race, class, nationality, language, and gender among Muslim students in their schools?

2- How do Islamic school teachers in the U.S. conceptualize multicultural issues in their classrooms and school climate?

3- What do teachers in Islamic schools in the U.S. suggest to promote the development of multicultural education in these schools?

Section 2

3.2. The Case Study as a Research Method

There are several definitions and understandings of the case study as a qualitative and quantitative research method. While Bromley (1990) defines a case study as a "systematic inquiry into an event or set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest" (p. 302), Stake (1995) explains the case study as the "particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances" (p. xi). I chose the case study as a research method for several

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

reasons; some of the reasons were related to my research topic and theoretical framework, and some were related to general characteristics of the case study method. I believe that the case study method was the most appropriate mode of inquiry for exploring the diverse dimensions of Islamic school classrooms, since this method could provide a wealth of unique information, perspectives, interpretations, and conclusions (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Moreover, I aimed to research how the climate of Islamic schools reflect the diversity among the general Muslim community in the U.S., and to investigate the experiences of teachers in these schools as a way of comprehending the general context of multicultural education and the multicultural education demands in these schools. My research aims were reminiscent of the words written by Hans Eysenck (1976) about social science research: "sometimes we simply have to keep our eyes open and looks carefully at individual cases—not in the hope of proving anything but rather in the hope of learning something" (p. 9). Islamic schools are a new area for educational research, specifically multicultural education research; I believe designing case study research provided the most efficient way to collect rich information about how educational contexts in Islamic schools in the U.S may vary; and to investigate how multicultural education can be improved in these schools.

The most common misunderstanding about the case study method points to the difficulty of generalization (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009). However, Stake (1995) argues that case studies are not favored as a research method to produce generalizations, but place emphasis on "particularization". Stake (1995) and Yin (2009) highlight that the case study method design follows different paths in qualitative and quantitative research. My research didn't require scientific generalization but on the other hand showed

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

"particularization". The work of Memon (2009), and Niyozov and Pluim (2009) demonstrate that Islamic educational philosophy is too diverse in the U.S. and Canada to be generalized. To conclude, my research was focused on the "particularization" of Islamic school teachers' multicultural teaching experiences, which gave me an understanding of the cases of specific teachers and schools.

Scholars describe case study methods from different perspectives. For example, Yin (2003 & 2009) categorizes the case study's purposes as explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive. Stake (1995) classifies case studies according to their purposes as intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. Yin (2003 & 2009) and Stake (2005) summarize the types of case studies as:

1) the explanatory case study: to explain and answer a question that are too complex for a survey or experimental research;

2) the exploratory case study: to explore situations that do not presents clear outcomes and interpretations;

3) the descriptive case study: to describe a real life situation in its real context;

4) multiple (collective) case studies: to explore differences within and between cases;

5) the intrinsic case study: to understand a particular case in depth, where researchers should have a genuine interest in the case;

6) the instrumental case study: to explore a particular case to define or re-define a theory; and accomplish something other than understanding;

My dissertation research was an example of a descriptive multiple case study. As I discussed before, my dissertation does not aim to theorize multicultural education in

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

U.S. Islamic schools, but to understand the experiences of Islamic school teachers and investigate multiculturalism in these schools. Secondly, I am not interested in investigating diversity and multicultural education development in one particular school, nor in gaining the perspectives of one particular teacher. One of the purposes of my study is to show how Islamic school environments are different in the U.S.; therefore, designing my research as a multiple (collective) case study has allowed me to explore multicultural education development both within and among the Islamic schools I choose as cases.

Designing my dissertation research as a qualitative case study has provided an in depth description and a richly descriptive end product (Merriam, 2009) that investigated the contemporary phenomenon of Islamic school teachers in the U.S. regarding the diversity they experience in their schools. A case study approach was an appropriate method especially when considering the different contexts of Islamic schools. In addition, the personal narratives of Islamic school teachers showed unclear boundaries between phenomenon and context (Yin, 2008). To guarantee a more compelling interpretation, several cases were included in my study. Therefore, my dissertation research was an example of a multiple case study so to strengthen my research in terms of several factors as Miles and Huberman (1994) state:

> By looking at a range of similar and contrasting cases, we can understand a single-case finding, grounding it by specifying how and where and, if possible, why it carries on as it does. We can strengthen the precision, the validity, and the stability of the findings. (p. 29)

I believe focusing on the experiences of Islamic school teachers reflects the different cultures of Islamic schools as Dewey (1951) states that culture and

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

experiences are related notions. In my research, six Islamic school teachers' experiences were described by individual portraits. The portraits included teachers' personal, familial, and educational backgrounds to provide better understanding of their teaching experiences in Islamic schools in the U.S. Writing the experiences of the teachers with portraits helped me to analyze the diversity and multicultural education in Islamic schools within a personal context. Also I believe that portraits strengthened the constructivist approach which requires "the importance of the subjective human creation of meaning" (Crabtree & Miller 1999, p.10).

The experiences of Islamic school teachers described through their portraits also may provide research "peopled with characters" instead of research merely filled with labels and categories (Phillion, He & Connelly, 2005, p. 10). In addition, Islamic school teachers were asked to talk about their past, present, and future experiences, these narratives enriched the descriptions of the contexts—physical and sociological—of Islamic schools (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Nespor, 1987).

To conclude this section, I strongly believe that designing my research as a combination of a descriptive multiple case study method was the most suitable way for constructing a better conceptualization of diversity contexts in different schools across the lived experiences of several teachers.

3.2.1. Selection of Research Sites and Participants. I applied purposeful sampling to choose participants who had a higher possibility of knowing about critical issues in education in Islamic schools in the U.S. The rationale for this approach was to

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

collect rich descriptions from teachers' perspectives about diversity in Islamic schools. I designed my research in this way because one of my pilot studies revealed that in exploring issues regarding multicultural education in Islamic schools, teachers may not provide in-depth descriptions if they do not have a clear general understanding of multicultural education. The pilot study was conducted in a Sunday school in Indiana, and all the teachers who participated in my study were graduate students in majors other than education. Moreover, none of them had any educational background in public or private school settings in the U.S. All participants mentioned that their school environments were very diverse, but due to their lack of knowledge about the concepts and issues in multicultural education research, they could not provide perspectives about how the religious education provided by the school should inform multicultural education. I expected that having Master's degrees in education and/or holding teaching certificates from institutions in the U.S. might lead teachers to provide rich descriptions related to the contexts of multicultural education in Islamic schools. Another guideline for choosing participants stemmed from the need to have participations from different schools around the U.S., since my literature review and a comparison of my pilot studies indicated how much Islamic schools' educational environments can vary (Haddad & Senzai, Smith, 2009; Memon, 2011; Merry, 2007; Niyozov and Pluim, 2009; Salili & Hoosain, 2014). I followed three different strategies to find Islamic school teachers.

1) During professional conferences such as that of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), I attended presentations on specific topics such as Muslim immigrants in the U.S., educational problems facing Muslim students

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

in the U.S., and anything about Islamic schools, to meet with people who have the same research interests, and who might be able to help me find potential participants. This strategy led me to one participant who has a PhD in education and teaching experiences in three Islamic schools in Virginia, Maryland, and New Jersey.

2) I reached out to two Muslim email lists and left announcements about my research. I received several email responses and chose to follow up with the best options for my convenience. In this way, two participants with graduate degrees in education, from two different schools in Michigan and New Jersey, became involved in my research.

3) I announced my research in the nearest Islamic community to where I live, and informed the *masjid* (mosque) board about my research. They spread the word and three of my participants sought out contact with me this way. These participants had teaching experiences in Islamic schools in Maryland and Indiana. Two of them had Master's degrees in Curriculum Studies and had focused on multicultural education. The other participant did not have a graduate degree but had majored in sociology; she was a converted American Muslim.

In addition to these details of participant selection, the general characteristics of my participants were as follows:

- Teachers who had taught any subject in an Islamic school in the U.S., but are not teaching currently.
- Teachers who had a Master's degree in education and/or graduated from an educational institution in the U.S.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

- Teachers who had at least one year teaching experience in Islamic schools. No maximum number of years of experience limited teachers' participation in this study.

In the case study method, data collection requires a great amount of time to gain a clear interpretation of cases and issues related to cases (Yin, 2009). Since I chose to conduct my research among teachers who worked in different Islamic schools in the U.S., I did not have a specific research site. However, I performed observation in a full day Islamic schools in one of my pilot studies, and my experience as a volunteer at a local weekend Islamic school familiarized me with the educational climates in these schools, gave me an insider's perspective, and immersed me in my research. How these experiences—my pilot study and volunteering for a weekend Islamic school— influenced my research will be discussed in detail in the data analysis chapter.

3.2.2. Data Collection Methods. Although scholars using the case study research method have varied perspectives on the purposes of case study research, they all agree that data collection in a case study should include multiple sources (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Stake, 1995 & 2009; Yin, 2009). For instance, Yin (2009) requires researchers to provide "multiple sources of evidence" and states that, "In fact various sources are highly complementary, and a good case study will therefore want to use as many sources as possible" (p. 101). Yin (2009) also describes "many sources" such as documentation, interviews, direct observations, participant observations, and physical artifacts. I was able to explore my research questions through semi-structured interviews and school

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

observation. Again, the school observation took place in the pilot study phase of my research.

Observations. One of the data collection processes in my research was direct (non-participant) observation, which is one of the basic data collection methods in qualitative research. Observations in qualitative research "rely on narrative of words to describe the settings, behaviors, and interactions. The goal is to understand complex interactions in natural settings" (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorensen, 2010; p. 431). Observations were made in an Islamic school in New Mexico in order to explore the school atmosphere, classroom settings, and multicultural dimensions of U.S. Islamic schools. As mentioned in Malhall (2003), unstructured observations carry specific importance for a constructivist approach in the process of knowledge construction between the researcher and "researched". The role of the researcher carries importance in observation. Ary, Jacobs, and Sorensen (2010) categorize observations according to the role of the researcher: *participant as observer*, *observer as participant*, *complete observer*, *naturalistic observer*, or *collaborative partner*. The observational method that I used in my research was "*observer as participant"*—where the researcher is known by those under study and is not actively involved in behaviors and activities. Since teachers in this study were not working in Islamic schools in the U.S. when I interviewed them, having observations in my participants' classrooms were not possible. However, during my pilot study, I had the opportunity to observe a full day in an Islamic school setting, and this experience primarily guided my interviews. What I have observed, and how these observations impacted my research will be discussed in the data analysis chapter. This

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

part in this chapter focuses on the general characteristics of the Islamic school I observed in my pilot study.

***Future Scholars Islamic School*.** I observed in this school while we were having a family holiday. My husband had professional meetings for a week in New Mexico, and I realized that there was an Islamic school just a couple of miles away from the hotel where we stayed. Before going to New Mexico, I sent several emails to school board members and the principal of the school. Fortunately, I received their permission to observe the school before going to New Mexico. It was a great opportunity to strengthen my research.

I went to the school to observe in December 2013. The school operated in two parts: the first part was a one-story building for early elementary grades, owned by the school. Another part was the entrance of the next building, which the school rented. In other words, the school was sharing a space with others. When I entered the first part of the school, I met with the school secretary. She was very welcoming, and followed me to the principal's office. She left me in the office for awhile as the principal had not arrived yet. The office of the principal was much smaller than the most offices I had seen before. Since the space was very small, there were lots of books, folders, and instructional materials piled up. Then the school principal arrived. I introduced myself and provided some of my background. He also informed me briefly about himself. He was an American convert Muslim, and a PhD student in education. Before becoming Muslim, he had international experience in Muslim countries such as Iran, Turkey, Egypt, and Palestine. According to the information I received from the principal during my observation, school enrollment was 80 students. The school provided education for K through 8th grade, and the school board was planning to include high school grades at the

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

time of observation, December 2013. The school's student population was diverse in terms of culture, nationality, language, and socio-economic status. Similarly to the diverse student population, the teachers working in this school were also from diverse backgrounds. Teachers' profiles in this school included Arab immigrants, second generation Americans, Latinos, white Americans, African Americans, non-Muslims, and convert Muslims teachers and administrators. The school's educational purpose specifically emphasized American identity, American citizenship education, and quality education in both secular and religious fields.

The issues related to funding Islamic schools mentioned in the literature review also came up during my observation. Due to lack of funding and a limited budget, the school had limited educational facilities. For example, the teacher lounge and library had been combined due to the lack of space. Some teachers did not have their own classrooms and had to share classrooms with other teachers. Classrooms had limited technology and supplies. The school did not include a gym, science laboratory, or conference room. The principal highlighted his focus on improving ESL education in the school. During the observation, he showed me ESL classroom materials and mentioned that the school organized workshops for parents and teachers on teaching English as a second language. The school had a dress code for students, but not for teachers. However, suitable attire and manners were outlined in teachers' contracts. *Hijab* was not required for female teachers but dressing in modest clothes was mandatory. All classes were mixed, and there was no obligation for female students to be taught only by female teachers. The school building was not attached to a *masjid* (mosque); the school principal mentioned that the *imam*—a religious leader from the local mosque—visits the school on Fridays to give a

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

weekly sermon for all students. I observed the school for two days. During the observation I experienced firsthand some of the context of this Islamic school in the U.S., which prepared me to conduct more effective interviews.

Interviews. As Seidman (2006) states, in-depth interviewing seeks to understand the lived experiences of participants and their interpretations. In light of this, I used in-depth interviewing as a way of accessing the multicultural teaching perceptions of Islamic school teachers. The interviews in my research brought light to the educational background of teachers, ways in which their classrooms show diversity, how each teacher planned instruction to meet the needs of this diversity, and how each teacher conceptualized multicultural education and/or religious multicultural education in the context of an Islamic school.

One interview was conducted with each participant. The interview questions were open-ended and framed by the research questions (Creswell, 2007; Seidman, 2006). Each interview was audio recorded using a digital recorder and transcribed by myself. I interviewed with four participants in person, but I had to interview with other two participants via Skype because they were not living in the U.S. at the time of the interview. The shortest interview took 65 minutes, and the longest took about 90 minutes. Once I had collected all my data from the participants, I transcribed the interviews and notes. I also wrote interview memos in my research journal after the first and second round of interviews, in order to remember gestures, pauses, and reactions to dialogues and questions that were helpful in re-establishing the interview context during my in-depth data analysis.

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

3.2.3 Data Analysis. I utilized "directed content analysis," informed by Hsieh and Shannon (2005), to analyze the data collected during my observations of the Islamic schools in my pilot study and during interviews with the six participants. "Basic content analysis" primarily focuses on identification of regular and familiar concepts, themes, and patterns throughout a text (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). Hsieh and Shannon (2005) provide three approaches to content analysis in qualitative research. One of the approaches to content analysis discussed in Hsieh and Shannon (2005) is "directed content analysis" (p. 1281). I purposely choose this method because "the goal of a directed approach to content analysis is to validate or extend conceptually a theoretical framework or theory" (p. 1281). As a first step to applying "directed content analysis" for the data collected in this research, key concepts were identified from existing theory and research (Hickey & Kipping, 1996). I then found "operational definitions" to indicate what kind of interview transcriptions could be categorized in these key concepts. Table 1 provides both key concepts acknowledged in the in-depth literature review discussed in Chapter 2 and examples of the *operational definitions*- defining a variable by how it is measured- I developed according to my interview transcriptions and observation memos are shown by Table 2.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Table 3.1. Key Concepts	
• Assimilation • Arab Muslims • African American Muslims • Adaptation • Cultural Identity • Culturally Responsive Teaching • Islamic Schools in the U.S • Muslim Identity Construction • Islamic Education • Diversity among Muslim Communities in the U.S • Citizenship Education • American Identity Construction • Multicultural Education • Gendered Education • Multiple Identities • Problems of Muslim students in public schools • Transformative Learning • Unity in Diversity • Denominational Differences among Muslims • Islamic School Teacher Education Program	• Integration of Islamic Education Curriculum • Approaches to Multicultural Curriculum Reform • The Role of Mosques in Islamic Education • Multiethnic Communities • ESL and Islamic Schools • Teacher Autobiography • Islamic Pedagogy • Academic Achievement and Islamic Schools • American Muslim Identity • Politics and Religion • Religiosity • Islam-phobia • Funding of Islamic Schools in the U.S • Religious Schooling in the U.S • Hybrid Identity

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Table 3.2. Examples of Operational Definitions
"I lost my language and I lost most of my culture, so most of my culture comes from the religion" interview transcript**…***Teacher autobiography*
"**I never felt comfortable and didn't want to go and teach in public school"** interview transcript **…** *Teacher autobiography and Problems of Muslim students in public schools.*
***"*I observed that in this class, girls were much more silent and less active than boys"** Observation memo by myself….*Gender, Academic Achievement and Islamic Schools*
"**At this particular school, gender segregation was very important to the administration. The girls and boys were separated onto different sides of the room, and there was a physical divider between them"** interview transcript…*Gendered Education, Islamic Pedagogy*

After locating these basic concepts in each data source, I proceeded to identify similar words and terms to develop categories. Data derived from interviews and observations was categorized according to the process that Merriam (2009) provides. Merriam (2009) states that in case study research when the categories are named carefully, research will provide more refined interpretations. So I reviewed my research questions and I attempted to cover all key concepts with optimal- not too many- numbers of categories. After "category construction", I sorted all of the categories and data sources. Since my research exemplified a collective case study, I applied these three steps for each case. When I completed the analysis of each case, I proceeded to cross-case analysis (Merriam, 2009). Cross case analysis of each category was provided as a table in data analysis chapter. Each category's table gave comparative information about how the results of data analysis for the category were similar or different among the cases. After

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

completing the cross-case data analysis, I compared my data analysis with existing theory and research. Then I explained how my research findings can be explained using the frameworks that guided my research and how my research findings exceeded these frameworks.

Section 3

3.3. The Role of the Researcher

Stake (2010) argues that a case study researcher's potential roles can be considered under five titles: the *case researcher as teacher*, the *case researcher as advocate*, the *case researcher as evaluator*, the *case researcher as biographer*, and the *case researcher as interpreter*. My research was not in the domain of my knowledge and voice, but it was in the voices of Islamic school teachers who participated in the research. My role was to find ways to make Islamic school teachers' multicultural education experiences comprehensible to others. My role as a researcher was not to advocate for teachers' perspectives but to facilitate readers' understanding. By writing the narratives of each teacher into my research, I functioned as an interpreter between my participants and readers. The epistemology of the research strongly determined my role as a researcher. In constructivist research, "the aim of research is not to discover external reality, for that is impossible, but to construct clearer reality, and a more sophisticated reality" (Stake, 1995, p. 101).

I have an apparent Muslim identity, I wear *hijab.* I have general knowledge about Islam but I have never been in an Islamic school as either a student or a teacher. Therefore, I do not have much information or any experience with religious schooling

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

and Islamic school regulations in the U.S. At the beginning of August 2013, I began working as a volunteer school principal in a weekend school to gain an "insider" perspective for my research. Although I did not teach there, my relationships with students, teachers, and parents gave me general ideas about the contexts of Islamic schools. Moreover, the extensive literature review and my pilot studies helped me to see the details behind Islamic schooling and the education of Muslims in the U.S. To inform my participants about myself, I provided a short biography along with information about my research to each participant before collecting data. I believe that my Muslim identity allowed my participants to communicate without difficulty and to explain the problems in Islamic education genuinely.

Again, the experiences I had in my pilot studies also allowed me to think about my role as a researcher. Based on my experiences, I came to the conclusion that Islamic school administrators and board members may hesitate to host a researcher in their school if the researcher is not from their community. For example, one of my pilot studies was rejected by the school principal in an Islamic school near where I live, without any explanation or reason. Therefore, I decided not to enter any Islamic school as a researcher, and not to observe my participants' classroom and school settings. I believe positioning my role just as an interviewer with the participants allowed me to analyze multicultural educational context in Islamic schools only from teachers' perspectives, and to have uncomplicated descriptions about the cases.

3.3.1. Ethical Considerations. There were ethical concerns, which are common to most qualitative research methods, and also ethical concerns that were specific to my

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

research. My dissertation study had IRB approval and I followed all the requirements of IRB at Purdue University. I made sure to note general ethical considerations in qualitative research such as *kind of information obtained, researcher's relationship to participant, reciprocation,* and *getting permission to conduct research* (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorenson, 2010). However, there were other ethical issues that stemmed specifically from my research. For example, participants in the interviews described their religious identities, beliefs, and practices---all vulnerable and sensitive topics. There was a more detailed concern about denominational differences in Islam: *Sunni* and *Shia*. The interview protocols did not include any questions for this purpose, but in some cases participants voluntarily mentioned their sects in Islam. Another ethical issue related to school administration arose during my pilot study. One participant in my pilot study was not positive when discussing critical issues in schools with me. Therefore, in my dissertation research, I interviewed teachers who do not currently work in Islamic schools.

