

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
GRADUATE COLLEGE

EDUCATIONAL INVOLVEMENT OF ARAB PARENTS WHO HAVE CHILDREN
WITH DISABILITIES

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By
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Norman, Oklahoma
2018

EDUCATION INVOLVEMENT OF ARAB PARENTS WHO HAVE CHILDREN
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A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

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Acknowledgements

I would particularly thank my mother Munirah Mohammed for her prayer and support during my life, and school's journal. I wish to thank several people for their support and encouragement during the process of writing my dissertation and through graduate school: my advisor and friend, Dr. Rockey Robbins, provided needed idea development and moral support. Dr. Joyce Brandes Dr. Annie Baghdayan gave much needed support and guidance over my Ph.D. courses and research. Dr. Benjamin Heddy, Dr. Mike Crowson, and Dr. Ruan Jiening who offered great feedback and provide much assistance with my work. I also like to thank my family and friends who offer their support and love. Thank you all of you.

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ABSTRACT

Many Arab immigrant parents invest a great deal of time, energy, and money in order to have their children attend public school in the United States (U.S.). Because of this investment, some of these parents want to ensure the success of their children by being involved in their education. Unfortunately, due to some barriers Arab parents may have a difficult time understanding how they can become involved. This study utilized a phenomenological qualitative approach to explore Arab American parents' perspectives and experiences in the education of their children with disabilities. Phenomenological data analysis exposed six core themes that are: relationships with educators, acculturation stress communication issues, parental involvement, educational support, religious perspectives about disabilities, and challenges with English Language. These themes found significant implications for professional working with Arab immigrant parents who have children disabilities. This study suggested more research about this topic.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Personal Journal

Since I started in the field of Special Education in 2002 in Kuwait, I accomplished many levels of experience of working and interacting with people with special needs who mostly were marginalized from our communities because people saw them as weak and unable to affect or improve the community. Kuwait families with children with disabilities experienced a great deal of stress. I was hired to teach in an institute for the deaf. I taught at the school for four years, and my sign language allowed me to participate in the deaf community as if I were a member. I treasured all of my time at the school, but one thing consistently troubled me: I saw some students who did not pay attention in their class. They were unmotivated because they knew that they would find only uninteresting jobs as adults, and they could not go to college. In Kuwait, a high school diploma is the education ceiling for deaf students. This limit was tragic for them, and for me. However, although their ambition had mostly been broken, I saw some students who certainly had the ability to go further in their studies. My students with disabilities influenced my behavior towards them, compelling me to support them to overcome the stigma of being a drain on society and their families.

Arabian Culture Perspective of Disability

Arab communities have negative feelings about people who have disabilities. Most Arab people believe that people with disabilities cannot help themselves, and they need other people to help them in all aspects of their day-to-day living. Consequently, people with disabilities have a difficult time participating in, and supporting, their communities. However, some Arab parents who have children with disabilities may

have different aspirations for their children with disabilities, and these parents believe in their children and support them.

In addition, most Arab parents who immigrate to the United States try to keep their identity connected to their cultural traditions, beliefs, and languages, which may affect their involvement with the education of their children with disabilities. The goal of this study is to investigate Arab parents' expectations and participation in the education of their children with disabilities, and to look at how Arab culture influences their communication with their children's teachers, and school personnel Abed.

Parents' Influences

From a very young age, children depend on their parents when taking steps towards success. Parents can play a beneficial role in their children's lives in general, and they can play an important role in their academic lives as well (Pomerantz & Monti, 2015). Throughout the years, the level of parental involvement has changed fundamentally. It is imperative that parents engage with their children's school to boost their children's scholarly accomplishment and achievement (LaRocque, Kleiman, & Darling, 2011). Griffin and Galassi (2010) mentioned that students whose parents interact with them in a friendly, loving manner, who are helping them in their academic and social activities, tend to have a better chance at succeeding academically and socially.

Parental involvement, offering consideration and approval encourages children to perceive their school training as a fundamental aspect of their growth (Seginer, 2006). Parents can effectively help with tutoring, facilitating their children to grasp concepts introduced initially by their teachers and mentors (Seginer, 2006). In addition,

parental involvement enables children to understand that their learning is a community-oriented project involving students, parents, educators and other positive community figures (Seginer, 2006).

Most parents want the best for their children, whether they have a disability, or are born “healthy.” Educational equity for their children ensures that the children have accessibility to every crucial aspect of their education. Crockett (2007) insists that effective education should be respectful, open, compassionate, transparent, and entail friendly communication amongst parents and educational experts who deal with their children. There is a need to ensure that educators provide culturally adequate services to children with disabilities, so that they can have a chance to succeed and gain career opportunities.

Many immigrant families have similar views, as do American families about disabilities, adaptation to disabilities, and beliefs concerning the quality of life for their children with disabilities. As mentioned above, they typically want the best for their children. Nevertheless, social perceptions uniquely influence the manner in which children with disabilities and their families are viewed within their ethnic communities (Odom, Brantlinger, Gersten, Horner, Thompson, and Harris 2005).

Indeed, most immigrant parents face challenges in the education system of the United States. This paper specifically deals with Arab immigrant parents encountering unique difficulties. The few studies (Derose 2009; Wingfield and Karaman 1995) conducted on the acculturation of Arab immigrants in the United States find that Arab immigrants face challenges affecting their lives in the following manners: maintaining their cultural values and religion, exposure to prejudice and discrimination, especially

for people of the Islamic faith. As more Arab people settle in the United States, the issues may become more pronounced.

According to Brown, Guskin, and Mitchell (2012), the Arab immigrant community has been growing since 2000 in the United States. The American Community Survey (ACS) (2011) reported that the approximate growth in the overall Arab community in the United States is 47% in last ten years. The same research mentioned that Arab people residing in the United States comprise about 1.8 Million (US Census Bureau, 2011). With a growing number of Arab communities in the United States, their children are looking to have support from the school psychologists and school counselors to assist them in their education goals. As the number of Arab students grows, naturally, the number of Arab students with disabilities has increased, and they are seeking accommodations regarding their needs. Donovan (2013) indicated that special education providers are likely to increase working with Arab immigrant students with disabilities. More research is needed to understand Arab student's unique needs.

Within the substantial research regarding immigrant families and their children with disabilities, there is less research focused on the Arab communities and their children. Consequently, due to the lack of research, this study will be useful for schools' personnel, teachers, and counselors to support Arab parents and their children with disabilities and to begin to meet their special needs. According to Abadeh (2006) and; Donovan (2013), there are remarkable needs revealed in research focusing on Arab immigrant families and their children with disabilities. Also, Goforth (2011) and Haboush (2007) indicated that special education providers have limited resources to

attempt to understand the nuances of Arab families' education and disabilities. This study focuses on Arab parents' involvement in the education of their children with disabilities and provides information on how to get them more involved.

As the primary researcher, my Arab cultural background helps me to interact with Arab parents on a regular basis and participate in traditional customs and ceremonies. I am a practicing Muslim, as is the majority of the Arab population. There are some non-Muslims among the participants who are Christians that I have had many experiences with as well, and I understand the Mid-Eastern ways of interaction that also influence them (see appendix B: subjectivity statement). My experiences and knowledge of Arab culture, and my prior work as a special education teacher in Kuwait, help me to delve deeper into this topic. This background allows me to be sensitive to evidence, based on data, to support American school personnel and special education teachers in understanding what Arab parents of children with disabilities are looking for from schools.

Statement of Problems

Studies (Donovan, 2013; Moosa, Karabenick, & Adamsy, 2001) indicated that many teachers believe that Arab parents lack involvement in their children's school. Based on their observation, teachers tend to believe that traditional Arab culture does not encourage partnership with teachers. Bazzi-Gate (2015) argues that teachers who interact with Arab parents are aware of other reasons that may create the lack of involvement of Arab parents. Most of these teachers believe language is a barrier that prevents Arab parents from being involved with their children's education. In this study, I interviewed Arab parents to investigate their participation in, and their expectations

for, the American education system regarding their children with disabilities. Also, I examined some barriers that prevent parents from interacting and being involved in the education of their children with disabilities.

I used a phenomenological approach to investigate Arab parents' experience with the special education process. I was able to see how these experiences are related to their own Arab culture's traditions, beliefs, and languages. Specifically, I focused on how they view disability and child improvement. In addition, this study clarifies the relationships between the Arab parents and their children's teachers, and what these parents need from school personnel to get more involved. This study references the few qualitative studies that investigate the involvement of Arab immigrant parents in the education of their children who have disabilities. I concentrate on the gap in the published research on this topic; namely, what will equip school psychologists, counselors, administrators and teachers with the flexibility and cultural awareness to work effectively with parents from diverse Arab cultures. The results of this research support the development of specific, helpful strategies of how to work with Arab parents and their children who have disabilities.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate these Arab parents' expectations and participation in the education of their grade school students with disabilities' education, and how their understandings impacts on them to interact as it relates to their children's education. The research intends to answer the following research questions.

Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study are: The research question is: what

factors may prevent Arab immigrant parents from engaging with their children's education? In addition, what is the most important element to Arab immigrant parents in helping their children achieve academic success and what do they need from the school district and teachers?

Chapter 2: Literature review

Strategies and Approaches for Immigrant parents

Every year, the United States of America welcomes immigrants from all over the world. Immigrants move to the United States in pursuit of the American dream: a better life and opportunities for prosperity, such as better education and well-paying jobs (Slavin, Madden, Calderón, Chamberlain, & Hennessy, 2011). However, the pursuit of the American dream comes with various challenges. Immigrant families find it hard to adapt to new environments, keep up with cultural expectations, and set standards while becoming proficient in English. This detracts from the learning of immigrant students, and creates challenges for them in school (Slavin et al., 2011). To address the challenges faced by immigrant students, the United States government has implemented various strategies in the education system to help these students (Slavin et al., 2011).

The need for governmental intervention to improve the learning process of immigrant students is necessitated due to the fact that immigrants form part of the demographic make-up of the United States (Center for American Progress, 2014). If immigrant students are not able to perform well in school, they are unable to be competitive in the United States' job market. As a result, taxpayer money must be used to support unemployed immigrants, which strains the U.S. economy and burdens both the public and the government (Peri, 2012). Therefore, the strategies undertaken by the government and schools accommodating immigrant students are quite important in shaping the development of the country. (See appendix A: strategies and program to support Arab parents to involve in their children's education).

Laws Support Immigrant Parents' Involvement

The foremost conceptual threat to people with disabilities is the belief that they are of less value to their communities than individuals without disabilities. Individuals with disabilities are always fighting an insuperable battle to create a suitable place for themselves within communities that distinguish them as an inferior part of society (Blacher & Baker, 2007). Since the establishment of the Disability Rights Movement in the 1960s, activists in the United States of America have worked tirelessly to eradicate this association between inferiority and disability (Blacher & Baker, 2007). This movement forced the United States' government to eradicate educational, social, and employment segregation of citizens with disabilities (Hastings, Kovshoff, Ward, Degli Espinosa, Brown, & Remington, 2005). Due to the creation of awareness by Disabilities Rights Movement, educators, and government organizations, the United States of America has made some incredible steps towards the transformation of the lives of people with disabilities and the perceptions and beliefs of people towards disability (Hastings et al., 2005). According to Jones and Passey (2005), under federal law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ensures that all children with disabilities are offered equal educational access similar to the children without disabilities.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

In 1975, Congress passed the education for all handicapped children act, guaranteeing for the first time that all students with disabilities would receive public education (Villa, Thousand, Nevin & Liston, 2005). This law was later changed to

IDEA. This law requires parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities (Stoner, Bock, Thompson, Angell, Heyl, & Crowley, 2005).

Within IDEA, the Individual Education Program (IEP) is described as the central mechanism for decision-making for children and youth in special education (IDEA, 2004). Educators are legally required to include both parents and students in IEP meetings. These meetings must take place at least once a year, but they can occur more often at the request of parents or educators. By age 16, meaningful goals and services are mandated for the transition from high school to post-high school life (IDEA, 2004). The IEP is developed in partnership between educators and parents in an attempt to assist children, so that they succeed in school life without the issues of dropouts or grade retention. The purpose of this program is to provide the unique needs in an attempt to attain the different needs of each child. The IEP offers great support for immigrant students who need to have special needs of accommodation. IEP is easily accessible to families from a minority culture, ethnic background, and who have low income (IDEA, 2004). The IEP supports Arab immigrant parents in their participation in their children's school activities and need as well as advocates for their rights. This law can assist Arab parents to build a relationship with their children's teachers and acknowledge how to be involved in their children's education.

Limited English Proficient and Immigrant (LEPI)

The goal of LEPI is to assist children who have limited English proficiency, including all immigrant children who struggle with language, to achieve at high levels in the core academic subjects. States can create high-quality language instruction educational programs designed to assist state educational agencies to support those

students. This will enable them to meet state academic standards and student academic standards, parallel to those students without disabilities. It also aims to develop educational programs to help educate students with low English proficiency. LEPI seeks to help authorities in education to come up with strategies to accommodate students with low English proficiency in all-English instructional settings. This is to be coupled with helping state educational agencies in designing, implementing, and sustaining programs to help children with low English proficiency, including immigrants, to improve their English (LEPI, 2018).

LEPI also aims at increasing the involvement of parents in educational programs for students with low English proficiency. Furthermore, this program's purpose is to create one broad program of language instructional education by the use of formula grants. It also seeks to hold state and local educational agencies and schools to the following standards: demonstration of improvements in English proficiency, display of adequate annual progress in levels of English proficiency, and provision of freedom to state agencies to make evidence-based amendments to state educational programs (LEPI, 2018).

Sustainable Development Goals

In addition, the United Nation has created the goal of Sustainable Development to address three dimensions (environment, economic, and social issues) to support all people with disabilities to be part of their communities. Sustainable Development includes disability as part of their goals, especially in relation to education and employment. Disability was covered in goal 4, 8, 10, 11 and 17. Goal 4 provides equal opportunity in education for all gender and ensures equal access to all levels of

education including people with disabilities. Goal 8 gives people with disabilities equal pay for equal work value, which helps to support sustainable and inclusive economic growth. Goal 10 supports people with disabilities among countries in order to improve socially and economically. Goal 11 supports cities to build safe and sustainable access to transportation systems for all people, including people with disabilities. Goal 17 provides and collects data to monitor and enhance capacity-building support (Sustainable Development, 2015). Sustainable Development provides goals for all parents including Arab parents who have children with disabilities to discover the skills of their children with disabilities and to help them to advocate for their children's rights for equitable education. In addition, Sustainable Development supports these parents, who have children with disabilities, in order to improve their children's condition socially and economically.

Even though these laws helped immigrant parents to be involved in their children with disabilities' education, immigrant parents may have encountered some barriers that prevent them from participating and supporting their children at school activities. The goal of this study is to explore Arab parents' involvement in the education of their children with disabilities and to identify what barriers they faced during their participation in school activities, as well as in their relationships with school personnel and teachers.

Immigrant Parents' Involvement Barriers

Some immigrant parents feel they face more challenges than non-immigrant parents in regard to opportunities for involvement in their children's school activities and work; thus, they may benefit from additional support (Kruzykowski, 2007). For

instance, Poza, Brooks, and Valdés (2014) reported that the limited involvement of Latin American parents is evidenced by their absence at school events and insufficient face-to-face communication with teachers and school administration. Al-Hassan and Gardner (2002) also confirm that immigrant parents face some challenges while trying to get involved in their children's education. Furthermore, some immigrant parents believe that their ethnic and linguistic backgrounds are different enough to make engagement in school activities more difficult (Al-Hassan & Gardner, 2002). Thus, these factors may force immigrant parents to be less active overall in their children's education.

