

UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCES OF PAKISTANI MUSLIM NEWCOMER
STUDENTS IN A SASKATOON SCHOOL CONTEXT

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By

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ABSTRACT

This study qualitatively explores the lived experiences of Pakistani Muslim newcomer students in Saskatoon public schools. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with six participants, including two Pakistani students, two Pakistani parents, and two Settlement Support Workers in Schools (SSWIS). This research is premised on the assumption that greater cross-cultural understanding and competence within the education sector can improve the current situation in Saskatoon. Currently, there are numerous challenges associated with the settlement of newcomers and issues related to the sudden experience of multicultural diversity within classrooms remain contentious. This research sought to understand the various factors influencing the construction of immigrants' realities in Saskatoon and how they impact immigrant students' learning. The findings could guide educators and administrators who are seeking to create more culturally responsive school spaces in Saskatchewan and other provinces and cities experiencing diversity. Data highlighted academic, social, cultural, religious, and gendered adjustment challenges. Findings from this research also highlighted a compelling need for greater cross-cultural competency among educators, administrators, and para-professional staff within the public-school system.

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As a professional who has worked with newcomer immigrants and refugees for over ten years in Saskatoon, this research is dear to my heart. During my time working in settlement agencies, I have tried to understand the challenges and opportunities faced by newcomer students and their parents from different perspectives. These ruminations led to the goal of this research, which is to generate greater understanding for the benefit of all parties involved, including newcomer students, their parents and the public school system, which will help to prepare newcomer Pakistani Muslim students. The jobs I have held over the past ten years sparked my passion for education. In these jobs, I helped poor and vulnerable school children to access learning opportunities through community-based education models in Pakistan at the elementary and high school levels. I also have fifteen years of experience in international development for education among immigrants and refugees in Canada, which prepared me to choose this area for my research. My master's degree in Anthropology helped me to develop research and writing skills, and I thank all my teachers.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

In this chapter, I present the background of the study and the statement of the problem stemming from the novel challenges of multicultural diversity in Saskatoon schools. I outline the assumptions, delimitations, and limitations of this thesis. In addition, I define the key terms to provide background information about Pakistani Muslim newcomer students, who are the focus of this research. I also discussed in this chapter the significance of the study and its potential to contribute with a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges of Pakistani Muslim students' settlement and integration into the public high school system in the city of Saskatoon.

Statement of the Problem

Over the past ten years, the province of Saskatchewan has experienced significant population growth and was estimated to be at 1,174,462 as of July 1, 2019 (Statistics Canada, 2019). Most of this growth is visible in the urban centres of the province, in the form of the new immigrants (newcomers) invited through the Saskatchewan Immigration Nominee Program (SINP) (Falihi & Cottrell, 2015; Okoko, 2019). Urban centres like Saskatoon have visibly grown. With new urban neighbourhoods, there has been a greater demand for diverse educational opportunities. This need places Saskatchewan school divisions in jeopardy as many urban elementary and secondary schools are running over their capacity limits, with little or no additional human and material resources available to them (Giles, 2013). In response to the increased number of new students, the government constructed nine new elementary schools in the Greater Saskatoon and Greater Regina regions. Falihi and Cottrell (2015) commented on the implications of this noted that

Saskatoon is becoming simultaneously both more diverse and more segregated, and this situation has the potential to cause misunderstanding, exacerbate racism and increase the

likelihood of conflict. Negotiating the increasing need for cross-cultural interaction in Saskatoon has implications for health, education and all social ecosystems, including those of families and other subsets of the community. Culture shock and complex race relations have the potential to negatively affect the health and resilience of both newcomer families and the province's host communities, including the already vulnerable Aboriginal peoples, and ultimately, these have the capacity to negatively impact individual and collective well-being and social cohesion in Saskatoon. (p. 3)

Many immigrant or newcomer families in Saskatchewan have moved across the world, bringing a diversity of colours, ethnicities, cultures, diets, languages, and religions. Many of these families still view gender, sexuality, and other markers of identity through their cultural and religious lenses. The integration of newcomer students into the Canadian education systems is dependent on many factors, including immigrant students, their families, and the school system. In contrast to cities like Toronto, Vancouver, or Montreal, where a steady influx of immigrants has necessitated constant adjustment to diversity, significant and rapid ethnic diversity is new to Saskatoon. The novelty of the rising numbers of immigrants presents unprecedented challenges for human services agencies and for schools, which are often the first agencies to come into direct contact with Newcomers and their children (Falihi & Cottrell, 2015; Okoko, 2019).

In response to the need for more cross-cultural learning and understanding in Saskatoon, this research will explore the opportunities and challenges of Pakistani Muslim students' face when settling and integrating into the Canadian public high school system in the city of Saskatoon. Many of these families adhere to Pakistani Islamic values as the guiding principles for their children's education and socialization through educational institutions. The Islamic lenses of Pakistani Muslim parents influence their children's learning, development, and

socialization, which potentially cause dissonance or conflict with the prevailing secular values in public schools. An additional challenge within the Saskatoon context is that most teachers and educational paraprofessionals are Caucasian and have limited knowledge of the cultural and linguistic diversity of students, especially those coming from Muslim backgrounds. Often teachers' professional development in instructional approaches suitable for diverse learners and cross-cultural competence is inadequate. Okoko (2019) additionally noted that "school leaders in Saskatchewan and Canada are hardly prepared to meaningfully engage with the growing number of culturally diverse immigrant families" (p. 198).

Information on diversity or culturally fluent and ethnically diverse teacher representation is sparse in Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation and other government public education websites do not provide specific data on how many white (Caucasian), Aboriginal/Indigenous/ First Nation or teachers of colour there are in the education system. Historically, the province has been predominantly white, and consequently, many teachers in Saskatchewan's urban and rural schools remain Caucasian males and females. Anecdotal evidence from principals' and administrators' names 'suggests that senior administration and governance are also predominantly white. While there is a small but growing presence of Aboriginal peoples within the profession, newcomer groups, especially non-white people, are significantly under-represented, despite the rapid increase in the number of newcomer students of colour within Saskatchewan (Falihi, 2019).

This research seeks to contribute to greater cross-cultural understanding within the Saskatchewan education system by exploring the experiences of Pakistani Muslims, who, in increasing numbers, make Saskatoon home in the last 15 years as a result of the SINP (Saskatchewan Immigration Nominee Program). This study seeks to document the challenges

and opportunities experienced by this group to derive insights that will inform policy and practice in the Saskatoon context, including the professional development of teachers and administrators. Previous research suggested that “challenges associated with the settlement and longer-term integration of Newcomer individuals and families and issues related to the sudden experience of diversity remain unresolved” (Falihi & Cottrell, 2015, p. 4). Thus, this research assumes that greater cross-cultural understanding and competence within the education sector will ameliorate the current Saskatoon situation.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the inquiry.

1. What are the integration opportunities and challenges that Pakistani Muslim newcomer students face in the Canadian public school system in Saskatoon?
2. What strategies should be developed and implemented for improved integration of Muslim newcomer students in the Canadian school system?

This study will attempt to explore the factors which negatively or positively influence students’ settlement and integration. These include students’ cultures from their country of origin, English language proficiency, gender perspectives related to cultural identities, religious and family values. Additionally, this study will look at the readiness of the school system and its acceptance to newcomers for settlement and integration. The research also explores the possibilities of better connecting newcomer parents with schools to create support systems for newcomer students and their parents and caregivers. Parents from many countries, including Pakistan, allow schools to make most of the decisions for their students. The Canadian education system encourages parental participation in their children’s learning and development, both formally and informally. However, the schools have not been very successful in engaging newcomer parents, including

Pakistani parents, to be part of the school and school community councils (Pushor, 2007).

Having a strong and close connection between newcomer families and schools provide opportunities for newcomer students' learning and integration.