Moreover, I provided my participants with consent forms and ensured that they understood the purpose and process of the research, their rights, and the voluntary nature of their participation in my research. They were also informed about the confidentiality of their information. I explained to them that they could review my interview transcriptions and were welcome to withdraw their participation at any time during my research. I used pseudonyms throughout all research documents and changed specific contextual details, such as school names and specific locations that could have revealed the true identities of participants.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

3.3.2. Validation. Cho and Trent (2006) discuss two approaches toward validation in qualitative research, *transactional validity* and *transformational validity.* The first approach requires interaction between the inquiry and research participants by means of several techniques like member checking, triangulation, and bracketing. The second approach problematizes the validity protocol in qualitative research. Transformationalist researchers "assert that because traditional or positivist inquiry is no longer seen as an absolute means to truth in the realm of human science, alternative notions of validity should be considered to achieve social justice" (Cho & Trent, 2006, p.324). In order to assess the validity and reliability of my research, my focus was mainly on techniques of transactional validity, since I do not have enough experience with critical perspectives on validity in qualitative research, and specifically in the case study research method. One of the techniques applied in my research was the "*code – recode strategy"* where data is coded and left for some time, then recoded again (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2006). Then, the two data interpretations are compared. In addition to this technique, I also made use of member checking; each participant was asked to review the interview transcripts to ensure accuracy. Using member checking provided fair knowledge construction and established credibility.

3.3.3. Educational Implications. I have a strong belief that the findings of my research will have theoretical and practical implications for several targets from different disciplines, which I discuss below.

One of the goals of my study is giving voice to Islamic schools in the general educational context in the U.S. Especially in multicultural education research, research

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

focused on Islamic school in the U.S. is invisible. According to Jones (2008), Islamic schools in the U.S. are not accepted in the same ways Jewish and Christian schools are. “Many Americans who pass Catholic, Jewish, and Christian schools everyday might cast a somewhat more suspicious eye toward a Muslim school constructed in their neighborhood” (p. 135). My research may help non-Muslim U.S. citizens to reevaluate Islamic schools and the profiles of Muslims living in the U.S. Moreover, the findings of my dissertation research may help the Muslim community develop Islamic education and Islamic schooling according to the needs of all Muslims in the U.S. Significantly, educational board members, administrators, and teachers in Islamic schools may derive theoretical and practical implications that will enable them to improve the educational quality of their schools. Although my dissertation research focuses on diversity among Muslims, and proposes multicultural educational development/improvement in Islamic schools, the general Muslim community also may be an audience. These Muslim communities in general might draw on this research and use it as they work toward improving the empathy, social justice, and tolerance. Finally, my dissertation research will also provide practical implications for teacher education programs, including the importance of considering Islamic schools as alternative field experience sites for understanding social justice and multicultural education.

The case study research design of my project involved more than simply conducting research on a single individual or situation. This descriptive, multiple case research design had the potential to breaking down situations of racial, economical, national, linguistic and gendered diversity in U.S. Islamic schools. After designing the research project as a case study, I realized that I phrased most of my research questions as

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

"how" type questions. According to Baxter and Jake (2008), case study research is "an excellent opportunity to gain tremendous insight into a case" (p. 556). Therefore, applying the case study method led me to improved research skills as a graduate student. Even though case study research has some general limitations, such as difficulty in finding appropriate cases, vast amounts of data collection, and difficulty in summarizing results, I strongly believe that the case study was the most appropriate and practical research method for this project, especially when the purpose of the research is *to raise the voices of U.S. Islamic school teachers about how they experience and conceptualize diversity in their classrooms and schools.*

The following chapter presents six portraits and provides the thick description necessary for interpreting the participants' cases. Each portrait focuses on a single participant and provides information about her personal background, the Muslim community in which the school where the teacher taught was located, the educational and diversity contexts of the school, and the multicultural educational perspectives of the teacher.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER 4. PORTRAITS OF SIX ISLAMIC SCHOOL TEACHERS IN THE U.S.

This descriptive collective case study was built around six participants. The following six participant portraits—of Rania, Sonia, Amira, Salma, Zainab, and Amal—include stories about teaching in Islamic schools. I have changed all participants' names and other personal information such as hometowns and school locations but I preserved gender identification. Table 4.1 provides brief information about each participant in my research. In each portrait, the participant's descriptions are organized under three categories that were determined according to my research questions: 1) Personal and/or community background, 2) School context, and 3) Multicultural education. These categories will be analyzed in-depth in the next chapter to provide the findings within and across cases.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Table 4.1. Participants' Teaching Experiences in Islamic Schools		
Participant's Name	Type and Location of Islamic School(s)	Year(s) of teaching experience in Islamic school(s)
Rania	Weekend Islamic school Indiana	Three years
Sonia	Full day Islamic school Maryland	Two years
Amira	Full day Islamic school Indiana	Three and a half years
Salma	Full day Islamic school New Jersey	One year
Zainab	Full day Islamic schools Virginia, Maryland, and New Jersey	Twenty three years
Amal	Full day Islamic School Michigan	Four years

4.1. Rania

I interviewed Rania on July 27, 2014 at her house. She was very positive and cheerful when she invited me inside. There were not any other people in her house other than us. She served me a cup of tea and homemade biscuits. Rania answered my questions openly and positively. Although I asked a few questions related to her background that were not specified in my protocol, she answered all those questions comfortably. I interviewed Rania for 85 minutes. Rania answered all my questions in detail, and did not hesitate to

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

provide examples. Rania worked as a principal, curriculum coordinator, and teacher in an Islamic weekend school that only provides Islamic education (*Quran,* Arabic, and Islamic Studies). Rania was the only person in my study who did not teach in a full-day Islamic school in the U.S., but I purposely wanted to include her as a participant in my research due to her convert American Muslim identity, which was a characteristic not shared by any other participants.

4.1.1. Personal and Community Background. Rania grew up in a small town in Indiana and converted to Islam after her marriage with an Arab man. Since there were Muslim students from different countries in her hometown in the 1970s, she was familiar with the cultural differences among Muslims before her marriage. Rania mentioned that she received her bachelor's degree in technology in the 80s, and worked as web manager and graphic designer for a while. She had gone back to school since then, and at the time of the interview, she was about to finish her degree in sociology with a focus in social psychology. She was the mother of two sons, and grandmother of two grandsons. She has been living in a Muslim community and attached to the mosque in the community since 1997. She identified herself as a practicing Muslim, and she personally made a lot of effort to learn about Islam. At the time of the interview, she was in *hijab.*

Rania had played an active role in a local Islamic school at two different times: from 2005-2007 and from 2010-2011. For the first time period, she was asked to participate at the Islamic school when the school had been left without an administrator. In two weeks she had to develop curricula for Quran, Islamic Studies, and Arabic programs. There was no structure in the weekend school before her position. She said she

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

felt she worked hard and came up with a good program. During her administration, instead of providing a weekend school on only one day on the weekend, the school was in session two days in a week—Fridays and Sundays. When she started her position, there were 20 children in the school; but then as soon as she started there the school ended up with 120 students within a semester. Then Rania resigned her position to help her husband and to manage other things in her life. She was asked to work in the same school four years later, and she accepted the year long opportunity to serve as principal again.

Rania's American identity was an advantage when she worked in the school; she was able to establish professional relationships with parents, teachers, and school staff without thinking of her cultural and national background. For example, the previous administrator was having difficulties separating her national identity from her principal role. The community of the school represented diversity in terms of nationality, class, and language. Since the school was on the campus of a large university in the Midwest, most of the parents were international graduate students. Rania worked as a volunteer in the school like all other teachers and staff members did. Rania was aware that her religious background and knowledge were not adequate for administrating an Islamic school, so she worked with an assistant who was knowledgeable in Quran, Islamic Studies, and Arabic; this assistant provided support and helped Rania to meet parents' expectations based on religion.

4.1.2. Islamic School Context. As stated briefly before, the diversity in the school was obvious. Rania thought that diversity in the weekend school had always been

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

different in form than diversity in public schools. Rania thought that public schools may also show diversity in terms of race and ethnicity, but most students are familiar with American culture along with their own underrepresented cultures. However, in Rania's school, a majority of students had not been raised in the U.S. and were not familiar with American culture. In addition, parents were also not well-informed about educational contexts in the U.S. For example, Rania was asked by parents who had educational backgrounds from Arab countries to follow a more authoritative and teacher-oriented pedagogy. On the other hand, parents from Malaysia or Bangladesh did not want the school to follow such a strict and thorough teaching strategy, but required a more student centered and respectful approach. Although Rania had opposition from the group of Arab parents, she recruited volunteers mostly from Malaysia and Bangladesh when she administrated the school for the second time. Rania indicated that before she administrated the school, much of it was under the control of Arab parents. Frequently, Rania witnessed tensions among parents related to nationality and language. The experiences Rania had pointed out the supremacy of Arabic, and Arabs. In her interview, Rania mentioned that majority of Arabs in the community considered Arabs to have superior religious and cultural knowledge.

In addition to nationality, Rania also highlighted how language became an issue among parents when she was coordinating a Quran memorization program. For example, she talked about an experience in which she observed that non-Arab parents did not favor having an Arabic program in the school; they thought that learning Arabic was not important in religious education.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

The roles of different Islamic religious ideologies were also discussed during her interview. Rania explained that students displayed their families' religious perspectives during classroom activities, which she found challenging for the school. Importantly, she stressed that most of the parents in the Islamic school expected their children to be assimilated during classroom activities in public school, but they were not so tolerant of following the school culture in the Islamic school.

4.1.3. Multicultural Education Perspectives. In her interview, Rania discussed that the improvement in multicultural education in Islamic schools closely related to transformation of immigrant parents' Islamic education understanding into the circumstances of Islamic education in the U.S. where Muslims are so diverse. During her interview, Rania explained how challenging it was to change parents' conceptions of religious schooling. She mentioned that her attempts to change the educational setting of the school and make the Islamic school more enjoyable for students were misunderstood by some parents, especially those who had dogmatic understandings about religion. Rania's interview calls to mind the role of funding in improving educational standards overall, as well as in improving multicultural education in Islamic schools. Rania described that the school could not provide classroom settings where girls and boys might receive better Islamic education. Another point highlighted by Rania during the interview shows that she made efforts to change the teachers' instructional methods, many of which had been formed according to teachers' native cultures. Rania explained that the demands of multicultural education in Islamic schools in the U.S. depend on the structures and demographics of Muslim

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

communities. At the end of her interview, Rania talked about how "others" profile Islamic schools in the U.S. according to images presented in the media. Rania explained that she always aimed to show the importance of tolerance and peace in Islam, and encouraged respect for differences in the school.

4.2. Sonia

The interview with Sonia took place on November 17, 2014 via Skype. At the time of interview, Sonia had recently moved to Qatar with her husband and daughter, and was looking for job opportunities there. Sonia's interview lasted one hour and a half. Her educational background in teacher education and multicultural education meant that Sonia could provide rich and comprehensive experiences to elaborate on my interview questions.

4.2.1. Personal/community Background. Sonia is the daughter of an immigrant family from Syria. Her father came to the U.S. to fulfill the residency requirements to work as a physician in the U.S. Sonia was born in the U.S., and always went to public schools in a small town in Indiana. At the time of interview, Sonia identified herself as a practicing Muslim; and she was in *hijab.* Sonia earned her undergraduate degree in Social Science Secondary Education with a focus on U.S. History. Later she received a Master's degree in Curriculum Studies. During her Master's degree, she taught a multicultural education course to undergraduate students who were mostly Caucasian. After her Master's degree, she began work as a teacher in a public school in her hometown, a small city in Indiana. She taught AP Government and U.S. History classes there for one year. After her marriage she moved to Maryland and in a short time was hired to work at an

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Islamic school there. As she had in the public school, she taught AP U.S. Government and U.S. History courses for both 11th and 12th grades. Additionally she taught English.

4.2.2. School Context. The school where Sonia taught was a full-day Islamic school, K-12, and all grades were housed in one building. The school also provided a nursery in the kindergarten class. Each grade was separated by gender—including kindergarten. In the high school level I which she taught, if the class sizes were not large enough, they combined boys and girls in the same class. For example, in Sonia's AP Government class, there were only 17 students, so both genders met in the same classroom, but girls were on one side and boys on the other side. As Sonia stated in her interview, the great majority of students were not immigrants, but most of their parents were first generation immigrants in the U.S. In the school in which Sonia taught, all students were fluent in English.

Sonia's school was having funding challenges, and was running out of space to provide feasible education facilities. For example, when Sonia taught in her first year, she had to teach several times in the cafeteria, gymnasium, prayer room, or multipurpose room. The first impression Sonia had regarding the physical condition of the school was that it was very different and worse than the settings she was used to from her work teaching in public schools and her experience as a student in her hometown. According to Sonia, the administration of the school was doing its best to utilize the small revenue they had to improve the school's physical conditions. Like all Islamic schools in the U.S., the school was not eligible for any funding from the state or the school cooperation in that area.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

When Sonia was teaching at this Islamic school, she was the only certified teacher out of fifty-five teachers. As she stated, most of the teachers held professional degrees in majors other than Education, such as Biology, Mathematics, and Engineering. Sonia was earning one-third as much as public school teachers in that part of Maryland.

The student population at the school where Sonia was teaching was fairly large, with an enrollment of 550 students. Most of the classrooms were large enough for 30 students. Sonia's AP Government class, as mentioned before, consisted of only 17 students. As Sonia stated, there were three other Islamic schools in the city, and their educational conditions—in terms of physical facilities—were quite similar. The school, where Sonia taught for two years, was established in 1995, and was accredited by the state government. Due to a long waiting list, this school was not able to accept a new student at any time. In addition, students were supposed to pass a test before their enrollment. All the classes in the school were full despite the fact that school tuition was $7,000 a year.

The school where Sonia taught for two years represented a very diverse population, with students of many different nationalities. The majority of students in the school where Sonia taught were students of color, but Sonia explained that many students were from Somali, Sudan and Utopia, not African American. During her interview, Sonia considered African American students as converts. Although the majority of parents in the school were working class, Sonia described that there were a few parents who were doctors, business owners, and professors at the university. Sonia experienced issues regarding class diversity very often in her classrooms.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Sonia compared her teaching experiences in the Islamic school with those she had teaching public high school. Sonia mentioned that her instruction was observed by the administration of Islamic school more than it had been in public school.

In her interview, Sonia discussed the Islamic educational perspective that the school followed. She stated that the administration emphasized the need for the integration of Islamic education into each course. Sonia stated that she did not have any issues in the Islamic school when discussing topics such as the abortion debate or gay marriage in her classrooms. She did not feel uncomfortable, nor did she receive any disagreement from her students about discussing controversial topics. Both in the first and second year of her teaching, Sonia did not have any students with English as a second language; English language proficiency was not an issue in her 11th grade classrooms. However, she mentioned that kindergarten and first-grade teachers did have challenges dealing with students with poor English. According to Sonia, language was not an issue in her classrooms as even if her students had come from a non-English speaking culture, they had made progress in the language before they reached eleventh grade.

Sonia taught AP Government in separate classrooms during the first year, but the next year she taught a combined classroom because there were fewer students. Sonia noted that girls were quieter when they were in the same classroom with boys. Sonia thought that being in a separate classroom allowed girls to be stronger both in religious identity and academic success. During the interview, Sonia paid attention to the difference between girls and boys in terms of academic success. She explained that school policy was strict about the separation of girls and boys. Boys were not supposed to

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

be outside when girls' classrooms were outside. Students followed the rules during school hours, but teachers and administrators had challenges during after-school hours. For example, when parents did not come to pick up their children, according to Sonia, it was difficult to keep girls inside when boys were playing outside and vice versa. Moreover, the school was organizing field trips or extracurricular activities separately for girls and boys. Sonia mentioned that it was rare for students to go on the same field trip together.

Sonia talked during the interview about the different religious perspectives among parents. She explained that her students did not carry many cultural differences as a great majority of students were raised in American culture; however, the diverse backgrounds of parents were more apparent. Sonia gave an example about how the school administration and teachers struggled to obtain support from some of the parents regarding the school rules and educational philosophy.

According to Sonia, differences among parents do not come from culture but demonstrate different beliefs within Islam. Sonia pointed out generational differences between students and parents as a major cultural difference that she observed in her classrooms. She provided more details and an example about how obvious it was that students were representing American culture rather than their parents' origins. As an example, Sonia mentioned her observations of students' reactions when Osama Bin Laden was killed. She stated that her students encountered this incident from an American perspective whereas their parents did not. Another point Sonia explained involved how parents' educational ideas were based on the pedagogy that they were familiar with in their country of origin.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Sonia mentioned that sometimes she had difficulties finding ways to approach students of color. Although the students of color in her 11th-grade classroom were not African American, they tried to imitate black culture with their language and attire.

4.2.3. Multicultural Education. Since Sonia has a Master's degree in Curriculum Studies, she provided more information about multicultural education settings and related demands in the Islamic school where she worked. Sonia thought that the school did not have a focus on multicultural education, since the school emphasized its fully Muslim identity. According to Sonia, the school administration focused more on ignoring the differences among students. Sonia discussed that the school's educational approach aimed to strengthen students' Muslim identity regardless to their cultural and national differences. For example, as Sonia mentioned, there was a cultural day every year in the school; students wore their national dress, and gave presentations about their cultures. According to Sonia, the ultimate goal of this activity was to show that students share a strong Muslim identity while their cultural, national, and racial identities vary.

As Sonia stated, the school followed state standards to preserve its accreditation. However, the Islamic pedagogy that the school followed was not informed by any Islamic institutions in the U.S. The school's philosophy, lesson plans, and extra-curricular activities were created by the school. Sonia mentioned that Arabic, Quran, and Islamic studies teachers especially struggled to create standards and curricula as every year the school was making major modifications to these subjects' curricula. Sonia mentioned that the school that she taught did not have any relationship with any mosques in local community. As Sonia mentioned, the school was playing the role of magnet in the

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

community, and enrolling the children of parents who had close attachments to three different mosques.

4.3. Amira

My third participant was Amira. I interviewed her in her house on December 12, 2013. Her interview took 95 minutes. Amira welcomed me to her house with great hospitality. During the time of the interview, Amira was about to finish her Master's degree. She was not teaching in an Islamic school at the time of the interview.

4.3.1. Personal/community Background. Amira was born in India, and her family moved to the U.S. when she was two years old. As Amira stated, she was raised in American culture; she lost her language and Indian culture. Amira's undergraduate background was in Biology. Following her graduation from the Biology program, Amira was thinking about enrolling in law school, although her parents wanted her to register for medical school. Around the time when she was taking the tests to enroll in law school, Amira was hired temporarily by an Islamic school principal. Although Amira had not thought about teaching, her teaching experience in this Islamic school led her to continue her Master's degree in Curriculum Studies. As part of her graduate degree, she was employed by the university to teach multicultural education courses for undergraduate students in the College of Education. When she was taking graduate courses and teaching at the university, Amira worked in the Islamic school for three days in a week.

Amira had been enrolled in public school her entire life. As she mentioned, she did not feel comfortable as a student in the public school environment. She identified

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

herself as a minority in public school classrooms. According to her, after she began wearing *hijab*, she felt the sense of being a minority even more. Amira did not think about teaching in public schools because she did not have a teaching certificate. However, this was not the only reason she did not want to teach in a public school. As she discussed in her interview, Amira thought that a public school environment would not allow her to demonstrate her religion and cultural identity. Amira found the Islamic school environment more comfortable and felt a greater sense of community there.

During her three-and-a-half-year teaching experience, Amira taught English in 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade classrooms. She also taught AP English for 11th and 12th graders. She also taught 7th grade science for one year.

4.3.2. School Context. The Islamic school where Amira taught had accreditation from the state. The admission policies of this school were not competitive. This Islamic school accepted students who could not afford to pay the school's tuition if contribution to school by service would be accepted by the family. In her interview, Amira gave an example of a student whose parent brought sandwiches for school lunch once a week to pay the tuition with service. She also explained that some wealthy families sponsored other students' tuition at the school. The student population was about 250 students when Amira resigned from the school. Most of the classrooms in this school were mixed classrooms with a small number of students. Amira's class sizes were also small, with a range of between 8 to 12 students. As Amira stated, the school administration was not highly focused on standardized testing scores, as there was no funding received by the school from the state. This situation allowed Amira some freedom in her teaching. Most

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

teachers were originally from the Middle East and South Asia. There were also some African American teachers. The number of female teachers was much higher than the number of male teachers. Very few of the teachers held teaching certificates. Teachers came from different professional backgrounds such as engineering, pharmacy, and medicine. Amira stressed her belief that an education background should be important for working in such a diverse educational setting as these Islamic schools.

At the beginning of her interview, Amira gave specific information about the significance of constructing American Muslim identities for her students. She stressed that carrying a strong Muslim identity is the only way not to be assimilated, and it prevents students from feeling insulted. Amira mentioned that the school considered empowering students' Muslim identity to prepare a generation of Muslims in the U.S. with strong religious knowledge who will contribute a positive influence on society.