The above-mentioned challenges indicate that immigrant parents do not seem to be involved enough in the education of their children, with or without a disability. Thao (2009) stated that when immigrant parents lack visible participation in school systems, this can send a message to school personnel that immigrant parents do not care to participate in their children's education. However, this is not always the case. There may be other reasons for their lack of involvement, including challenges that are unique to their diverse backgrounds. Several studies (Leiter & Krauss, 2004; Thao, 2009; Trainor, 2010b) indicated that the most common factors or barriers immigrant parents face, which lead to low involvement in their children's education, include a lack of information, diversity of culture, and low English language proficiency.

Tradition and Adaptation of Immigrant parents

Culture is a society's way of life. It includes the attitudes, faith, principles, and symbols people obtain normally without deliberating about them and pass along in conversations from one era to the next (Ratemo, 2016). For schools to best

communicate with immigrant parents, it is vital to understand the cultural practices of the parents to which they are accustomed (Ramirez, 2003). Immigrant parents come from a variety of cultural traditions, languages, and beliefs; most of these factors affect their involvement in their children's schooling. Guo (2012) stated, "Parents reported that sometimes teachers misinterpreted students' behaviors due to a lack of knowledge of students' cultures" (p. 125).

According to Young-chan Han (2012), the involvement of immigrant parents has four stages: cultural survivor, cultural learning, cultural connector, and cultural leader. First, cultural survivors are recent immigrant parents who still use their native language for communication. These parents focus on the needs of their families to survive. They depend on bilingual friends to help them when they enroll their children in school. These parents are rarely at home, because they spend most of their time in work to support their families. They do not attend parent-teacher conference unless there is an interpreter available because they do not know about the school system in United States. Second, cultural learners are immigrant parents who begin to communicate with school, but with the support of an interpreter. These parents struggle with translating and understanding school documents, which prevents them from understanding school systems. They join parents-teacher conferences with interpreter's support, and participate in language programs for immigrant parents. In this stage, parents start gaining knowledge about the school culture in the United States. Third, cultural connectors are immigrant parents who are cultural survivors and cultural learners who begin attending the school functions regularly. In addition, these parents seek to obtain more than basic information about their school education and its overall

system, terminology, and policies. These parents become more comfortable with the English language, communication, programs, and events. Fourth, cultural leaders are supportive to cultural connectors, cultural learners, and cultural survivors, and they participate in leadership training and events. Eventually, these parents advocate for other immigrant families and their children. In addition, these parents seek more involvement in their children's school programs and events, such as parent-teacher conferences (Young-chan Han, 2012).

Acculturative stress is defined as the stress that immigrant face during resettlement. It refers to reaction that can include depression, anxiety, feeling of marginality, and alienation (Prendes-Lintel, 2008). The faces of acculturation are contact, conflict, crisis, and adaptation (Prendes-Lintel, 2008). Acculturative stress can appear across a number of life domains including, language, education, work, intracultural interaction, values, and worldviews. School experiences often put pressure on students to learn the academic and social language of the host country in order to enable them to gain acceptance from peers (Yakushko, Watson, & Thompson, 2008). The level in the nature of acculturative stress is associated with level of acceptance of the house society. Perceived discrimination in the environment, in which acculturation take place, influences how one engages in the acculturation process (Rodriguez, Myers, Bingham Mira, Flores, & Garcia-Hernandez, 2002). The more discrimination one perceives, the more likely they are to reject American identification (Birman, Trickett, & Buchanan, 2005). Birman et al. (2005) reported that immigrants in large percentage living in areas with home country environment experience less behavior acculturation than those who lived in areas with few people from their home country. This suggest

that the types of “acculturative press” that communities exerts on its members influences the acculturation process

Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1997) reported that they classified immigrants as “blinded bicultural,” “alternation bicultural” and “separated”. Blinded Bicultural persons viewed themselves as equally ethnic and American. Alternating bicultural saw themselves as more ethnic than American, but identified situational factors as influencing how they view themselves. Separated persons indicated that they view themselves as ethnic and did not feel that they were Americans.

The above research is especially relevant to the purpose of this study. The description of immigrants’ experiences offers information that contextualizes the interviews of the Arabic immigrant participants in this study. Though the above qualitative study are composite descriptions, they open the way for more subjective experiences through the participants of this study.

Culture causes immigrant parents to have certain reservations in communicating with their children’s schools, just as culture affects their children’s behaviors in class. A study by Nam and Park (2014) suggested that when schools offer activities and programs, they should think about parents’ cultures, as most immigrant parents look at their involvement in their children’s school through the lens of their native culture.

Arab parents, like any immigrant parents, have their own traditions that affect their involvement in their children’s education. Abadeh (2015) stated that Arab culture may affect the relationship between Arab parents and their children's teachers. For example, a teacher may describe the child’s performance positively, indicating that he or she participates in class discussions, expresses themselves, and takes an active

leadership role in the classrooms. The Arab parent, however, may not condone to this type of behavior, as their children have been culturally taught to be respectful and not to stand out in class.

Traditions of Immigrant Parents of Children with Disabilities

Most immigrant parents possess perspectives influenced by their cultures about how to treat and help their children who have disabilities. Each culture draws from its own belief system in understanding why some children are born with disabilities and how they should be treated (Tanner, Turner, Greenwald, Munoz, & Ricks, 1996). In other words, these cultures have their own way of dealing with children who have disabilities. For instance, Kummerer, Lopez-Reyna, and Hughes (2007) interviewed Mexican mothers about their perceptions of disabilities. Some of these mothers believed disability has a medical cause. Gregoire (2010) found out that most Haitian parents are influenced by their values, beliefs, and customs about disabilities, which results in a lack of understanding of how to address their concerns and role they play as their children's advocates. Jegatheesan (2009) interviewed Asian American mothers. The results indicate that due to ingrained cultural beliefs of immigrant parents who have children with disabilities, they may be unwilling to share information about their children to assist professionals, including special education teachers, counselors, and therapists.

Donovan (2013) found that to maintain family honor, Arab parents traditionally keep their children's disabilities secret. Similarly, Crabree (2007) found most Arab immigrant fathers struggle to accept their children's placement in special education settings. In several Arab immigrants' studies (Donovan, 2013; Crabree, 2007), it was

determined that Arab fathers believe that placements of their children in special education may result in lower self-esteem and self-expectations among children. The same results are supported by additional studies (Erickson & Al-Timimi, 2004; Goforth, 2011), which indicted that due to this stigma, Arab American parents do not prefer their children to be in special education program in their countries.

Immigrant Parents' Religion

Most of the immigrant families try to keep and teach their religion to their children. They believe that their religion is a part of their identity. In his research, Sidhu (2000) indicated the importance of the Sikh spiritual script for people who are Sikh. Sidhu added for immigrant Sikh parents, religion is a very important guidance for them in raising their children. Kim (2003) indicated that Christian Korean mothers believe their religion is the greatest guide for raising their children. They view their faith as a primary element for children's future welfare and central to their mothering. Korean Christian mothers believe that God is controlling their lives and guiding them.

Shaheen (2001) indicated that the culture of Arab American Muslims wearing hijabs and other clothing that tend to differentiate them from other religions is challenging to school children as they do not feel content with the American tradition. Muslims and Arabs have been strongly criticized and insulted by American media and other popular culture, which makes them feel disgraced, ashamed, and isolated (Shaheen, 2001). Abu El-Haj and Bonet (2011) indicated that most of the Muslim parents' views about education and their mingling with teachers and schools may be mistaken or disputed with school rules; therefore, their expressions or absence in interactions are viewed as vice by teachers and school administrators. For instance,

American teachers expect that parents should be involved in their children's educations, but this is not the perspective of Muslim families. Additionally, most of the Muslim parents are not comfortable/supportive to the idea of children taking stuffed animals to school for shows because Muslim parents consider playing with these animals as forbidden. Furthermore, Md-Yunus (2015) mentioned that some Muslim families have restrictions on most of the holidays celebrated in the United States, which include Halloween and Thanksgiving. For this reason, some Muslim parents don't allow their children to take part in school activities related to such holidays.

Religion and Disability

The findings of a 2-year ethnographic study by Gabel (2004) involving North Indian Hindu immigrants living in the mid-Western United States connected that disability and diversity create extra problems for Indian Hindu immigrants. They have distinct cultural and religious beliefs about having a child with a disability that might prevent them from reaching out to special education services and getting the help, they need. In the Indian Hindu community, negative assumptions are prevalent that view disabilities as a form of God's punishment to the parents for their sins. In contrast, Greeson, Veach, and Leroy (2001) found out that Somali families care about their children with disabilities, seeing disability as God's decision. Furthermore, Cho and Bae (2005) interviewed Korean parents. These parents experienced a process of transformation in their religion about their children with disabilities. Most Muslim parents, either Arab or non-Arab, consider their child's disability as God's will. Miles (2002) in his qualitative study with Pakistani parents indicated that these parents believe that apart from God, no one else can help. These parents believe that children with

disabilities are gifts from God. On the other side, Bywaters, Ali, Fazil, Wallace, and Singh (2003) said that a minority of Pakistani parents view disabilities as curses or punishments from God. A study by Malik (2011) in a Pakistani community in Britain found that most of these parents accept their child's disabilities as a test, whether or not gift or punishment, and they believe that they should treat their children well.

Most Arab parents who believe in God have the same beliefs concerning the will of God for their children's disabilities. Nevertheless, each parent may interpret God's will differently. Crabtree (2007) mentioned that in the Arab world, disabilities can be known as God's plan and not only as a medical condition. A study by Donovan (2013) supports this idea when he interviewed Arab parents. He emphasized in his study that most Arab parents believed that their children with disabilities were a gift of God, and they accept it. To review the collected perspectives above, one can say that persons in the study interpreted disabilities as one of the following: blessing, punishment, challenge or as a phenomenon to simply accept.

In addition, several studies (Abadeh, 2006; Crabtree, 2007; Donovan, 2013) indicated that most Arab parents connect disability with their religion. Abadeh (2006) indicated that religion can be a contributing factor in the adaptability of Arab American parents and their acceptance of their children with disabilities. Crabtree (2007) conducted a study that suggested that most Arab parents look at disabilities from an Islamic perspective. Most participants see their children with disabilities as a test from God to accept their destiny. Donovan (2013) indicated an Arabic mother expressed her feelings about her child with a disability as God's gift. These researches explore

Language Barrier

Limited English proficiency may affect immigrant parents' participation in their children's education more than any other factor. Limited English proficiency can make immigrant parents feel uncomfortable and intimidated while engaging with teachers or school personnel (Ruiz, 2012; Al-Hassan & Gardner, 2002). In contrast, immigrant parents who have strong English skills are more active with schools (Holman, 1997).

Garrett (2006) documented that children of immigrant families have a hard time adopting the United States education system due to language barriers. They often do not perform well in class because they seldom understand the concepts taught. Garrett added that such children are more likely to join local gangs. Garrett's report indicated that in North Carolina, most immigrant students drop out of school at age 16 and join local gangs.

In the same report, Garrett (2006) mentioned that immigrant parents regretted that they could not help their children with their homework because their limited English proficiency prevented them from understanding the questions and instructions given by the teachers in assignments. Many of the parents said that they felt very "helpless" when it came to helping their children with their homework. Most of these parents tried to help as much as they could, but after some time, they would give up and left their children on their own. A qualitative study by Smith, Stern, and Shatrova, (2008) over Hispanic parents' involvement indicated that Hispanic parents often feel uncomfortable communicating with their children's teachers and school personnel because of their limited English proficiency. Some of these parents used their native languages to help their children's development, which may impact their children's knowledge and limited English proficiency.

Furthermore, Guo (2012) found that a child's first language is important and valued by immigrant families, as they are interested in preserving their mother tongue. In this study, 36 out of 38 parents felt their children's schools ignored their children's proficiency in languages other than English. Kummerer et al. (2007) carried out a subjective study to survey mothers' approaches to their children's communication impairments. The survey results demonstrated that language was an obstruction in acquiring school services. Mexican mothers suggested that interpreters speak Spanish while offering information about therapy procedures with Mexican migrant families (Kummerer et al., 2007).

Donovan (2013) indicated that limited English skills make it difficult for Arab parents in the United States to get involved in their children's schooling, even though these parents want to be involved. Similarly, Abadeh (2015) found that Arab parents born outside of the United States face difficulties in communicating with their children's schools; hence, they are barely involved in their children's educational progress.

Language Barrier of Immigrant Parents of Children with Disabilities

For immigrant parents of students with disabilities, their level of English proficiency can positively or negatively affect their ability to communicate with teachers and school districts (Al-Hassan & Gardner, 2002). Jegatheesan (2009) stated that immigrant mothers of students with disabilities commented on the complicated nature of technical jargon, descriptions, and explanations, which are culturally imbued, and noted that interpreters themselves had difficulty translating from one language to another.

In her study, Ratemo (2016) found that most immigrant mothers depend on their husbands who had better English skills to provide clear explanations of the information provided by schools. However, Ratemo added that most of these fathers do not have the time to be involved with the education of their children with disability. Ratemo revealed that because of their limited English proficiency, immigrant parents had difficulties understanding the term ‘special education,’ and they used this terminology without clearly understanding its exact meaning.

Education System Barrier

Tradition, religion, and language barriers lead immigrant parents to struggle in communicating with school personnel and understanding the school system. Griffin and Galassi (2010) in their focus group study of parent perceptions of barriers to academic success found that most immigrant parents are not familiar with the American education system. Not knowing about the educational system of the U.S. may lead parents to not understand how to guide their children through the school system. Also, these parents may not understand the American view of parents' roles in education. Similarly, Sobel and Kugler (2007) found out that immigrant parents might also have limited knowledge of how to support their children’s educations and navigate the educational system.

Furthermore, Sobel and Kugler (2007) added school systems differ around the world, and in many different countries, parental involvement is not expected. Instead, teachers assume a parental role in monitoring students’ educations and parent involvement would be considered as an interference and disrespectful to the school system. Thus, immigrant parents may not know that they have the opportunity to be involved in the American school system.

Sobel and Kugler (2007) indicated that many immigrant parents have dreams and expectations that their children will graduate high school and attend good universities, but they have limited knowledge of how to help their children to reach those goals. Thus, finding ways to get extra help for their children who struggle with studying and school tasks becomes one of the main challenges faced by immigrant parents (Al-Hassan & Gardner, 2002).

Education System and Parents of Children with Disabilities

Immigrant parents who have children with disabilities face more difficulties when seeking information. Jegatheesan (2009) reported that immigrant mothers lacked essential information about their rights as parents of children with disabilities, even though sources of available information and ways of accessing this information can vary across states, districts, schools, grade levels, and teachers. In his study, Sattin-Bajaj (2009) found out that when schools fail to reach out to immigrant parents and assist them in understanding information about their children's progress in school in a way that is comprehensible, these parents translate it negatively. They eventually come to believe that they are not a priority of the school.

Immigrant parents enjoy listening to teachers talk about their children at IEP meetings, but they may not understand the central message or content of the discussion and they cannot advocate for their children. Ratemo (2016) mentioned that immigrant parents who do not understand the special education system do not advocate for their rights and their children's rights. Some of the immigrant parent use their trust on their children's teacher when they do not trust the educational system. Several studies (Griffin & Galassi, 2010; Jegatheesan, 2009; Ratemo, 2016; Sattin-Bajaj, 2009; Sobel

& Kugler, 2007) indicated that immigrant parents believe and trust their children's teacher because their experience of understating the education system.

The above research is specifically relevant to the purpose of this study. The description of immigrant parents' experiences offers information that contextualizes the interviews of the immigrant Arabic participants in this study. Though the above qualitative studies are composite descriptions, they open the way for more subjective experiences, which the participants of this study will provide about what barriers prevent them from being fully involved in the education of their children with disability. Barriers such as tradition, limited language, religion, and lack of understanding of the educational system may prevent some Arab parents to collaborate with their children's teachers, which may affect their relationship.