Researcher Positionality and Liberal Muslim Perspective

As a researcher, I bring strong academic, research and professional work experience in the areas of education and immigration and refugee support in Canada and Pakistan. I am a liberal Muslim male originally from Pakistan, and I have been living in Canada for the last fifteen years. My professional expertise is in settlement services for newcomers. Currently, I am working as the Director –Settlement and Family Services for Immigrants and Refugees with the Saskatoon Open Door Society (SODS). From my experience and my work, I am intimately familiar with the issues and challenges of settlement, integration, and the diversity of newcomer populations in Saskatoon.

I hold a master's degree in social anthropology with course, fieldwork and a thesis from Pakistan and a post-graduate diploma in community development and leadership from Coady International Institute of University of St. Xavier in Canada. As part of my study program, I produced an independent research study on supporting the development of school/community-based parents' education committee in Pakistan. Furthermore, before moving to Canada about fifteen years ago, I worked in education and community development in a leadership role. Back then, I worked with the public sector in education and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), providing basic education to thousands of children in the disadvantaged communities in Pakistan.

I consider myself a liberal Muslim with values of respect for people from all beliefs and faiths. I believe in the liberty of opinions, freedom of rights, social justice, and remain moderate

with my social outlook being influenced by Muslim Sufism, which practices respect, peace, and harmony. As a liberal Muslim, I believe in the primary principles of Islam within the Muslim faith but find it appropriate to ask questions on religion and try to find answers. I do not see non-Muslims as the enemy of Islam but as fellow human beings practicing different religions and faiths. I always seek options for flexibility with Islamic commandments and practice religion with flexibility. Some of the common attributes in a liberal Muslim are respect for all religions, to favour flexibility in practice, to encourage more rights for women and support fundamental human rights. Considering these facts, I brought my liberal perspective of the Muslim faith to my research by choosing participants capable of expressing a diversity of opinions. I also ensured that the study aligned with Canadian values because freedom of religion and freedom of speech are embedded in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. But I also understand the perspectives of more conservative Muslims, and as an emic researcher, I can apply these insights to the data collection and analysis processes.

Assumptions

1. I, the researcher, was able to recruit an appropriate group of participants for this research.
2. Participants of this research would answer all questions honestly and understood the problem under study.
3. The participants would be able to respond to answers in English and not in their first languages.

Delimitation

Creswell (2003) suggested using delimitations to narrow the scope of a study. The delimitations of this research included the data collection method and choice of participants. I

collected data from six participants, one male and one female Pakistani student, two Pakistani parents (a mother and a father), and two SWIS school workers from the Saskatoon Open Door Society.

This research focused on Pakistani students in one public secondary school in Saskatoon. Findings from this research would not yield generalizable results to all newcomer students or even to all Pakistani Muslim students in Saskatoon; rather, it would be limited in scope to the sample size of the respondents and the qualitative data collected.

This research is relevant to the development of culturally responsive education systems as part of the wider public policy responsiveness to increasing diversity in the province of Saskatchewan. Given the likelihood of increased diversity within Saskatchewan, school systems must develop a greater capacity for seeing diversity as an opportunity and developing policies to achieve positive outcomes for all students.

Limitations

The study was subject to the following limitations, challenges, or deficiencies. The biases of the researcher may affect the interpretation of the data. I assumed that participants would provide accurate information regarding their involvement in the controversy, but there were some limitations. Qualitative interviews rely on respondents' opinions and thoughts, and when interviewed, people have varied memories as they recall or frame past events.

The data collected were not sufficient, and the questionnaires set did not get detailed answers. Therefore, I required additional information and follow up interviews with participants. English is the second language of the researcher, and it would take longer to transcribe, compile, and interpret data if someone chooses to respond in their first language.

Definitions

The following terminologies are used throughout this study and thesis:

South Asia: Region of indefinite boundaries usually thought of as including all or some of the following countries: Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives.

Pakistani: There are three ways that someone can become a citizen of Pakistan, including citizens by birth, by descent and by migration, which are briefly mentioned below.

Muslim: For this research, a Muslim is a person born into a Muslim family or an individual of another belief who converts and becomes Muslim by accepting the belief in Muhammad (Peace Be upon Him PBUH) and his teachings as the last prophet of Allah (God) and belief in the Holy book of Quran, revealed to Muhammad (PBUH) from Allah, the only God in whom Muslims believe.

Integration: It is an act or instance of integrating a racial, religious, or ethnic group into a larger society, such as incorporation as equals into society or an organization of individuals of different groups such as races.

Culture: Culture is about customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group. The characteristic features of everyday existence (such as diversions or a way of life) shared by people in a place or time. Culture is the learned and shared knowledge that specific groups use to generate their behavior and interpret their experience of the world. It comprises beliefs about reality, how people should interact with each other, what they know about the world, and how they should respond to the social and material

environments in which they find themselves (National Center for Cultural Competence of Georgetown University, 2020).

Cross-cultural Competence: According to Cross et al. (1989),

Cross-cultural competence is a set of congruent behaviours, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enables that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

Operationally defined, cross-cultural competence is the integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings. (Cross et al., 1989, p. 21)

Multiculturalism vs Assimilation: The Canadian model of society is based on multiculturalism, which seeks to manage diversity by encouraging and allowing Canadians who come from various parts of the world to sustain and practice their languages, faith, culture, food and traditions within Canada. This practice of multiculturalism, within a bilingual framework, is evident in both public and private settings and has protection under the Canadian Charter of Freedom and Rights. Canada experienced diversity due to immigration of many cultures, and it introduced the Multicultural Policy in 1971, which was later reflected in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom and Canadian Multiculturalism Act. This further strengthened the promotion of multiculturalism in Canada (Lund, 2003).

Islam: It is the religious faith of Muslims, including belief in Allah as the sole deity and Muhammad as his prophet. Islam is a religion of belief in one God, like Judaism and Christianity. These religions teach that God sent prophets to teach people how to live a good life. Holy books contain the prophets' teachings. The Qur'an is the holy book of Islam, like the Bible

for Christians and the Torah for Jews. Muslims believe that the Quran is the holy book revealed to Muhammad from Allah (The God). Muhammad became the prophet and messenger of God to spread the message of peace through Islam. The Qur'an teaches that the first prophet was Adam and that Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and others were prophets. It explains that Muhammad was the last prophet (Douglas, 2003).

Islamophobia: Is an irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against Islam or people who practise Islam.

Islamophobia is an emerging comparative concept in the social sciences. It was initially developed in the late 1990s and early 2000s by political activists, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), public commentators, and international organizations to draw attention to harmful rhetoric and actions directed at Islam and Muslims in Western liberal democracies. For actors like these, the term not only identifies anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim sentiments, it also provides a language for denouncing them. (Bleich, 2011, p. 1581)

Newcomer: This is someone who immigrated to Canada within the last five years. The period of five years is significant because Citizen and Immigration Canada has a three-year residency requirement for Permanent Residents to be eligible to apply for citizenship. On average, it takes another two-year application process to become a Canadian citizen.

Pakistani Values Contextualizing the Study

The increased immigrant Muslim population is making it necessary to understand the change in religious diversity in western societies. Due to relatively large immigration from predominantly Muslim countries, many Western countries have acquired non-negligible (if not necessarily large) populations that are of Muslim origin. Therefore, it

can be argued that the increased focus on religion simply reflects the increased levels of religious heterogeneity of Western countries and that a strong focus on Islam is related to the large proportion of Muslims among newly arrived immigrants. (Strabac et al., 2016, p. 2665-2666)

The following information explains aspects of Pakistani culture with religious values, which are essential to understanding participants' perspectives.

Hijab

The hijab is a Muslim headscarf used to cover a woman's head in public places.