During her interview, Amira detailed the diversity of the school in terms of race, nationality, and class. Amira especially focused on the socioeconomic differences among her students. Amira mentioned that there were students of over 25 different nationalities in the school, but mostly from African countries such as Somalia, Kenya, and Sri Lanka. She explained that during her teaching experience in this school, all students were Muslim; however, she indicated that the school had accepted non-Muslim students in the past. The school aimed to hire Muslim teachers, but historically non-Muslim teachers had occasionally been hired by the school when there were no chances of finding Muslim teachers.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Amira stated that national diversity among her students intersected with the issue of language in her classrooms. Since she was teaching English for high school students, she was able to see the context of teaching English as a second language. She noticed that some students, especially those who came to the U.S. as refugees, had struggles related to writing and reading. She stated that those students were much better at speaking English; however, they had difficulties understanding main ideas and more complex issues.

As Amira pointed out in the interview, race was not so apparent in her classrooms. Most of her students were of students of color but they were not part of an African American culture. Her colored students were from Somolia, Sengal, Mauritania, and Kenya, with families who came to the U.S. for political reasons.

Amira stated that one of the differences among her students had to do with religious perspective. She specified that this was closely related to the parents' perspectives also. To elaborate, Amira connected her reflections on religious perspectives to the gender diversity specifically in her classrooms, and generally in the entire school. She thought that girls were much stronger in religion because they carried the visible Muslim identity given by *hijab.* In Amira's interview she stressed that all differences were intersecting with each other in this Islamic school. For example, later on she talked about how her students were living different kinds of lifestyles. She specifically underlined the narratives of students of color who came to the U.S. because of the wars in their countries. She explained that their experiences would not be understood by Muslims students who had only experienced privileged lives in the U.S.

Amira made clear that she did not consider race and national diversity as an issue, but she frequently repeated that gender, class, and language diversity were important

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

issues to be considered in multicultural education in her school. In Amira's school, class difference was obvious. There were children of well-known physicians, professional engineers, and university professors as well as children of truck drivers, janitors. As she stated in her interview, Amira did not approve of the school's educational approach, which ignored the class difference. According to Amira, the context of language was also as important as class. According to her, Arabic was not an issue among students as there were fewer students from the Middle East compared to students from Africa.

4.3.3. Multicultural Education Context. Amira thought that multicultural education was not considered enough by the school administration or the school board in the school where she worked for three and a half years. According to her, the reason behind this situation was that there were not enough teachers and administrators who considered the importance of multicultural education in school. Amira and the principal were the only people in the school who had Master's degrees in Education. However Amira thought that even the school principal's knowledge about multicultural education was limited to see the educational issues in school from broader perspective as his Master's degree was in Educational Leadership. To improve teachers' multicultural educational knowledge, Amira initiated informal meetings with teachers during the lunch hour to talk about educational topics such as culturally relevant pedagogy, equity, social justice, and multiculturalism. Although she tried to maintain this activity, the attendance was too low; she couldn't carry on. Moreover, she mentioned that the school was trying to survive with very limited resources, and were more occupied with the important issues of an insufficient budget than with multicultural educational concerns.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Although Amira did not get enough support and motivation from school administration or other teachers, she still developed instructional materials that allowed her students to think critically. According to her, teaching English gave her an excuse to bring up controversial issues such as media literacy, freedom, immigration, and feminism. She gave some examples of how she implemented multiculturalism and social justice in her classrooms which will be described in detailin the next chapter.

4.4. Salma

I interviewed Salma in my university office on April 15, 2014. Her interview was 57 minutes long. I could see that Salma was comfortable during her interview; she gave clear responses to my questions. At the time of interview, Salma had just moved to Indiana from Saudi Arabia. She was in her early thirties, married, and had two sons.

4.4.1. Personal/community Background. Salma was born in the U.S. Her father was from Pakistan; he came to the U.S. to receive his medical education and continued his career in the U.S. as a physician. Salma's mother was from Iran, also came to the U.S. to finish her medical education, and has been working as a physician in New Jersey. Salma grew up in a small town that was not diverse. She went to public schools for her K-12 education. As she mentioned, she and her siblings blended into American culture as her parents did not strictly adhere to either Pakistani or Iranian culture. She knows neither Urdu nor Persian. According to her, she did not have a strong cultural identity. During her public schooling, she was somewhat shy to represent her Muslim identity, and had difficulties expressing or showing her religious identity to her friends because she was the only Muslim student in her class. Salma received her undergraduate degree in English

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

literature from Cornell University. During her college years, she met with other Muslims, and felt more confident about her religious identity. In her second year of college, she decided to wear *hijab.* After her undergraduate degree, she received her Master's degree from Teacher's College at Colombia University in English education. During her Master's degree she was a student teacher in two schools, a public high school and a vocational high school in New York. Salma mentioned that she did not feel any discomfort while she was in these schools as a student teacher. During her Master's degree, she worked as a teacher in an Islamic school in New Jersey. She worked there for a year before moving to Saudi Arabia with her husband.

4.4.2. School Context. The school was founded twenty-five years ago to provide an Islamic educational environment for pre-school and kindergarten students; eventually the school became a full-day Islamic school for K through 12 education.

As Salma stated in her interview, the Islamic educational approach followed by the school reflected the educational perspectives of Saudi Arabia. When Salma was teaching in the school, student enrollment was at about 200 students. In her interview, Salma talked about how the student population in the school had been half its number just before she was employed. To make it clear, a year before Salma started to teach in the school, half of the parents had taken their children from the school because they had conflict with the school administration for having divergent perspectives. Salma had not witnessed this situation. However, during the interview, she talked about how this situation affected the school for a long time.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

During her interview, Salma gave details about the educational settings of this Islamic school. When Salma was teaching there, she struggled due to the physical conditions in the school. She explained how she had to spend her salary to bring a white board or projector to her classroom. The school was not able to provide educational facilities such as a gym, library, or science laboratory. Most of the classes were small; for example, Salma had only five students in her 12th grade classroom.

According to Salma, the school environment was not diverse. A majority of students were African American and the rest were Hispanic. According to Salma, all the students in the school were the children of American convert Muslims. Salma was the only white person who was working in the school. Other teachers were African American and also all female. Only the principal of the school was male. Most of the teachers had children enrolled at the school, and were from the neighborhood of the school. The principal of the school was also the head of the school board.

Salma did not consider race an issue in her classroom because all her students shared the same background. Actually, Salma had an issue related to her own race; she thought that she was often misunderstood by students and also teachers because she carried a different racial identity. In addition, Salma did not talk about much about national diversity in the school as most of the students had been born and raised in the U.S., children of African American converts. Similarly, language was not an issue in her classrooms.

Students in this school also shared the same socioeconomic background—that is, low income; class was not an issue in Salma's classroom. As Salma mentioned, the school provided a safe environment compared to the public school environments in the

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

area. According to her, there were several serious issues with public schooling in that community, such as drug use, teen pregnancies, and gangs.

As Salma mentioned, according to its policy the school did not accept non-Muslim students or teachers. Students were required to wear uniforms. Also, female teachers were supposed to wear *abaya*—loose caftans—in the school. Salma stated that sometimes it was difficult to follow the dress code as a teacher. In some classes boys and girls were separated, but mostly the classrooms were mixed. However, girls were supposed sit in the front of the classroom to middle section of the classroom, and boys in the middle to top section. Sometimes physical dividers were used to separate girls and boys.

Salma stressed the role of gender in her classrooms. First, there were more girls than boys in the school. Second, according to Sonia, the school was not motivating girls from an academic perspective. Most of the girls in her classrooms were expected to be homemakers after their high school graduation. Salma felt a sense of "otherness" in this situation because she was not supported by administrators and other teachers. Last, Salma mentioned that the dress code of the school did not reflect the students' personal identities, especially for girls. Therefore, girls were often breaking the school rules, and protesting. According Salma, the strict policies of the school, like in the dress code case, resulted in rebellion, and students expressed their personal identities in spite of school policy and rules.

4.4.3. Multicultural Education Context. In her interview, Salma mentioned that multicultural education was not effectively considered by school administration. During

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

her time teaching at the school, Salma wanted to apply teaching materials that she knew from her Master's degree, but the school principal did not allow her to use them, as he found them to be non-Islamic. She decided not to insist or argue any more with the principal; she thought that the incident of half of the students leaving showed that the school administration was not positive about discussing and implementing new ideas .

To improve multicultural education in Islamic schools in the U.S., Salma suggested that non-Muslim teachers and administrators should be hired in the school to expand the educational approach of the school. Salma mentioned that Islamic educational philosophy in the school was so strict, no space was provided to bring in the voices of teachers and students.

Salma considered lack of funding to be a major obstacle preventing the improvement of general educational standards (e.g. physical conditions of the school) and also multicultural education. Salma talked about her experiences in her Master's degree. She noted that she could not have enough knowledge from the graduate courses that she took in her Master's program about how to discuss and explain critical topics that may be inappropriate in Islamic school environments. For example, she explained that gender diversity was mentioned in her classes—however, how to practice its implications in a religious school was not.

According to Salma, politics within the school made it difficult to implement new educational methods, and to bring new ideas to the school's educational programs. Salma preferred to position herself outside of those politics. According to Salma, teaching in

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

this Islamic school was a lesson in how Muslims in the U.S. share the same religion in such different ways.

4.5. Zainab

I interviewed Zainab on June 5, 2014. Zainab was another participant whom I interviewed via Skype. At the time of her interview, Zainab was in Kuwait working as a vice principal in a bilingual Islamic school. I interviewed her for one hour. Her contribution will be detailed below.

4.5.1. Personal/community Background. Zainab was an immigrant to the U.S. Her father was an Egyptian, and her mother was from Europe. She had numerous experiences during twenty-three years in three different Islamic schools in Virginia, New Jersey and Maryland. She worked officially as a teacher, curriculum developer, and administrator in an Islamic school in Virginia. She also helped two other Islamic schools in New Jersey and Maryland receive accreditation, raise funds, and establish an Arabic curriculum. As she stated, she unofficially contributed her knowledge and experience to several schools working towards accreditation and establishing school policy. With such a long and rich experience, Zainab discussed several key points in her interview.

Zainab's professional background was also very interesting. She received her bachelor's degree in Chemistry in Egypt. Then she earned her Master's degree in Secondary Education and received a teaching certificate to teach in Islamic schools. While working in Islamic schools, she developed an interest in Islamic studies and decided to pursue an undergraduate degree in Islamic studies. It took eight years for her to finish the degree because she was working in an Islamic school. After that, she

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

completed another Master's degree in teaching English as a Second Language after receiving funding from the Saudi Arabian government. Later, she completed her PhD in Educational Administration and Policy Studies.

4.5.2. The School Context. The school in Virginia where Zainab worked opened in 1984; it was subsidized by the Saudi Arabian government. The school was established to meet the educational needs of Saudi diplomats' children during their time in the U.S. All the needs of the school, and even teachers' salaries, were paid by the Saudi government for some years. According to Zainab, the Saudi government's financial support is still in place but to a lesser extent than previously As Zainab mentioned, the school did not struggle with funding issues as much as many other Islamic schools in the U.S. did. Zainab wanted to register her daughter at the school when it was newly opened. However, there were 4,000 students on the waiting list. The school was accepting Saudi diplomats' children first, then the children of people who were working in the school, so it was difficult to register. To register her daughter, Zainab started to work as a teacher's assistant in the school. She was not accepted as a teacher because of two reasons: 1) she did not hold a teaching certificate, and 2) she was not a native speaker of English. After working as an assistant for six months, she applied for a Master's degree just to be certified. Then she started to teach Science in the school. The school did not have high school in those years; Zainab developed a high school science program, and then the school started to have high school a few years later.

Zainab mentioned that after 9/11 the school had difficult times. A number of serious accusations have been made against the school. The most specific complaint was

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

that the school was teaching students not to respect any religion other than Islam, and encouraging terrorist ideologies against the U.S. Zainab mentioned that all these misunderstandings came about because the school had an apparent connection to Saudi Arabia.

Regarding the diversity she experienced in the school, she first focused on socioeconomic standards. She said that great majority of the students were wealthy, because they were the children of Saudi diplomats. One of the interesting things she mentioned regarding socioeconomic status was about how much difficulty teachers faced in such a school; most of the teachers were not from upper socioeconomic classes like the students in the school. She mentioned that socioeconomic class differences could be observed among students.

In terms of nationality, the school consisted of students from more than thirty nations. However, specifically different than other Islamic schools in the U.S., a majority of students came from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries. According to Zainab, national differences among students were not an issue either in her classrooms or in the school environment. Similarly, Zainab did not observe any significant racial issues.

The school, where Zainab worked for twenty years, provided education for girls and boys in different buildings after third grade. The school simply had two parts: the girls' school and the boys' school. For senior high school, AP classes might be combined if there were only a few students in the boys' and girls' classrooms. Young male teachers were not allowed to teach girls in high school; there was no restriction for female teachers. The school had a dress code, but it was not very strict.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

As Zainab stated, the school had a strong ESL focus in its curriculum. Since there were many students who came from Saudi Arabia with poor English, the Saudi government provided the school with several opportunities to improve ESL education—for example, teaching Science especially for ESL students. Zainab mentioned that the school had better facilities in ESL education when compared to other Islamic schools she had experienced.

4.5.3. Multicultural Educational Context. During her interview, Zainab discussed her concerns regarding multicultural education and its development in Islamic schools. Based on her experiences, she did not narrow the multicultural education context only to the school she worked in officially, but she discussed it generally. For example, Zainap thought that multicultural education is important on both sides, for Muslim teachers and non-Muslim teachers. According to her, Muslim teachers should consider multicultural education to transform their teaching beliefs which were conceptualized according to their native culture into the educational context in Islamic schools in the U.S. Non-Muslim teachers who work in Islamic schools also should improve their multicultural education knowledge to teach students who have very different cultures and beliefs from themselves.

Zainab also discussed how the founders of Islamic schools in the U.S. should improve their understandings of multicultural education, and should develop educational approaches that will meet the all expectations of Muslim communities. At this point, she stated that the most important way of improving multicultural education in Islamic

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

schools in the U.S. is by building connections in school communities and including the perspectives of people from every different culture or nationality.

During her interview, Zainab also highlighted that if Muslims leave their political views and follow true Islam, then good multicultural education develops by itself. She stressed that Islam itself advocates human rights, equity, and social justice, which are core principles for improving multicultural education.

4.6.Amal

I interviewed Amal in her house on April, 2014. Her interview took 70 minutes. Amal had not been teaching in an Islamic school for the two years previous to the time of the interview.

4.6.1. Personal/community Background. Amal grew up in Dearborn, Michigan. In her educational background, she always went to public school as her sisters did. Amal's family emigrated from Lebanon to the U.S. in the 1970s to work in an automotive factory. Amal and her all sisters were born in the U.S. Amal received her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education, and her teaching certificate in middle school Mathematics Education from the University of Michigan. She received her Master's degree in Educational Leadership.

The community where Amal grew up in included a large number of Muslim immigrants from Lebanon; during her schooling in public school she did not feel as much otherness, since most of her teachers had knowledge about Muslim culture in the neighborhood and school community. She mentioned that when she was a student in

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

public school, she had several Muslim teachers. In actuality, she mentioned that in the public high school she went to, Americans were the minority. She stated that her public school environment was different than any other public school in the U.S., so that she did not feel discomfort because of holding a Muslim identity.

4.6.2. The School Context. The school Amal taught in for four years was founded in the early 90s. When the school was newly open, the school population was about 20 students. Originally the school provided a K through 3rd grade education with two or three classrooms. In 2005, the school added a middle school. When she quit teaching in the school, the student population had grown to 300 students and 40 staff members. The school had accreditation from the state, and the curriculum, vision, and mission of the school were adapted to meet state standards.

Amal did not observe diversity in the school because almost all students shared the same cultural background. For example, a great majority of students were culturally Lebanese. Therefore, as Amal discussed, the school did not represent much racial, cultural, or national diversity. The school had very few students from Iraq, and few non-Muslim students. Amal stated that all students were born in the U.S. and had grown up in Michigan. Amal had only one Muslim student from a country other than Lebanon. That student left the school because of the culture of the school and neighborhood. Also, the school's teachers came from the community, and most were Muslims. Occasionally, there were non-Muslim teachers. All teachers were certified in their subject from universities in Michigan, and considerable number of them had graduate degrees.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

As mentioned above, language was not an issue in the school. There were not ESL classrooms because the school did not need them. The test scores of students in English, reading, and writing were high. Arabic was mainly spoken in the school. The few non-Muslim students were the children of Christian families from Lebanon, so they could also speak Arabic.

In terms of socioeconomic class, the school was not diverse. All students were coming from the same neighborhood, and their parents had highly-paid jobs such as doctors, pharmacists, lawyers, professors, engineers, and business owners. Parents were paying for tuition, textbook fees, lunches, and uniforms. The school did not have funding issues, and was able to provide good facilities. Related to gender, there were more girls than boys in the school. Classrooms were mixed. The school had the same policies toward boys and girls. The only diversity she mentioned during her interview was about religiosity. During her interview she mentioned that some parents in the school wereconcerned about building a strong Muslim identity for their children, while some others were not sufficiently promoting Islamic culture although they registered their children to attend Islamic schools.

4.6.3. Multicultural Education Context. Although Amal did not observe much diversity in the school, she provided critical insights into multicultural education and its development in Islamic schools. Firstly, she mentioned that she learned about multicultural education during her Master's degree. She stated that if she had not received her Master's degree, she would not have had this knowledge. She believes that the

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

undergraduate degree she earned was not enough to prepare her to conceptualize the importance of multicultural education.

Amal stressed the importance of multicultural education in improving mutual understanding, respect, and empathy within the community. According to her, it was difficult to change parents' cultural perspectives and ways of thinking, which negatively influenced the development of multiculturalism in the school and community. She also expanded her thoughts to the general Muslim community in North America, regarding the importance of multiculturalism for maintaining a unified Muslim community in the U.S.

4.7. Summary

The six portraits discussed in this chapter described the case of each participant, from personal and family background, through to teaching experiences in Islamic schools in the U.S., and finally concluding with participants' perspectives of multicultural education and its development in Islamic schools. Each participant brought in different stories, experiences, and contexts. The next section in my dissertation will provide findings of data analysis where I used direct content analysis to separate out the various contexts of the portraits.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER 5. FINDINGS

The purpose of this descriptive collective case study was to investigate how the climate of Islamic schools in the U.S. demonstrate diversity regarding race, class, nationality, language, and gender, and to take Islamic school teachers' experiences into consideration when thinking about multicultural education development in these schools. In chapter 2, I provided an in depth analysis of literature on the education of Muslims in the U.S., on the role of Islamic schools in the education of Muslim students, on the educational contexts of Islamic schools in the U.S., and on diversity among Muslims. In Cchapter 3 I discussed the details of the theoretical framework guiding my research, including how and why I designed my research as a descriptive collective case study. The descriptions of six cases were presented as portraits in Chapter 4, tracing each participant's personal/community background, school context where they taught, and a summary of their multicultural education perspectives. This chapter provides the outcomes that were revealed by data analysis within and across the cases.

As discussed in Chapter 3, I applied individual data analysis to each case to extract the important categories from each participant. After that, I generated the table below that lists all sub- themes brought up in each case. This table also included common sub-themes that were represented in most of the cases to compare all six cases.

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

Sub-themes	Table 5.1. Cross Case Analyses					
	Rania	Sonia	Amira	Salma	Zainab	Amal
Funding of Islamic schools		X	X	X	X	
Islamic education		X	X	X	X	X
School rules		X	X	X	X	X
Parents	X	X	X			X
Teachers	X	X	X	X	X	X
Race		X	X	X		
Class		X	X	X	X	
Nationality	X	X	X		X	X
Language	X	X	X			
Gender		X	X	X		
School approach to multicultural education		X	X	X	X	X
Personal approach to multicultural education	X	X	X	X		

I grouped the sub-themes under three overall themes which were selected according to the research questions of this study. The overall themes were (a) school context, (b) diversity, and (c) multicultural education. The figure below illustrates the categorization of themes and sub-themes. This chapter includes the key findings and

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

analyses of sub-themes under these three themes, and compares the key findings and analyses among six cases. The key findings and analyses were discussed in this chapter through using direct quotes from the interview transcripts. Since the interviews in this study were transcribed verbatim, there were some errors due to English being a second language for participants or to normal conversational errors. A comprehensive discussion of findings will be provided in the next chapter in which I summarized the key findings and analyses of this study, discussed how the key findings and analyses reflected the scope of this research, explained how the key findings and analyses reflected the highlights of reviewed literature, and suggested practical implications of the findings.