Parents Teachers Relationships

Many teachers probably get frustrated in their interaction with parents in their attempt to involve them in their children's schooling. Immigrant parents sometimes do not view school as parent friendly places; especially, if they feel that their children are viewed as problematic. This conflict may lead disgraced parents to not attend parents- teachers' conferences. Consequently, educators may label these parents as "incorporative." In response to this circular conflict, (Epstein & Sharma, 1998) begin construed offers to improve positive interaction between parents and teachers for the benefits of students. They proposed: 1) teachers hear from parents at the beginning of the year; 2) parents are given specific acceptance of their child; 3) parents are assured that they learned about problems before it get out of hands; 4) parents are given a general idea of what is happening in the classroom; and 5) parents are told when their

child is doing well. Ried, Eddy, Fetrow, and Stoolmiller (1999) developed a collaborative home-school program. Teachers can give calendars monthly to parents, with specific information about classroom activities. Educators can also provide daily information regarding classroom activities and assignments via recorded voice messages, phone calls and emails. Parents should be able to access the messages easily and leave questions and concerns for their children's teachers.

According to Abadeh (2006), many teachers may not understand differences among Arab immigrant and first-generation parents and children, since they have not had opportunities to interact with Arab Americans. These teachers may lack in knowledge about how Arab Americans and different Middle Eastern countries vary in their cultural dispositions. Although each country has at least one unique culture, most teachers and educators tend to think of Arab Americans as a homogeneous culture (Abadeh, 2015).

Moosa, Karabenick, and Adamsy (2001) evaluated first-generation Arab parents' participation at the elementary school level. Their findings show that Arab parents' lack of participation in their children's education was a result of the attitude held by educators about Arab parents. The educators concluded that only a few mothers helped in school-related concerns. Nevertheless, Moosa et al. (2001) stated that teachers are aware that language barriers and other obstacles can be reasons for the lack of involvement by the parents. Time restrictions and language difficulties are often mentioned among the different causes of lack of parental involvement. For example, teachers understood that most of the mothers had infants at home who required their company and support.

The above studies and projects dealt with immigrant parents and their children with disabilities. The study conducted here focuses specifically on Arab parents and their children with special needs and the teachers with whom they interact. It is hoped that this study will offer unique perspectives that emerge out of the exploration of their subjective experience.

The Benefits of Parental Involvement

The involvement of parents can be a great factor to help their children in school. For instance, in their research, Henderson and Mapp (2002) suggested that the involvement of parents in school can provide higher academic achievement for their children. Moreover, Comer (2005) and Harackiewicz, Rozek, Hulleman, & Hyde (2012) discovered that parental involvement in school can help parents to gain confidence in taking responsibility for their children instead of blaming the school. Furthermore, (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Comer 2005; Harackiewicz, Rozek, Hulleman, & Hyde, 2012) indicated that the involved parent can help their children to be more engaged with school and have better attitudes toward education. Also, these researchers reported that when parents are involved with their children's education, is related to increased attendance and graduation rates.

According to Lorenz (2013), parents perceive that their children's teachers have passion and qualifications to teach in classrooms. However, not all parents are content with the quality of instruction their children receive in school. Osburn, Stegman, Suitt, and Ritter (2004) survey shows that 80% of parents believe that pre-school programs affect the performance of students afterward. In the U.S., 75% of parents believe that it is important for schools to assess student's performances on a regular basis and this

should happen through standardized test-taking. A majority of the parents believe that the standardized tests measure both individual performance and school-wide activities.

Although all parents have the same goal for their children to succeed in their academic life, immigrant parents are different from American parents in terms of expectation, beliefs, and practice (Fuligni & Yoshikawa, 2003). Immigrant parents value the educational system in the United States, and they place greater emphasis on the importance of study compared to the American family (Fuligni & Yoshikawa, 2003). Fuligni and Yoshikawa (2003) mention that one of the reasons of immigrant parents placing such an importance on a successful academic career for their offspring is because they believe that it will lead them to better their quality of life and standard of living.

Moreover, another study by Elliot and Bempechat (2002) found out that Asian parents strongly value the significance of the effort invested in education for academic achievement. As a result, these parents spend more time and effort helping their children do their homework. Additionally, Fuligni (2001) showed another reason of immigrant parents to value the school achievement. Fuligni mentions that both Asian and Latino parents support their children in school, so that their children can support and honor their families. Culturally, the Asian and Latino groups see this as being a part of the family duty.

Cakiroglu (2004) in his survey of both 24 American and immigrant families of 5th grade students compare their involvement and expectation of school. Cakiroglu's study finds that American and immigrant parents support their children at home and help them to do their homework. Additionally, immigrant parents have more

expectations of the education than American parents. However, American parents are more likely to participate in extra-curricular activities in relation to the immigrant parents.

Both American and immigrant families strongly value education, support their children, and trust the current educational system; however, the above studies in this research have not taken into consideration a particular category of children who do not fall into those expectations for all American or immigrant parents. The range of belief, value, and expectation on the education system in United States of parents who have children with disabilities are notably different compared to children without disabilities.

Parents' Involvement

Within the American families, whenever a family recognizes that a child has an impairment, they are required to go through an intricate procedure to receive services and diagnosis (Summers, Poston, Turnbull, Marquis, Hoffman, Mannan, & Wang, 2005). Skinner and Weisner (2007) stated that children with disabilities and their parents face a series of assessments from experts, must attend several meetings, and fill out numerous forms. All these happen at a period when parents may still experience the sense of grief and shock. However, these procedures last throughout the entire life of the children with disability. Numerous families are regularly dealing with appointments, evaluations, and bureaucracy frequently without even getting sufficient services consequently (Skinner & Weisner, 2007).

A study on American families by Summers et al. (2005) indicates that living with a child with disability has profound effects on the whole family, meaning siblings, parents, and the extended members of the family. It is an exceptional shared experience

for families and might cause distress into the functionality of the family. Depending on how a family will understand the issue of disability, two things will eventually occur within the family (Summers et al. 2005). On the positive side, a family will have growing adjustments like having their horizons broadened, intensifying the awareness of the family members regarding their inner strength, improving the family cohesion and strengthen connections with religious, educational institutions, and community groups. On the other hand, the family could face financial costs and time expenses, emotional and physical strains, as well as logistical difficulties linked with raising a child with disability. These impacts will probably be contingent on the sort of situation and intensity regarding the emotional, financial and physical ability of the family and the available resources. Within these challenges, American families overall tend to show great support for their children (Summers et.al, 2005).

A survey study by Blanchard, Gurka, and Blackman (2006) found that in the United States, children with disabilities get a great deal of support from their families. The same study (Blanchard et al., 2006) mentioned that the interaction of parent with teacher and students with disability is more pivotal than student without disability. Also, Blanchard et al. (2006) indicated that grandparents especially are quick in providing care for their grandchildren. As a consequence of demanding careers and office hours maintained by most American parents, they have a different way of how they interact with the educational system.

Parents' Expectations

The term 'parental expectations' can well be defined as realistic judgments and beliefs that most parents have towards future accomplishments of their children,

children's course grades, and the highest attained level of schooling they have attended (Gray, 2006). Parents who have children with disabilities have the same expectations. Legislation regarding children with special education needs has clearly shown what they have a right to expect quality educations. (Areza, 2015). Teachers in general education are expected to cope with students with diverse needs (Areza, 2015). Gray (2006) mentioned that most of the American families have adjusted to ensure that their children with disabilities are leading a good life just like the other children. Collaborating with teachers has been a major step that has boosted the well-being of their children. It should be noted that different expectations of these parents in most cases predict the outcomes; nonetheless, the sort of disability regulates the connection between expectations, parents, and outcome (Gray, 2006).

Brown, Crisp, Wang, and Iarocci (2006) discovered that the impact of parental expectations depends the sort of disabilities. The study indicates that most parents hold lower expectations for students with disabilities compared to students without disabilities. Such expectations might, in turn, impact the achievement of the student. Luther, Canham, and Cureton (2005) had conducted a study about how parents support their children with Autism. The results indicate that American families with higher-income can ensure that they will be able to pay for post-secondary education for their children. They are more probable to have expectations that their children with disabilities would access such levels of education without any barriers. These double features have significant and systematic associations with the academic performance of student with disability. On the other hand, Luther et al. (2005) stated that parents who have children with disabilities living in low-income families hold suggestively lower

expectations compared to higher-income families concerning the educational and professional realization of their children with disabilities.

According to Luther et al. (2005), the expectations of the American families correlate with the sort of disability. The parents who are raising children with learning complications hold higher expectations concerning education and future careers as compared to parents that have children with intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, or autism. To be more precise, most American parents have high expectations of their children with disabilities because the education system has ensured that they have linked and worked with the parents to provide active learning environment for the children with disabilities (Luther et al., 2005).

A survey completed by Pomerantz and Monti (2015) over 120 parents identified that most of the parents of children with disabilities interact with a wide range of service providers in order to ensure appropriate services for their children. These parents support school system because school services meet their expectations. Over half of the responses provide information about parents' expectations of schools and teachers; they expect quality teaching, happiness, fairness, discipline, and their child's academic progress.

Parents' Belief about Education System

Soodak and Erwin (2000) indicated that families who have students with disabilities believe that local schools do not provide equal opportunities for all students including those with disabilities. The issue got in the minds of many parents because they are always told local schools do not have enough funding to facilitate the necessary tools for students with disabilities. Soodak and Erwin (2000) added most parents

receive this message when they try to enroll their children in local schools and thus believe that the education system is failing and not providing equal opportunities for student with and without disabilities in local schools. Therefore, parents are forced to hire private teachers to facilitate learning for their children with disabilities, which is not affordable for most families (Soodak & Erwin, 2000).

Parents who have children with disabilities believe that the education system is failing them. Spann, Kohler, and Soenksen (2003) interviewed five mothers who have children with autism. The results found that these mothers believe that most inclusive schools in the country do not take the steps required to provide knowledge to children with disabilities effectively. These parents believe that students with special needs are expected to be handled with care and there are some steps that need to be taken by the teachers while teaching to ensure that the students with disabilities acquire adequate knowledge despite their disabilities. These parents believe that some of the teachers in these schools do not have enough training to handle students with special needs and that is why they do not take necessary steps while teaching.

A study by Weon-hee, Shimin, and Seung-chul (2014) found out that parents of children with disabilities have two opinions concerning the education system of their children. One group, which is the lesser one, suggests that the students with disabilities should not be in mainstream schools. The other group prefers inclusive education for the children. Many transitions are identified as stressful for children and families. They argue that inclusive education leads to positive social and emotional outcomes in the children, as they are able to identify individual differences of the schoolmates, which definitely is a positive effect of inclusion (Weon-hee et al., 2014). Similarly, Adrienne,

Frederick, and Annemarie (2017) in their survey found that majority of the parents were satisfied with the facilities, which were available at school campuses. These parents believe schools provide facilities that support their children's academic performance. They also believe that school facilities encourage them to better communicate and collaborate with schools to provide more effective services for their youth with disabilities (Adrienne et al., 2017). These beliefs of parents about the education system leads them to think about how to participate in the education of their children with disabilities.

Parents' Practice

Huntsinger and Jose (2009) stated that one of the major practices that American families have relied on to assist their children with disabilities in getting the best education is the inclusive education implemented by the government. The plan intended to give instructive chances to students with disabilities in general schools and to encourage their accomplishment and maintenance. A cardinal element of the strategy was to contact amongst general and exceptional classes to fortify the joining procedure.

Furthermore, Huntsinger and Jose (2009) indicated that it is common that America's families and schools work together so that their children with disabilities have instructors in the special education field who can change or adjust the systems to help advance learning. For example, educators can stretch out the time expected to take the test or providing special accommodations for them. Specialized curriculum teachers help to sort out an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for every child with disability. The IEP defines objectives designed particularly for every child's needs and

capacity. The IEP assists parents to practice and understand their children's educational aim (Huntsinger & Jose, 2009).

However, Klingner and Harry (2006) proposed that low levels of parent participation may be due to parents being intimidated by professionals or hesitant to exercise their rights out of concern that it would negatively impact relationships with school personnel. Klingner and Harry (2006) found that most parents do not actively participate in meetings; instead, they spend most of their time listening to professional educators during IEP meetings.

Immigrant parents' Involvement

Most people from other nations, specifically impoverished nations, have for a long time recognized the United States of America as the land of opportunity. There are different reasons why people immigrate to the United States of America (Camarota, 2012). These reasons include but are not limited to economic prospects, family reunification, education, and political wars within their respective nations (Camarota, 2012). These immigrants enter the United States with hopes of providing their children with advanced opportunities of education and a better life. However, this dream seems far from reality for those parenting children with disabilities upon arriving (Camarota, 2012).

Langdon (2009) stated that a vast number of immigrant children are encountering significant issues with education, physical and psychological wellness, destitution, and adjustments into American culture. Langdon (2009) indicated that active engagement of family leads to enhanced student performance. However, in the United States, local schools still struggle to engage ethnically, culturally, and racially

diverse communities (Gray 2006). For that reason, some children with disabilities from such diverse upbringings end up left behind as the healthy and or fit peers advance.

Another study (Haboush 2007) indicated that at some point in the United States, there was a delay of immigrants' children placement into a special education program for learning disabilities. According to Haboush (2007), immigrants, which include Arabs for this research context, have a disproportionately large number of children with disabilities who need to be given a chance to access special education (Haboush, 2007). However, it has been noted that despite the fact that these parents understand that their children need access to specialized services, these parents tend to be dormant (Sobel & Kugler 2007). In ordinary cases, parents should be active in ensuring that their children with disabilities have reasonable access to all necessary amenities. Wanting access to services to help with their child is an expectation of any family (Sobel & Kugler, 2007).

Immigrant Parents' Expectation

A thorough research on most of the immigrant families who have children with disabilities indicates that expectations and accomplishment of these parents toward their children with disabilities shifted the moment that they knew their children were diagnosed with different sorts of disabilities (Gray, 2006). Sobel and Kugler (2007) mentioned that immigrant parents expect school personnel to help them feel a 'sense of belonging,' which in turn allows these parents to be more involved in their children's growth. Similarly, Chiang, Cheung, Hickson, Xiang and Tsai (2012) indicated that immigrant parents expect schools to communicate with them regularly.

Hart, Grigal, and Weir (2010) stated because some of the parents are not proficient in the languages used, such as English in a situation like this, interaction

cannot be achieved. Immigrant parents expect the institutions to hire bilingual employees to connect them with other parents and make them feel like part of the institution. Those parents expect the school personnel to provide a service where they can involve themselves with their children's education (Hart et al., 2010). Sobel and Kugler (2007) mentioned immigrant parents expect school personnel and teachers to repeat information, well explanations, and clear information about their child's progress. These parents believe that it is not enough to receive progress reports once a semester. Also, there is a varying understanding as it pertains to trust (Sobel & Kugler, 2007).

Keen, Reid, and Arnone (2010) found that immigrant parents conversely, expect the system to ensure that high levels of trust are maintained. This is due to the distortion of trust level between immigrants and the education system. The immigrant parents expect those involved in the education system to bear in mind that, it may take time to be fully trusted again.

Keen et al., (2010) added that immigrant parents expect that the education system to give equal treatment to their children. They do not want any discrimination against them in the system. They also expect to see their children being treated sensitively and with respect. These expectations of immigrant parents came from their preconceived notions about the education system in the United States (Keen et al., 2010).

Immigrant Parents' Belief about Education System

The involvement of immigrant parents in their children's academic lives is of high importance. However, they encounter a great deal of difficulty. Some parents who

have immigrated to the U.S. for education want to be more active in their children's schooling. These parents believe that the opportunity for their children to study in the U.S is significant, as they have not had the same opportunities in their native country. In fact, according to Fuligni and Yoshikawa (2003), many immigrant parents who came to the U.S. seeking education believe that education is the only opportunity for their children to be successful in the future. Thus, immigrant parents make greater investments to get their children into an American school. Fuligni (2001) indicated that Asian immigrant parents believe that it is a great opportunity to invest in education for achievement in United States.