Hijab simply means “a covering” in Arabic. Although there has been a great deal of theoretical feminist critiques of the practice of hijab, few empirical studies have examined how the Hijab may serve as a source of empowerment for Muslim women and, as such contributes to their understanding of their body image in relation to mainstream, western images of the empowered or feminist woman. (Al Wazni, 2015, p. 325)

The commonly used dress is shalwar kameez for both men and women. Women's dresses are more colourful, and they wear dupatta over the kameez (long shirt) covering their shoulders and upper body. Other women choose to wear a headscarf (Critelli, 2010).

In certain Islamic teachings, it is mandatory that a woman practice hijab in front of a male with whom she has no intimate or biological relationship. For example, she does not need to wear a hijab in front of her husband, father, brothers, male cousins, or uncles. But with males in any other relationships that are distant, she is required to practice hijab.

In one tradition, the Prophet Muhammad is quoted as saying: “. . . If the woman reaches the age of puberty, no part of her body should be seen but this—and he pointed to his face and hands” (Bun, 2006, p. 292). However, in practice, not all Muslim women wear and practice

hijab. It is a choice based on individuality, freedom, and the level of the influence of the family in support of Hijab. There are many Muslim women in Pakistan, and the Western world, including North America, who choose to wear hijab, and they are equally well-educated professional women with liberal and progressive views.

Sex and Islam

Based on Islamic teachings and values, Muslims are not allowed to have pre-marital sexual relationships. It is a sin if a Muslim male and female have sexual relations before they are properly married. These Islamic values are often in conflict with Canadian teenage dating practices. Both Muslim adult boys and girls cannot have sex until they are religiously married, and there is no concept of a boyfriend or a girlfriend in Islam as a sexual partner as it is considered a sin against the cultural values of their parents. Developing sexual relationships before religious marriage is the reason the parents of teenage girls worry about their daughters' future. So, they seek to have them religiously married as soon they reach the legal age of consent in Canada, and when the parents find a suitable Pakistani Muslim male match for a girl (Droeber, 2006, p. 183).

Pakistani parents believe it is their cultural and religious responsibility to find a suitable Pakistani Muslim match for their daughter and have her settled as soon as possible. In many cases, male Muslim partners are chosen from a family either living in Pakistan or North America. Parents often provide more support to male children to further their career and education as the daughters are only the responsibility of parents until she goes to her husband's new home upon marriage. Male children are further supported as they advance their education and career and are often entirely or partially dependent on their parents' social and economic support to achieve their desired goals. On average, parents would be happy if their daughters were married at an

early age, between 18 to 25 years. For a male child, the ideal age is between 28 and 38, depending on various factors such as education, career, financial resources, and any special desire that he may have as it relates to finding a perfect bride for him.

The gender preference to support the education of male children has a strong cultural dimension. The male in Pakistani culture assumes the father's responsibility in a patriarchal society. The male child carries forward the family name and family values to the next generation. The male child is also responsible for extended family members, including his own nuclear family, his parents and grandparents, and all other unmarried and unemployed brothers and sisters to meet their financial and social needs. The above reasons explain why Pakistani parents spend more on male children's development and growth as a family's future is dependent on their male child.

Halal and Haram

Muslims living in multi-religious societies are considered more conscious about the permissibility (halal) of products. Thus most of the halal research in the non-financial sector was conducted in multi-ethnic societies. Nonetheless, global trade is changing the way we perceive the origin of products and brands and their permissibility under Islamic Sharia laws. This has serious implications for international companies operating in food, cosmetics, and pharmaceutical products. (Mukhta & Mohsin Butt, 2012, p. 108)

In many schools in Canada with Muslim populations, the discussion of haram and halal is common. The word haram comes from Arabic, and in Islam, it means something or an act which is prohibited. The most common discussion in schools is about haram and halal food. Muslims are now living in places that do not have Islamic foundations and practices. Muslims coming

from Islamic regions of the world to the Western world choose to continue their religious practices, particularly buying and consuming halal meat.

The term halal is often seen by non-Muslims to be pertaining to the slaughter of meat or being applicable only to food (Al Jallad, 2008). However, the term halal, meaning “permissible” (Rehman et al., 2010; Mukhtar and Mohsin Butt, 2012), reaches far wider, forming a guide pertaining to every aspect of a Muslim’s life. In a Muslim’s life, every aspect of life is regulated by Islamic law; therefore, the halal-haram dichotomy almost always applies to everything. (Wingett & Turnbull, 2017, p. 643)

Muslims in their home countries and overseas are not allowed to eat pork in any form, as the pig is considered an unclean animal. However, Muslims may consume animals such as chicken, cows, water buffalos, goats, sheep, as well as seafood, including various kinds of fish. These become halal, and Muslims may eat them. However, these halal animals must be cut and slaughtered under Islamic guidelines by partially cutting the throat of an animal to let the blood drain from it.

The consumption of alcohol is prohibited in Islam, and it is considered haram. Therefore, any product or meal that has ingredients from alcohol is not allowed. However, even though alcohol is prohibited in Islam, some Muslims use it knowingly. Mostly some liberal and progressive Muslims who do not follow Islam by the book or say yes, it is not allowed, but we know that God is kind, and he shall forgive my sins. However, the vast majority of Muslims do not consume alcohol. The use of any other substance which intoxicates one’s body and affects the mental state of the person is not allowed in Islam and is considered haram. These are some reasons why Muslim young adult males and females are forbidden, by their parents, to attend

parties in bars or clubs where they could use alcohol or any other substance, interact with the opposite gender and where haram food might be served.

LGBTQ2 and Muslim Students

Islam and Pakistani culture do not recognize the rights of LGBTQ2 (Lesbian Gay Bi-sexual Transgender Queer and two-spirited) persons as it is considered a sin with teachings of the Muslim's holy book of Quran. Non-heterosexual practices do not have any legal, religious, or social protection and are punishable as criminal offences. It is socially unacceptable if someone claims to be LGBTQ2, and the consequences are very harsh, including stigma, social isolation, or physical punishment. It is because of these consequences that very few Pakistani citizens of any faith identify as a member of the LGBTQ2 community and often avoid engaging and participating in LGBTQ2 activities as they could be tagged and marked as a part of this group. It is not only the parents who frown on this, but most young Muslim male and female students find this contrary and stay away from these activities and lifestyles. Many would prefer to avoid any social talk about LGBTQ2 as it is a subject of taboo and shame for them. It is shameful for Pakistani parents if their child declares to them that he or she is LGBTQ2 (Cochrane, 2013).

Pakistani Geography and Culture

South Asia is referred to as members of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was established with the signing of the SAARC Charter in Dhaka on December 8, 1985. SAARC comprises of eight Member States: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. The Secretariat of the association was established in Kathmandu on January 17, 1987 (Al Wazni, 2015).

The objectives of the association were to promote the welfare of the peoples of South Asia and to improve their quality of life; to accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region and to provide all individuals with the opportunity to live in dignity and to realize their full potentials; to promote and strengthen collective self-reliance among the countries of South Asia; to contribute to mutual trust, understanding and appreciation of one another's problems; to promote active collaboration and mutual assistance in the economic, social, cultural, technical and scientific fields; to strengthen cooperation with other developing countries; to strengthen cooperation among themselves in international forums on matters of common interests, and to cooperate with global and regional organizations with similar aims and purposes (Al Wazni, 2015).

This region is home to 1.814 billion people as per data from The World Bank in 2018. The data also shows that the region's GDP was US\$ 3.452 trillion in 2018. The life expectancy at birth, total (years) was 69 in 2017. The primary education completion rate (% of relevant age group) was 92% in 2018. Shankar(1998) contended that

The study of South Asians is further complicated by internal diversity. Contemporary South Asia includes Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, each of which has its own set of internal and international politics. They have cultural values that are different from each other as well. In addition, they all have their own languages and dialects. India, the largest South Asian country, itself has over 20 official languages and hundreds of dialects. All the major religions of the world are practiced here, and the twenty-eight different states and seven union territories have different foods and attire.