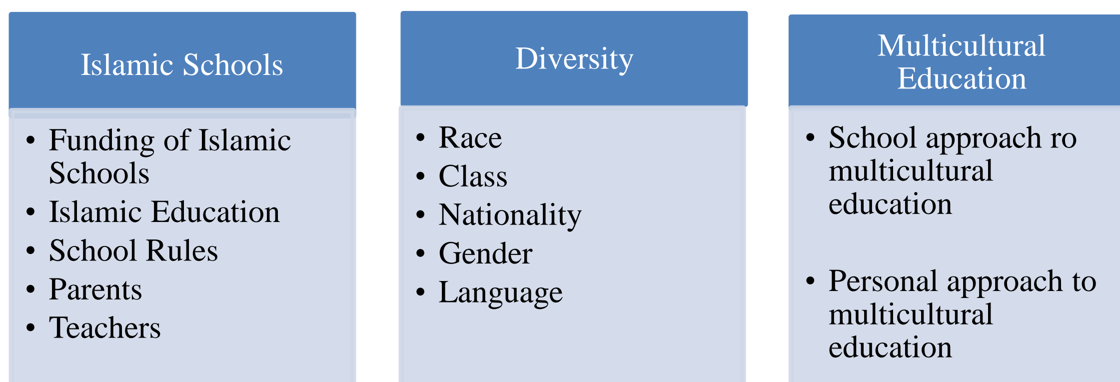


Figure 5.1: General Themes

5.1. Islamic Schools (Theme 1)

In the interview protocol of my research, there was no specific question to ask about the school's educational setting, rules, and approach. However, my semi-structured interview questions did allow participants to describe the school(s) where they have taught before. Each case revealed several Islamic school contexts with different Islamic education perspectives, school rules, and teachers' profiles.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

5.1.1. Funding of Islamic Schools. Data analysis of six participants' interviews revealed that the funding context in Islamic schools was considered significant by four participants (Sonia, Amira, Salma, and Zainab); funding was not discussed in depth by the others. For example, in Rania's interview, findings demonstrated that funding issue were more common in full-day Islamic schools; her school, as a weekend Islamic schools, was less concerned with funding problem. Similarly to Rania's interview, data analysis of Amal's interview did not identify specific results in terms of funding. However, in data analysis of other interviews (Sonia, Amira, Salma, and Zainab), funding of Islamic schools was considered a significant issue in conceptualization of multicultural education in Islamic schools. For example, Sonia explained how she was disappointed when she first saw the physical facilities of the Islamic school where she was hired. In her words:

> They were just creating classrooms out of nowhere. The first year I taught there I had some classes in the cafeteria, gymnasium, prayer room, and multipurpose room. I mean one room and they use for different things. When it rains, the rain comes through the roof; there were garbage cans all over the school collecting rain. The first year when I was there I was literally in shock. The second year I was there I was like this is normal. And when I left, I was extremely sad. The first day when I walked in I was like where the heck am I teaching. And the last day when I left, it was 180 degrees difference, regardless of, you know, the physical facilities.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Salma had similar experiences when she taught in a school located in a low-income neighborhood.

> From what I understood, funding was a big issue. The school was very poor. There were not a lot of resources, or a kind of facilities, for the kids. There were no sport teams, there were no extracurricular activities for the children. It was just the school, and that was it. Only classes were offered.

Unlike Amira, Sonia, and Salma, Zainab's experiences in her school represented different perspectives on funding Islamic schools in the U.S. As she stated:

> The school I worked it was a lot subsidized by the Saudis [*sic*]. At that time there were many, many students, and students from all around world. And they did not want to put the kids in the public system, so they worked on establishing the Islamic school. The school did not have a lot of the problems that most of the Islamic school in the nation have which is the financial problem because it was subsidized by the Saudi government.

Data analysis showed that most participants considered the funding of Islamic schools to be important for improving multicultural education in these schools.

5.1.2. Islamic Education. As mentioned before, my research does not aim to investigate the characteristics of Islamic education in Islamic schools in the U.S.; however, most of the participants discussed the influence of the Islamic educational perspectives of the schools on their own classrooms and teaching approaches. Also, brief discussions of Islamic education in Islamic schools brought light to the multicultural

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

educational approaches of these schools—a connection that will be discussed later in this chapter. For example, Sonia's interview showed that some Islamic educational approaches may create tensions between parents and the administrators or teachers.

> The school was teaching a very strict Islamic belief. They took much more conservative view than a lot of other schools, but parents and students were disagreeing. They were thinking that the school was too strict. The separation was too much. The uniform was too stiff. The rules were too strict. They picked on a lot of different things. Students would complain about something, and parents were supporting students instead of supporting the school. Therefore, sometimes there were little tensions because of these in parent/teacher conferences.

Similarly to Sonia's case, Salma also mentioned in her interview that the politics of an Islamic educational approach played an important role for parents when choosing Islamic schools for their children.

> Actually, the year before I had arrived at the school. The school had double the amount of the students—I think they were total 400 students in the school from kindergarten to 12th grade. And there were a kind of political problem between the imam of the school, who was also the principle, and some of the families. Actually about half of the students ended up leaving the school.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

On the other hand, Amira's interview analysis showed what may happen if the Islamic educational approach in Islamic school allows students to represent their personalities and cultural backgrounds.

> Public schools set Muslim students opposition their identities; I mean their Islamic culture and traditional culture. You do not feel like you can bring both together and create, you know, hybrid identity, but you have to choose and fragment yourself. So in school you have to pretend to be American and at home you can be who you are, right. Then in school, you do not express your Muslim identity, and at home you can be Muslim. But in this school or in any Islamic school you do not have to divide yourself in that way. You are one in the space, so the space allows you to be Muslim and it allows you to be American at the same time.

The Islamic educational approach was not explained deeply by Amal. She did talk about how Islamic education approach in the school required the integration of Islamic Studies and Arabic with other subjects. In her words:

> As part of our curriculum we had Arabic, we had Islamic studies. As part of the accreditation we were required to integrate. We were required, because it was part of our mission, and vision, we were required to incorporate Islamic studies across the curriculum whether being in math or science, such as in math writing a paper about some mathematicians that were Muslims.

Integration of Islamic education into other subjects was also analyzed in Sonia's interview.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

> They [school administrators] expect Islam to be incorporated into every lesson somehow, like connected to, you know, Islam. Even if you are talking about World War II, U.S. Government, or when you are doing English essay they want some sources of connection back to Islam. You have to put in your lesson plan and they expect to hear it.

In terms of Islamic education, Zainab did not give much detail about Islamic educational philosophy, but she explained how the school was misunderstood especially after 9/11, because of the Saudi Arabian government's support for the school. She said:

> The school where I was working was accused of teaching terrorist which was completely not true, I mean I was a teacher there, my kids were students there, and I knew everybody was there, and there was nothing of that sort. I mean for example Saudis have tribal names. So some people were accused because of the same last name. So they started looking for the people in the school, maybe they were terrorists, maybe they were this, for the things were not real. Also, they were saying that the school was teaching students hatreds, and terrorism and whatever. We had Saudi curriculum books for Arabic and Islamic studies. They looked at and to find something that could be interpreted in two ways

Data analysis of Rania's interview showed that she did not discuss the Islamic educational approach directly.

5.1.3. School Rules. The descriptions in participants' interviews showed that Islamic school teachers modify their instructional methods and pedagogy according to

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

official school rules in the schools. For example, Sonia's interview exemplified that the rules in the school did not allow her to bring her own perspectives into her lesson plans.

> In the public high school I taught, you never have to submit lesson plans unless you are being observed. You never had somebody watching you. If you do the same thing every day, nobody would care. I mean it is very free. You do as you pleased. And as long as your students are at the certain points at the end of the semester, you are okay. At the Islamic school I was teaching, there was high accountability. They were very much obsessed with success, students' achieving, test scores, lesson plans being submitted, and technology being used with. You always felt you have to be at the top of your game. Every week, lesson plans were due for the entire week.

Sonia's interview analysis also provided a comparison between her experiences at the Islamic school and at public school. Salma's interview analysis also revealed that the rules in her school were too strict to follow, even for her.

> The school was a kind of very strict, and had strict atmosphere of Islam. Mostly, they were following the school of Saudi Islam. That was there. All of them were that type, so if you did not follow them you might a kind of felt religiously weak. Teachers had to wear *abaya*, and students had to wear *abaya* too.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Data analysis showed that in the cases where the schools followed a strict Islamic education approach, participants felt that their instructions did not reflect their own beliefs and perspectives.

5.1.4. Parents. The influence of parents in the development of multicultural education in Islamic schools was mentioned by most of the participants. For example, Rania discussed how parents approached the school without intention of following the school rules; she also explained some tensions that she had with parents while she was administrating the school.

> The interesting thing is that, the public schools in our town do the same things and these parents follow the rules over there, or at least they do not make problems because of small things. However when it comes to Islamic school they did not follow school rules very properly such as being on time, doing homework, and bringing school supplies.
> I did not have teacher-parents meeting when I was running the school. Since I thought that they (parents) could not see the whole picture so that I just continued to do my job. There were few people wanted me to go. Even they saw their children happy and learning but they were blind. It was so sad to see that those people extremely happy to see me leave; but the majority were able to understand what I was doing.

Participants mentioned their experiences with and perspectives on the parents of the students in the schools where they have taught; however, the issues

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

related to parents intersected with other contexts such as socio-economic class, gender, and multicultural education.

5.1.5. Teachers. Data analysis of the interviews also revealed that teachers' profiles across the Islamic schools represented in these six cases were different, varying according to schools' educational approaches and financial situations. For example, in Zainab's case:

> Half of the teachers in the school were Christian and Jewish. There was no restriction of religion with apply for the position, you did not have to be a Muslim to teach in that school. Most of Islamic schools prefer teachers to be Muslims but this school did not care. The school had many non Muslim teachers.

The cases of Sonia, Amira, and Salma were similar to each other but completely different from the case of Zainab. Sonia and Amira describe their experiences as follows:

> I was only one, one or two, of fifty-five teachers that was certified. A lot of them who have degree in biology, computer science, engineering, I mean top degrees but none of them were teachers. So I was the only one certified. (Sonia)

> We were about twenty-five to thirty teachers. All of the teachers had degrees, bachelor's degree at the minimum. Not everybody was certified, in fact few of the teachers were certified. Most of the teachers had higher degrees than bachelor's degree. We had lots of teachers with master's degree. We had a teacher who was even a doctor. We had lawyers,

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

pharmacists. You know, they come from their countries, and can not take the equivalency exam, but they were still well- educated people, teachers. (Amira)

In terms of schools requiring teaching certificates, Amal's case was similar to Zainab's case, but not exactly the same.

Teachers were mostly Muslims. Most of them were from Michigan; they were not immigrants. The bulk of them graduated from the universities in Michigan. We had a few at a time, we had three or four staff members who were not Muslim. They followed the Islamic dress code; they wore the scarf when they come in. They were taught and guided about how they were going to adjust their lesson based on Islam.

Since Rania was not working in a full-day Islamic school, she did not discuss teacher perspective in a way that other participants explained. However, her case brought different perspective to discuss how nationality of teachers became an issue among parents because of specific reasons as Rania explained below.

You know Arabs have their own way in education. For example, from Arab perspective learning is an intense; it requires strong memorization and strong teachers who are very strict, have high expectations. Versus to this perspective, you have a Malaysian child who is used to calm and quiet atmosphere. Then you can see that Malaysian child is crying as he gets scared. When I did in 2005, there were a lot of Arabs wanted to be involve as teachers, because they felt like that is how is the school going to run better if we run or are big part of it. But the problem was then the

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

American, Indian, and the Pakistani parents as they were upset because of the more aggressive, and the more forceful way of teaching. This is an example what we went thorough in our school.

5.2. Diversity (Theme 2)

The overarching purpose of my research is to investigate how the climate of Islamic schools in the U.S. represent diversity among general Muslim communities in the U.S. by drawing on the perspectives and the experiences of six Islamic school teachers. The interview protocol of my research included several questions aimed at revealing the existence and the details of diversity in terms of race, class, nationality, language, and gender. The data analysis concluded that all teachers observed different types of diversities, depending on their school's context and community. Only Amal mentioned that the school where she taught for four years did not show diversity in terms race, class, nationality, gender, and language.

5.2.1. Race. The data analysis within and across cases revealed that most of the participants (Sonia, Rania, Amira, and Zainab) experienced racial diversity in their schools, but did not consider it an issue. Especially in Sonia's and Amira's cases, where most students were students of color, neither participant mentioned that race was a problem in their classrooms. In Amal's school, there were no racial differences, as almost all students' parents and most of the teachers were from Lebanon. Race was only considered an issue in the case of Salma. As mentioned before, Salma worked in a school where teachers and students were indigenous Muslims (African American and Hispanic). The description she gave in her interview showed that she did not observe racial

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

discrimination among her students, but she experienced racial discrimination personally for being White in that school. She detailed the experience as follows:

> Everyone was American born; and African American and Hispanic. Actually I had issues for not being African American. One issue actually happened in my 11th grade class when I tried to discipline them. A lot of them were used to have someone to put them back into the class and to behave respectfully towards a teacher some of them had created an accusation against me that I was racist. One of the mothers called me angrily saying "I want to meet with you personally to talk about the way you treated my daughter." Knowing that it was not a good situation, I got the principal involved and said if we gonna meet I want to meet with you not alone with the mother. We had a discussion, and eventually came out that obviously it was not true that I was a racist it was because of disciplining issues. Also other teachers was saying like it sounds you were racist in the class.

Another important finding revealed in data analysis was the fact that both Sonia and Salma described African American students or teachers in their schools as converts.

> There were some African Americans; their grandparents were converts and have been here for a long time. Majority of students were colored.

5.2.2. Class. In all interviews except Amal's, class diversity was mentioned, and was considered an important issue. In Rania's case, it was not as much or as strong, but she mentioned it. In Sonia's, Amira's, and Salma's schools, class was an important issue

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

to be considered in multicultural education in Islamic schools. For example, as Sonia and Amira explained:

> Class was an issue a lot of the time. It was very obvious. Although the kids were in uniforms, it was still very apparent. So there were some incidents, for example, we were having study sessions after school and we were ordering pizzas. Some of the kids just would not have the money to pay their share. Another example would be a field trip we would go with laser tag, such like 20 dollars for lunch and transportation. Some of the kids would stay at home for that day because they would not have the money. These were 11th graders. For example another girl would say to her friend "why you did not tell me, I was going to pay", you know, the girl was daughter of the doctor. It was pretty obvious. Even when I was working in my desk, I was often hearing such these conversations. (Sonia)

> There is definitely strong diversity in terms of nationality and also in terms of social class. This school does not turn away any students who cannot afford so we have a broad spectrum of students. Some parents are doctors, both parents are doctors, I mean very wealthy. We have parents really specialized engineers and lawyers in the state in those high profession class parents. Also we have parents who are truck drivers, taxi drivers and nurses. All of these kids come to this school so we do not only see different languages, culture and nationalities but we see also different social classes. So, in terms of that there are definitely a lot of differences.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

> Our Indian, Pakistani, Asian students and also our Arab students come really predominantly wealthier backgrounds, professional class backgrounds. And our African, Somalian, Kenyan students come from lower class background because that is just the way the labor market is. The Muslims who emmigrate from South East Asia, they are highly trained professionals. And those who came from Africa they are political refugees who escape from the war in Somalia so they are coming to those minimum types of labors. So in our classes the best students are from South East Asia and Arab because they have that cultural capital knowledge and social capital at home, they have resources. Parents they can buy them iPods and own laptops. The parents have the time to drive them everywhere for their speech tournament to give them extra supplies and those kinds of things. Those parents have deeper conversation with the students, it means they have different set of conversations with students if they are doctors and lawyers. They live in nicer houses and they do better. And our African or Somalian students, their parents have different sort of resources so they don't do as well and you see that it is very clear. (Amira)

In Salma's case, the school did not represent much class diversity among students and teachers but Salma had issues regarding class in her classroom because of coming from a different socio-economic background than her students. For example, she mentioned her experience as:

> I remember one incident, I was telling my students like as I was told in my high schools like you need to better study or you are gonna be flipping

www.manaraa.com

> burgers in McDonalds. I said these to my students in Islamic school to motivate them and lots of students were offended like what is wrong with flipping burger, what is wrong with that my uncle worked, my dad worked in McDonalds. And I realized it was a completely different culture atmosphere and that is normal and acceptable good job for them.

As mentioned in the profile of Zainab, the school where Zainab taught represented a kind of class diversity much different than other participants' schools. Zainab describes her school's context as:

> The junior and senior students in the high school were used to come to school with the cars. They had the fanciest cars in the world, because a lot of them were diplomats' kids. The teachers had the most miserable situation in the school because they were working class people. Teachers were looking at the cars, I mean, they were not rich people.

To summarize, socioeconomic diversity was considered important by all participants in this research project. Moreover, socioeconomic diversity also emerged in other sub-themes such as nationality.

5.2.3. Nationality. The interviews of all participants indicated that diversity of nationality was obvious in the schools described in every case. The cases of Rania, Sonia, and Amira showed many similarities. For example, Rania stated:

> So the community was very diverse. We got Arab children from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Palestine. I mean all of the countries represented. We had Indian, Pakistani, Indonesian children, Malaysian children, Chinese

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

> Muslim children, and American Muslim children. It was very diverse as well as difficult.

When Sonia was explaining the situation in the school where she taught, she used similar vocabulary.

> The school was extremely diverse. I can't begin to tell you. In the first year I taught I had seventeen students. I had ten girls and seven boys; and I had students from Ethiopia, Somalia, India, Egypt, African American converts, Palestine, Venezuela. I mean from everywhere; and that was just my class which was very small. If you go to for example kindergarten through seven grades, there were thirty students per class. There were two classes, boys and girls; so it makes sixty students for each grade from everywhere, very, very diverse.

Amira's interview transcription represented in the above findings on class diversity also revealed details of national diversity in her school at the same time. However, later in her interview Amira stated that national diversity was not an issue in the school. In her words:

> I think we have to be aware of class background. We are very familiar and comfortable with national background, Muslims in the U.S. are immigrant communities so we come together along with our common identifier which is Islam; so we are used to going to the mosques and having Arabs, Pakistanis, Africans, and Malaysian. We are used to them, and I hope we do not look down on them. For me national diversity is not a problem.

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

Similarly to Amira, Zainab did not consider national diversity an issue. The findings showed that coming from different countries did not cause any problems among students in her school.

National diversity was a significant issue in Rania's case. She mentioned several examples; however, none of her examples pointed out the students in the school. Her experiences were related to the various nationalities among parents, and how these differences influenced the school and also the community. For example, data analysis of her interview found several descriptions of Arab supremacy.

> As well as being American, being married to an Arab man was well liked in the community. However there is always this underlying tone among Arabs in our community, everybody else is okay as a person—they are okay—but we know this; it does not matter what country but we know best.

Arab supremacy was also revealed in Sonia's interview, but in her case it was among the students in her class.

> The only time I think that kids would be separate because of Arabic. I had only one or two students who were having Arab origin. Other students would be a bit…,not jealous, but would assume that Arab students understand better than them, or have certain advantages in Quran or Arabic classes.

At the beginning of her interview, Amal stated that there were no nationality differences in her school. However, at the end of her interview, she gave an example which indicated the existence of Arab supremacy in her school. She brought up the

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

example of one South Asian Muslim student who ended up leaving the school and going to another Islamic school in the community that provided more diversity and a more comfortable environment for students. Amal mentioned that other (Lebanese) students had been making fun of this student's national identity, so her parents decided to move to another neighborhood.

Sonia's interview analysis brought another perspective to the topic of national identity: the challenge of American identity construction for Muslim students. Her example interesting illustrated how the students in her class were representing cultural identities different from those of their immigrant parents. Sonia described this situation as:

> The cultural difference that I noticed the most was the generation difference between parents and students. The students, these kids, are American. They are fed out of the American mainstream media. They are Muslim, they are in Islamic schools, they are in *hijab*; but through and through they are like any of the other American teenagers. They watch the same movies, same TV shows, and listen to the same music. Their culture is American culture. But their parents' culture is not, they are immigrants.

Data analysis showed that national differences were considered significantly by most of the participants in this research. The six cases included in this study show that national diversity can be an issue in Islamic education in the U.S. Findings revealed that while some Islamic schools' contexts—particularly those offered by three participants (Rania, Sonia, Amira)—represented great diversity in terms of nationality, the other schools' contexts, brought by the other three participants (Zainab, Salma, and Amal),

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

provided nationalized educational contexts such as Lebanese, Saudi Arabian, and African American.

5.2.4. Gender. As discussed in the participants' portraits, each school followed different regulations about gender. For example, the schools contextualized by three of my participants (Sonia, Salma, and Zainab) separated boys and girls starting kindergarten or first grade in elementary schools. Amira's school separated boys and girls after elementary school. In other schools, contextualized by Amal and Rania, classrooms were mixed. Data analysis of the interviews found that participants in my study discussed gender diversity from different perspectives. Rania's, Amal's, and Zainab's interviews only considered how school policies approached gender diversity where they taught. On the other hand, Amira, Sonia, and Salma stressed how their schools' educational policy played a role in gender identity construction. For example, Amira's and Sonia's interviews stressed that girls in their classrooms had stronger Muslim identities and were more focused on their academic success than boys in their classrooms. In her interview, Sonia said:

> Those girls were top of the top, they graduated and they went to very well-known universities. The girls were much stronger than boys, and cared more about their success. There are lots of studies showing that in segregated schools by gender, girls come out stronger. When they are together, they are more shy or more timid to express and achieve, because it is not seen as something girly to achieve in math and especially in science. That was also what I found in my classrooms.