However, some immigrant parents do not like the education system. For instance, Poza, Brooks, and Valdés (2014) interviewed Latino immigrant parents, most of whom mentioned that they do not like the educational system in the United States. These parents believe the system does not help their children. Therefore, they believe that there is discrimination in the delivery of services to their children with disabilities. They believe that effective measures are not put in place to ensure equity in the delivery of educational services. Similarly, Gray (2002) stated that the immigrant parents of children with disabilities believe that the system is discriminatory against them. Those immigrant parents believe that the educational system is biased, and the special education services are not effectively delivered to their children. Shattuck (2006) indicated that immigrant parents believe their children may attain poor grades, lose interest in school, and fail to be promoted to the next class because the educational system in the United States does not adequately support these parents.

Immigrant Parents' Practice

In the United States, all learning institutions are covered by laws and regulations. This is a clear indication that children with disabilities suffer health-related needs and are legally safeguarded by statute in the massive majority of schools (Welterlin & LaRue, 2007). Unfortunately, a study by Zhang (2005) indicated that the potential legal protection does not point such protection to be granted automatically. Therefore, the immigrant parents who have children with disabilities have worked tirelessly to ensure that educational equity is ensured in the school system. One of the practices that they have relied on is the provision of enough information regarding the disability of their children and other related health issues. This is an essential practice because the parent ensures that the school is aware and has detailed information pertaining to the health of the child, which is vital when it comes to contributing to extracurricular activities that are mainly institutionally sponsored (Zhang, 2005).

Earner (2007) found out that immigrant parents collaborate with professionals who deal with their children in order to understand the nature of the disability and other health needs. This practice is a critical part, which will ensure that the health-linked necessities of the child are fully met in the course of the school day. To provide such an incentive, collaboration between school and parents is essential. Free communication, openness, and respect amongst those parties will ensure that services are efficiently delivered (Earner, 2007). Similarly, Kuaider (2005) found that most immigrant mothers were happy when they attended parent–teacher conferences. Those mothers expressed willingness to help their children and participate in school activities.

In addition, Kuaider (2005) found that Arab American parents' participation with their children with disabilities is very low. On the other hand, Donovan (2013) found that some of the Arab American mothers support their children with disabilities and participate in school activities depending on their experiences. Arab American families stated the urgency to create and preserve meaningful relationships with experts who collaborate with them to check their children's vigor and distresses, assess their intelligence of distinctive education and distinctive needs, undertake supporting ideas, and partner with them as they deem goals for their children (Donovan, 2013). In the same study with different experiment, Donovan (2013) found that Arab mothers of children with disabilities have a higher participation experience than their fathers.

Abadeh (2006) mentioned that Arab immigrant families revealed that various resources/services including day care were essential in helping them tolerate and manage their children with disabilities. These aids coordinate help and advantages; for example, enhanced family life and diminished parental anxiety. Educators and parent support groups, likewise, helped parents comprehend their children with disabilities, thus lessening anxiety and negative impact. These projects were best when they were equipped with meeting singular family necessities. Proper and sensitive, culturally diverse openness was of the most important aspect for improving acknowledgment of their children, learning about what disabilities meant, and seeking family bolsters.

The above research is relevant to the purpose of this study. The description of immigrants' involvement reported offers information that contextualizes the interviews of the Arabic immigrant participants in this study. This research investigated Arab parents' expectations, participation, and beliefs in their grade school students with

disabilities' education, as well as helped to understand the impact of their interaction in their children's education.

An Islam Educational Theory

The Islam theologian, educational philosopher, and peace advocate Fethullah Gulen (2000) has long been a strong advocate for dialogue between Islam thinkers and Western educational theorists. He is suspicious of what he sees as Western education's sometimes-irreligious relationship with materialistic aims, but he also believes that Western educational theories that are based on scientific research are not at odds with Islamic history or traditions. Gulen also writes about how he believes that God is active in people of all races, religions and colors. His message goes beyond tolerance to acceptance as much as it also crosses the line into absorption into another relation and culture. Still, he believes that it is crucial the Muslims take care not to relinquish their unique traditions and beliefs, while incorporating often-effective Western educational interventions, to raise the educational levels of people who are devoted to Allah (305-331). The following is a general review of his ideas.

The foundation of Europe's Renaissance is built with Muslim bricks. Now, Arabs are in a situation in which they may borrow many beautiful educational insights from the West. Some Arabs may argue that the West promotes only a materialistic perspective that can only harm their people. However, this is not what the Prophet taught. No single person taught tolerance and openness more than did Mohammed. All people are created by God and possess divine attributes. Whether one is a Christian, Jew, or a Westerner, he or she carries many of the same attributes, as does the most

strident Muslim. Whether one is the most physically and mentally healthy person, or whether a person with a disability, they are worthy of security and love.

The words of Mohammed are not, and have never been, viewed as science and education being opposed to religion. From the founding of Islam, education has been viewed as a commendable and sublime duty that is vital for both societies and individuals. The right decision is dependent on having a sound mind. Education has the potential to develop and illuminate the mind. Learning is basic to what it means to be a human being. Learning should be valued more than materialistic acquisitions. The great Islamic thinkers instruct that teaching should be about relaying vital information for greater understanding of the world, and to inspire students to achieve human betterment. Therefore, it is true that Islam teaches that education might be misdirected if it is directed toward deceptive materialistic goals. However, ideally it is directed toward more sublime goals.

The last comments situate us to consider the multi-directional focus of this study. Muslims must teach their children the values and beliefs of Islam, which cannot be undermined in educational systems. Muslim parents in the United States must be vigilant about contradictory teachings their children may be subjected to. It is not easy to keep one's religion and culture in a foreign land. The only way it can be achieved is through developing good communication between Muslim and Christian parents and children. Only healthy homes can attain such high standards of dialogue. This dialogue must also be extended to teachers and administrators in educational settings. Both educators and parents must work hard at building understanding, trust and courage to

create safe and productive dialogic spaces. This study will be an attempt to examine just where Arab parents are along this continuum, and what obstacles need to be overcome.

Chapter 3: Methodology

A qualitative approach was used in this study to understand Arab immigrant parents' participation in their grade school students with disabilities' education. Because there is such a gap in the literature in this area, I wished to make broad explorations to gain an understanding of the larger issues related to the study's problem. Consequently, I have chosen to employ a qualitative research inquiry into the issues mentioned above. This chapter will discuss the research design, methods, participants, data collection procedure, and data analysis.

This research used a qualitative, phenomenological design. Qualitative analysis research is an inquiry that analyzes data expressed in language and behavior in natural settings (Creswell, 2007). It is inclined to capture information regarding beliefs, values, feelings, and motivations that trigger behaviors (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative research allows for a deeper understanding of complex phenomenon directly from participants in interviews and what they consider vital from environmental and social contexts, which are deemed necessary to grasp a comprehensive understanding of the issues being explored (Creswell, 2007). John Creswell, author of numerous qualitative studies defined qualitative research as follows:

Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological tradition of inquiry that explores a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes word, report detailed views of information, and conducts the study in a natural setting (Creswell, 1998, p. 15)

Kumar (2005) listed the following points as the benefits of the qualitative research method. First, it gives a realistic view of that cannot be understood in numerical and statistical data analysis. Second, since the researcher interacts with the

culture or the situation in which they study, they understand a better understanding and a clearer perspective of a larger context. Third, it allows the researcher to respond to changes that arise in the course of the study hence offering flexibility to extended fieldwork and observation. Fourth, it provides a rich, detailed picture to be built up about why people behave in a certain way and their feelings towards these actions.

This method of conducting research allows a researcher to cast a wide net offering depth and breadth of coverage, although with a narrower pool of participants than a typical quantitative study would employ by going deep with a small number of participants. Qualitative research attempts to gather broad, rich stories about what a person's lived experience is like. In addition, qualitative research design is particularly well suited to phenomena not previously studied, on which little research exists, or when theories are beginning to be developed (Creswell, 1998).

A choice of methodology should be based upon the research questions, letting the questions and the theory guide the research. However, while quantitative research is based on logical-positivism and scientific method, and tends to reflect an epistemology based on fact and measurable phenomena, qualitative research tends to examine phenomena that are changing relative, contextual, or have socially constructed meanings (Glesne, 1999).

As a method of research, phenomenology focuses on a "description of how people experience and how they perceive their experience of the phenomena under study" (Glesne, 1999, p. 7). Phenomenology attempts to enter a person's interior frame of reference, understanding how they perceive their experience, how they experience their perceptions, and how these two interact. The main goal of phenomenological study

is to uncover the essence of a concept experience (Creswell, 1998). One person who describing an experience constitutes biography, but several people describing a similar experience or phenomena are describing a pattern containing the essential structure or essence of the phenomena. It should be noted that in order to prevent over-generalization, there are likely multiple essences of a phenomena.

Furthermore, the phenomenological research method explains situations based on real life experience. Researchers who use this method try to understand and explain behavior from the participants' point of view (Creswell, 2007), which allows researchers to enrich the participants' experiences. Moustakas (1994) considers phenomenology as the best method to use when studying behavior because behavior and experiences are related.

For my research, I identified my proposal and the questions of the research. For my research design, I used a phenomenological study to gain a deep understanding of the topic. My participants consist of six Arab immigrant parents discussing their children's educative process. To collect the data, I interviewed each participant for one hour to one hour and a half. After collecting the data, I used thematic analysis to analyze the data and write a report. These elements are explained well below.

Primary researcher. The primary researcher for this study is a graduate student at the University of Oklahoma in the Special education program. The primary researcher is dedicated to research with cultures of Arab parents who have children with disabilities' school stage. The primary researcher interacts with Arab parents on a regular basis and participates in traditional customs and ceremonies. The researcher is a practicing Muslim. The researcher is familiar with Arab parenting in general and cultural protocols

and methods of interaction. Although some non-Muslims among the participants are Christians, he has had many experiences with this group as well and understands the Mid-Eastern ways of interaction that also influences the participants. Because of the knowledge of researcher, he has a deep understanding of underlying assumptions about parenting and education, which helped him made sensitive interpretations. If there is a bias he will have to consider, it is that he deeply believes in education as a means of attaining a higher awareness of what it means to be human. Consequently, when participants were critical of education, he worked hard to maintain his objectivity and empathy.

Secondary researcher. The secondary researcher is a professor working in the field of psychology. He is a Native American and has done almost all of his work investigating Native Americans in the area of psychology. He is interested in all multicultural subjects. His limitations are that he has not extensively explored Arab cultures and Special Education, which are not his primary focus in research. His strengths are that he worked in the field attempting to build bridges between cultures. His knowledge of psychology also is facilitative in understanding underlying issues that may be related to issues that Arab parents and their children with disabilities may be experiencing with school systems.

Problem Statement

Parents play a vital role in their children's lives in general, and in their academic lives specifically. During children's school stage, their parents may be involved in their school. However, the problem is that some Arab immigrant parents do not seem to be involved enough in their children with disabilities' school. Donovan (2013) indicated that

Arab immigrant parents might suffer from lack of involvement. Donovan (2013) stated that Arab immigrant parents' lack of involvement causes misperception among teachers, school personnel, that Arab immigrant parents do not give attention to their children's education. Therefore, the academic level of their children is likely affected negatively day after day. This study investigated the Arab immigrant parents' involvement in their children with disabilities' education, what barriers may prevent them from being involved with their children' education as well as how they feel their children are supported.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to investigate Arab parents' expectations and participation in their grade school students with disabilities' education. How their understanding impacts them interact as it relates to their children's education. The research intended to answer research questions.

The questions were asked of Arab immigrant parents. The research question is: what factors may prevent Arab immigrant parents from engaging with their children's education? Also, what is the most important element to Arab immigrant parents in helping their children achieve academic success and what do they need from the school district and teachers?

Participants

The purposive sampling was selected to provide information-rich cases for a detailed study (Patton, 1990). Criterion sampling was used to select the participants for this study. The participants in this study were six Arab immigrant parents who have children with disabilities, and their children are in an American school or have been in

school. The participants were three fathers, and three mothers. All participants were chosen from Southwestern states.

The participants were from different Arab countries who immigrated to the United States. All participants have children with disabilities, and their children have received special education services. The first participant is named Mr. Kelani, and he is 42 years old. Mr. Kelani is from Lebanon and has been in the U.S. for 20 years, and his children were born in the United States. The second participant is named Maryam who is a wife of Mr. Kelani, and her age is 33. Ms. Maryam is from Lebanon, and she has been in the United States for five years, and her child was born in Lebanon. The father has master degree in biology, and the mother has high school diploma. Both parents are from Muslim faith.

The third participant is named Marya, and her age is 50. Ms. Marya is from Iraq, and she has been in the United States for eight years. Her child was born in the United States. The fourth participant is named Ali who is a husband of Marya, and his age is 38. Mr. Ali is from Iraq, and he has been in the United States for ten years His child was born in the United States. Both father and mother have bachelor degree. Both parents are from Muslim faith.

The fifth participant is named Ahmed, and his age is 48. Mr. Ahmed is from Jordan, and he has been in the United States for 22 years. His child was born in the United States. The sixth participant is named Najla who is a wife of Mr. Ahmed. Her age is 34, Ms. Najla is from Jordan She has been in the United States for 15 years, and her child was born in the United States. The father has bachelor degree in media and the mother has high school diploma. Both parents are from Christian faith.

Each parent signed a consent form, either in Arabic or in English, according to the participant's preference. They were semi-structured interviews. Each participant was interviewed for one hour or one hour and a half, and it was a one-time interview. The interview took place in the parents' home, which helped them feel confident and comfortable. Also, the interview was conducted in the English language. However, during the interview, the interviewer translated some of the questions to the Arabic language when any interviewee needed the translation.

Data Collection

Interview

According to Fetterman (2009), interviewing is a framework in which responses, activities and standards are recorded, challenged and as well as reinforced. It involves one-on-one communication with the targets, which increases the effectiveness of this method. Most of the research interviews are structured; the unstructured interviews are recommended for conducting a long-term field work as it allows the respondents to express their responses in their own ways and pace without being led on.

For this study, interview was used to collect the data. The participants were asked to meet with the researcher and participate in a semi-structured interview session. The questions were general and the interviewees were informed that they may volunteer any details that they wish. The interviewees were informed that they could go deeper to express any feeling that may not include in the questions. Moreover, the participants were knowledgeable that they have the option of declining to answer, passing on any of the questions. The length of the interview was an hour to one hour and a half, and it was

taken place in the participant's home or public library. Also, audio recording was used for the interview.

Data Analyses

To analyze the interview, I used a phenomenological approach. Creswell (2007) described phenomenology as focusing on real life experience. Researchers who use this method try to understand and explain behavior from the participants' point of view (Creswell, 2007). Creswell argued that phenomenological research could be used when studying a person or a group of people. Moustakas (1994) considers phenomenology as the best method to use when studying behavior since behavior and experiences are related. The data analyzed based on an inductive analysis framework. Inductive analysis functions as a method to create a theory or model of the subliminal context of experiences, which are shown in the text. In order to collect meaningful research data and reduce extensive data to a workable size, researchers reflected on the overall context. First, the data were transcribed from the audio version to text. Second, researchers read the participants' data and highlighted what they viewed as remarks. Third, the remarks were compared to other participants' data to create code categories. After creating codes, researchers discussed and modified these codes to find similarity and clusters of information. The results of the discussion provided higher agreement of code categories. Fourth, both researchers linked the relationship between categories to be formulated into themes. Based upon these themes, the researchers went back to original data and wrote a description of each theme, staying as close to the data as possible during analysis, but attempting to bring for the most salient points. The design of this study consisted of a one time, face-to-face interview. To find the credibility of

this study, peer debriefing was used. The data were shared with my advisor to help discover biases, viewpoints and assumptions on the researcher's part. This peer debriefing assisted to test the findings and see if they are reasonable.