Thus, a study of South Asian migrants must acknowledge all this diversity. (Shankar, 1998, p. 46).

In 1965, the Government of Canada made changes in the immigration and naturalization act by removing discriminatory laws with opportunities for immigrants with skills that allowed Asians to immigrate. People with specialized skills and with education benefited from these immigration policies (Leonard, 1997).

Geographical and Political Landscape of Pakistan

Pakistan is in southern Asia, bordering the Arabian Sea, between India on the east and Iran and Afghanistan on the west and China in the north. Islam, the principal religion, was introduced in 711. The Mogul Empire that ruled most of the Indian subcontinent from the 16th to the mid-18th century. By 1857, the British became the dominant colonial power in the region. A mass-based movement for independence 1857-1859, to end colonial authority, developed. Because Hindus held most of the economic, social, and political advantages, the Muslim minority's dissatisfaction grew. Upon independence from the British, the nation was divided into two sovereign states. (Critelli, 2010, p. 237)

“Pakistan's majority Muslim population (96.28 percent) is divided into two major sects Sunni and Shia. The national census does not enumerate percentage figures for sects, but anecdotal estimates place the Shias as 20 percent of the population. Other religious minorities are Christians (1.59 percent), Hindus (1.85), Sikhs (0.01), Parsis and very small minorities of other religions (0.03).¹ although there are other divisions: ethnic and linguistic and class.” (Rahman, 2014, p. 9)

Pakistan became an independent country because of the division of India, which created two nations, India and Pakistan (West Pakistan and East Pakistan). East Pakistan, currently

known as Bangladesh gained its independence from Pakistan in 1971. Pakistan was home to the majority of Muslims living in the Indian sub-continent. Modern Pakistan has four provinces: Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, and Sindh Province. Each province and region bring its unique cultures and traditions. It also has independent territorial areas called federally administered tribal areas (FATA) in the North West of the country, which borders Afghanistan. FATA consists of seven territories known as agencies. Gilgit Baltistan is the newly formed autonomous province in the north of the country and borders India, Afghanistan, and links with China's territory. Kashmir is a disputed territory between India and Pakistan. A major part of Kashmir is in India, and the other part, Azad Kashmir, is under the administrative authority of Pakistan with independent, autonomous status. Conflict over Kashmir has been unresolved between India and Pakistan since partition in 1947, and it is considered a disputed territory.

Linguistic Landscape of Pakistan

Each province has its unique provincial languages and dialects, including Sindhi, Punjabi, Balochi, and Pashto. Since its independence, English has been Pakistan's official language. Urdu, on the other hand, is the national language and connects all provinces. The people living in Balochistan speak Balochi, and Pashtu and some communities speak Persian / Dari and Siraiki. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa speaks Pushto, and some of its communities speak Hindko. People in the central part of Punjab province speak Punjabi. In the south of Punjab, people predominantly speak Siraiki languages, and in northern Punjab, some dialects of Punjabi are prevalent such as Hindko, Gujri and Pahari. The people of Sindh speak Sindhi predominantly in urban and rural Sindh. The Muslim immigrants from India to Pakistan at the time of independence in 1947 spoke Urdu primarily, and they mostly settled in urban centres of the Sindh province. This group call

themselves Mohajir (immigrant or refugees) and some of them call themselves Urdu speaking (Allana, 2010).

Pakistani Culture and Marriages

Ninety-six percent of Pakistanis identify themselves as Muslim. Pakistani culture is mixed, with influences from Islamic values and the historical identity of the Indus civilization in the sub-continent. Pakistanis believe in strong family bonds and live in a structure of extended families (including brothers, unmarried sisters and parents and grandparents of the husband). This family structure is changing more toward the nuclear unit because of economic changes and western influences on the urban middle class. Even so, the extended family is very much intact as the country does not have a very formal structure of senior and retirement homes in place. The existence of this family system is influenced by the culture of the sub-continent and reinforced by strict Islamic teachings to care for the extended and elderly family members.

Pakistan is a collective society where families are dependent on each other and live in multi-generation homes. Marriage is not seen only as a process of two individuals getting into a relationship; instead, it is a new partnership through arranged marriages by parents between two families to support the new couple. It is acceptable in the Muslim faith and socially to have cousin marriages, which is a prevalent practice. Some families would choose to marry in the same tribes and the bloodline. This engagement is more common in rural communities, and urban middle and lower middle class and low-income families. These marriages bring more stability between families and keep the interests of wealth and assets united in the same extended families (Critelli, 2012).

With the above in mind, Critelli (2010) shared how the Pakistani family structure functions when there is a collective bond with a knitted family system. The marital relationship

is not seen only as a relationship between two individuals arranged by their parents; rather, it is a bond between two families. This bond is manifested as the couples remain connected with families in good and bad relationships, and families come forward to mediate in times of crisis. Critelli further argued that honour (Izzat) is significant to both families, and this may become a source of conflict in times of crisis. The honour is the reason a family compromises to maintain the relationship. Accounts presented in his article indicate that often it is the girl and her family that compromise to continue building this relationship to respect the families' honour.

The first cousin marriage culture has changed in the last 25 years in families with higher levels of education and those influenced by the urban culture. On average, a couple has five to six children, which has increased the population dramatically. The trend of smaller families, with 2 to 3 children, is now becoming more common in the urban middle and higher-income families (World Bank, 2018).

Pakistani Dress Code

The typical dress code for men and women is Shalwar Kameez (long shirt with loose trousers) and “a dupatta, a lengthy scarf that is usually draped over the shoulders in urban areas and worn covering the head and bosom in rural areas” (Critelli, 2010, p. 238). Women use many colours and designs in their dresses. These are brighter when used for happy ceremonies and social evenings. Men in major urban centres commonly wear western trousers and shirts, as do some urban middle and elite class women.

Pakistani Food

Pakistan is a country known for its spicy East Indian food. The women have developed skills of cooking as a large part of the women in Pakistan are unemployed and are not considered to be economic contributors through employment income from outside the home. This trend, too,

has changed in the last 25 years, and many young urban middle class educated women now work, often in professional capacities.

Cultural and Religious Festivals

Pakistan celebrates all Islamic festivals, including a whole month of fasting in the month of Ramadan from the Islamic Lunar Calendar. Pakistanis celebrate the Eid Festival at the end of the fasting month. This celebration is about peace, patience, and tolerance. People wear new clothes and visit family and friends and share food and sweets. It is considered a more colourful and joyful celebration for children.

The month of Hajj is the month of pilgrimage to Holy Mecca in the Islamic calendar. Eid-el- Azah at the end of Hajj (Mecca pilgrimage) signifies the Hajj rituals to remember the sacrifice of the prophet Ibrahim. Muslim families across the world, including Pakistan, buy an animal of their choice to sacrifice.

Four percent of Pakistani citizens belong to various other religions, including Christianity, Sikhism and Hinduism. These religious groups have their places to pray, including churches and temples. The Sikh religious community is a minority in Pakistan but hosts the birthplace of Sikh faith creator Guru Nanak in Punjab, which has international spiritual importance for the Sikh community. Pilgrims from across the globe visit this monument every year to pay their respects.

Pakistan Public Education Sector

Pakistani public education is underdeveloped. The federal and provincial governments do not invest significant amounts in the development of public education at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. To date, the government only provides the financial resources for salaries and the administrative costs of the current structure with a minimal development budget. Public

financial management challenges undermine the delivery of health and education services to the population (World Bank, 2017).

“Government schools are those where no tuition fee is charged, and they form a comprehensive system in which school admission is not officially dependent on academic ability, ethnicity, religion, location of children’s house and parents’ occupation or income status” (Siddiqui & Gorard, 2017, p. 160). The new program will support the government to strengthen its public financial management and make it more transparent and accountable by introducing new aspects like a social audit of public expenditures by beneficiaries.