للاستشارات المنارة
www.manaraa.com

Contradicting Amira’s and Sonia’s cases, the data analysis of Salma’s interview showed that female students were not motivated enough to be successful. Salma explained the situation in her words:

> As an outsider in this particular community, that certain gender roles were expected of the students, particularly the girls. For example, it was common in this community for women to marry young and immediately begin to have children, and to have many children. Many of the students' mothers had done just that. Some of these families expected the same of their daughters, and for that reason, education was perhaps not as urgent for these girls. I recall one incident in which I had spoken to the teacher who had taught my class the previous year. She commented privately to me that one girl was not a good student, and, in her opinion, not intelligent. The solution for that girl, she said was, "Stay pretty and cook good." It was a strange comment, but it spoke to me that continuing education after high school was not necessarily expected of all the girls, and there was a viable, socially-acceptable option available to them: marriage, caring for the home, and child-rearing.

Another example in Salma’s interview also revealed that female students in the school were in conflict with the school administration over the dress code and school rules.

> From what I heard from the students, the dress code did not reflect the students' personal identities. Many of the girls wanted to wear different, bright colors, or wear regular clothes besides the *abaya*. Many of the girls

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

did not observe the headscarf outside of school, and they wanted to show their earrings. In rebellion, some girls would purposely pull their earrings out of their headscarves so that they would show. Teachers would always tell them to put their earrings back inside their scarves. When the principal felt that the girls were becoming lax about observing the dress code, they were reminded to be careful. In protest, the 11th grade girls wore *niqabs*, or face covers, to class the following day. One girl said something to the effect of, "If you want to be so strict, fine, we'll cover our faces, too." From observing incidents like these, I came to the conclusion that trying to control the students' gender identity so strictly through clothing actually resulted in the students pushing back and expressing their personal style and identities in spite of the school rules.

Gender diversity was also discussed by Amira and Salma when they stated their perspectives on multicultural education. Actually, data analysis showed that most of the sub-themes interrelated with others.

5.2.5. Language. Data analysis of the participants' interviews showed that language was not significant in all six cases. Language context was mentioned by three participants (Rania, Amira, and Zainab). While Rania's case includes language perspectives from the Arabic side—such as how teaching Arabic can be an issue in an Islamic school or in a Muslim community, Amira's and Zainab's cases took up language diversity from an ESL perspective.

للاستشارات المنارة

www.manaraa.com

The experiences Rania mentioned show that there were tensions between Arab and non-Arab families related to how Arabic should be integrated into the Islamic school' s curriculum.

> There was high numbers of Arabs and Pakistanis; these were two major groups in our community in that time. The second group, I mean non-Arabs, did not want to have Arabic in school as they thought it was going to be waste of time. For example, for Pakistanis Quran memorization is extremely important to them but not to understand—to recite. During that time, I just felt like how come you do not want your kids to understand the language of your religion. Even to change their understanding, the mosque invited a well known scholar for the community to highlight the importance of understanding Quran and the language of it.

From an ESL perspective, Amira pointed out that ESL programs in the school should be improved to meet the educational needs of her students:

> We also definitely need to have awareness of ESL issues. For example we don't accept students who have special needs because we do not have the facilities to deal with them, so we don't take them at all. But ESL, we do take, because we have a very bad perspective such like if they sit and listen to the conversation they can learn English that way which is simply not the case. So my advice is that this school in particularly, I can't speak for other schools, need to work on to be aware of social class differences and they have to develop ESL programs that is appropriate for students

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

which are based on curricular perspectives and do not just throw the students into an English-speaking environment.

On the other hand, Zainab mentioned the characteristics of a well-established ESL program in the school, a program which was the ultimate concern of the Saudi Arabian government in establishing the school.

Sonia, Amal, and Salma did not consider issues related to language either from Arabic or English perspectives.

5.3. Multicultural Education (Theme 3)

Data analysis of Theme 2 revealed that there is complex diversity in terms of race, class, nationality, gender and language in Islamic school that were contextualized by the six participants in this research. When the six participants explained these differences, they also provided in-depth descriptions about the multicultural education context in their schools. Some participants described how school administration approached multiculturalism and diversity; others more often brought up multicultural education experiences from their own teaching.

5.3.1. School Approaches to Multicultural Education. Data analysis of participants' interviews showed that multicultural education was not considered by the schools that were represented in participants' cases. For example, Amal stated in her interview that the school where she taught highlighted multicultural education in the school's mission and vision statement, but as she explained, multicultural education was not as clear in practice. Three participants (Amira, Sonia, and Rania) related the lack of concern for multicultural education in their schools to the financial struggles of Islamic

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

schools in the U.S. They highlighted that there were more important and urgent educational needs in their schools. Interview analysis showed that all participants also connected the lack of multicultural education in their schools to the lack of educational training had by teachers and administrators in the schools. For example, Amira's interview analysis showed that she was the only person in whole school who considered multicultural education. Amira stated:

> It is not part of the school objectives. So lot of teachers fall back on that because they do not have trainings in multicultural issues, this is my assumptions here. We do have social studies teachers who are more critical, and non-statuesque, and especially elementary they just followed the standards. The school does not necessarily promote multicultural education itself because the administration does not have educational background. The principal has masters' degree but not related to multicultural education.

Sonia's interview analysis revealed that the diversity of the school was ignored by school administrations, and multicultural education was not taken into consideration.

> When we did our lesson plans, and when we had our observations and discussed with administration like what we can do better, multicultural education was never brought up. The things that brought up was incorporating Islam, Islamic lessons, and incorporating standards. Multicultural education and diversity were never mentioned. For example, there was never really discussion about gender and class, although they

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

were an issue among students and in the school. Even after couple kids did not afford field trips, I never heard a big discussion to reflect the problems in terms of socioeconomic status.

The example Amira gave during her interview showed that most of the teachers ignored the individual differences among students. This example also supports the idea that most of the teachers at her school shaped their pedagogy according to their original culture.

> Back home it is still very authoritarian. You know like, Friere's pieces where the child is supposed to be quiet and listen. And the teacher sits down and works. There is no exchange, and it is the approach that they have in their countries. And that is the same thing they were doing in the school. When I tried to talk about in the stuff meetings where we have been in discussions and conversations, I mentioned that it is very important to ask the students how they want to learn, so there is a concept that you can negotiate that you do not have to be strict in front of the board teaching it. There is a fresh way to learn and you can ask the students like, okay! How do you feel about learning this in this way? and so. Of course they did not like that idea, and said how can we ask the students this. The students have to just follow what we are doing. It was very narrow way of teaching because they were taught in their back home countries in this way, very traditional way.

Amira’s interview revealed that teachers and administrators at the school mostly failed to understand the needs of the students who were coming from working class families,

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

who had poor parental support. The story she provided about a Somalian student who had to work after school showed that other teachers and principals expected him to succeed academically, without understanding what he needed, and why he failed. Amira described her feelings as:

> There were still large deficit perspectives of the students. The deficit perspective concerned class mostly, and so much on race. For example, As I mentioned some of the students were coming from working class families and we know that working families do not have the cultural capital where the cultural knowledge to negotiate schooling, and they can not pass that onto their children. Their children come to school, and do not know study skills, and they do not have anyone at home to help their homework. All these issues are classed based issues. And at the stuff meetings, you always hear that they just dismiss students' backgrounds. They fail to take them into consideration. and that is huge. The child was being lazy. There is a huge story behind why the child was not doing homework.

Data analysis showed that Amira's educational background—her Master's degree in Curriculum Studies and the multiculturalism course she taught at the university—allowed her to provide in-depth descriptions of multicultural education in the school where she taught.

In Salma's school, multicultural education was also ignored by the school administration. The incident she mentioned about half of all parents withdrawing their children from the school the previous year revealed that the administration of the school

www.manaraa.com

had not been able to adjust school curriculum and pedagogy in accordance with the expectations of those parents. In other words, this incident in Salma's school indicated that the dominant educational approach of the school reflected the ideology of the school principal, who was also the *imam* (Islamic leadership position) in the mosque located in school building. He closed his eyes to different perspectives related to the school's education.

Salma's case also showed that the school's rules and educational approach did not take into account students' perspectives, so that students sometimes acted dishonestly to take advantage.

> At this particular school, gender segregation was very important to the administration. The girls and boys were separated onto different sides of the room, and there was a physical divider between them. Thus, the girls and boys could see the teacher, but could not see each other. This was at the middle school and high school level. The school administration felt very strongly that unmarried males and females should not mix with each other, even casually. In my opinion, the effect of the strict segregation was not that the students shied away from the opposite gender. Rather, there was a kind of intense curiosity about the opposite gender. Students would try to sneak glances at the "other side" of the room, and they would joke with each other over the barriers. A couple of students were known to like each other, and it was a subject of frequent jokes amongst the students.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Another part of her interview showed that the school administration did not approve of her teaching materials because they did not adequately reflect Islamic culture. As she stated:

> One incident I remember, we were reading short stories like Miracle Workers and a couple of short stories and I wanted to show movie to compare the book and the movie. So the principal said all the movies are non-Islamic, so little things that I did not think that would be an issue. The school was following Saudi Islamic education philosophy and it was strict. I was outside of the community and it was a kind of multiculturalism lesson for me even if we share same religion we were not same. I did not want to fight it because there were lots of fighting. And I did not want to be involved in controversial.

Data analysis of the interviews revealed that any connection between an Islamic school and a mosque may affect the multicultural educational context of that Islamic school. For example, the schools that were represented in Amira's and Salma's cases had principals who were also *imams* (Islamic leadership position). In both schools, teachers and administrators were very concerned about Islamic culture and were not willing to make adaptations according to students' needs. Amal's interview also revealed that there was a strong connection between the school and a mosque. She mentioned that her school was connected to one of the largest mosque in the city which determined the school's Islamic education approach. However Amal did not mention any issue related to the connection between the mosque and her school.

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

Data analysis showed that multicultural education was not seen as an important context in any school represented by the participants in my research. The interviews of four participants (Amira, Sonia, Rania, and Amal) showed that teacher-centered instruction and an educational pedagogy similar to that of their home countries were much more important to parents than providing a multicultural educational context in the school. As Sonia said:

> The students, these kids, are American. They are fed out of the American mainstream media. They are Muslim, they are in Islamic schools, they are in *hijab*; but through and through they are like any of the other American teenager. They watch the same movies, same TV shows, and listen the same music. Their culture is American culture. But their parents' culture is not, they are immigrants. Parents were ignoring the new trends for student-centered education, you know, it is not a dictatorship where the kids sitting in the lines in front of the board and memorizing and taking the test.

Findings showed that in the schools represented by Sonia, Amira, and Amal, parents' concerns about academic success were deliberately taken into consideration by school administrators because these schools depended on the tuition paid by parents. Findings showed that meeting the expectations of parents was much more important than recognizing the needs of students.

5.3.2. Personal Approaches to Multicultural Education. Data analysis of this research found that multicultural education was also contextualized through personal

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

perspectives by the participants. To elaborate, participants in this research shared how they engaged multicultural education in their classrooms, and what they suggested to promote multicultural education in Islamic schools. Not all of the participants provided rich and in-depth perspectives about how they applied multicultural education in their teaching, but data analysis brought to light important findings.

The results of data analysis revealed that multicultural educational knowledge depends on teachers' personal and educational backgrounds. In the previous section, it was explained that participants in this research who had graduate degrees in education pointed out that other teachers in their schools were not informed about multicultural education. In addition to that, the findings of this research showed that participants who had experiences and knowledge specific to multicultural education provided more information related to multicultural education in their schools and classrooms. For example, Amira's interview data analysis showed that the knowledge and experiences she had about multicultural education allowed her to apply multicultural education from a critical perspective. Amira explained how she applied multiculturalism, social justice, and culturally responsive teaching:

> Multicultural issues came out in my pedagogy and my content. I taught English, so my approach is different than the approach is taken in public schools. My approach was to give students social awareness and consciousness so we looked at very controversial issues such like advertising theory. When I have to teach like argumentation, I would teach it from the point of view that they will gain critical thinking skills. Then

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

through that how gender is constructed, masculinity, and femininity and we look at some of phobia through comics and political cartoons. All those are creating arguments. So I will teach the concept of "argument" through this very non-traditional ways. And that is still multicultural approach, because we looked at how minority groups are constructed. We looked how African Americans are represented in films, and of course how Muslims are represented in the variety of printed and electronic media. And of course gender. We looked at advertisements in magazines in terms of how women are portrayed, and this was one unit which would be teaching arguments. We also looked at the role of TV in people's lives we looked at the concept of freedom, immigration. All these are I would say multicultural issues.

Amira elaborated on her thoughts about how her multicultural educational background helped her develop learning environments according to her students' needs. She explained:

I think it is very important to have educational background because there was so many issues within in the school that needs theory to help you understand what is happening. Let's take diversity. Obviously I mentioned that there were lots of diversity in the school, and some people may say that you were brown and your students were brown; so you should have easily understood their experiences. However that was not true… Having the background in multiculturalism in education really helped me to navigate that diversity and to understand the students' responses in the

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

> classroom. For example, gender was a huge issue, because a lot of the girls when they go home if they have siblings, they were cooking, cleaning and doing gendered activities that the boys do not have to. They tell me they were not able to do their homework sometimes because they have to do housework. Just understanding those sides of the students' lives helped you to understand and approach them in the classroom. This lens that I have acquired or used, I acquired from my educational background. If I did not have that, I would not be able to understand.

Similarly, findings from Amal's interview showed that Amal had gained multicultural awareness during her Master's degree which helped her to apply multicultural education in her classrooms. However she did not provide rich descriptions about how she adjusted multicultural education in her classrooms. In her interview, Amal pointed out that her multicultural educational approach was not very clear; she stated that she preferred to be neutral in discussing sensitive issues in religious education with her students. She described her experiences with 8th graders.

> I dealt with mostly with my home room which was eight grade classroom, because I saw them more throughout the day. I was their home room teacher, so they came to me a lot more. I was like their counselor. But I tried to stay again in the middle. Because a lot of students would look up the teachers, you do not want to put too much your views, even your actions. You even have to try not to show your thinking in a certain way because they are old enough to figure out just by the way you dress. They were able to figure out what you think in terms of religion.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

As it was mentioned in previous sections, Salma also tried to bring a multicultural educational perspective to her classroom in the Islamic school. However she felt that the school's culture, students' backgrounds, and the principal did not let her apply multicultural education .She always felt a sense of otherness in the school, and she found the school rules and educational approach very strict.

> My beliefs were supporting to teach in a multicultural way, but then may happen in any Islamic school if your views are different than administrative then you have to modify your teaching according to the administrator or school perspective so it is definitely a disadvantage.

All of the participants stressed the importance of professional development in multicultural education, and highlighted that professional workshops should be provided for Islamic school teachers to improve their understandings of multicultural education and help them learn about how multicultural education–oriented teaching can be applied in Islamic school classrooms.

The interviews showed that multicultural educational contexts in Islamic schools are closely related to the diversity observed in those Islamic schools and their communities. Cross-case analysis of my research indicated that each school as outlined in each case in this study represented different types of diversities. Therefore, the analysis of school context and Muslim community is critical for finding out the needs of multicultural education in Islamic schools in the U.S.

To conclude this chapter, I provide Figure 5.2., which summarizes the general findings of all six cases in my research. In the next chapter, the Discussion chapter, I will discuss the findings, implications, and limitations of my research.

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

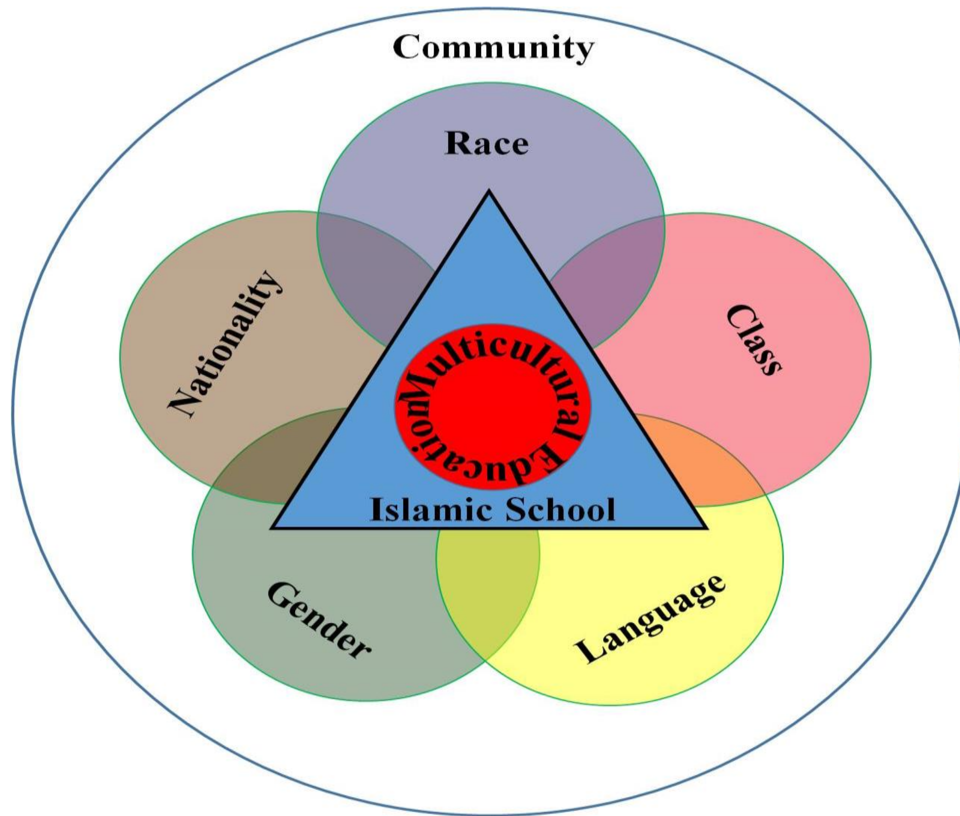


Figure 5.2. Diversity Analysis in Islamic Schools in the U.S.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER 6. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

This descriptive collective case study explored how six Islamic school teachers in the U.S. experienced diversity regarding race, class, nationality, gender, and language in their schools, and more specifically in their classrooms. The study looked closely at how the school contexts described by each participant informed multicultural education, and its development in Islamic schools. The research questions guiding this study were:

1. How do teachers in Islamic schools in the U.S. experience the diversities of race, class, nationality, language, and gender among Muslim students in their schools?
2. How do Islamic school teachers in the U.S. conceptualize multicultural issues in their classrooms and school climates?
3. What do teachers in Islamic schools in the U.S. suggest to promote the development of multicultural education in these schools?

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section provides a summary of key findings and analyses. The second section includes an in-depth discussion of these findings and analyses, detailed into three parts—diversity in terms of race, class, nationality, gender, and language in Islamic Schools in the U.S; multicultural education in Islamic schools envisioned via six cases; and transformational approaches and critical pedagogy for promoting multicultural religious education in Islamic schools in the U.S.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

The next section includes implications and suggestions for future research. The last section forms the conclusion.

6.1. Summary of Key Findings and Analyses

Research question one was answered primarily by the individual portraits of each study participant in chapter 3. The key findings and analyses highlighted for each school setting provided by participants address their complex diversity. However, the key findings and analyses of this descriptive collective case study demonstrated that Islamic schools in the U.S. may represent monolithic cultures too. For example, the school discussed in Amal's case symbolized Lebanese culture, the school Salma worked in for a year exemplified the culture of indigenous American Muslims, and the school where Zainab worked for twenty years promoted the Saudi Arabian culture. While half of the cases discussed in this study represented great diversity, the other half exemplified educational environments dominated by one type of culture. To be specific, this study showed that some Islamic schools in the U.S. may focus on a specific culture which is most probably practiced by the school principal even if the student population in the school represents cultural diversity. This shows that the administrators of Islamic schools in the U.S. play a key role in multicultural educational development in these schools. Moreover, key findings and analyses show that diversity in Islamic schools depends on the diversity of the Muslim communities in which the schools are located.