Grounding this study in a comprehensive literature review is fundamental, though being comprehensive was not automatic. In order to triangulate the themes with the literature, it is necessary to be able to hypothesize what interviewees would emphasize in their responses. Nonetheless, this task was basically accomplished, though some of the emphases were not totally encapsulated. Finally, the triangulation process succeeded.

Trustworthiness

To find the credibility of this study, peer debriefing was used. The data was shared with my advisor to help discover granted biases, viewpoints and assumptions on the researcher's part. This peer debriefing assisted to test the finding and see if it is reasonable. In addition, the interviewees read the interview transcripts to ensure that the transcripts match what they said. Also, the interviewee group should know how important the topic is so that they can provide feedback to investigate the problems, and find a solution.

Chapter 4: Results

Following the transcendental phenomenology approach, I developed a textural description and structural description of the participants' experience. I combined the textural descriptions to convey an overall essence of the experience. After I transcribed the interview data and proof read them, I came up with six themes. These themes are as follows:

Theme 1: Challenges with English Language.

Theme 2: Acculturation Stress Communication Issues.

Theme 3: Religious Perspectives about Disabilities.

Theme 4: Educational Support.

Theme 5: Parental involvement.

Theme 6: Relationships with Educators.

In this study, I categorized participants according to their country and had each parent speak about his or her experience with these themes.

First Parent from Lebanon

Challenges with English Language: Both male parents discussed several inter-related challenges he and his family encountered when they moved to the United States.

Language issues were at the core of several of the challenges. Their family's limitations with English caused communication problems. Further, they both realized that they cannot let their children simply speak English and thereby lose the capacity to speak Arabic without also losing their cultural and religious identities. Teaching English to each other for survival was done. Continuing to speak Arabic maintained their cultural soul's identity. The alienation that arose from his limitations in speaking English was

compounded by many American stereotypes about Muslim people. This is further compounded by the American media's false representations of Muslim people.

Mr. Kelani stated that

“So when I came, actually I remember my English language was not good at that time. I couldn't understand a lot. I had a lot of problems. Also the communication between a Arabic people and American people is not easy, especially if you are Muslim. I saw that when I came in 2009.”

Mr. Kelani added that

“Also I try to speak both Arabic and English language for, for, for two reasons. One reason is yeah, two acre practice. A lot of practice inside my home with, especially with my kids also. I try to talk with them in Arabic, why? Sometimes I use their. When I try to point for something, I want to try to say that in both Arabic and language. Why? To put in their mind that, yeah, this thing for, for, for example, table for example, I said, for example, this is the same. Put this thing on the table. Dah ala aldawalH (ARABIC) It means I own to teach them that this thing is called Chaebol in English is called wheeler in Arabic. So I'd try inside my home to talk in both language.”

Ms. Maryam stated that about language

“I don't know how can I speak English, especially English, because I am too weak with English. Also, I study in my country, but a time after time begin to be better. I speak English with my friends. I'm don't talk very good. The grammar with them, but there is no what I need and helped me a lot to fix my problem with English. There is a patient with me until we get what idea it I need to give to them. With my with my child and I don't speak English, just Arabic because I need to keep a, a native language that's helped them when growing up to speak two languages, English and Arabic.”

Acculturation Stress Communication Issues: Frequently both parents have had to explain their dress, their religion, and their own virtue. They both demonstrated great patience as they offered their explanations. The father even excitedly exclaimed his joy about the customs. They did express concerns regarding being misunderstood, however; even in simple acts like taboos about hugging or not hugging. They appear to want respect and are very patient about attaining it with repeated explanations.

Mr. Kelani made comparisons between the two cultures that exist in his home country and in the United states. He stated that

“Good, good, good costumes! As you know, advantage and disadvantage a lot. We are amazed when we see, for example, you can see your friend if he is man, you can't hug him. Uh, the, the problem here when you see a friend and if she is a woman, the problem here is how can we avoid the hugs that I was shy. Any student in, if she is a lady wanted to hug me. So I tried to hug her, but I try to be, yeah, yeah. To make distance between me and her, uh, for, for my wife maybe. Yes. Maybe more than me because she wears hijab. Uh, a job here in United States. A lot of people respect him, a lot of people that respect because I think that what I understood most of American people think that the Hejab is tradition clothes this depending on the culture.”

Ms. Maryam said that

“I'm sometimes asked me why you wear hijab, why you different. And I told them that's a religion but my English don't tell me to explain why we were that just I told them my religion but that's normal.”

Moreover, both parents contend that differences in culture exist between the United States and Arab countries in regards on people who have disabilities. Both parents contend that their son would not have the educational or relational support in their home country that they get here. They claim that in their home country, community members would view their son with less patience and possibly even less able. The father quickly informs us that these prejudices are not symptomatic of Islam but of the people's ignorance and biases. Here they say there is “vision” in regard to working with persons with special need., Social support in America varies from Arab countries as well as efforts to allow them to participate in both special classes to help them learn effectively as well as in “normal” classes.

Mr. Kelani stated that

“Here we find all the freedom. My friend, he, I found all the treatment for Zain without paying anything. He or we found all the people who supported me, who supported him, who loved him. So really big. So big difference between what did we see there and here again, I say it's not that the, the, the, the problem is not the Islamic faith. When you study Islam, uh, you will discover that Islamic religion support disabled person and he ask or ask the people to help him to help any disabled, a man or a woman or any person, especially if he was a child. Yeah. So I don't think that their problem is with the Islamic faith. The problem is with the community, with the people... I don't know why refuse that disabled a person, a no chance to find a job if you are disabled. Also, it's hard to make relationship with the people. It's hard to get education, no special classes.”

Ms. Maryam said that

“There is no school for this disability child, if he went to, to the normal school such as here normal school. He's second degree with a normal a class, but in our country we don't have this vision for the disabled. If maybe if he, he went to school there, maybe his friend talk, laughing about him or a teacher don't have, don't. That's our problem.”

Religious Perspectives about Disabilities: Both parents expressed dismay about how many people in their community in Lebanon view their child as a punishment or as a means for them to gain special privileges in heaven. The mother is appeared adamant that her son is a gift of love from God. The last thing she wants is gifts in heaven for her son. She simply loves him. The father was clear in his explanation that such negative views of some of his community in Lebanon is not propounded in the Quran. The father expressed that his move to the U.S. was to protect his child. Both parents also mentioned that they came here for the medical and educational opportunities afforded.

Mr. Kelani stated that

“Yeah. His family. We, we accepted that. We have a disabled child. We accepted no problem. Our community in Lebanon doesn't accept it doesn't accept. So any child, any Lebanese who is or who has disability, any kind of disability, it's hard for him to live so hard. The problem is, I don't know if it's the. I don't think that is a problem with Islamic faith. No. The problem is with the community, with the people. They didn't accept him. Yeah. Because of that. That is the reason that made me travel again to United States.”

Ms. Maryam believed that

“Some person told that's punishment such as our family dollar gift from God to you to keep you to the heaven because you take care of him. Another person told us that's punishment from for us... Why not normal always asked me about that. And uh, sometimes I keep him always in a lift with the my husband formerly upstairs. Always keep him up the stairs with me. I don't bring him down because sometimes when friend or anything coming don't like that or asked me to take him up a stair or when, when we go in there he is four years just. But when, when, when we are here is different. I see him different. He is a nice happy no crying. Such as when, when to there he is he need to do something for himself and he asked me to go outside to play with his friends. Yeah. Uh, that's big difference between my country and here for treatments... Child on love home and take care of him and talk with him. That's gift from God to give you a special thing he needed to give you, such as give you a special, a science. Give a special education or anything in our God when he gave us this child need to. I think he is love us. He is love. Love us on need to, uh, to keep us always to pray and yeah, uh, that's also I encourage all parents if have a disability need to look about this type. That's a gift”.

Educational Support: This father seemed resolute in convincing the researchers that his child is a “regular person,” almost too much so. Perhaps this is because, beneath his proclamation of being sure of his son’s struggles, an almost unbearable concern exists that his son is somehow not “regular” and may not be able to achieve the goals of other students his age. The father appeared concerned with convincing the researcher that his son was “regular”. He wants the best for his son and has high hopes him to go to a university. He notes signs suggesting that he is developing intellectually and academically in explaining how he can read and comprehend well. He wants to “protect” his child. His mother has underlying fears that her son might be in a situation in which that he vulnerable some day. She appears to feel as if his condition requires that he must have lots of support now Without her, she fears, for his life. She is determined get him to the point where he can independently perform the actions that

will insure his survival. She tells us that she offers strong encouragers to him to grow independent.

Mr. Kelani responded that

“Actually, I really wish to follow him in the, in his study. I wish to discover a lot of things about it is to protect the, as I told you, uh, his uh, his teacher wanted, he is now in the second degree and his teacher wanted to make a test and she told me, I'm sure he will pass. His clear brain, I think that's helped him so much to pass a lot of things. I remember His teacher when he told me I think and I, I guess if Zane continue, uh, with this communication, if his continue with this ability, I don't think so, that he will need any help in the future and he will be a year such as a regular person”.

Mr. Kelani mentioned the goal for his child, he said

“I have alot of goals for him. What did I discover about Zane? Uh, I think that made me actually optimistic about him and now I'm excited to, um, increase his ability to, uh, to study a lot. Actually he read. He understand perfect. No problem about that. I wish if I can make the test for him to, to decrease their period from other levels. I think Zane will succeed if he continue and I think there is no any block between him and continuing education and until the university”.

Ms. Maryam responded

“I'm always encourage him to eh, Eh, I told him, you know, you can do anything you need to do by yourself. Don't need help. He always asked me to help him and help him to get him from his wheelchair to the bed. And also, uh, you know, he is a special need with Cut. I'm always do after every four hours I do for him. Cut. I know training him... I told him need to do exercise with his hand to get his hand. Strong and his finger strong because years and years he is bigger. Need to. Teacher help him. I'm not with him always. Maybe one day I'm die. What did he take care of him who take care of him and he take care of himself.”

Parental involvement: For these parents, as with many parents of children with special needs, life can be more trying. They had to make a choice either to give him to another family or keep him as their own. Knowing that life would be altered dramatically for them, they chose to keep him, love him, and give their lives sacrificially to him. They drew on their profound faith in God, believing he was His gift to them. They are happy

to get up throughout the nights to change the catheter, work extra to provide for him, and be responsible for him in million other ways because they are happy to love his “good face.”

Mr. Kelani said

“Uh, how I explain that, uh, my friend, when when you have a child, if he, uh, if he, if he is your son or your daughter would, disability is not easy. It's not easy. So much harder, so much harder. You can't imagine how much pressure was on us, especially on his mom because his mom get about eighty percent of the pressure about his disability. I am honest. His mom is responsible about everything about him. Hey. Yeah. She makes the catheter tube every four hours for him. In the night in day in the school yard sometimes she could go to issue a responsible about you. I'll always, we, we aren't happy with that. Now we are happy. Why? Because when we see other cases, when we see other kids, especially in that center, we say, thanks God. You made your decision about our son, but it was light nor dark when I see other cases that so hard. So we said thanks God we accept.”

Ms. Maryam indicated that

“Because I get a job now that's make me in. Not always went to, to the school before that I'm always went to the school and sometimes volunteer at school but not with his class because I don't need to be always with him. But when I get job now, Eh, Eh, I cannot went to a lot to the school, just a. I texted his teacher if he needs something or she texted me if he needs something.”

Ms. Maryam added

“This doctor send us, I think from the church or anything, women, she came to talk with me. If you don't need your child, we take him. But you don't need to ask about him never just when you deliver him and also you don't see him. Just take. I'm refused. And His dad also refused. They told her no, that's never a no anyone want to do that. But when I talked this with the doctor, I'm just nervous and I, that's too big in my mind. I don't mean when I, I don't mean when I talk with this one and we are keep our child. When he is born, he different. When the doctor told us he's OK, he's good face and also a he after year after year, he's doing great. And also, uh, he stay at the hospital, uh, 40 days. I'm back for, for four days at home. We are so happy to keep him and he is so, so nice. He uh, his face ok and everything.”

Relationships with Educators: Both participants demonstrated profound appreciation for the teachers making an effort to form a relationship with his family and to show emotional connections with their son. They noted that they were overcome with emotion about the teachers' willingness to come into their home to interact with them. This demonstrates great concern, respect, and love for their children. They both demonstrated great emotion as they express their appreciation. The mother made a point to mention the little things done by teachers that she appreciated. These included her son getting good performance stickers, his teacher dropping by the hospital when she delivered her daughter, and the teacher crying when she learned of what her son's situation would be like in Iran. She spoke of crying herself due to the love she feels. She also specifically spoke of meetings the school arranged to keep her up to date about her son's progress, working with her in strengthening his hand, and performing other tasks to keep him healthy. Both parents suggest that the fundamental aspect of their son's education is their relationship with teachers and administrators.

Mr. Kelani mentioned that

“So much good relationship with the teachers. When we came in 2015. Even now, three teachers steady. Uh, yeah, it was a teaching Zane every year when the teacher leave and change with another teacher, she come to my home because she tried cry. Tell us. I love Zain I love him so much because really I'm amazed about him, about his situation in this school. We have a, what's up, Icon with all his teachers. If there is anything there, if they want to send us something, if they want to ask about something or if we want to ask here. So our relationship with his teachers are very fact. the teachers will call us or come to the apartment to ask a about Zain there nice thing that we began to make relationship with, not just the teacher teacher and her family and that. Nice. That's so nice. Teacher Charles families came to my apartment to see is a program. She does it by herself, which kind of. No, no, no, no, no, no. Just to see him and to know us. Uh, we made a good relationship with all the teachers and their families. We began to visit them. They began to visit us”.

About her relationship with her son 's teacher, Ms. Maryam mentioned that

“I'm always get to sticker from his teacher. This, uh, is a week for Zane. He, the one he's on for this one and also with their 100 a day smart. Zane, he gave this sticker and uh, also, uh, he, yeah, he saw kindly on the friendly with the child. I know what happened in this school with the Zain, uh, we are, uh, due to a meeting at school and begin the school and one middle school and I meet a lots stuff such as five or person one for he, for ob. We work with his hand one for a calm conversation. He had the top or with conversation he read very well, but he has trouble with conversation a little bit. A special teacher also worked with him about that. A nurse at school and with this big show, a teacher, he always sit with him and his class teacher. Yeah. And principal uh, that happened two times in years And also I went to the school between time on time to see him on if his teacher or nurse she can to do calf for him, called me and asked me to help her to do this stuff... Look this picture. We take that school. Yeah. No, we have a meeting tonight and we'd go there. Uh, so, uh, so nice. Uh, all, uh, our meeting or when I talk with the teacher or with not just with any teacher at school. That is so kind, so lovely.”

Ms. Maryam added more

“A special class and the teacher, she is so kind, so, so nice. When she knows we need to leave to our country, she's crying because she knows Zane on his situation and she know our country don't have any treatments such as here. She's crying on hold him on there. Gave us a album , photo for Zane. She take during the time in school until she write . If I give you to see, she write a word make us cry. She is work with him like her mom. She don't have any trouble when I teach her how can do cough for him, just four days after that she can do for him. And uh, she is lovely also. Uh, she came here in our apartment at, uh, during the summer time too, to see Zane Zane when he saw her cry, he needed to, to hug her and play with her also. And when I deliver my little one also she visited me at a hospital and here at home.”

Second Parents from Jordan

Challenges with English Language: Both parents were able to learn the rudiments of the English language in schools before they came to the United States, though with a British accent. They both speak English now primarily with family and friends. The father has had a few problems using the English language. The mother mentioned that at her daughter's school, a teacher and the administration use “the language barrier” as

an excuse for not following through with educative tasks and in defending themselves against her complaints. She said that due to a lack of being listened to effectively, she has lost trust in them.