This lack of intervention by the state has de facto given the choice to parents/caregivers whether they want their child to receive a formal education or not. In general, therefore, children who attend schools already have the advantage of having parents or caregivers who do not belong to the most economically deprived section of the population and also those who may be less likely to abide by the cultural practices against girls’ education. They form a group of children who belong disproportionately to families where parents are perhaps more aware of the need for education and have enough earned income to spend on a child’s education (travel, uniform, school meal, resources and perhaps fees and extra tuition. (Siddiqui & Gorard, 2017, p. 160)

Many Pakistani people live in rural towns. The high level of poverty among parents discourages them from sending their children to schools. As a result, many children drop out of school before completing grade five at the primary level. These children then often work to contribute to their families. Child labour in Pakistan brings with it other issues, including children running away from home and living homeless on the streets. These children are often physically, mentally, and sexually exploited. Girls are commonly more at risk as many of them in

these conditions get married at a very young age, and others are sold as property. Many of these poor young girls are sent to affluent families as domestic servants and spend most of their childhood working for other families. These girls live in these homes for many years, with very little monthly income given to their parents. Furthermore, these girls are often abused physically and sexually. They also work long hours with no leisure time or educational opportunities.

The World Bank shared that the literacy concerns for young children. They highlighted that, on average, 75% of children under the age of 10, three out of four, can not read simple paragraphs. This literacy gap is comparatively very high in the South Asian region, where the illiteracy rate is 58% on average. The reasons presented are poverty, inequalities and the low quality of education in the public sector. This has a more significant impact on girls' education as they remain out of the school or drop out earlier for various economic and social pressures. (The World Bank Group, 2020)

Similarly, there are limited numbers of secondary schools in urban and rural communities. As such, schools are overpopulated with insufficiently trained faculty in science, mathematics and reading. Student research labs are often empty, with no tools, equipment, and research material. These students graduate high school but often with a poor quality of education, which does not help them to further their education or access trade-related training. Most male graduates end up working in small private businesses in unskilled positions, and many remain jobless for years. The general trend among female high school graduates is that they get married between the ages of 15 to 20 and start families; thus, they do not become part of the formal economic life of the country.

Pakistan has several technical and trade-related polytechnic colleges in the urban centres of each province, but many of them do not carry a reputation for providing quality education.

Meanwhile, there are over 30 public sector universities that train professionals in health sciences, law, engineering, social sciences, and humanities. A minimal number of lucky high school and college graduates get the opportunity of being admitted to these universities. The tuition fees in these universities are subsidized, and some of the universities, mostly in health and engineering sectors, carry regional and international reputations. (Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, 2020).

Pakistan Private Education Sector

The state has created a major vacuum by not delivering quality education through the public sector. Many parents who can afford the expense of their children's education, mostly in the urban and suburban communities, have the option of sending their children to private schools. The private sector education option determines the socio-economic class of the students and their parents in Pakistani society.

Private schools charge tuition fees, admission fees and other regular funds for school maintenance. There is quite a wide range of monthly or annual student fees charged by private schools, and there is no regulation that has set a threshold amount for this. Private schools can be run by individuals, non-government, and voluntary organizations, which often have a donor-led agenda of promoting education. Some prominent non-government organizations that support school education are the Pakistan armed forces, overseas employed Pakistanis who have their families in Pakistan, ex-servicemen associations, Christian minorities and so on (Rahman, 2005). Voluntary organizations are also franchise businesses that provide a specific brand name to the schools, and people who want to run the schools as a profitable business become associates of the franchise. (Siddiqui & Gorard, 2017, p. 160)

These private schools have categories, the first of which is street/neighbourhood private school with limited facilities of physical infrastructure, higher enrollment, and relatively better education from the public schools. Parents from the lower middle classes prefer to send children to these schools. The second category of private schools appeals to the middle class that send their children to some locally owned franchise schools such as City School, Beacon House School, and some other schools in the country. These schools are expensive for parents, and on average, they pay a tuition of \$150 per month in a country where the minimum wage is about \$3 a day for a person with little or no skills. These schools have a proper structure with opportunities for teacher training and introduce new teaching methodologies with updated curricula. The medium of instruction is English, the curriculum is affiliated to the Oxford or Cambridge education system, and they follow the same global student assessment measures. These are generally known as A and O level education system, whereas the public schools and street-level private schools follow the matric school system. The graduates of these schools generally end up continuing their higher education in some public or private universities in the country, and a lucky few find their way to international universities. The parents of this group of children are generally hard-working middle-class individuals with some education, and their priority is to provide the best education possible for their children.

The third category of education is for the elite class of the country with immense resources. This group has access to a separate school structure that falls under grammar school, American school, and British school systems. The parents of these children are generally either from rich business communities, are politicians, or work with the civil and military bureaucracy. The tuition fee structure for these schools is affordable only for the elite. Children of diplomats also attend these schools in major cities. Graduates of these schools often do not attend local

public or private university, and they fly to Europe, North America, and Australia to attend university, which is fully paid for by their parents.

The demand for higher education in Pakistan has increased, but the public universities cannot accept all interested students. This lack has created opportunities for private universities in the country. Some of these universities are locally owned and have various campuses in the country. Many private universities and colleges are affiliated with British and American universities. The general focus of these private universities and colleges is on programs such as business administration, accounting, engineering, and medicine. These are the key education areas in which parents are willing to invest.

Pakistani culture does not encourage students to work while they are in school, and these students are dependent on their parents until graduation from colleges and universities. It is mostly middle and upper-middle-class parents that utilize these universities if their children do not successfully enroll in a publicly funded academic institution. The graduates of these public and private universities often start working in the private sector locally, and some lucky ones find their way in the global private sectors. Many of these graduates choose to work for the government if they are lucky to find that option. The children from elite backgrounds return home with a degree from a reputable foreign university and get senior positions to become the leaders of local graduates. (Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, 2020).

Madrasah Religious Schools

Pakistan came into being as an independent Muslim state with the end of British colonial rule and the subsequent partition of the sub-continent into two sovereign states: India and Pakistan. At that time, the educational system here was divided into two. On the one hand were government-run schools, colleges and universities whose system and syllabi were

prepared under the supervision of the British with an eye to providing a workforce for the colonial government according to the priorities of the British government; on the other hand, were Muslim educational institutions called *madaris*, which were established with the objective of preserving and promoting Islamic sciences and arts. These institutions were spread throughout India, and it is worth noting that since the establishment of Pakistan, there has been no drastic change in their system—their objectives, curriculum, textbooks, teaching methodology or overall environment—in either Pakistan or India. (Rahman, 2006, p. 325)

Many parents from poor communities prefer to send their children to free *Madrasah* religious schools. These schools also provide free lodging and board with three meals every day. The parents with limited means find these schools the best option for their children. In these schools, children mostly learn religious education by reading and memorizing the Holy book of Quran and reading the teachings of the prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him -PBUH) as the last messenger of God. There is no accurate number, but there is over 20 thousand registered and non-registered *Madrasah* in Pakistan, funded through private religious groups and various Islamic countries in the Middle East.

A rough estimate indicates that over 3 million children attend these *Madrasahs*. Some of these *Madrasahs* teach very fundamentalist values. Historically, They have contributed to inculcating people who have fought in Pakistan and Afghanistan against the Soviet Union in the 1980s and against the West and Pakistani forces after 9/11 with Islamic ideology. The teachers and leaders in many *Madrasahs* are not formally trained to be teachers and administrators but only completed religious education and started teaching young students. The popularity of *Madrasa* education among poor parents is attributed to its affordability and inclusion of free food

and living for their children. The state has failed in its responsibility to provide a free elementary and secondary quality education through the public education system. Private education is only for the middle-class and the rich in the country. The only alternative for many parents is to allow their children to attend Madrasah education (Reuters, 2016).