Research question two was answered by all participants in this study. Findings showed that the conceptualization of multicultural education by Islamic school teachers depends on their knowledge about multicultural education and on the administration of

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

their schools. Again, the administrators of Islamic schools play a key role to promote and develop multicultural education in Islamic schools in the U.S. As the cases of Salma, Amira, and Sonia showed, teachers' individual efforts were not enough to get the schools as a whole to promote multicultural education in their classrooms; school administrators did not focus on multicultural education despite the fact that the climate of their schools required it. Another factor that influenced the conceptualization of multicultural education in Islamic school climates was the personal knowledge teachers had about multicultural education. For example, the data analysis of Amira's and Sonia's interviews showed that the school environment and the diversity in their schools could be contextualized comprehensively as a result of their specialization in multiculturalism. Also, overall findings for Salma's case showed that her Master's degree in education allowed her to provide in-depth and rich description about socioeconomic class, gender, and racial diversity in the school settings. Although Amal and Zainab had graduate degrees in educational leadership, their descriptions of school environments were not as informative as Amira's, Sonia's, and Salma's. Rania was the only participant who did not have a degree in education, but her American identity and degree in sociology allowed her to discuss her experiences from a broader perspective.

Research question three was largely answered in Chapter 5. Each participant brought different suggestions, but a common point among them all indicated that Islamic schools in the U.S should hire teachers who have more experience and knowledge about the social contexts of education in the U.S. Results of this study showed that the existence of teachers and administrators who had teaching philosophies in accordance

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

with their native culture may restrict the development of multicultural education in Islamic schools.

To conclude, key findings and analyses gave details to describe the experiences of Islamic school teachers in the U.S regarding diversity and multicultural education in these schools. The next part provides a detailed discussion in answer to the following questions:

1. How did the key findings and analyses of this study reflect the points mentioned by the reviewed literature?
2. How did key findings and analyses of this study draw conclusions within the research scope?
3. How did key findings and analyses fill a gap in the literature?

6.2. In-Depth Discussion of Findings

The key findings of this study showed that five of the six Islamic school climates discussed by the participants in this study presented highly diverse educational environments, just as much of the reviewed literature mentioned (Al-Huda, 2000; Haddad, Senzai, & Smith, 2009; Memon, 2009; Merry, 2007; Niyozov& Pluim, 2009; Omanson, 2013; Salili & Hoosain, 2014; Sanjakdar, 2011). Designing my research as a descriptive collective case study allowed me to understand that the discourse of diversity in Islamic schools shows similarities and at the same time significant differences.

6.2.1. Diversity. Findings and analyses pointed out that critical conceptualization of diversity regarding race, class, nationality, gender, and language in Islamic schools in

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

the U.S. plays a key role in finding the most efficient and effective multicultural education development in these schools.

As was discussed in the six individual portraits, race was not mentioned as an issue by the majority of the participants. Five of the six participants did not consider race an issue for two reasons: 1) the school climates did not include racial diversity (as in the cases of Amal, Rania, and Zainab), or 2) students of color in the schools were not Indigenous Muslims, but came from countries in Africa (as in the cases of Amira and Sonia). Race was a significant concern of Salma's because she worked in an Islamic school where all of the students and teachers were indigenous Muslims. When I interviewed Salma, I asked her several times if the school had immigrant Muslim students; she mentioned that the school did not have any students who were not Indigenous Muslims. Salma was the only white person in the school, and as she mentioned she had several challenges because of this situation. Similarly, in other participants' interviews, I asked if any had encountered African American students in their schools; they responded that either they had a few or none. Findings showed that the voices of African American or Hispanic Muslims are missing in Islamic schools established by immigrant Muslims; and vice a versa. This confirms that racial differences and discrimination within American Muslims (Leonard, 2006; McCloud, 2006; Rashid, 2013; Smith, 2009) may explain why immigrant Muslims and African American Muslims have their own Islamic schools. Data analysis of each individual case showed that race was not an issue to be considered in Islamic schools in the development of a multicultural context because it was mentioned as significant by only one of the six

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

participants in this study. However, the cross-case data analysis of this study importantly pointed out that race, which was discussed under two groups (immigrant Muslims and indigenous Muslims) in literature review chapter, is an important factor in Islamic schools in the U.S. because none of the six Islamic school contexts represented in this study provided an educational environment that brought immigrant Muslim and indigenous Muslim students together. This shows that race is still a major problem among Muslim communities in the U.S. (Leonard, 2003; Rashid, 2013).

The literature review detailed class differences between African American Muslims and immigrant Muslims (Haddad, 1991; Haddad & Lumis, 1987; Haddad, Senzai, & Smith, 2009; Memon, 2009; Pipes & Duran, 2000; Rashid, 2013). The results of this study could not provide significant information on this point, as there was only one Islamic school dominated by African American students. The school that Salma taught at for a year was in a low income neighborhood with a mostly African American population; similarly the schools where Sonia and Amira taught had mostly low income immigrant Muslim families' children. This shows that there may be Islamic schools with poor physical conditions in both immigrant and indigenous Muslim communities. However, key findings and analyses explained that Islamic school classrooms may show socioeconomic diversity. Amira, Sonia, and Rania discussed the class diversity among their students. Specifically, Amira and Sonia mentioned that class diversity was the most observable difference among their students. This finding is consistent with the findings of Haddad and Lumis (1987), Memon (2009), and Omanson (2013) all which elaborate the class difference among immigrant Muslims. In addition, the key findings of Zainab's and Amal's cases pointed out that Islamic schools established by immigrants from a specific

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

culture (Saudi Arabian or Lebanese) may provide less socio-economic diversity Specifically, Zainab's case illustrated the unique example of an Islamic school supported from overseas (Jasser, 2011; Merry, 2005). To conclude, the findings of this research shed light on class differences in the climates of Islamic schools as well as among Muslim communities in the U.S.

Designing this research project as a descriptive collective case enabled me to comprehend the context of national diversity from a broader perspective. Similarly to cases that showed diverse class contexts, Zainab's and Amal's cases showed that if an Islamic school in the U.S promotes a specific culture, it may not provide a diverse climate regarding nationality (Haddad, 1991; Leonard, 2003; Memon, 2009; Merry, 2005, 2007). Salma's case alone did not reveal key findings about nationality, but again, when her case was compared with the five other cases, it showed how Muslim identity construction in the U.S. is complex, involving several discourses. For example, Salma's Muslim identity, which was developed according to Iranian, Pakistani, and American cultures, did not fit into the culture of a school where most of the teachers and students' Muslim identities had been developed according to African American Muslim culture in the U.S. In other words, this finding indicates that nationality may play a significant role in the determination of school culture (Emerick, 2009; Merry, 2007; Salili & Hoosain, 2014). Key findings and analysis revealed that Sonia's and Amal's cases carried similar characteristics in this study, also in terms of nationality. In both cases, the majority of teachers and administrators employed teaching methods that had been developed in Arab countries. In addition to Sonia and Amira, Rania also brought up this point. These results

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

acknowledged that nationality may be an issue between teachers and students in Islamic schools.

The results of this research exposed the fact that nationality plays a significant role in every type of dynamic in Islamic schools, from teacher–student relationships, administrator–parent relationships, administrator–teacher relationships, and student–student relationships. The previous paragraph explains the role of nationality in the dynamic of teacher–student relations. Rania's case was specifically clear on how nationality challenges the parent–administrator relationship. Non-Arab parents were not happy with the school following a curriculum that reflected an Arab tradition. This situation reminds me of the term "home sick mosques"—mosques established in the U.S. and directed according to the culture and ideology of home— which is conceptualized in Rashid (2013). Arab supremacy among either students or parents was indicated by Rania, Sonia, and Amal (Johnson, 1991; Memon, 2009; Zine, 2009). National and cultural differences in Islamic school contexts may be leading factors that burden the development of multicultural education in these schools. The circumstances created by racial differences among African American Muslims and immigrant Muslims may be seen in the context of national diversity between Arab and non-Arab Muslims. Here the history of such Islamic schools influences the situation. Both the reviewed literature and the key findings of this study show that most students in Islamic schools are the children of immigrants; thus, the effects of native cultures and nationality may still exist for these students, but in the future nationality may not be such an issue.

The key findings of this research showed that most of the participants did not consider language an issue, because according to participants, most students were fluent

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

in English. However, the case of Rania confirmed that there may be some issues among parents regarding Arabic. This point was also mentioned by Haddad and Lummis (1987) with an example where Arabs and Turks had separate mosques where religious sermons can be held in different native languages. To conclude, language may be an issue in Islamic schools that include Arab and non-Arab students. Regarding ESL programs in Islamic schools, only Amira and Zainab discussed relevant circumstances in their Islamic schools. Again, Zainab's case was unique in having very well-developed ESL programs in the school. However, Amira's personal analyses of her school's attitude to ESL showed that there may be some issues in terms of ESL context in Islamic schools. She stated, "...because we have a very bad perspective such like if they sit and listen to the conversation they can learn English that way which is simply not the case." Her analysis may indicate that the context of ESL education should be investigated more comprehensively in Islamic schools, which was importantly highlighted by Zine (2009).

The key findings and analyses in this research showed that Islamic schools' educational contexts regarding gender diversity should be critiqued to improve multicultural education in these schools in the U.S. The cases represented in this research by Sonia, Amira, and Salma showed that gender differences were significantly observable. In other cases, gender was not specifically mentioned. Three factors may explain this absence: 1) In Rania's case, the school was a weekend school so gender differences did not cause problems as in full day Islamic schools. 2) Amal taught elementary school students, so she might not have observed gender differences among elementary school students compared to those among high school students. 3) Zainab's school had different buildings for boys and girls in the school, and it could provide

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

optimal physical facilities to both girls and boys. On the other hand, in other cases gender was significant. For example, the findings from Amira's interview showed that some parents' understandings regarding gender were shaped according to their home culture which might place less emphasis on girls' success in Islamic schools (Sanjakdar, 2011). However, generally both in Amira's and Sonia's schools, girls had stronger religious identities and more success than the boys. Data analysis showed that the great number of female teachers in Islamic schools may influence girls' stronger religious identities and better academic success. Memon (2009) discussed the role of females in the history of Islamic schools in the U.S.; the findings confirmed that the number of female teachers has been significantly higher than the number of male teachers in Islamic schools (Haddad, Senzai, & Smith, 2009).

Unlike Sonia's and Amira's cases, the key findings and analyses of Salma's case indicated that the context of gender identity may be different in Islamic schools dominated by indigenous Muslims. Here, more research is needed, since the cultural understanding of gendered identity may also be due to the socioeconomic context of the community where Salma's school was located. However, the findings may also indicate that in Islamic school contexts where there is class diversity among students, gender diversity may also be observed.

In summary, there are complex dynamics regarding race, class, nationality, language and gender diversity in Islamic schools. Key findings and analyses indicated that all these differences intersect with each other and form complicated educational environments. These environments need to be investigated from every perspective. This study was designed as a descriptive collective case study primarily to investigate how

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

racial, class, national, language and gender diversity are observed in Islamic schools' climates and classrooms in the U.S from the perspectives of teachers who worked in Islamic school.

The results of this study also confirmed that designing the research as a collective case study was an appropriate decision, as critical knowledge about Islamic schools could be obtained from individual and as well as general perspectives. Designing this research as a collective case study fostered the exploration of various social dynamics among Muslim communities in the U.S., and exemplified different characteristics of Muslim communities through the six cases. Key findings and analyses highlighted that multicultural education and its improvement are not promoted effectively in six Islamic schools in the U.S.; this result implies that multicultural education in Islamic schools cannot be conceptualized without peeling back the layers of pluralism in Muslim communities. Under these circumstances, Banks's *The Transformational Approach* (2006) can help Muslim communities in the U.S to re-conceptualize their own perspectives, ideologies, beliefs, and politics, and reshape them according to the social contexts of Muslims in the U.S. Moreover, critical pedagogy can help administrators, teachers, parents, and students in Islamic schools to reflect on their own cultural beliefs and norms and to comprehend the many multiple perspectives among Muslims.

6.2.2. Envisioning Multicultural Education in Islamic Schools. The analyses of reviewed literature represented in chapter 2, and key findings and analyses of this research both outline a vision for the development of multicultural education in Islamic schools in the U.S. As mentioned in previous sections, there are two domains that directly

www.manaraa.com

affect multicultural education in Islamic schools in the U.S.—Islamic schools and their Muslim communities. This section will provide more details about other possible agencies that may have some influence in multicultural educational development in Islamic schools.

Mosques. The relationship between mosques and Islamic schools is discussed by Memon (2009), Merry (2005), Niyozov and Pluim (2009), Sanjakdar (2011), and Zine (2009); these studies mention that local mosques can be powerful determinants in the educational perspectives of Islamic schools located in their communities. The key finding and analyses of this research revealed that multicultural education in Islamic schools importantly should define the structure of the relationship between Islamic schools and mosques. As the cases of Salma and Amira represent, having principals who also take religious leadership roles in mosques may prevent the representation of different perspectives and beliefs in Islamic schools. This research suggests that for more effective multicultural education in Islamic schools, *imams* or religious leaders should only provide assistance to Islamic schools for how to resolve the issues of divergent perspective according to Islam but they should not direct the educational perspective of Islamic schools.

Administrators. Haddad, Senzai, and Smith (2009) stated that working as a principal in an Islamic school has several challenges, such as noncompetitive salaries, long working hours, and a lack of professional support. Rania's case in this study showed further challenges; particularly that it was difficult to find a happy medium among parents' different perspectives on Islamic education. As mentioned in Rania's portrait,

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

she considered her American identity to be an advantage for positioning herself equally distant from everyone she worked with. She represented neither Arab culture nor non-Arab culture. As she mentioned in her interview, she performed all the responsibilities that any principal should in any kind of Islamic school. Although her Islamic knowledge was not comprehensive, her other skills such as organizing, coordinating, and setting rules helped her administrate her school successfully so that community members asked her to lead the school for a second time. Rania's experience shows that Islamic school administrators should focus more critically on their knowledge and skills to improve the educational conditions of Islamic schools rather than focusing on being religious leaders.

Teachers. Teachers' discourse in Islamic schools in the U.S. or in Canada has been discussed by many studies (Haddad, Senzai & Smith, 2009; Memon, 2009; Niyozov & Pluim, 2009; Zine, 2009); they recount that circumstances in Islamic schools include several challenges for the teachers and that understanding the contexts of teachers in Islamic schools is also difficult. This study exemplified that many Islamic school teachers do not hold teaching certificates accredited by the U.S. Only Amal and Zainab stated that teaching certificates were required for teachers working in their schools. The qualifications of Islamic school teachers play a significant role in the development of multicultural religious education. This study showed that teachers in Islamic schools should improve their knowledge and experiences to understand the development of students' Muslim identities in Islamic schools. Moreover, being certified may help Islamic school teachers to transfer their teaching beliefs according to the social context in Islamic schools in the U.S. which may also positively influence teachers' efficacy in teaching diverse student populations in Islamic schools. The overall results of this study

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

showed that improving the knowledge of Islamic school teachers about multiculturalism and critical pedagogy is vitally important in the practice of multicultural education in Islamic schools in the U.S. As Memon (2011) pointed out, teachers in Islamic schools should be informed about Islamic education in the West. Connecting the results of this research to Memon (2011), it can be concluded that programs for Islamic school teachers should also include courses which help familiarize Islamic school teachers with multicultural religious education.

Policy. The key findings and analyses of this research addressed the fact that the funding situations of Islamic schools in the U.S. prevent these schools from investing in better physical and social educational facilities. Many of the points mentioned above about administrators and students mostly stem from the financial issues facing Islamic schools in the U.S. For example, the salaries of teachers and administrators are not as high as teachers' salaries in public or private schools (Haddad, Senzai, & Smith, 2009). Also, after paying the salaries of teachers and principals, limited funds remain for improving the school settings; as Sonia and Amira mentioned in this study, the physical conditions of the school are the priority destination for the rest of these funds. Consequently, multicultural education is not a significant concern. Therefore school-district policies regarding Islamic schools in the U.S. should be reviewed to provide support for these schools.

Accreditation was mentioned by most of the participants in this research; however the connection of Islamic schools to the educational policy in the U.S. was not explored more than that. The descriptions revealed by the interviews in this study indicated that Islamic schools mostly are left to solve their educational problems by themselves, which

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

may also indicate that general non-Muslim mainstream mostly ignores the educational problems and issues in Islamic schools in the U.S.

6.2.3. Transformational Approach and Critical Pedagogy for Promoting Multicultural Religious Education in Islamic Schools in the U.S. The key findings and analyses of this study showed that it is difficult to generalize the educational settings of Islamic schools in the U.S. Keyworth (2009) mentioned the difficulty of constructing common standards among Islamic schools in the U.S., and the findings of this study revealed that there are complicated politics and perspectives behind Islamic schooling in this country. The key findings from the cross-case analysis showed that establishing Islamic educational standards and connecting Islamic schools in the U.S. under one main association may be complicated and ineffective. Analysis of the Islamic school contexts described by the six participants in this study sheds light on how immigrant Muslim communities and indigenous Muslim communities have their own schools. In the five cases represented by Rania, Sonia, Amira, Zainab, and Amal, either there were a few African American students or none. Additionally, in the school context discussed by Salma, there were no immigrant Muslim students. This shows that the divergent perspectives between immigrant Muslims and indigenous Muslims in the U.S. continue to exist also in the climates of Islamic schools as these two Muslim communities mostly have their own Islamic schools that reflect separate cultures (Ahmad, 2012; Haddad & Smith, 1994; Khalifa & Gooden, 2010; Leonard, 2003; Pipes & Duran, 2000; Rashid, 2013). Moreover, the results of this research showed that establishing unity among Islamic schools in the U.S. can be complicated even in schools established by immigrant Muslims; the environments of Islamic schools may favor the culture of one significant

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

nation, as in the school contexts of Amal and Zainab where each school represented the culture of Lebanon and Saudi Arabia, respectively. To summarize, the results of this study showed that there is a lack of union among Islamic schools in the U.S., and this finding is in keeping with much of the research in the reviewed literature (Callaway 2010, Haddad, Senzai, & Smith, 2009; Memon, 2011; Merry, 2007; Niyozov & Pluim, 2009; Niyozov 2010; Rashid 2013; Sanjaktar, 2011). However, the results of this research pointed out that because of divergent perspectives, cultures, and politics, maintaining solidarity among Islamic schools may be complicated. Before multicultural education can be developed adequately in Islamic schools in the U.S, there is a strong need to promote multiculturalism among Muslim communities here, which by extension may also spur dialogue among U.S. Islamic schools.

The results of this study confirmed that most of the teachers and administrators in Islamic schools may not be familiar with the broad educational contexts of the U.S.; this was also mentioned by Haddad and Smith (2009), Merry (2005), and Niyozov and Pluim (2009). Furthermore, Niyozov (2010) pointed out that teaching Islam may even be an issue in Islamic schools in pluralistic societies, due to those communities' different perspectives on religious education. The key findings and analyses of this study also highlighted the discussion of teaching Islam in multicultural communities. For example in the case of Rania, there were tensions between Arab and non-Arab parents about teaching Arabic. Also, the Islamic school contexts described in the cases of Amira and Sonia pointed out that teachers and administrators were more concerned with the academic success of the students rather than with understanding the needs of students. This shows that there is a necessity in Islamic schools in the U.S. to introduce

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

multicultural education and promote its development. Key findings and analyses pointed out that the contexts of teachers and administrators in Islamic schools requires a transformational approach that "changes the basic assumptions of the curriculum and enables students to view concepts, issues, themes, and problems from several ethnic perspectives and points of view" (Banks, 2006, pg. 61). Each participant in this research directly or indirectly pointed out the importance of transformation in teaching beliefs, cultural norms, and religious perspectives to improve multicultural education in Islamic schools in the U.S. For example, the data analysis of Amira's and Sonia's interviews showed that the conceptualization of *The Transformation Approach* is also critical for Islamic school teachers to change their teaching beliefs which were formed according to their home cultures. Another example, the findings of Rania's interview showed the importance of *The Transformation Approach* to understand the role of culture, nationality, and politics in construction of Muslim communities and Islamic schools in the U.S. *The Transformation Approach* (Banks, 2006) also may allow Islamic school teachers and administrators to develop critical pedagogy knowledge and skills for self reflection, self assessment, and tolerance (Memon, 2009; Zine, 2009). For example the case of Salma in this study showed that providing Islamic education which ignores the real life experiences of Muslim children and youths in the U.S only results in rebellion rather than reinforcement of mutual understanding and tolerance. The educational perspective that is based on critical theory promotes such individual consciousness which "understands how and why his or her political opinions, socio-economic class, role, religious beliefs, gender role and racial self-image are shaped by dominant

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

perspectives" (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997, p. 23). McLaren (1995) considers critical pedagogy as a way of social transformation.

> The overall project of critical pedagogy is directed towards inviting students and teachers to analyze the relation among their own quotidian experiences, classroom practices, the knowledges they produce, and the social, cultural, and economic arrangements of the larger society. (McLaren, 1995, p. 231)

In summary, to apply a transformational approach for multicultural education, the discourse of Islamic education needs to effectively shift to a critical perspective, one which should be informed by multicultural religious education.