Mr. Ahmed stated that

“I'm in the beginning. Always when come like , uh, the language, the accent, you know, you feeling harder than you feel like you want to go back, you know. Now, I don't feel like I'm different or I'm not, you know, I feel part of the society. So it's, it's really good. Even then our culture in middle east or long time, maybe a away from my country, so I'm a hundred percent American, but I, I got the best part to the American culture and the good parts of my culture, I mix them together, makes hundred percent. Everyone who speaks English or at my job or my kids, they don't speak Arabic. So we speak English all the time and the friends that take them to school and come back.”

Ms. Najla mentioned

“Well, I've been here 25 years. It was a challenge. Different culture adjust to another culture in here. Well, um, it was a difficult first because you know like when you learn the language from back home coming in here like, in Jordan we learn the second language from a young age, so coming here it wasn't difficult. The only thing it was the accent as we learned the British language and the adjusted to American language, it was kind of. Or the accent. But you know the English is the main thing like we speak the language in the house. Because my kids don't speak Arabic. they understand a little but not that much... Mostly they treat me as me most, which is that teacher disrespect, but sometimes you can't prove it cause any issue. They be like, maybe it's a language barrier. Maybe she did not understand what we are saying, so they will use that part. No, I understand what you're saying. But sometimes they use the language barrier, like maybe not understand what we said, but this is what I meant. You feel like disrespect from the suspect and you lose the trust. The administration and that's something that they try to defend, defend their teacher Yes. Especially in a one day, I knew you are having a different accent coming in from different country. They will use that and they will put it under the umbrella is language barrier... They know how to cover themselves. the good communication between the parents and the teacher is the trust. By the time you build the trust, what they tell you about your child. What we can do was the goals for here, what we like, how we can reach that goal. You'd be working side by side with them, but when you see a teacher not working from the heart and she's waiting for you to do a mistake to go home, then there's no trust.”

Acculturation Stress Communication Issues: The father acknowledged that his family seen as different but he passes this off as normal and refuses to let strange looks bother him. The mother on the other hand, says that educators and parents “back home” were significantly more concerned about whether their children and students were doing well academically and much less concerned about the children’s social skills. There she has come to realize that the social skills are intricately tied to academic success. She also has seen how her children’s lack of eye contact with teachers was interpreted as disrespectful, whereas “back home” the opposite was true. Navigating such customs has been important.

Mr. Ahmed believed that

“always you're gonna find someone who looks at you like, oh, he's, you know, but it wasn't really a bigger problem was until, you know, very, very little. And some of them actually, they look at you because you for enough, they look at you like you are interested in. They want to be involved with you, not about your tradition, about your life, about your culture and stuff like that, you know. But uh, in every society you're gonna find someone looking at you like, you know, he's, he's, he's an immigrant, but it wasn't really a big problem, big issue and it wasn't at all. prejudice Nah, I don't see any of that when my kids.”

Ms. Najla stated that

“They need the social skills first I ignored the social skills. And I start working Education Academy her academic and that was the wrong thing I did for my child. If I worked with her, her social skills, she will succeed in her academic. This is how we are back home. Our parents, I don't care if you can, if you have social skills with the others, they look at your academic deputy need to be number one in the school... It's opened my eyes more where his teacher wants to label him. I want to ask why he said, because when you talk to him, he doesn't look in the eye. I said, okay, because I told my son. When you, when your teacher talk to you do not look this is disrespect, and he said, what? I said, yes. That's what we learned. Then from there I said when somebody talked to you, keep looking in the eyes.”

Moreover parents are experiencing stress in regards to acculturation. Being pulled between two cultures, parents seem to convey that emphasizing American culture may be a way to protect them. Still, they said they value their Arabic cultural ways and have spent minimal times teaching their children. One of the things that they have done to do this is listening to the Arabic songs that are related to the father's missing their mother. Their child may sing along and also becomes emotional. The mother does appreciate American open mindedness but she identifies as Arabic. Both conveying the feeling that their children can be both American and Arabic.

Mr. Ahmed stated that

“She likes certain songs, you know, she like American songs, of course, you know, but certain Arabic zones, uh, she loves and I met her a cd when she arrived with me. She always used that CD. I started singing with the Hakim as my wife said that she likes Hakim, you know, his songs and believable. So I will bring like the values, the values of my, uh, culture and mix it with the good values of the American culture, which is a lot, you know, and uh, come up with a really, you know, little different value than, than many people, not everyone but many people, they don't know different a culture. So when you mix those two cultures together, it makes the good stuff only leave the bad stuff behind and take only the good habits of our culture Yes. I sit with them and talk to them and show them the way we think that we our cultural belief and they like most of it, you know, and then they mix it with American culture and you know.”

Ms. Najla said that

“my daughter, she like she sings in Arabic and she had had favorite other singers too, like when she arrived in our card, actually my husband and he is patients more than a myself. She knows the CD for Hakim and there is a special song about a person who left the country and he missed his mom. but with the language he knows like Arabic songs, certain singers as she will sing with them. In the beginning we refuse to teach Arabic because with her situation she must be in one language and we chose the English language at home I speak to my kids in Arabic. Like when I say something like for example, give me the cup, they don't understand it. I'm like give me the like give me the Kasa, then give me the cup. So this is how started catching the Arabic language. But with her specific we try not to because it from his therapist or the specialist. They said choose one language and the English

language will chose it just for her to be a communicate what we tried. But you know, now she's 24... I do not believe I'm American . I'm still carrying that Arabic stuff inside of me. I'm American because I start to be more open minded. Like there is a lot of things. You see like you put yourself in a lot of stress as American family? Yes. I act like I'm going to get family the way they think, but I act like Arabic family the way I raised my kids.”

Religious Perspectives about Disabilities: Both parents (Christian) see their child with a disability as a gift, a blessing from God. But possibly the most moving story of all these interviews was that told by the Father. In the father’s account of befriending a young man when he was in school “back home”,his friendship with this young man had nothing to do with acting in accordance with holy scripture but out of the free verdict of his heart. His empathy and kindness emerges in response to seeing how this person was abused. He could see a human being who needed and wanted love. The story recalls how religion theoretical section states that everyone, no matter what religious or non-religious group they are a part have the divinity of their creator inside them. He found this love within.

Mr. Ahmed believed that

“Uh, when God says, you know, uh, all the people, are the same and Jesus Christ, his, even a Christian, for example, I spoke to every religion that says love even your enemyIt doesn't matter what level she is, you know, we love her, she knows God and he's listening. She's not involved until religion a lot, you know, she's OK with that too, you know. Not he punishments in our religion says this is the, uh, this is gift. Actually, if you have a child like that, you took care of him. That's a good uh, that's good. When you will go and meet God, you know, the configured good things for your blessing. Actually, this ability is something that no one wants, but uh, when you have it, it kind of punishment and life, you know, bring you down a lot, sub you, limit your moving and stop you from taking action, especially if you want to take care of your child in your house, you know, so, uh, you need to spend a lot of time with that child so you cannot do what he wanted, you know, almost like a religion wise punishment than life, you know.. So it is kind of a punishment in life, you know. But uh, in the eye of God is different story.”

Ms. Najla said

“It's a gift from God and the priests, he told me, he said, if the Lord knows you can take care of it, you will not give you, especially on each other, but he knows you can make it.”

Educational Support: Both parents are realistic about their child's potential for achievement in our society. The father is very proud of his daughter when she got the high school diploma and being the best she can be. The mother is angry and feels that her educators labeling her stifled her development.

Mr. Ahmed indicated that

“Mostly I wanted her to, to be the best she can because I know she's limited. She cannot, uh, she cannot be a lawyer. She cannot be an engineer or doctor or something like that, you know. So, and when she finished, even when she's got the high school diploma, I feel so great. You know, I didn't think she would get high school diploma and you know, uh, I want to her the best she can, bring her to the best level she can be and she's much better now. We used to have meetings and write down the objectives, the goals we want to reach this goal and every quarter of the year when we go back again and we see the cheer each like 25 percent in the first quarter or she's still 18 or 17 or so, and then we push her toward to achieve, to achieve the goal.”

Ms. Najla believe that

“I think their label limit her. I not sure what she will be able to be.”

Parental involvement: These parents had much to say about their support of their child with special needs. Both spoke of going through a transition time in which they tried to psychologically adjust to the difficulties that came into their lives when their daughter was born. They spoke of the extended amount of time they had spent taking care of her. The father says that he mainly takes her to the park to get her exercise. The mother does most of the educating, communicating, note taking, and execution of assignments from school. She remarks that initially she tried to control her too much while the father was

less strict. She calls herself “the mean one” and the father “the heart one”. The father appears unable to take care of the day-to-day tasks for the child.

Mr. Ahmed explained that

“Our first child, that was our problem. You know, our first child. And she was like an autistic. She was special need and we saw, we thought that's really big, big, huge rock fall from the sky in our heads, you know, we had to deal with it and it was tough. It was hard. Uh, I tell you the truth in the beginning, my wife and I, we try to change here to live like us and we wind up finally us living like the way she wants because she cannot change to be like us. So I had to change and become in her shoes, like talking to her and treating her, or dealing with her and her level. So I'd become a in her level instead of bringing her to our level. .. I think, you know, uh, she has so much energy and she could sit in the school for long, long hours. So sometimes I used to go and take care out to the school and take her to park, for example, to the little run and walk with me and stuff to bring her energy out, you know, so she get kind of tired, so she relaxed, you know? Uh, but, uh, um, no, I think we want to her to learn, you know, and she did learn a reads and writes and she's the computer as I, as I said, I think that's all challenge.”

Mr. Ahmed added that

“My wife and I, we involve a lot actually any meeting, anything we go, both of us, you know, uh, whatever the teacher tells us about a her, a school, grades or involvement, we get involved and we go and come and spend a lot of time trying to get her to be the best she can be, you know. So the teacher, every day she would write us a Ream do and from good stuff and bad stuff, you know. And she used to get two words even, you know, eh. So anytime they need us to be there, we used to go there, ma, her mom and I. We involve very well. And they ask us, we want to send there to college. I said I don't think it would be useful for hair. I'm involved weekly or whenever they call us, she lives in a special, uh, a community, you know, and she sleeps in house, not our house. We bring care here in occasionally and uh, for example, uh, when we have any kind of, uh, uh, occasion, we bring here. Her birthday we celebrate her birthday or her brother's and sister's birthday. We bring here and she sleeps one night sometimes. And sometimes she tells me, now take me back to my house. So I had to take her , I take her to the restaurant at lunch and he likes to go buy books from coloring books from Walmart or dollar tree, whatever. She asked me and they go and she knows where she goes and pick it up and they'd pay it for them and they take her back to her house... I go to the classroom, sit with her and she's, you know, I like about dream. Like she gets a proud, you know, this is my dad, Roger, this is my dad. Walk into school, she will introduce me, you know, so it is good for the child, give the child a push to go up or better... She's my, my

daughter and I love him no matter what. No matter what she is, she's my, I'm going to love her all my life. That's it.”

Mr. Ahmed indicated that

“My wife knows more about our daughter .She knows very far as the diseases are the things you had, but you know, she knows more about it. But for example, we go for a meeting, we got together, there is a meeting, we go together, but she knows all report. She read stuff, you know, I am the one who drives them there. I taking to the lake, take them to the park.”

Ms. Najla said

“I not same one who treated her like she was before. Honestly, I would've been more patient with her. I would understand her or I'm going to tell you something one time we were sitting at the table eating and so I've been too much. Hold your Napkin, hold your spoon in your mouth. Close. My youngest child who was sitting across from me from the, you know, at the table and he said, mom, can I say something like cream? Or like my daughter, especial need kids, when they wake up in the morning, they are brain programmed What they going to be doing, no matter what you say, she going to be the seconds she will listen to you for two seconds, but after two seconds she will not do it. That opened my eyes for another thing. so if I was more knowledgeable about special needs kids or more trained about them, the way I'm going to be going to be completely different than before. .. Well, as a parent, I've done my best with her. I'm very strict and very fair Mama. My husband is the other way around, like when I discipline, they know she knows what to go, like I'll be talking to her discipline her, but her eyes like that dad helped me out and where my husband like here step in, okay, we have to stop this. So he gets the hearts and discipline. He is the heart one, I'm the mean one, but as a mom I've done everything for her. Everything, natural her, taking care of her. the few, you know he can't do it.”

Relationships with Educators: The parents express appreciation for the help these educational entities gave to their daughter in regard to reading. The father claims that their special attention bolstered his self-esteem. The mother recalls their initial visits during which their child was tested and screened. The mother blames, both, herself and the IEP group for her child being placed exclusively in special classes with no regular classes. She is angry with herself for letting her fears as an immigrant make her feel

vulnerable and afraid. This may have lead to her not not challenging their decisions. She also blames North Care for simply giving her rules for guiding her child's behavior at home. Her daughter could not be contained so easily, she communicated. This lead to the medicating of her to the point that she remained listless.

Mr. Ahmed believe that

“ I think we did, we did fine with her education, she, she learned, you know, she read and write, she used the computer easy, you know, she has high school diploma. My bad. Yeah. Leading to, yes, yes. There's lots of challenge actually, like different level of, uh, of uh, especially. And some of them really tough kids, you know, and uh, some of them really nice and they used to fight sometimes and uh, the teachers, you know, people are different. Some teacher, they used to have lots of patience who've been, and some teacher, sometimes they lose it, you know, and stuff. But uh, after all, I think it's fine. It's good... When you come here and you find this level of education and they allow you to get them under one too. They wanted to get involved in your child's education. It makes me feel really, uh, this is very important.

Ms. Najla stated that

“When, when I enrolled my child, you know, there will be test in here also do the screening. Then they have parents meeting. What do we sit together with a speech and her therapist, the school lab, uh, like the principal had teachers, the counselor and all of that... they have services for her like somebody's been working on or a speech pathologist. She been working with her inside the school and there was another lady who worked with outside the school, so she'd been getting it twice in and out to help her out with her speech... That were a deal between us and the school and her teachers. There was a notebook anytime, like daily they would write the notes, what is ream done in the classroom, how has had a behavior and if she have a severe behavior which is not listening, act, acting are like my way or highway. I told her teachers anything, just give me a call and they'll come take care of it and any issue she would be working on it, but to say she ended up, she can't keep going. Working with my child, she used to call me where I go to the school, talk to the teacher what's going on and take my child and home.

Ms. Najla added that

“I do lot of changes in there. Maybe she will not going to be spent her lifetime in the special need class I would have her to be at will force it and I'll ask her rights more to be a regular classroom, not to spend it. You know, they go 8 hours she used to go. Just have not have they actually one hour

each day to be a regular classroom. If I have the knowledge and experience as now I will enforce it. That she needs to be in the regular classroom at least five hours a day. If I'm in the same experience as now a knowledge and knowing and after educating myself about special need kids, I will force it that she needs to be in regular classroom and I'll be more involved. I was involved but not as the way it's supposed to be. As I know now the system because the education in united states that his rights for parents, that is rights for students and that is rights for special need kids. I did not pay attention to that because I still have that fear the way we used to be in our country. I'm an immigrant. I need to be other one to make the school mad at have my chart to be kicked out. I don't. I don't. I don't. So that's why it's like living with fear or the phobia. I'm going to call it again. When you didn't know the system very well, you have not educated very well for it, so you will live in that fear. I'm immigrant. I want to be safe. I don't have my child to be kicked out are the ones I knew one from my society to know that my child being kicked out because of her behavior. So, all of that It was part of my attention Just to stay on the safe side, to be involved, but not to be too much.

Ms. Najla mentioned

“There's a place in Oklahoma called North Care. I took her there and they helped me help with I need to do it her. How I can just here to listen and follow the rules? But as an autistic child, they mood swing very quick. She been, had she been having angary issue? Like when if things doesn't go her way, she'd be hitting herself by herself or she ended up with that behavior to pull her hair out. Like she will pull it and she'll show you, look, this is my hair. So it's end up to be a lot of things especial needs. It's not just education, it's just home. It's not just a school. There's a lot of parties needs to help you out to behavioral system, which is not just like people who works with special needs. The behavioral institute doctors and sadly most of the doctors, they believe in medication. A school, they start believing in medication. The more we give her medicine, the more she's calming down, but she's not coming down. She's always asleep, so that poll my child away from what's going on around her.