“The three categories of education in Pakistan has variables with access to education, quality education and options chosen by parents from public schools to private to Madrasah schools. However, this does not mean that all types of schools should contribute to equity in the long-term. Madrasahs seem to have very poor outcomes in terms of simple skills, and perhaps should not be permitted to be used instead of mainstream settings. The private schools available include high-cost chains of schools concentrated in the urban centers, as well as low-cost schools opened in almost all regions. Each of these school types would tend to deal with different social income groups. Nevertheless, private schools, by definition, cost money and so tend to be used by the relatively richer families in any area. (Siddiqui & Gorard, 2017, p. 167)

Pakistani Migration

Since the country's independence, and mostly starting from the mid-1960s, many Pakistanis migrated to other countries as economic immigrants. Many no-skilled and semi-skilled people move to the Middle East to oil-rich countries for better job opportunities and earnings. These temporary immigrants live their working lives in the Middle East by working as untrained and unskilled labourers for massive urban concrete building firms. As many of them cannot afford to have their family living with them, these workers keep their families back home in Pakistan and visit them once every two or three years. They live on minimum means and send all their savings back home for their wives and children. According to a December 2013 report of

The Daily Dawn, a national Pakistani English newspaper, overseas Pakistanis sent about US\$ 15 billion of remittance in a year to their families living in Pakistan. The second category of Pakistani migrants in the Middle East are either running small businesses or have some university education and perform clerical or professional work. The strict immigration policies of Middle Eastern countries do not give citizenship to any aliens, so Pakistanis in these countries have work on business permit visas.

Another large group of Pakistani immigrants live in developed countries in Western Europe, the US, Canada, and Australia since the 1960s and 1970s. Large scale Pakistani immigration started when the British government allowed people from the Mirpur Kashmir region of Pakistan to work in British industries as unskilled workers. This was the result of a contract signed with a British company to build a dam in the region, which had displaced large numbers of peasant families. These families were promised better opportunities for themselves and subsequent generations in the United Kingdom. At the same time, many Pakistanis emigrated to North America, with substantial concentrations in Toronto and Vancouver. Some settled in Saskatoon also, as early as the 1970s. Siddique's (1977) study noted two kinds of restraints experienced by the group: those which have "resulted from the immigrant family's structural separation from its larger kin networks, and the constraints posed by the host society—which may be actual or of perceived variety" (Siddique, 1977, p. 20). This study collected data among 50 families, including 12 Pakistani and 38 Indian families. The participating families lived in Saskatoon in the summer and winter of 1972 and 1973. This historical context demonstrates that the Pakistani community is not new to Saskatoon but made this city home about 50 years ago with a small group of families working in professional careers as part of the middle and upper-middle class of the Canadian society including in Saskatoon.

Many Pakistani professionals, including doctors, engineers, scientists, and professors of various disciplines, have been recognized and respected overseas by reputable academic and scientific institutions, hospitals, and political think tanks. In the last half-century, Canada has become a new home to Pakistanis and is the top 5 source country for immigration to Canada (Statistics Canada, 2016). It is mostly the lower middle and the middle class who move to Canada, and the larger percentage live in the urban centres of Greater Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal. However, these Pakistanis come from all professions and educational backgrounds. Some come with degrees that are in regulated occupations in Canada, for example, medical doctors, nurses, engineers, pharmacists, physiotherapists, and geologists. Many go through a long process to have their credentials recognized and become licensed and registered in Canada to be able to practice their professions. Many of these professionals fall through the cracks and must find work outside of their specializations.

The Demographic Shift in Saskatchewan

With the current demographic reference, 10.7% of Saskatchewan's population calls themselves First Nations, and 5.5% are Metis as per the census of 2016, and over 73.72% are of European descent. The population of visible minorities has increased from 3.6 in 2006 to 10.08.% in 2016, and these individuals come mostly from China, South Asia, Philippines and Africa as the province has proactively encouraged immigration to fill the labour force gap in the province (Government of Saskatchewan, 2016). The Census defines visible minorities as persons, other than Aboriginals, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in skin colour. The most populous visible minorities in Saskatchewan were Filipinos, South Asians, including Pakistanis, Chinese and people of African descent. Most of Saskatchewan's visible minority residents live in the two provincial Census Metropolitan Areas. Saskatoon is home to 42.5% of

Saskatchewan's visible minority population, and Regina houses about 35.6% (Government of Saskatchewan, 2016).

There were 112,490 immigrants in Saskatchewan in 2016 compared with 48,160 for 2006 (an increase of 64,330 persons). There were 12,255 non-permanent residents (which include persons who held work or study permits, refugee claimants as well as family members living with them in Canada) in Saskatchewan in 2016 compared with 4,610 in 2006. Immigrants and non-permanent residents accounted for 11.65% of the Saskatchewan population in 2016 (Government of Saskatchewan, 2016).

Immigrants are filling the labour force shortages in the skilled and unskilled sectors of the provincial economy. With time the immigrant community is likely to be more visible as currently, it sits at only 11.65. % of the total provincial population, which is less than the total national average of 23.4% (Government of Saskatchewan, 2016).

Immigration of Pakistanis to Saskatchewan

Although there were Canadians of Pakistani origin in Saskatoon, the numbers increased dramatically after the year 2000. These newcomers settle mostly in Saskatoon and Regina. Many of these Pakistani's belong to prestigious professions, including the fields of engineering, science and technology and medicine, and several of them started private businesses, working in trades and semi-skill jobs. The province's economic growth and flexible immigration policy under the Saskatchewan Immigration Nominee Program (SINP) encouraged many immigrants to make Saskatchewan their new home. The SINP was a result of the Canada – Saskatchewan Immigration Agreement, 2005 (Government of Canada, 2005). Through this agreement, the Government of Saskatchewan committed to promote awareness and understanding of the social, cultural, and economic benefits of continuing immigration to Saskatchewan and to facilitate the

settlement of immigrants in Saskatchewan and their adaptation to and integration into Saskatchewan society. Many Pakistani Saskatchewanians are recent immigrants, arriving in the past 5 to 10 years in Canada. Most of these are young families with children attending elementary and high schools. The priorities of these families are to have quality education for their children, safety, peace and security and better economic opportunities for their family members.

Religious and Cultural influence on Pakistan Immigrants

Many Canadian social activities are socially and religiously anti-Pakistani and Islamic values, and the majority of new Canadian Pakistanis remain strictly observant of their traditional values where first-generation immigrant Pakistani women play a critical role. For example, the consumption of alcohol, visiting bars and discos is taboo for both men and women. There is no concept of boyfriend and girlfriend, and pre-marital sexual relations are not allowed in Pakistani culture because of Islamic religious beliefs.

First-generation Pakistani Canadian women typically have limited levels of education and skills to be part of the Canadian workforce. It is not true for all Pakistani women because many come with advanced education and experiences and immediately become part of the Canadian workforce.

First-generation Pakistani women are closer to their religion compared to their male adult family members. This closeness connects them with their place of origin and religious values and creating a protective net for their children to preserve cultural and religious identity in the host country. This trait is commonly observed in countries like the UK and Canada (Akhtar, 2014).

The Pakistani families in Canada are generally influenced by Islamic values, which they carry with them and try to transfer to their children, the second-generation Pakistani-Canadians.

Pakistan is a gender-segregated society, as males often socialize with males and women with women. This is still very visible in first-generation Pakistani communities in Canada. For example, when a Pakistani family invites other Pakistani families over for dinner, the males are placed in the living room together, and the women socialize together in another room.