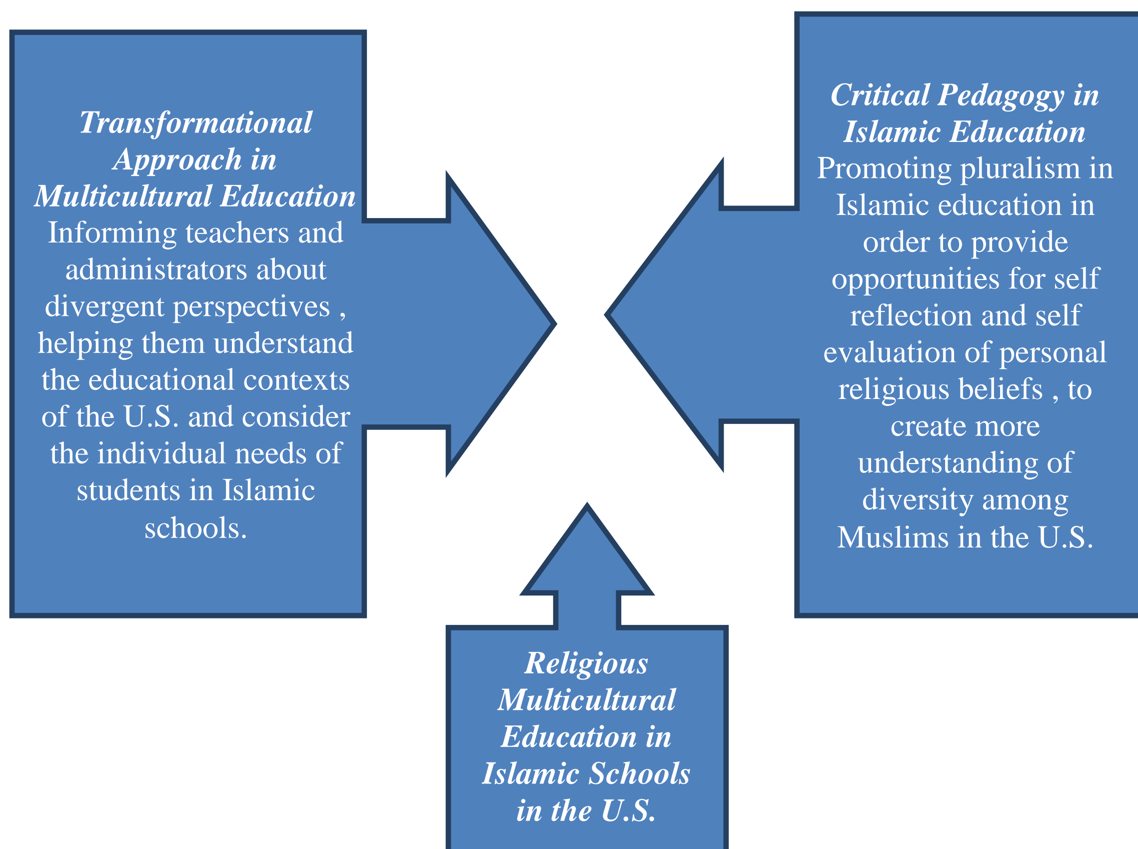


Figure 6.1. Analysis of Multicultural Religious Education in Islamic Schools in the U.S.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

A discussion of key terms and analyses can explain the connection between this research and reviewed analyses; however, it is also important to detail how this research fills a gap in the existing literature. The overarching purpose of this study was to investigate diversity in Islamic schools in the U.S., a concept that has been limitedly highlighted by previous literature. This research contributed significant information about how differences in terms of race, class, nationality, language, and gender contribute to different dynamics in Islamic schools. This research provided space for a multicultural education discussion that opens further research possibilities about this topic in Islamic schools in the U.S. Also, existing research has highlighted cultural diversity in Islamic schools in the U.S., but has not shed light specifically on the details of important discourses such as immigrant versus indigenous Muslims, Arabs versus non-Arabs, socioeconomic class, and denominational differences. Another point is that existing literature has focused on how to integrate Islam into the educational standards of a secular curriculum, whereas this research highlighted that in integrating multicultural education trends and practices in other (religious or non-religious) schools, it is also important to consider the individual needs of students in these schools and to provide social justice, equity, and culturally responsive teaching. Lastly, this research affirmed the particularization of Islamic schools' contexts which indicates the need for education research designed as a collective case study in this area by showing similarities and differences among six cases.

I believe that in terms of multicultural education research, this study also fills a gap to visualize possible future structures of religious multicultural education in Islamic schools. The findings of this research addressed the necessity of Islamic schools in the

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

U.S. being informed about multicultural education and its implementations in religious schools and the importance of developing productive and effective multicultural education in these schools.

6.3. Implications and Future Research

While the vast majority of the content of this study has involved understanding how six Islamic teachers experience the diversity among Muslims in the U.S. in terms of race, class, nationality, language, and gender and these six teachers' conceptualizations of multicultural development in Islamic schools in the U.S., this study has several implications for research and practice, including those in teacher education . In the following section, these implications will be presented and discussed.

The overall outcomes of this study suggested that there should be more emphasis on religious diversity in the field of multicultural education research. Sonia in her interview also discussed how her undergraduate students in her multiculturalism classroom were not aware of the types of religious schooling available in the U.S. Teacher education programs should inform prospective teachers about Catholic schools, Jewish schools, Islamic schools, and other religious schools in the U.S., focusing on diversity and multicultural issues that may arise in these schools. From another perspective, Amira discussed how she felt a sense of otherness when she was teaching undergraduate students in a university where most of the students were white and conservative. The findings of this study suggested further research in education to understand the different contexts of multicultural education. This study was primarily aimed at the exploration of the socio economic, national, gender, language, and racial

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

differences and showed that investigation of each difference in Islamic schools' classrooms contributes significant knowledge to multicultural education research.

Many preservice teachers in teacher education programs in the U.S. come from a monocultural background and lack a clear understanding of what multicultural education means (Causey, Thomas, & Armento, 2000). For teacher preparation in the U.S. to reach a critical understanding of social justice–oriented multicultural education, transformation of preservice teachers' beliefs should be considered by teacher education programs. Field experiences that provide opportunities for preservice teachers to reflect on their beliefs about minority groups may provide these teachers with better understandings of social justice and multiculturalism (Villegas & Lucas, 2007). As mentioned by two American Muslim teachers in this study, Islamic schools are isolated both from the educational mainstream and from society, so that these schools may live in their ghettos. General societal attitudes towards Islamic schools and Islamic education may also influence preservice teachers' beliefs, as Islamic schools in the U.S. are not accepted in the same way Jewish and Christian schools are. As Jones (2008) posits "Many Americans who pass Catholic, Jewish, and Christian schools everyday might cast a somewhat more suspicious eye toward a Muslim school constructed in their neighborhood." (p. 135)

I am aware that six Islamic school teachers' perspectives are not enough to use in building a roadmap for the inclusion of Islamic schools in teacher education programs, but this research might be considered the beginning of a process for conceptualizing the role of Islamic schools as an alternative field experience site to teach social justice and multicultural education in teacher education programs. The Islamic school teachers' perspectives presented in this study show that multicultural education depends

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

significantly on the healthy inclusion of Islamic schools and requires the collaboration of Islamic schools and teacher education programs in the U.S. Islamic schools also should regulate their policies to provide better field experiences for preservice teachers. The interviews with Islamic school teachers in this study showed that there may be some concerns among some Islamic school administrators who are not open new ideas, practices, and reforms. However, this assumption should not obstruct the cooperation of Islamic schools and teacher education programs to give more access and exposure to Islamic schools. Also the prejudices and beliefs preservice teachers have about Muslims and Islamic schools in the U.S. can be changed by bringing the discourses of Islam and Muslims in the U.S. into multicultural education curricula.

Providing field experience opportunities in Islamic schools not only helps preservice teachers to be part of an environment that fosters different cultures, but at the same time it may lead them to reflect on the issues related to the funding and the educational policies of Islamic schools, or private schools, in the U.S. This may help preservice teachers to conceptualize equity and social justice in education more sophisticatedly.

My hope is that discussion of the racial, class, nationality, language, and gender diversity in Islamic schools in the U.S. in this study may illustrate how the inclusion of these schools in teacher education programs as alternative field experience sites would allow preservice teachers to practice thee multicultural education content they learn in their college classrooms. Moreover, reading the voices of teachers who have experience not only teaching in Islamic schools but also as teacher educators and hearing about common issues may encourage educational researchers to consider Islamic schools in

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

social justice research and to further develop programs in teacher education that allow for the practical inclusion of Islamic schools. I hope that this study will generate reforms in teacher education programs and allow Islamic school teachers, administrators, and board members to reflect on their beliefs. The findings of this study also suggested improvements in educational policies to be involved in agendas that will debilitate the perception considers Islamic schools only for Muslim community in the U.S. Also, the teacher perspectives represented in this study suggested that Islamic schools teachers and administrators should play an active role in strengthening the place of Islamic schools in general mainstream education in the U.S. To conclude, launching a discussion about the inclusion of Islamic schools in teacher education programs and in educational research may promise mutual benefits for both sides: teacher education and Islamic school education in the U.S. Personally, I do not have experience teaching in an Islamic school, but my research experience about the development of multicultural education in Islamic schools and my experience teaching a teacher education course has led me to see the gap between the two sides. This research encourages future projects and research that will close this gap.

This research revealed important results and implications for Muslim communities, Islamic schools, teachers in Islamic schools, research into religious multicultural education, and research in teacher education. Meanwhile, the results of this study also provided implications for future research.

This study was an example of a qualitative case study. Designing my research as a qualitative case study allowed me to obtain rich and in-depth descriptions of six Islamic school teachers' experiences. Investigating the educational context of every Islamic

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

school may be too complicated to be accomplished through qualitative educational research. The results of this study strongly suggest that there should be quantitative research examples that can bring considerable number of Islamic schools' teachers' perspectives. For example, future research may focus on creating surveys that investigate the beliefs of Islamic school teachers and administrators on multicultural educational practices in Islamic schools to be used in quantitative inquiry. Designing and executing such a quantitative research project may provide findings on more general requirements for multicultural educational development in Islamic schools in the U.S.

Another avenue for future research may include ethnographic research in Islamic schools. This study showed that Islamic schools established by immigrant Muslims may present a different picture than Islamic schools established by indigenous Muslims. This result encourages ethnographic studies in both types of schools. Future research designed as an ethnographic study may provide more different perspectives on and more details about diversity in these schools. Ethnographic research may bring the voices of teachers, students, administrators, and parents to the investigation of multicultural education contexts in Islamic schools in the U.S.

Lastly, I strongly believe that the results of this research do not only point to the importance of multicultural education development in Islamic schools but at the same time direct attention to the discussion of controversial topics such as feminism, homosexuality, and the relationship between mosque and state in Islamic schools' classrooms.

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

6.4. Conclusion

In the spring of 2011, I was about to finish my Master's degree and needed to decide whether I should continue to a Ph.D degree in Curriculum Studies or not. One of the challenges for me during those days was that I could not decide on my research topic. As an international graduate student, I faced several challenges during my Masters' degree. I was studying hard to understand the concepts in U.S education which I was not familiar with during my bachelor's degree. I studied hard to understand issues in U.S education, important research lines in multicultural education, the history of U.S education, and social contexts of U.S. education. When I was close to completing my Master's degree, I felt that I was not ready to continue as a Ph.D student because I did not know which topic I would research in my doctoral program. During those days, my marriage was also not going well. My husband and I had arguments more often after having our baby. I realized that most of the arguments were about how to educate our daughter within Islamic culture. We did not agree on some things because the cultural differences between me and my husband were throwing us to opposite sides, even though we share the same religion. I was not happy in my marriage, nor was I hopeful about my future career.

For me, continuing with my Ph.D with a baby and an unhappy marriage was not an issue; having no idea what I was going to research was a bigger matter. I could have decided what I would research later, but I did not want to go into a Ph.D program without any research idea in my mind. Then I started to reflect on my personal life. The religion which connected me and my husband so strongly ten years ago was causing difficulties in our relationship these days. Then I started to think about how those problems between me

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

and my husband might guide me to decide on a research topic for my Ph.D. Finally, looking for diversity in Islamic schools came as a general research idea for my Ph.D degree.

During my Ph.D degree, I always believed that my topic was worthy of being researched and critical for both Islamic schools and the field of education, because my research journey slowly diminished all the problems in my marriage and then slowly cleared them all. When I was reading articles and books about my research topic, I was always finding something from my own life. On the other hand, the graduate courses I took in my doctoral program were expanding my comprehension about multicultural education, social justice, tolerance, equity, culturally responsive teaching, and mutual understanding. Combining what I learned in my graduate courses with what I read about differences among Muslims in the U.S. let me see that having cultural norms, beliefs, and visions in religion is normal and natural. Also I realized that understanding the cultural discourse behind the religion was a key to resolving the divergent perspectives my husband and I had. My research brought hope, happiness, and ambition to me, so I was always positive and patient about completing my research journey successfully.

I believe that my research has been a success. The key findings and analyses show that this study described the contexts of diversity in terms of race, class, nationality, language, and gender in six Islamic schools in the U.S. from the perspectives of Islamic school teachers. In light of the reviewed literature, I was able to analyze the collected data effectively. The discussion of key finding and analyses concluded that the contexts of each difference (race, class, nationality, language, and gender) are part of a complex dynamic that depends on the Muslim community, administrator, teachers, parents, and

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

policies of six Islamic schools where multicultural education was not concerned. The experiences and descriptions of six Islamic school teachers, most of whom had graduate degrees in education, showed that multicultural education curriculum cannot be generalized for Islamic schools in the U.S. but can be improved through strengthening understandings of critical pedagogy and transformational approach in these schools.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

REFERENCES

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

REFERENCES

Adeney, M., & DeMaster, K. (1994). Muslims of Seattle. *Muslim Communities in North America*, In Haddad, Y. Y., & Smith, J.I. (Eds.) (1994). *Muslim Communities in North America* (p.195-205). Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Afridi, S. (2001). *Muslims in America: Identity, diversity and the challenge of understanding*. New York, NY: Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Agee, J. (2009). Developing qualitative research questions: a reflective process. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *22*(4), 431-447.

Ahlquist, R. (1992). Manifestations of inequality: Overcoming resistance in a multi-cultural foundations course. In C. A. Grant (Ed.), *Research and multicultural education* (p. 89–105). Washington, DC: Falmer Press.

Ahmad, S. L. (2012). The tale of the two Muslim Americas. Retrieved on March 15, 2013 from http://theamericanmuslim.org/tam.php/features/articles/the-tale-of-the-two-muslim-americas/0019542.

Ahmad, I. & Szpara, M.Y. (2003). Muslim Children in Urban America: The New York City Schools Experience. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, 23 (2)* 295-301.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Abu El-Haj, T. R. (2007). " I Was Born Here, but My Home, It's Not Here": Educating for Democratic Citizenship in an Era of Transnational Migration and Global Conflict. *Harvard Educational Review*, *77*(3), 285-316.

Al- Romi, N. H. (2000). Muslims as a minority in the United States. *International Journal of Educational Research, 33,* 631-638**.**

Al-Shingiety, A. (1991). The Muslims as the “other” representation and self-image of the Muslims in North America. In Haddad, Y.Y. (Ed.) (1991). *The Muslims of America.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., Razavieh, A., & Sorensen, C. (2010). *Introduction to research in education*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Banks, C. A. M., & Banks, J. A. (1995). Equity pedagogy: An essential component of multicultural education. *Theory into practice*, *34*(3), 152-158.

Banks, J. A. (1993). Multicultural education: Historical development, dimensions, and practice. *Review of research in education*, *19*, 3-49.

Banks, J.A. (2006). *Cultural diversity and education: Foundations, curriculum, and teaching*. New York, NY: Pearson Education Inc.

Banks, J. A. (2010). Multicultural education: Characteristics and goals. In J. E. Banks & C. M. Banks (Eds.), *Multicultural education: Issues and perspective,*(7th ed.)(pp. 3-30). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Barboza, S. (1993). *American Jihad: Islam After Malcom X.* New York, NY: Doubleday.

Bayoumi, M. (2009). *How does it feel to be a problem?: Being young and Arab in America*. New York, NY: Penguin Group.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*,*13*(4), 544-559

Bennett, C. I. (2007). Comprehensive multicultural education: Theory and practice. Boston: Allyn & Bacon

Bilgè, B. (1994). Voluntary associations in the old Turkish community of metropolitan Detroit. In Haddad, Y. Y., & Smith, J.I. (Eds.) (1994). *Muslim Communities in North America* (p.381-406). Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Blanchard, C. (2008). *Islamic Religious Schools, Madrasas: Background*. Congressional Research Service. Washington, DC.

Bonett, S. W. (2011). Educating Muslim American youth in post-9/11era: A critical review of policy and practice. *High School Journal, 95 (1),* 46-55.

Bromley, D. B. (1990). Academic contributions to psychological counseling: A philosophy of science for the study of individual cases. *Counseling Psychology Quarterly, 3(3),* 299-307.

Callaway, A. (2010). Literature review: the growing need to understand Muslim students. *Multicultural Perspectives, 12(4),* 217-222.

Carter, S. & Little, M. (2007). Justifying knowledge, justifying method, taking action: Epistemologies, methodologies, and methods in qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research, 17 (10),* 1316-1328.

Causey, V. E., Thomas, C. D., & Armento, B. J. (2000). Cultural diversity is basically a foreign term to me: The challenges of diversity for preservice teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *16*(1), 33-45.

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

Cho, J., & Trent, A. (2006). Validity in qualitative research .*Qualitative research*, *6*(3), 319-340.

Crabtree, B. F., & Miller, W. L. (1999). Using codes and code manuals: a template organizing style of interpretation. *Doing qualitative research*, *2*, 163-177.

Creswell, J. (2007, 2nd edition). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions.* Thousand oak, CA: Sage.

Dewey, J. & Boydston, J. (Eds.). (1951). *John Dewey: The later works, 1925-1953* (Vol. 5). Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Elbih, R. (2012). Debates in the literature on Islamic schools. *Educational Studies, 48,* 156-173.

Elliot , A. (2006). Between black and immigrant Muslims, an uneasy alliance, downloaded February 24, 2014 at: http://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/11/nyregion/11muslim.html?pagewanted=all.

Emerick, Y. (1999). Muslim schools: a view from the inside, downloaded February 24, 2013 at: www.islamfortoday.com/emerick9.htm.

Eysenck, H. J. (1968). *Eysenck personality inventory*. San Diego, CA: Educational and Industrial Testing Service.

Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative inquiry*, *12*(2), 219-245.

Frable, D. E. (1997). Gender, racial, ethnic, sexual, and class identities. *Annual review of psychology*, *48* (1), 139-162.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures :Selected Essays.* New York, NY: Basic books.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Grant, C. A. (1992). *Research in Multicultural Education: From the Margins to the Mainstream* (No. 4). Philadelphia, PA: Routledge.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. *Handbook of qualitative research*, *2*, 163-194.

Guba, E.G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). 'Paradigmatic Controversies, and Emerging Confluences', in Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds) *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3rd Edition), pp. 191–216. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Guion, L. A., Diehl, D. C., & McDonald, D. (2011). Conducting an In-depth Interview. Retrieved on April 10, 2013 from http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fy393

Haddad, Y. Y. (Ed.) (1991). *The Muslims of America.* Oxford University Press: New York.

Haddad, Y. Y., & Lummis, A. T. (1987). *Islamic values in the United States: A comparative study* (p. 51). New York: Oxford University Press.

Haddad, Y. Y., & Smith, J.I. (Eds.) (1994). *Muslim Communities in North America*. SUNY Press.

Haddad, Y. Y., Senzai, F., & Smith, J. I. (Eds.). (2009). *Educating the Muslims of America*. Oxford University Press, USA.

Hermansen, M.K. (1994). The Muslims of San Diego. In Haddad, Y. Y., & Smith, J.I. (Eds.) (1994). *Muslim Communities in North America* (p. 169-194). Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Hickey, G., & Kipping, C. (1996). A multi-stage approach to the coding of data from open-ended questions. *Nurse Researcher*, *4*, 81-91.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Hoodfar, H. (2003). The veil in their minds and our heads:The persistence of colonial images of Muslim women. *Resources for Feminist Research, 22,* 5-18.

Hodge, D.R. (2002). Working with Muslim youths: understanding the values and beliefs of Islamic discourse. *Children & Schools, 24(1),* 6-25.

Howard, J. A. (2000). Social psychology of identities. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 367-393.

Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative health research*, *15*(9), 1277-1288.

Huda, Q. U. (2009). The diversity of Muslims in the United States: views as Americans. *United State Institute of Peace Special Report.*

Imam, S. A. (2009). Seperation of what and state: the life experiences of Muslims with Public schools in the Midwest. In Sensoy, O., & Stonebanks, C. D. (Eds.), *Muslim Voices in School: Narratives of Identity and Pluralism (*p. 41-54). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Jackson, L. (2011). Islam and Muslims in U.S public schools since September 11, 2001. *Religious Education, 106(2),* 163-179.

Jasser, M. Z. (2011). Islamic Schools and American Civic Culture. *Academic Questions*, *24*(1), 24-31.