For their relationship specific with their child, teachers of both of parents have good expressions in regard to the old teacher who worked with their children. However, the mother did not agree with second teacher in that she had miscommunication with this teacher.

Mr. Ahmed stated that

“It was good actually reaching out their child. Yeah, it was great. I mean, anything we want, they will, they would show us how they would, you know, I used to take her to school, bring her and talk to her a futures and I think a very good level. We communicate in a very good level. she moves a lot and she, she works like dizzy and she doesn't walk street. So she used hit herself, for example, uh, the corner the table or something. And so they call us. They give us exact report what happened and things, you know. And uh, yeah. But communication between us and the school.”

Ms. Najla explained her relationship with teacher, she said

“It was, when her teacher who was working with her when she was five years old up to nine or 10 years when she was 10 years old. When old teacher retired, another teacher took over. So whatever that teacher been doing she's just took over and she started constraints... The one who took over, she was would not to do anything at all. My daughter is she's a heart person. They're still kind of people. Others, work for the check and she was one of those who was from the heart. She hold my child hand and she had her out what to do. She works with her behavior in the classroom. She knew what kind of learning styles. My daughter, she's visualize like short her and she will do it. My daughter she holds my hand from the heart and people when they work with special needs or even not special needs in education, When you were the child from the heart, that child will be succeed and they will love to do what you ask them to do. When you work with children because it's a job, it's a check the thing so it doesn't matter. They not be I work out and that relationship was our communication skills between myself and the teacher.”

Third Parents from Iraq

Challenges with English Language: Except for the first-born daughter, this family had little problems speaking the English language having learned it in Iraq, though with an English accent. The first-born daughter had a difficult time with communication at her school for the first few months, but help from “the program” and her parents enabled her to learn English.

Mr. Ali said that

“I used to speak English the same with the same accent, with the same vocabulary from overseas. So I'm back there a specific, uh, uh, The British accent over here to this different accents. And since we started learning when we were children and so we still have this accent. Maybe the accent is the most, um, inconvenient thing. I speak English everywhere outside my

home back in 2013. My oldest daughter, she didn't speak English at all, so we started talking English with her. Just trying to help her to learn. So the first year, actually the first six months, what was worst for her because she didn't have the ability to communicate with the others, but uh, that her young age helped her. She did her best, but then six months then they have like a program. Within six months with the first year she did good.”

Ms. Marya mentioned that

“Maybe the accent. Sometimes to ask everyone to go slower and I'm not sure if they will be acceptance of going slower.”

Acculturation Stress Communication Issues: Both parents want their children to speak both Arabic and English. They expressed concern that their older daughter is losing her capacity to speak Arabic. They have begun to make a special effort to speak Arabic with her. They feel that it is vital for them to maintain of her Arabic “character.” Nonetheless, they want her to be fluent in English as well as they feel it is important to survival and growth in America. The mother mentioned that she feels embarrassed speaking Arabic in public places, explaining that she feels that others may feel she is “hiding something.”

Mr. Ali said that

“We should have our own identity. That's what I think we should have our own identity. But at the same time we should mold within the, uh, within the community. And we chose to be here. So we uh, we should be, we should have, we should have the bowl to more within this community at the same time. It's all right to keep our character or, or on um, unique culture. We have the right to keep that, but at the same time we should more within this community...My oldest is losing the Arabic now, you know. So for now she doesn't understand us. What sometimes will ask her to reply in Arabic. I've seen other people who had been there here for a while. Their children will lose that, the Arabic uh, but I mean the job completely and then they will until I go to, uh, teach them Arabic again. So I was trying to, uh, prevent that from happening. So when she speaks Arabic she will speak Arabic like, um, like an American strike to speak Arabic. Arabic language is part of her, her character as part of her who she is. I need my daughters to speak the second

language English especially. It's part of their character and something that will help them, that future job almost, I'm sure that will help them the future and then within their carrier with them within. If they want to live back there, they have the option if they speak the language, if they don't, they don't have the option.”

Ms. Marya stated that

“My youngest, when I speak only English and signed with her, I don't speak Arabic and unless I'm angry and with my oldest child I try my best to speak Arabic with her. But sometimes when we were outside in the community or among her friends, I feel embarrassed to speak Arabic. It will be like we're hiding something from them. So I speak mostly English at home when we're studying. Husband will speak English when we're arguing or, or like a communicating tries to speak of as much as possible. Last year we made an effort and she learned how to write Arabic, my oldest child and. OK. So she, she speaks Arabic in an accent and she can kind of write and read Arabic a little bit.”

Religious Perspectives about Disabilities: Both parents reacted to the notions that their children were a form of punishment with disdain. The mother did wonder at first but quickly evolved into thinking another way. The father seems to have simply accepted it having only a hollow remark that “it is fate, but doesn't believe God had anything to do with punishing anyone”. The mother does not like the word disability much less punishment when thinking of her children. She advises others to accept their children and to really get to know them for who they really are.

Mr. Ali stated that

“It's, it's, it's a, it's not a punishment. Uh, it's, it's not a curse. Ah, it's like a, her faith is to get this, uh, issue and the same time God give her the world, uh, to resolve obstacles that she has in her life. I don't think there is a religion that will deal with disability as a curse or a punishment. I don't think I've got the, I don't know. I'm Muslim I talked to him as a blessing or a punishment because, uh, I don't think there's a religion deals with disability as either way. The punishment. It's, it's, it's like God work. We know that it's hasn't been God willing to have this condition. It's her fate and we need to support her when our best to help her.”

Ms. Marya explained that

“I'm a first-time Muslim. Second, like my religion says that's everyone is equal and the only thing that differentiates between people is what they do, like their actions, not who they are or from where they came. So my religion doesn't say it's punishment. No. And my religion embraces every person with every unique think they have. Like a person is not defined by color, by disability. They're only defined by how they build themselves and their, their outcome is what's like stuff like that was spiritual stuff. First. When I learned about it, I was in denial for. So I took all the steps of shock. I was in denial. I, I did not accept his. I felt like it's a punishment and uh, what time I learned how to accept it and accept her as the unique person she is and it's its own. Now I don't see it as a disability. She's deaf, she cannot hear us. That doesn't mean that she is disabled or she cannot do anything. She can be whatever she wants to be. She's a great child. The first tip off helping your child is accepting him And I embraced that and I wanted to understand who she is. That that was the only thing that made our relationship better and helped her developments better. So accepting your child and always asking so that you don't go through the mistake that I went through all.”

Educational Support: The mother mentions several issues that she encountered that were problematic. She claims to have never been given a proper orientation about what her youngest daughter would be doing, especially in regards to math. She feels that if she had been given the goals of her education, she could have facilitated her daughter more. She also felt that her different cultural expressions may have caused barriers to arise. These barriers may have stemmed from her own psychological distrust and the gap between her and the school. She also complains that IEP members misplaced her daughter in classes that simply grouped all different disabilities together. Her daughter was confused and upset.

Ms. Marya explained what challenges she faced in school

“ I don't know lots about the Khan curriculum. I don't know a lot about what they are supposed to do and it's, it's the difference between how we learned in our schools and how the schools are here, like systems different. So I don't quite understand the system and what's right, what's wrong here. I try my best to learn sometimes... I would like to be more understanding of what they're gonna do with math. I don't know what the curriculum is. We never went through what they are studying and we don't have a base to stand on, like I don't do what she's supposed to know. I don't know what to ask if

you're not that informative. The psychological challenges that, as I mentioned, you always don't feel that you're accepted so you always try to avoid being in events or communicating a lot. We're talking like, um, it's difficult to reach a comfort zone with a teacher or with someone else. So they need to be very compassionate and understanding. Yeah, verbal lock. Maybe for me to be more comfortable to speak with them. It's like I don't feel like I'm like any other mom because I go there with the challenge of are they going to accept me for who I am, how are they gonna look at me, what's their idea when they look at, what will they say first time they see how I, once I'm wearing or how I look. So I think that's a challenge and it's, it's like a barrier I feel every time.”

She added more

“my daughter, she's with Wardenberg Syndrome and she's, she doesn't have any cognitive or mental or other mental issues. When we came over here as immigrants, we, they did like an evaluation or an assessment and they said OK, she goes to the night IEP program. She was a pre K or first. Um, so when she went to kindergarten they put her IEP program, which is kind of a program that's below the curriculum and uh, she went to a school with all different, like a different train of disabilities, down syndrome and autistic children, children with cerebral palsy and they were kind of learning nothing. And she never improved. She went to an IEP class and she was crying and she didn't want to go to school. She could not communicate with anyone there.”

Both parents describe extreme pride for their children who have overcome great obstacles to reach high levels of development. They describe their ups and downs, their struggles, and the people who damaged and supported their aspirations for their children. Now they believe their children are great and may even achieve college graduations someday.

Mr. Ali talked about his hope for his child “Well, her journey was long and from day one when she was born, she, each year she achieve or over achieved her expectations each year I'm talking from when she was one year old she achieved expectations, not because we didn't expect that much from her, but because we, she suffered a lot. So she is, um, she's doing her best. Setting a goal for what I learned is setting a goal for, has, will not give her enough credit. So she over achieved everything we as parents said to our, uh, daughter with her condition...So I think setting a goal for her is not, not stare enough. We shouldn't have a like limited to a specific goal. They, we will have like older students went through the same program and they

finished bachelor degree, master's degree, Phd and I've seen those, uh, I've seen one of those guys in my field of work. Uh, his issue didn't stop him from achieve high... So as you know, she did her best and what I think is a horizon is wide open to new achievement. She can't do anything.”

Ms. Marya stated that

“Well, I could say disability up stigmata and they would deal with her and pity like, oh we're sorry. When I came here, they are more accepting and I could say that for like they, they don't look at you like, oh, we're sorry that that's the difference I loved. Um, when I used to go out of the or if anyone met me on the road, they will say, oh, so sorry. And like I would feel even more depressed and I, what I did at first cochlear implant and we were going out of the hospital here in the US. I met a lady who said, oh, how strong she is. Oh, she's a fighter. And that actually, that's where build up my spirits. Deaf have certain institutes where they could study, they could not go to college or graduate to universities and stuff like that. So he or she has lots of more options, like she has the world ahead of her, whatever she wants to do or be.”

Parental involvement: The father appears to feel that his long hours working to support his family keeps him from helping his daughters (both who are in Special Education classes) with their educations. He wants to do more. The mother is self-castigating also. She does not blame the school at this point for not meeting her children's' needs, but it was her fears and insecurities with educators that kept her from asking right questions.

Mr. Ali stated that

“ I'm trying but her mom because her mom was more dedicated for her. So I try usually to do my best and I will attend her meetings with the teachers. Uh, I will do my best to explain stuff to her, but I think her mom is better than that than me. If there is a way that I will be a more helpful outside to do that. If there's a way I can help her to achieve more, I would like to help him. My work schedule sometimes have to go to. I have two or three or a two shifts a day previously, so that means I will not be available for her. So it's like a train. When you miss it, you miss it. I would like to participate in each and every activity that I can do, I can participate to help her. Um, sometimes she will ask you. I think she will ask to help That's one of the positive things. I would like her to read this state when she. I'm sure that when she leaves the stage, she will go up like a rocket.”

Ms. Marya mentioned that

“Don't be embarrassed. And that's, that's a culture barrier because acceptance barrier., whatever you called, I was afraid to go ask or insistent asking. OK. So, uh, I did not feel like my child was placed in the right place in the beginning. And I went once and said, OK, can I go to the deaf school? And they said no. And I accepted whatever they said, but I did not research or ask her. Going to the right place was a great coincidence and I still blame myself. I should have asked more. I should have insisted more likely because I don't. I did not feel that was right or she was going to the right place. I should have asked and assistance, so don't be embarrassed. Even if you're a different, they need to accept you and ask and be there and communicate and look for answers. I believe in my girl.”

Relationships with Educators: Both mother and father believed that relationships between children and teachers and parents and teachers formed the foundation for educational development. Both parents express deep emotion as they recall instances where teachers went beyond their call of duty to help their child and connect with them.

Mr. Ali talked about their relationship with their child's teacher

I mean we used to have, she was a little bit busy but during the first year she used to come to our house once a week just to discuss and to give her, like help at home. ..she volunteers at the last year and that's why I say when I say they're dedicated this time She didn't have to come and commit to come for more than a year ago, but you did. So I think for them it's not, it's not like a job, it's not a job, it's a way of life, the way they fit. They like what they're doing and they're dedicated to doing. Uh, like, like friendship and this is the same. So I think it's good. I think what they're doing is dedicated enough because having a teacher that dedicated for them, um, maybe will help them in the beginning, but having the uh, having the need to achieve what other students without any issues, uh, to achieve the same targets within the same time, using the same, uh, say teaching or a teaching process without special a treatment will let them like a, be more aggressive during the. I think that's good because life or not treat them special way. They need to be treated equally and they need to be aggressive enough to take that positivity. I think the program is good.

Ms. Marya explained her relationship with teachers and school

“I just want to communicate with my child. From the beginning and I was like really showing them my passion and how I want to communicate with my child. I, I believe they were very. They embraced me and they were very

compassionate in the beginning. And that's building up a very strong relationship between us that yeah, her interpreter, as I mentioned before, she first time she met me she says, Oh, don't be afraid. And I said, OK, so how is she going to go in and who's going to guide her and where will she go and highlight that I know, how is she improving and I want her. I since we're on the right step, I want to go up with her, I want to see her improving. And she said, OK, well I'm going to come weekly to your house and tell you whatever happens at school and teach you more sign language so that you could communicate with your daughter . And she started coming at each every Tuesday bringing papers and pictures and teaching me sign language. There's a great relationship between us. They embraced me. They, they never showed me any like care, any dislike or anything else. So I was really comfortable with them. They embraced me. They were really great and wonderful.”

In addition, the father described his oldest daughter being behind in English when they first moved to the USA. She had a hard time catching up with other students. He appreciated how teachers gave his daughter personal attention. He was amazed at how they came to his house and helped her voluntarily for no money. Their aggressive effort to facilitate her learning helped her to catch up with other students and allowed her to take regular classes. He only wishes the teachers had more “resources.” The mother is very emotional about how grateful she is for teachers who gave her daughter motherly love and proximity. She weeps remembering how sad her little girl was not being able to communicate. She feels she and the teachers were able to address her daughter’s emotional and educational needs.

Mr. Ali mentioned how the school support his child

“Well, the difference over here from overseas. They (USA) having disability program. So they'll start, uh, with them, with young age, they all try a because usually the first step, which is the challenge to give the child a, the knowledge to know this is a letter, this is the site for the letter. This is an award. This, when they start to explain that for five years old or six years old or even younger than that, it's, it's, it's hard. Over here, uh, they have like the right program, they have good dedicated teachers to do that. The first step is the most important. They will have their, owns a translator and the

translator, she will listen to them over the teachers is saying she will translate that with sign for them. It's helping them a lot but still the challenge for her because she does, she does not receive the, the knowledge or the information as quick as the other students because we still have the therapy part translating if everything went good. .. I think she was doing good a she over and for me it's over achieved my expectations. OK, so the school system over here, I think it's, it's very good. I think the school system over here is very good. having the ability to get a child, uh, with issues with issue, with her issues and students with hearing issues and uh, getting this child in the same class with other students have been the same lessons taking the same test I think they are achieving starting over here. I think they will lack of resources. They can use more resources.”