Culturally defined gender roles were found to limit the Pakistani girls' socialization with the local community and frame the space of their social communication. Four Pakistani girls said that they 'played with the local girls in the park, hung out shopping like normal friends. However, the traditions of the heritage community prevented them from developing any in-depth communications with and thus understanding of these local friends. (Gu, 2015, p. 1939)

Culturally, the gender preference which gives priority to males is still dominant, and males are served food first. The women and children eat later in many low and medium-income families in Pakistan. The parents focus more on the education of male children than their female children. The female child belongs to some other home as once she gets married, and she will move to her husband's family. This gender preference changes in Canada, where the state provides free and compulsory K to 12 equitable education to both boys and girls with the same opportunities. Many Pakistani families in Canada teach their girls to cook; keep the house clean; be a good Muslim; pray five times a day, recite the Quran; and learn all the other social traits which she would need once she gets married and her spouse and his family demand that of her. Some Pakistani girls in Canada, starting from puberty, are expected by their parents to start wearing headscarves (hijabs) to cover their heads. They are not allowed to wear western clothes that expose and display any part of their body.

These girls are also instructed by parents to avoid talking to boys in schools, and they are not allowed to attend parties unless it is a Muslim family and, in many cases, if the parents are also part of that invitation.

The Pakistani girls were restricted by the image of what 'a good girl' should do; according to their heritage community, 'a good girl' should never talk to boys and should always wear the Hijab [the tightly wrapped traditional clothes and khimar (headscarves)] not only on important occasions but also in other aspects of their everyday life. (Bun, 2006)

These social barriers isolate Pakistani Canadian high school and university age girls from Canadian culture and peers, and often they remain within their own Pakistani culture under the supervision of their parents and families. However, there is another group of Pakistani girls who are not influenced by their parents to wear hijab, and it remains their choice, including socialization with boys where the Pakistani and Muslim values are not compromised.

Canadian Pakistani parents start worrying about their daughters' marriages as soon they become teenagers, and they begin planning for arranged marriage proposals to have them married as soon they reach the legal age for marriage in Canada. Most of the arranged marriage proposals are with their cousins and relatives living in Pakistan to keep girls in the same family. Endogamy is popular in Pakistani culture, but some girls do not fully accept this marital arrangement. The trend is frowned upon especially when an educated girl is engaged to a man from Pakistan who does not have the same level of education as she. In many cases, arranged marriages turn into compromises, and life continues, and the third generation of Pakistani Canadians are reproduced to carry forward family values. In some cases, the arranged marriages do not have a positive result, ending in divorce. Divorce is another taboo in Pakistani families,

and divorced women sometimes become further isolated from family, so some leave their Pakistani culture and live as single mothers and others remarry and start a new life.

Pakistani parents with progressive values in most cases now prefer their daughters to complete their education and develop a career plan before making a marriage plan for them. The second generation of immigrants typically carries forward some values of the first generation, especially fundamentalist Islamic values. But the third generation of immigrants frequently revolt against the culture of their parents and grandparents and lean towards broader Canadian values to shape their identity. This generation is more comfortable accepting and presenting themselves as Canadians. In the process, some values and principles carried by the second generation are diluted, and the second-generation parents become less resistant to the change they experience in their children. Third generation females often become more independent to make choices and decisions for their own lives. They typically become an active part of the Canadian workforce and of the social fabric of Canadian society by accepting diversity and respecting the differences among other cultures in Canada. The role of religion becomes more limited in their lives while they tend to internalize broad Canadian values.

Summary/Conclusion

The objective of this thesis, as presented in the research questions, was to explore the opportunities and challenges of Pakistani Muslim students' settlement and integration into the public-school system in Saskatoon. Assumptions, delimitations, and limitations of the research were explained, and key terms were defined. The research context was also briefly described, as was the Pakistani background of the research participants.

This research explored the integration challenges faced by newcomer Pakistani Muslim students who attended a Saskatoon public school. The study sought to document the problems,

challenges and opportunities experienced by this group of learners as they tried to integrate into the Canadian education system, to derive insights that will inform policy and practice in the Saskatoon context, including professional development of teachers and administrators. The research is premised on the assumption that greater cross-cultural understanding and competence within the education sector will ameliorate the current Saskatoon situation in which challenges associated with the settlement of newcomers and issues related to the sudden experience of diversity remain contentious.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

In this chapter, I synthesize recent relevant literature and research in migration and minority student integration into school systems in various international contexts. I identify and discuss gaps in the research as well as the implications for the integration of Pakistani students into the Saskatoon public school systems.

In the decade after 2005, Saskatchewan went through an important period of socio-economic development, which attracted investment and immigrants to live and work in the province. The province was competing with other provinces and international jurisdictions both for investment and for skilled and unskilled labour, and immigration policies were central to this competition. In seeking to become more attractive for investors and immigrants, the province introduced the Saskatchewan Immigration Nominee Program (SINP), which brought temporary and permanent immigrants under various economic immigration categories (Falihi & Cottrell, 2015; Okoko, 2019).

In addition to the many benefits, the sudden increase in immigration to Saskatchewan has caused challenges related to diversity. These challenges are especially evident in the human services and educational sectors, requiring increased cross-cultural competency among educators and service providers (Falihi & Cottrell, 2015; Okoko, 2019). This research seeks to document the problems, challenges and opportunities experienced by Pakistani newcomer students and families as they seek to become integrated into the Canadian education system, to derive insights that will inform policy and practice in the Saskatoon context, including professional development for teachers and administrators. The study is premised on the assumption that greater cross-cultural understanding and competence within the education sector will ameliorate

the current situation in Saskatoon, where challenges associated with the settlement of newcomers and issues related to the sudden experience of multicultural diversity within classrooms remain contentious.

Context of the Problem

The SINP program provides hope for overseas immigrants to live a new life in Saskatchewan and have a better future for their children. As a result, many immigrant students, including Pakistani Muslim newcomer students, are currently attending Saskatoon public schools. The population of the province has significantly increased, mostly in the urban centres of Saskatoon and Regina. Saskatchewan's Population Census for 2016 was 1,098,352, according to Statistics Canada. This number represents an increase of 64,971 persons (6.3 percent) from the 2011 Census population of 1,033,381 (Government of Saskatchewan, 2019).

Immigrants contributed significantly to this increase as incentives were offered for individuals to work and live in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan families could nominate their overseas family members as permanent economic immigrants under the SINP program. Stone (2012) explained, "in the policy realm, incentives are simply carrots and sticks. If you promise people a reward or threaten them with a penalty, they will act differently than they otherwise might. Incentives and deterrence are flip sides of a motivational coin" (p. 271). Saskatchewan's immigration strategy *Strengthening our Communities and Economy*, drew on Canada's multicultural heritage to strengthen communities, create greater prosperity, and foster new jobs in Saskatchewan. According to Rob Norris, the ex-provincial minister responsible for immigration, the strategy responds to important social and economic changes underway within – and beyond – Saskatchewan by improving upon current immigration programs and undertaking new initiatives. We want Saskatchewan's immigration program to be the

best in Canada. Our province will benefit through enhanced global perspectives, increased diversity, vitality and growth, expanded knowledge and innovation, increased business investment and opportunities, and a strong labour force. (Government of Saskatchewan, 2015)

In November 2019, the Government of Saskatchewan released its ten-year vision of 2020-2030 to increase the economic prosperity of the province. One of the success indicators presented is an increase in population from 1.2 million in 2019 to 1.4 million by 2030. If this is achieved, it will attract inter-provincial migration to Saskatchewan and introduce more newcomers to the province through provincial and federal immigration programs. Thereby making communities and schools more diverse, especially in urban centres such as Saskatoon and Regina.

Multiculturalism in Canada

According to Taylor (2012), the move towards

multiculturalism as a federal policy and defining feature of the Canadian nation began in the 1960s as a result of a rejection of the Anglo-normative conception of Canadian society and identity. This change was not mainly motivated by a concern for immigration policies, although multiculturalism did alter how immigrants were received, and in particular helped greatly in easing the adjustment to an important change in Canada's immigration policy which came in these years, specifically the abandonment of the bias in favour of people of European origin. A multiracial Canada is much easier to build under the philosophy of multiculturalism than it would have been under the older outlook. But in fact, the pressure came largely from the older immigration; people of non-British origin had been coming in great numbers since the beginning of the 20th century.