Jones, S. L. (2008). *Religious schooling in America: Private education and public life*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.

Kelley, R. (1994). Muslims in Los Angeles. In Haddad, Y. Y., & Smith, J.I. (Eds.) (1994). *Muslim Communities in North America* (p. 135-168). Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Keyworth, K. (2009). Islamic schools of America: data based profiles. In Haddad, Y.Y., Senzai, F., & Smith, J.J. (Eds.), *Educating the Muslims of America* (p. 21-37). New York: Oxford University Press.

Khalifa, M., & Gooden, M. A. (2010). Between Resistance and Assimilation: A Critical Examination of American Muslim Educational Behaviors in Public School. *Journal of Negro Education*, *79*(3), 308-323.

Kim, H. S. (2012). Multicultural religious education in a Trinitarian perspective. *Religious Education, 107(3),* 247-261.

Kymlicka, W. (2004). Forward. In *Diversity and citizenship education: Global perspectives,* James A. Banks (Ed.), (pp. xiii-xviii). San Fransisco, CA: Josey-Bass.

Kymlicka, W. (2010). The rise and fall of multiculturalism? New debates on inclusion and accommodation in diverse societies. *International social science journal*, *61*(199), 97-112.

Kincheloe, J. L., & Steinberg, S. R. (1997). *Changing multiculturalism*. Philadelphia, PA: Open University.

Kincheloe, J. L., Steinberg, S. R., & Stonebanks, C. D. (2010). *Teaching Against Islamophobia*. New York, NY: Peter Lang Pub Incorporated.

King, K.P., Nuseibeh, H.A., & Nuseibeh, H. (2014). Raising children and teens of Middle Eastern born parents in the Unites States:transformative perspective of intercultural competency. In Salili, F. & Hoosain, R. (Eds.), *Growing up between two cultures: problems and issues of Muslim children* (p.17-38). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Kuhn, T. (1996). *The structure of scientific revolutions*. Chicago, IL:University of Chicago Press.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2000). Fighting for our lives preparing teachers to teach African American students. *Journal of teacher education*, *51*(3), 206-214.

Lee, H. J. (2005). Understanding and assessing preservice teachers' reflective thinking. *Teaching and teacher education*, *21*(6), 699-715.

Leonard, K. (2003). *Muslims in the United States.* New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Malhall, A. (2003). In the field: Notes on Observation in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Advanced Nursing 41 (3),* 306-313.

Maira, S. (2004). Youth culture, citizenship and globalization: South Asian Muslim youth in the United States after September 11th. *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, *24*(1), 219-231.

Marks, M. J., Binkley, R., & Daly, J. K. (2014). Preservice Teachers and Religion: Serious Gaps in Religious Knowledge and the First Amendment. *The Social Studies*, *105*(5), 245-256.

Marrett, C. B., Mizuno, Y., & Collins, G. (1992). Schools and opportunities for multicultural contact. In C. A. Grant (Ed.), *Research and multicultural education* (p. 200-213). Washington, DC: Falmer Press.

May, S. (1998). *Critical multiculturalism: Rethinking multicultural and antiracist education*. Philadelphia, PA: Falmer Press.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

May, S., & Sleeter C.E. (2010). *Critical multiculturalism: Theory and praxis*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.

McDonough, G.P., Memon, N.A., & Mintz, A.I. (2013). *Discipline, Devotion, and Dissent: Jewish, Catholic, and Islamic Schooling in Canada.* Ontario, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

McCloud, A. B. (1995). *African American Islam*. New York, NY: Routledge.

McLaren, P. (1995). *Critical pedagogy and predatory culture: Oppositional politics in a postmodern era*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Memon, N. A. (2009). *From protest to praxis: A history of Islamic schools in North America* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Toronto, Canada.

Memon, N. (2011). What Islamic school teachers want: Towards developing an Islamic teacher education program. *British Journal of Religious Education, 33(3),* 285-298.

Merriam, S.B. (2009). *Qualitative Research: A guide to design and implementation.* San Francisco, CA: Willey Publishers.

Merry, M. S. (2005). Advocacy and involvement: The role of parents in western Islamic schools. *Religious Education*, *100*(4), 374-385.

Merry, M.S. (2007). *Culture, Identity, and Islamic Schooling.* New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Merryfield, M. M. (1998). Pedagogy for global perspectives in education: Studies of teachers' thinking and practice. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, *26*(3), 342-379.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook. 1994. *Beverly Hills: Sage Publications*.

Miller, T. (2009). Mapping the global Muslim population: A report on the size and distribution of the world's Muslim population. *Washington, DC: Pew Research Center*.

Mirza, K., & Bakali, N. (2009). Islam: the fundamentals every teacher should know. In Kincheloe, J. L., Steinberg, S. R., & Stonebanks, C. D. (2010). *Teaching Against Islamophobia* (Vol. 346). New York, NY: Peter Lang Pub Incorporated.

Moore, K. M. (2007). Muslims in the United States: Pluralism under exceptional circumstances. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *612*(1), 116-132.

Moore, J. R. (2009). Why religious education matters: The role of Islam in multicultural education. *Multicultural Perspectives*, *11*(3), 139-145.

Nespor, J. (1987). The roles of beliefs in the practice of teaching. *Curriculum Studies,* 19(4), 317-328.

Niyozov, S., & Pluim, G. (2009). Teachers' Perspectives on the Education of Muslim Students: A missing Voice in Muslim Education Research. *Curriculum Inquiry, 39*(5), 637-677.

Niyozov, S. (2010). Teachers and teaching Islam and Muslims in pluralistic societies: claims, misunderstandings, and responses. *Journal of International Migration and Integration, 11,* 23-40.

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

Nord, W. A., & Haynes, C. G. (1998). Taking religion seriously across the curriculum. Alexandra, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Omanson, L.G. (2013). *African-American and Arab-American Muslim communities in the Detroit Ummah* (Master's Thesis). Retrieved from http://ir.uiowa.edu/etd/2597/.

Peek, L. (2005). Becoming Muslim: the development of religious identity. *Sociology of Religion, 66(3), 215-242.*

Pew Research Center. (2007). *Muslim Americans: Middle Class and Mostly Mainstream*. Washington, DC: Author.

Pew Research Center's forum on Religion and Public Life. (2011, January).*The future of global Muslim population.*Washington, DC: Author.

Phillion, J., & Malewski, E. (2011). Study abroad in teacher education: Delving into cultural diversity and developing cultural competence. *Action in Teacher Education*, *33*(5-6), 643-657.

Pipes, D., & Duran, H. (2002). Faces of American Islam. *Policy Review, 114,* 49-60.

Prior, L. (2003). *Using documents in social research*. Thousand Oaks, CA SAGE Publications.

Richards, L. (2009). *Handling qualitative data: A practical guide*. SAGE Publications Limited.

Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (p. 162). New York: Teachers college press.

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

Rashid, S. (2000). Understanding Blacks and Islam. *Journal of Islamic Law and Culture, 5(1),* 45-75.

Rashid, S. (2013). *Black Muslims in the U.S: History, Politics, and the Struggle of a Community.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Rashid, M., & Muhammad, Z. (1992). The sister Clara Muhammad schools: pioneers in the development of Islamic education in America. *The Journal of Negro Education, 61(2),* 178-185.

Saada, N.L. (2013). Teachers' perspectives on citizenship education in Islamic schools in Michigan. *Theory and Research in Social Education, 41(2),* 247-273.

Sabry, N.S., & Bruna, K. (2007). Learning from the experience of Muslim students in American schools: towards a proactive model of school community cooperation. *Multicultural Perspectives, 9(3),* 44-50.

Sacirbey, O. (2011). 9/11 bullying: Muslim teens push back.*Retrieved on February 27, 2013 from* http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/09/07/bullying-muslim-teens-push-back_n_952947.html.

Sancar, M. (2010, June). *Toplumsal baris ve egitim kapanis konusmasi.* Paper presented at the *Conference of Reconstruction of Education for Social Justice*, Istanbul, Turkey.

Sanchèz, E. (2012). Latino Muslims carving a new American identity. Retrived on March 15, 2013 from http://www.commongroundnews.org/article.php?id=32444lan=ensp=0partner=rssemc=rss.

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

Sanjakdar, F. (2011). *Living west facing east: the (de) construction of Muslim youth sexual identities.* New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing.

Salili, F. & Hoosain, R. (2014). *Growing up between two cultures: Problems and issues of Muslim children.* Charlotte, NC: Information Age publishing.

Sarroub, L. K. (2005). *All American Yemeni girls: Being Muslim in a public school* . Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* . New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Sensoy, Ö. (2009). Where the heck is the "Muslim world" anyways? In Ö. Sensoy & C. D. Stonebanks (Eds.), *Muslim voices in school: Narratives of identity and pluralism* (pp. 71-85). Boston: Sense Publishers.

Sirin, S.R., Ryce, P., & Mir, M. (2009). How teachers' values affect their evaluation of children of immigrants: Findings from Islamic and public schools. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 24(2009),* 463-473.

Sleeter, C. E., & McLaren, P. (Eds.). (1995). *Multicultural education, critical pedagogy, and the politics of difference*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Sleeter, C. (2008). Equity, democracy, and neoliberal assaults on teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *24*(8), 1947-1957.

Smith, J. I. (1991). Patterns of Muslim Immigration.U.S. Department of State. Retrived February 18, 2013 from http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/muslimlifelimmigrat.htm.

Smith, J.I. (1999). *Islam in America.* New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

Stake, R. E. (1995). The art of case study research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Stake, R. (2010). *Qualitative Research: Studying How Things Work.* New York, NY: Guilford

Steinberg, S. R. (2001). *Multi/intercultural conversations*. New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing.

St. Pierre, E. (2002). "Science" rejects post-modernism. *Educational Researcher*, 31(8), 25-27.

Sonn, T. (1994). Diversity in Rochester's Islamic community. In Haddad, Y. Y., & Smith, J.I. (Eds.) (1994). *Muslim Communities in North America* (p.279-292).Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Subedi, B. (2006). Preservice teachers' beliefs and practices: Religion and religious diversity. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *39*(3), 227-238.

Van Manen, M. (1997). From meaning to method. *Qualitative health research*, *7*(3), 345-369.

Villegas, A. M., & Lucas, T. (2007). The culturally responsive teacher. *Educational Leadership*, *64*(6), 28.

Yin, R. K. (1993). Applications of case study research (applied social research methods series volume 34).

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (Vol. 5). SAGE Publications, Incorporated.

Zeichner, K. M. (2009). *Teacher education and the struggle for social justice*. New York, NY: Routledge.

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

Zeydanlioglu, W. (2008). " The white Turkish man's burden": orientalism, kemalism and the Kurds in Turkey. *Neo-colonial mentalities in contemporary Europe,* 156-174.

Zine, J. (2001). Muslim youth in Canadian schools: education and politics of religious identity. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 32(4),* 399-423.

Zine, J. (2009). *Canadian Islamic schools: unravelling the politics of faith, gender, knowledge, and identity*. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

للاستشارات المنارة

www.manaraa.com

APPENDIX

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

APPENDIX: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1- Can you introduce yourself briefly? Such as where are you from? What subject do you teach?
2- How long have you been teaching in Islamic Schools?
3- What factors led you to teach in Islamic Schools?
4- When all teaching experiences of you in this school are thought, how your students differ in terms of nationality and language?
5- Other than nationality and language, what kind of diverse perspectives do your students bring to your classroom?
6- What about different experiences of your students, have you ever notice that the influence of different experiences?
7- How do you experience these all, linguistic, national, political, and cultural differences? In other words how does having students from different perspectives but from the same religion influence your teaching style?
8- What do you think are this situation's strengths?
9- What do you see as major challenges for having students from the same religious culture, but have different experiences?
10- How does this situation impact your understanding of multicultural education?

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

11. According to you, what is the role of Islamic schooling in the U.S education?
12. What needs to be done to improve multicultural education in Islamic schools in the U.S?

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

VITA

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

VITA

Kadriye El-Atwani
649 S. Henderson Road. C312 19406 King of Prussia, PA.
765-409-5433
kelatwan@purdue.edu

Education:

PhD. Candidate: Expected Completion, August 2015
Cultivating Multicultural Education in U.S Islamic Schools: Islamic School Teachers' Perspectives about Diversity in U.S Islamic Schools
Purdue University, West Lafayette-IN
Area of Specialization: Curriculum Studies and Multicultural Teacher Education
Department: Curriculum and Instruction
Chair: Dr. JoAnn Phillion

Master of Science in Education, Purdue University, West Lafayette- IN, May 2011

Bachelor of Science in Education: Elementary Mathematics Education, Department of Elementary Education
Middle East Technical University, Ankara Turkey, January 2005
Advisor: Dr. Erdinc Cakiroglu

Research Experience:

Graduate Research Assistant: *Cultivating Multicultural Education in U.S Islamic Schools,* granted by Purdue University Research Foundation with Prof. JoAnn Phillion
August 2013 – August 2014

As a research assistant I observed various Islamic schools' educational settings, and interviewed with Islamic school teachers from different states. I prepared documents for the Institutional Review Board, and attended meetings to discuss my research in details. Analysis of this research turned into several articles and conference presentations.

www.manaraa.com

Graduate Research Assistant: Honduras Study Abroad Program Research Group, Purdue University, IN
August 2011- July 2013

As a research assistant I conducted and transcribed post study abroad interviews, analyzed interviews and wrote articles, lead research group meeting discussions, and worked on preparing research agendas.

Teaching Experience:

Graduate Instructor: Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Purdue University
Exploring Teaching as a Career (EDCI 205)
August 2009 - January, 2015

I taught EDCI 205-Exploring Teaching as a Career, a course which provides students school experiences that will assist them to make informed career choices and build a foundation for future education courses. I consistently received excellent evaluations from students. During teaching this course, I aimed to develop a student-centered approach by establishing collaborative knowledge communities in the classroom. The activities and projects covered in this course help students to translate theory into practice.

Mathematics Teacher: Yildirim Beyazit Public Elementary School, Izmit-Turkey
Teaching Algebra and Geometry, Grade 6.7, and 8
2007-2008

I taught elementary school mathematics curriculum in Grade 6-8 classrooms. During teaching in the public school and following the national curriculum, I applied instructional strategies that supported multicultural intelligence theory, and creative mathematics. I also organized parent-teacher conferences to inform parents about students' progress.

Mathematics Teacher: Cozum Private Schools, Ankara-Turkey
Teaching Algebra and Geometry, Grade 8, 9 and 10
2005-2007

I taught algebra, geometry, and introduction to calculus in grades 6 to 10. I was also responsible to guide my students' progress in other courses to fulfill the expectations of high stake tests, national curriculum standards, and parents. I organized parent-teacher conferences every two weeks to

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

track students' progress, and home visits to have better understanding of students' family and social life.

Publications:

El-Atwani, K. (2015). Book Review. (Review of the book. *Discipline, Devotion, and Dissent: Jewish, Catholic, and Islamic Schooling in Canada,* by G.P. McDonough, N.A. Memon, A.I. Mintz*). Journal of Multicultural Perspectives, 17 (1), 1-6.*

El-Atwani, K. (2014). Book Review. (Review of the book. *Black Muslims in the U.S: History, Politics, and the Struggle of a Community,* by S. Rashid). *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, *34*(4), 464-466.

El-Atwani, K. (2015, in press). Teaching Social Justice within Other Communities: Study abroad coordinators' perspectives on the impacts of community practice in Honduras, India, and Tanzania. In Fang He, M. & Phillion, J. (Eds.), *Internationalizing teaching and teacher education for equity: Engaging alternative knowledges across ideological borders.* North Carolina, NC: Information Age Publishing.

El-Atwani, K (2015, in press). U.S Islamic Schools as an Alternative Field Experience Site in Preservice Teacher Education. In Phillion, J.; Rahatzad, J.& Sasser H. (Eds.), *Critical multiplicities in teacher education: ethical considerations and alter-globalizations.* North Carolina, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Holleran, C. & El-Atwani, K. (2013). Math + Social Justice = A New Take on Mathematics Teacher Preparation. In L.C. de Oliveira, (Ed.), *Teacher education for social justice: Perspectives and Lessons Learned* (115-126). North Carolina, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Sharma, S., El-Atwani, K., Rahatzad, J., Ware, J., Phillion, J., Malewski, E. (2011). How Disorienting Experiences in Informal Learning Contexts Promote Cross-Cultural Awareness in Preservice Teachers: Findings From a Study Abroad Program. *Journal of Learning Landscapes.* 5(2)*.281-294.*

El-Atwani, K. (under final revision). Envisioning Multicultural Education Development in U.S Islamic Schools in Light of Reviewed Literature. *Journal of Multicultural Perspectives.*

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Research Grants:

Purdue Research Foundation Year- Long Research Grant (with Prof. JoAnn Phillion). *Cultivating Multicultural Education in U.S Islamic Schools* ($18,000). 2013-2014. (University Wide Award).

The Purdue Research Foundation (PRF) Research Grants are one-year awards distributes through to assist faculty by providing support a half time Research Assistant at the PhD. level. I wrote the research grant proposal to have funding for my own research.

Scholarships & Fellowships:

Ross Fellowship (Assistantship). *College of Education, Purdue University.* 2011-2015.

This fellowship is for the recruitment of outstanding Ph.D. students to graduate programs at Purdue University. The fellowship provides a four-year award of $48,441.50 (stipend, tuition, and medical insurance supplement).

Travel Grants:

2014 April: Curriculum & instruction, College of Education, Purdue University ($200).
2014 April: Associate dean for Discovery & Faculty Development, College of Education, Purdue University ($200).
2012 September: Curriculum & Instruction, College of Education, Purdue University ($200).
2012 September: Associate Dean for Discovery & Faculty Development, College of Education, Purdue University ($200).

Conference Presentations:

El-Atwani, K. (April, 2014). *Critical Examination of Race, Class and Gender in U.S Islamic Schools: New Possibilities for Critical Multiculturalism.* Paper presented at American Educational Research Association, Philadelphia, PA.

El-Atwani, K (April, 2014). The Role of Gender in Muslim Identity Development: Perceptions of U.S Islamic School Teachers. In C. Ridenour (Chair). *Women's Religious Identity Formation in Educational Contexts.* Paper presented at American Educational Research Association, Philadelphia, PA.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

El-Atwani, K. (April, 2013*). Multiculturalism in Religious Schooling: Voices of Islamic School Teachers in the U.S.* Paper presented at American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA.

El-Atwani, K. (March, 2013*). Cultivating Critical Multiculturalism in U.S Islamic Schools: Voices of Islamic School Teachers.* Paper presented as a poster presentation at Annually Graduate Student in Educational Research Symposium (AGSERS), Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN.

El-Atwani, K. (October, 2012). *Re-Conceptualizing the Role of National Education in Social Justice: Urgent Dialogues on the Education of Kurds in Turkey.* Paper presented at Conference on Curriculum Theory and Classroom Practice, Dayton, OH-USA.

El-Atwani, K. (September 2012). *Community of Practice as an Application in Multicultural Education: First Year Midwestern Pre-service Teachers' in International Field Experience.* Paper presented at Applied Education Congress, Ankara, Turkey.

Professional Activity:

Volunteer Principal, Greater Lafayette Islamic Schools, August, 2013- May, 2014
Vice-President, Graduate Student Educational Council. August 2012- May 2013
Officer, Curriculum and Instruction Graduate Student Association, August 2011- May 2012

Research Interests:

Issues in Immigrants' Education in the U.S.
Islamic Schools in the U.S.
Multicultural Education
Social Justice
Teacher Education
Elementary Mathematics Education
Culturally Responsive Teaching

Professional Membership:

American Educational Research Association (AERA)
National Association of Multicultural Education (NAME)
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)
The Association of Teacher Educators (ATE)

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Workshops and Short Courses Attended:

College Teaching Grant Writing
Tech Tools for Teaching and Learning Assessment
Designing a Course

References:

JoAnn Phillion, Professor
College of Education, Purdue University
Beering Hall of Liberal Arts and Education
Room 4144
West Lafayette, Indiana, 47907-1446
Voice: (765) 494-2352, Fax: (765) 496-1228
Email: phillion@purdue.edu

Nathalia E. Jaramillo
Deputy Chief Diversity Officer and
Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies
Office of Diversity and Inclusion
Kennesaw State University
1000 Chastain Road,MD #2702
English Building Room 204
Kennesaw, GA 30144-5591
Phone: 678-797-2243
Email:: njaramil@kennesaw.edu

Suniti Sharma, Assistant Professor
Department of Teacher Education
Saint Joseph's University
Merion Hall 233
5600 City Avenue
Philadelphia, 19004
Email ssharma@sju.edu
Phone: 6106601273

Jill Newton, Associate Professor
College of Education, Purdue University
Beering Hall of Liberal Arts and Education
Room 4136

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

West Lafayette, Indiana, 47907-1446
Voice: (765) 496-5679
Email: janewton@purdue.edu

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com