Ms. Marya spoke about the support she had for her daughter from the school

“Life gave us great people in our way, like a great teachers monarch in her first year I remember taking her to school. She was a kindergartner and I saw the teacher and I started crying and I told her she doesn't speak a word in English and I don't know how I'm going to leave her and go out. But then she said, oh, you're leaving her with me, so don't worry. And actually that teacher will say it Malak, sit with her at lunch and sit with her at recess and kept on working with her all day. I'm, I'm tearing while I'm talking about her. She, she kind of like adopted her. So she, she did a great job within three, six months was like she could speak English. She mingles she made friends by the end of the year and that was a great change for her about in the beginning she suffered. She came back from school and she said, oh I know that's you're always sad. Cannot speak or hear bought. I think you need to be sad about me now because I can hear and I can speak but I'm not understanding anything. And so like she was struggling in the beginning a lot, but now she's doing good. My disabled child, as I mentioned before, she's deaf, so, and she's behind. So school is not quite enough. She needs to have a 24 hour understanding and communication. Um, she's newly learning how to express yourself and she cannot find that only in school. She needs to find it at home. She needs to feel accepted. Um, she needs to feel able to communicate with us. Um, so yeah, that's why I, I learned sign language so that I could teach her at home too. And we're, we're like in her case and my, and my disabled or deaf child's case, uh, we are communicating to the best with school and it's, it's more like I'm, I'm doing whatever they tell me to do. OK, well she's behind in reading. You need to do this and this and this at home too, to reinforce what we're doing at school. And so yeah, I believe I have a big role in that because we are like completing each other. Me and the teachers.”

Summary

As I stated before, the reflections that follow the interviewees' comments are brief over-views. Looking at them with a bird's eye, one can see that the themes are highly inter-related. The discussion attempts to highlight each of the particular themes (language, acculturation, religion, parent-educator's relationship, and parental involvement) as well as integrates their meanings.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Our study focuses on the involvement of Arab immigrant parents who have children with disabilities. Its findings triangulated with current research. Abdu (2005,) Donovan (2013) and Haboush (2007) indicated that Arab parents suffer from lack of involvement. The involvement of Arab parents in school who have children with disabilities desire feel that their prospective is valued and that they are supported by school personnel, and desire that teachers to utilize culturally relevant strategies to facilitate Arab immigrant parents that will not only help their children but help them in their support of and involvement with their children during school activities This study further investigated Arab immigrant parents' involvement in the education of their children with disabilities, and what barriers may prevent them begin involved with their children's education as well as how they feel their children are supported.

Once the interviews were transcribed, they were sent to the participants for corrections, responses or reactions. We received none, so, further inquiries were made by phone call. Each participant said they had not had time to read them completely but they all said that what they had been able to review was acceptable. We began the coding process by agreeing on more general codes drawn largely from the participants responses. Then we coded again, attempting to be more specific, trying to find what Creswell calls the essential themes. We reviewed all the large themes and the summaries following them and independently wrote out more specific codes. We had a rater-reliability score of 70 percent. We chose to discuss the overlapping code themes, though agreeing to alter the code names in a few instances. The themes are: Relationships with Educators; Acculturation Stress and Communication Issues; Parental

involvement; Educational Support; Challenges with English Language and Religious Perspectives about Disabilities. As mentioned above we found that the themes we arrived at corresponded fundamentally with themes found in previous studies, though with unique cultural costumes.

Relationships with Educators

This topic was not only the most talked about during interviews, it was also the most complex and possibly the most revealing about the needs of parents of students with disabilities. There was only one participant who had negative comments about teachers, counselors and administrators. This participant felt that some of the teachers seemed to avoid interaction with her and did not appear to show care for her child. But she said that her child had one teacher who was exceptionally good with her child, demonstrating love and providing full attention to her needs.

Participants made their feelings and thoughts explicit and specific. Several of them either explicitly or implicitly stated that the key to the development of their child's educational development hinged upon a caring interaction their children as parents. Several participants got emotional when telling stories of the love a teacher showed to them or their child. Typically, the stories were about a teacher offering their children proximity when they were working on an assignment. They believed that this proximity offered a security base that helped their children concentrate and to suggest as well that the subject they were studying were of value too. But probably the most emotionally laden stories were about teachers and volunteers who came to their houses to interact with their families and teach their children. Every couple related to these stories and all with extraordinary appreciation. One person said that a teacher came to see her when

she delivered a child. While many educators may be hesitant to use the word love to describe their relationships with the parents of their students, these parents felt what they felt was love and had no hesitated

to call it “love.” Love was the drawing force that united these educators and families and it was also the sense that educators were truly devoted. Parents believed that this resulted in the foundation for the educational development for their children (Donovan, 2013).

Educational Support

Fuligni and Yoshikawa (2003) reported that many immigrant parents believe that education is the only opportunity for their children to be successful in the future. These parents reported that they are happy with the support their children receive in their schools. All the parents of this study were realistic about their children potential for achievement in this society. Most of the parents were happy with the support that they had for their children from the school and were proud of their child’s work to achieve their school goals. However, some parents were angry and felt that the educator’s labeling of their children stifled development. Moreover, some parents indicated there were some problems with school personnel. For example, one of the mother claims to have never been given a proper orientation about what her youngest daughter would be doing, especially in math. She felt that she had not been given the goals of her child’s education. Nonetheless, participants were grateful overall for the options their child had in the American educational system.

Parental Involvement

All parents put their support of their children's education in the larger context of their home lives. They all spoke of their great love for their children. They also disclosed that their work load had multiplied due to their children's disabilities. Their stories are filled with great sacrifices they had made for their children. One father had left his country to come to USA where he felt his child would be protected and cared for. He went from being an Engineer to working three jobs here. They told stories of the poor quality of education their children would have had in their home countries. They were very happy that the schools their children attended now had involved them directly. All parents attended meetings regularly, followed instructions about how to help their children with homework. Parents also talked about the importance of the psychological support they offered to each other.

As indicated in previous research (Al-Hassan & Gardner, 2002; Gray 2006) listed in the literature review, parents felt that their intimate and informed involvement in their child's school work was paramount to their child's success. They felt if they could only know what the specific expectations of teachers at school were, they could facilitate their child's growth and learning. As expressed in the next section this had its challenges.

Acculturative Stress and Communication Issues

Every participant described being pulled between two cultures. Much was said about the difficulties of communicating in English - from hardly knowing the language when first arriving in the United States to speaking English with an accent. They described feeling alienated from most Americans and insecure even when attempting to communicate with them. Two participants claimed being afraid to ask questions or to

confront teachers about matters that concerned their children. This may have contributed to keeping their children even more “behind” than they might have been anyway. One parent claimed that when she finally could express some of her challenges, a teacher and administrator blamed her for the problem because of her poor English and the resulting communication problems it led to.

Some of the acculturation stress also resulted from issues related to social etiquette (Yakushko, Watson & Thompson, 2008). They felt tired of constantly being explained of their differences. They also expressed feeling negative for being self-conscious about looking and speaking different. One participant said her differences made her feel embarrassed. Another expressed fear that people who heard her speaking Arabic might think she was hiding her salacious remarks conversation from them.

All participants spoke directly about how they wanted their children to be both American and Arabic. Most worried about their children not speaking in Arabic at all or speaking it with an American accent. All had begun trying to teach their children Arabic at home and to teach them other Arabic and sometimes in Muslim ways. Still, they argued adaptation is essential to thrive in the United States. One pair of parent spoke of the emotional dimension of Arabic culture that they felt their daughter had begun to understand. They did not want to adopt the more detached American way of being, that appeared cold and unhappy. They spoke of crying, and feeling intensely as a positive way of living.

Religion and Arabic Community Views of People with Disabilities.

All participants argued that their religion (Islam and Christianity) did not view persons with disabilities as a consequence of sin or as a punishment (Crabtree, 2007).

This contrasted with some of the previous research. This may be the result of the higher education level of the participants in this study. In fact, all were appalled that anyone would believe this. Possibly the most beautiful story of acceptance of persons with a disability was told from a mostly humanist perspective in which he simply was bothered by how someone had treated a young man with a disability. He had befriended him on a weekly basis. When the person died he left an unreadable note he wanted his friend to have. A few of the participants did tell stories about community members in the countries they previously lived in who were condescending to persons with disabilities. One parent recalled having to hide their child when they had company. Certainly, this would not have been a common scenario in every community in their previous countries but there was enough non-acceptance that participants freely told stories about it when contrasting how their children were more accepted here. Participants were now wanting not just tolerance for their child's differences and challenges but acceptance.

Challenges with English Language

The struggle to speak English can make immigrant parents feel uncomfortable and intimidated while engaging school personnel. In contrast, immigrant parents who have strong English skills are more active with schools (Ruiz 2012; Al-Hassan & Gardner 2002). All participants speak English, however, they explained how they encountered communication struggles with school personnel and teachers in the beginning just after they immigrated to the United States. Some participants indicated that language limitation continued to cause miscommunication between them and their children's teachers. One mother believed that a teacher and the administration used "the language barrier" as an excuse for not following through with educative tasks and in

defending themselves against her complaints. Moreover, some participants believed that their use of a mix of the two languages (Arabic, English) may have affected their child's education. They tried to use only English until their child improved in English and only then did they teach him/her the Arabic language to keep their cultural identities.

Differences Found Between Mothers and Fathers

While in most ways mothers and fathers reported similar opinions, there were a few differences and a few different emphases. All reported many positive relationships with administrators and teachers, but mothers did offer some complaints. They reported knowing if a particular teacher did not show proper respect to their child. Fathers reported none. Both wanted their children to be loved by their teachers, but mothers especially were likely to report who exactly in the school demonstrated such love. Fathers tended to show appreciation toward teachers who visited their houses. Mothers reported much more educational facilitation for their children in the form of homework assistance and knowing and taking notes at the schools that would guide their facilitation of their child at home. Fathers reported doing lots of stress relief and doing fun things with their children, like taking them to the park. One mother said she was the tough parent and her husband was the "heart." Both parents had both realistic and high hopes for their children defined within the limitations of their children. Donovan (2013) indicated that Arab immigrant mothers are more involved in the education of their children.

Educational Implications

The results of this study suggest that relationship building between educators of students with disabilities and their parents is the cornerstone of constructing a space for effective educational and emotional development of students with disabilities.

Participants themselves offer fairly straightforward comments about their need. They needed better orientations to gather very specific information about possible directions their children will be needing throughout their journey of education. If possible, the school may have persons who speak Arabic present. The persons in this study would have been happy to play this role of translator or mediator for future parents with children with disabilities. Therefore, assume if a school has had previous Arabic speakers associated with their school they could be contacted. During this orientation, they need to be assured that any questions they might have are appropriate. And in the future, the educators should be open to listening empathetically to any problems they may notice with their children's education.

Some of the aspects of relationships that seem to have been especially effective might be built upon. Parents really appreciated the friendly support they received. They were not only supported with helping their children with their homework during home visits, they were inspired by the concern and acceptance they felt. In fact, they felt these acts of kindness were considered the most important elements for the development of their children's education. They also mentioned how they felt proximity with their children when they completed assignments was helpful. Possibly teachers could mindfully heed this suggestion and gradually give children more space and independence gradually.

The acculturation stress experienced was almost unbearable for some of the participants. All participants contextualized their experiences in school with descriptions that revealed an association between acculturation stress of the family and the success of their children in school. Many parents work at several jobs and can spend a very short time with their children.

Yet all tried to go to all meetings for their children. To add further meetings, risk their time at job and make things more stressful. But possibly a support group of immigrant parents could be created and run by a school counselor during the time when educators work with their children after education meetings. They might talk about their work pressures, feelings of alienation and inadequacy, conflicts their children have at school, and adjustments to new social etiquettes.

Limitations

The strength of this study is related to its limitations. While in depth explorations were made into the feelings and thoughts of the participants, the small number of participants allows for limited generalizability. The participants were all from a very small city located in a mid- southwestern state, which may not be the experiences of Arabic families in other states. Also, the use of snowballing as the technique to acquire participants limits randomness.

Future Research

This study has revealed specific areas that could be explored more in-depth qualitatively. An entire study could explore intricacies of the relationships between Arab parents of students with disabilities as well as the impact of acculturation stress upon the Arabic families and particularly its impact on the education of their children

with disability. It is hoped that there may also have few more specific elements of relationships, acculturation and education that might be correlated quantitatively to demonstrate clear relationships among variables.

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Appendix A: Programs and Strategies Support Immigrant Parents

Making Reforms to the Education System Using Evidence-Based Approaches.

Empowering Public Schools to Avoid Segregation of Immigrant Students.

Block Scheduling.

Promotion of Parents Advocacy

Increasing Students' Involvement in Extra-Curricular Activities.

Program monitoring and evaluation.

The Abriendo Puertas Opening doors program.

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPO).

Peers Early Education Partnership.

Migrant Education Programs (MEP).

Appendix B: Subjectivity Statement

During children's school stage, their parents may be involved in their school activities and work and such involvement can improve the performance of the children. However, the problem is that some Arab immigrant parents do not seem to be involved enough in the education of their children with disabilities. Because of this, I want to find the factors that may prevent them to involve in their children' education. Moreover, to encourage Arab immigrant parents to active in the school, I will search and figure out the support they need and are looking for.

In 2007, I graduated from College of Basic Education from Kuwait. My grades had been so high in sign-language class, and because my friends who are deaf from university gave me a recommendation, was hired to teach an institute for students who are deaf. after graduation. I taught at the school for four years, and my sign language skills allowed me to participate in the deaf community as if I were a member. This experience guided me to have an interest in special education field. I believe when Arab immigrant parents can be a great resource for school and teacher to improve the children and also, teachers and school personnel can improve the gap between them and Arab immigrant parents by reaching out those parents and build a great relationship with those parents which will help them get involved in the school activities.

From my experience, I believe that I have good knowledge about special education field. Also, I have the same cultural background that will help me to go deeper to investigate this problem; however, different cultures could have been my limitation which may affect my conception of the problem. And my language is also one of my

limitations that I'm going to improve. Language may affect my understanding of other people though.

Appendix C: Interview Protocol

Introduction

Thank you for time and willingness to participate. As you know, I am interested in Arab parents of children with disability and how they involve in their children's education. Particularly, I am trying to investigate what factors may prevent Arab parents from engaging with their children's education? Also, what is the most important element to Arab immigrant parents in helping their children achieve academic success and what do they need from the school district and teachers? If the questions are general and abstract, you may volunteer any detail you wish. You also have the option of declining to answer – passing on – any of the questions. Do you have any questions before we start?

Interview Questions

1. How long have you lived in the U.S. and what were some of the challenges you encountered during the first few years?
2. How comfortable do you feel about living in the U.S. now, especially with regard to speaking a new the language? In what situations do you speak English with others? How often and what situations do speak English with your children?
3. How well do you feel your child performs in school? How well-adjusted is your child in school? Are there any educational challenges your child faces in terms of grades and teachers or student relationships?
4. How involved are you with your child's education? How much do you feel you know about what is going on or happening in the daily life and tasks of your child at school?
5. Would you like to be more involved in your child's education? What challenges have kept you from being as involved, as you want? Are any of the challenges unique to you as an immigrant to the U.S.? What specifically about your child education would like to be more involved in?

6. How important do you feel your participation in your child's education can facilitate his/her development and academic success?
7. What are some of goals you have for your child in the education system? How do you think that the school system can aid you in your educational goals for your child?
8. What is your relationship with your child's teachers? How comfortable do you feel reaching out to your child's teachers if there is some problem or if your child needs extra help?
9. What kind of support do you feel would be most helpful for your child's teacher to provide you and your child concerning the child's educational success and well-being?
10. What is the attitude of the school teachers and administration towards immigrant person?
11. Are there any special programs at your child's school for second generational children? Should there be and, if so, what kind?
12. How do you feel your Arabic cultural beliefs, value, tradition, and language affects your child's performance at school and your involvement in his/her education? What are the advantages and disadvantages?
13. How do you identify your child's disability? And what do know about this disability?
14. Explain how do your religion teaches about disability (punishment, gift, neither)?
15. what do you personally believe about whether your child disability is a blessing or punishment?

16. Do you have hope for the improvement for your child with disability? Explain.

17. How would you describe your parenting style?