The new definition of Canadian identity was mainly carried through with them in mind, and of course, with their support. (p. 417)

Multiculturalism is conceptualized at the federal level and interculturalism in the province of Québec (Bouchard, 2015). At their core, both multiculturalism and interculturalism promote a positive view of diversity in society. The primary distinction between multiculturalism and interculturalism is found in the status given to a society's majority culture. By rejecting the notion of a single majority culture, multiculturalism is a form of egalitarian pluralism that places all cultural groups on equal grounds. In the Canadian context, interculturalism, in contrast, is a form of hierarchical pluralism due to its explicit commitment to provisions including the specification of a public language and set of societal values that safeguard the minority Québécois culture as society's dominant majority group within the province of Quebec. (Scott & Safdar, 2017, p. 30)

As a hierarchy-attenuating intergroup ideology, multiculturalism is predicated on the celebration of group differences. The social-psychological literature has uncovered mixed support for whether pro-diversity integration ideologies like multiculturalism ameliorate or exacerbate intercultural relations. Findings from correlational and experimental studies suggest that reductions in prejudice toward minority groups are associated with intergroup ideologies like multiculturalism. (Scott & Safdar, 2017, p. 29)

"The implementation of multicultural education within Canadian schools is influenced by the implementation of the 1971 federal Multicultural Policy, the 1982 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the 1988 Canadian Multiculturalism Act (James 2003; James and Shadd, 2001). From its inception, multicultural education is linked to the goals of the original federal multiculturalism policy, which promotes

ethnocultural retention, fosters appreciation of the cultural heritages of others, and assumes increased intergroup harmony” (Kirova, 2008, p. 104)

Canada experienced diversity due to immigration of many cultures, and it introduced the Multicultural Policy in 1971, which is reflected in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom and Canadian Multiculturalism Act. This inclusion further strengthened the promotion of multiculturalism in Canada (Lund, 2003).

Canada is one of the countries where there is an ongoing discussion on multiculturalism and diversity (Elliston, 1997). Education has evolved through reforms as it is considered an important element of integration for newcomers (Kymlicka, 2001). This change is now more visible in urban centres like Saskatoon that have become more multicultural and diverse with new immigrants making these cities home.

Manitoba was one of the pioneers to introduce a multiculturalism curriculum in schools to help understand the Canadian personal identity. This resource taught about the contributions made by ethnocultural groups and how these groups remain relevant and dependent on shared values, rights, and responsibilities. The government introduced English as a second language (ESL classes) in schools to accelerate the process of settlement and integration for newcomer families (McGrane, 2011).

The investment which Manitoba made in multicultural education is an indication of the critical relationship between state policy, civic values, and school curriculum.

However, both multiculturalism and multicultural education have not been without critics. The first criticism of multicultural education came from anti-racist theorists, who are typically seen as holding opposing views to those of multiculturalists, particularly in the UK (Brandt, 1986; Troyna, 1987), in the US (Nieto, 1992; Perry & Fraser, 1993;

Sleeter & Grant, 1998), and in Canada (Dei, 1996; Tator & Henry, 1991). Antiracist education theorists stress that multicultural education ignores racial differences and racial discrimination and fails to challenge the organizational structures of institutions as a basis for this discrimination. The debate between the two views on the focus of multicultural education is described as harmful (Tomlinson, 1990) because it diverts educators' attention from making practical curriculum changes. (Kirova, 2008, p. 106)

In discussing multiculturalism, Pater (1965) argued that it creates challenges with many social identities, and that creates divided political views and takes away from citizens as singular Canadian identity and bring divided loyalties. Pater believed that multiculturalism with various identities become the source of differences and conflicts.

Similarly, Garcea (2008) believed multiculturalism was not supportive of a citizenry with collective cultural identity and brought different views and conflicts as people move into Canada from different parts of the world. This is true when people come with values and views that are different from Canadian values and become the sources of many conflicts based on religious, cultural, linguistic, and racial identities. Thereby causing a deliberate shift from homogenous to heterogeneous identifies, diversity and becoming a source of conflicts and competitions.

On the contrary, multiculturalism has its challenges, and this has become more effective where Canada has an ageing population and needs young talented immigrants from across the world to be part of the workforce and build communities (Government of Canada, 2020). Canada is a liberal democracy which under its charter of rights and freedom promises to respect and protect minorities from the work of multiculturalism. Garcea (2008) contended that regarding multiculturalism and interculturalism, Canadian society should consider a hybrid approach.

Canada has one common federal multiculturalism policy. However, each province has adapted and developed its policy based on local needs. McGane (2011) posited examples from Saskatchewan and Manitoba as they responded to the local needs at the provincial levels to give a direction for multiculturalism. The economic growth at the provincial level makes it more important to have a localized definition of multiculturalism and diversity for newcomers. This explains why each province and region in Canada brings its uniqueness and, more importantly, immigration strategies linking with economic growth and community building. This requires each province to frame provincial immigration policies that best meet its needs and promote diversity.

Further arguing the policies on education with multiculturalism where there is a possibility of education opportunities of education for all results in equal contribution in the economic development of communities is challenged with a higher rate of drop out of the new immigrant children as compared to those who are Canadian born (Derwing et al., 1999; Watt & Roessingh, 2001). Sharing the challenges of newcomer students, Nogurera (2008) emphasized the role of leaders in education plays in creating conducive learning situations that benefit all students. Immigrant children often attend public schools; thus, teachers and education leaders must have the competencies to work with diversity among students. Referring to school leaders, and teachers Cholewa et al. (2014) supported the argument that education should be imparted culturally responsively and bring value to students by looking at various perspectives of students aligning with their histories and cultures.

“In a culturally responsive environment, “differences among ethnic groups, individuals, and cultures are normative to the human condition” and considered “valuable to societal and personal development” (Gay, 2013, p. 50). Research maintains that “culturally responsive

educators have greater success in closing achievement gaps for minority students” (Tanner, Hermond, Vairez, & Leslie, 2017, p. 1).

The recent increase in ethnic, cultural, racial, and religious diversity in Saskatchewan means that educators in this province must now engage with both the benefits and challenges of multiculturalism in a more robust way than was previously required. This situation requires the adoption of new pedagogical approaches and innovative curriculum appropriate to the new provincial reality while continuing to be responsive to the presence of a growing Indigenous population with distinct rights enshrined in treaties and aspects of the Canadian constitution. Saskatchewan population had diversified with new immigrants who come from various cultures, education and sets of professional skills. This introduces internationally trained teachers with cultural and professional diversity that could benefit the variety of students in Saskatchewan’s education system (Oloo, 2012).

Multicultural Citizenship

Global immigration and the increasing diversity in nation-states throughout the world challenge liberal assimilationist conceptions of citizenship. According to Banks (2008),

they raise complex and divisive questions about how nation-states can deal effectively with the problem of constructing civic communities that reflect and incorporate the diversity of citizens and yet have an overarching set of shared values, ideals, and goals to which all of the citizens of a nation-state are committed. (p. 132)

In the past, the liberal assimilationist ideology guided policy related to immigrants and diversity in most nation-states.

The Challenges of Global Citizenship

Cultural and group identities are important in multicultural democratic societies. However, they are not sufficient for citizenship participation because of worldwide migration and the effects of globalization on local, regional, and national communities (Banks, 2004). Students, however, need to develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that will enable them to function in a global society.

Globalization affects every aspect of communities, including beliefs, norms, values, and behaviours, as well as business and trade. Worldwide migration has increased diversity in most nation-states and is forcing nations to rethink citizenship and citizenship education. National boundaries are eroding because millions of people live in several nations and have multiple citizenships. Millions have citizenship in one nation and live in another. Others are stateless, including millions of refugees around the world. The number of individuals living outside their original homelands increased from approximately 33 million in 1910 to 175 million in 2000. (Banks, 2008, p. 132).

It is within this rapidly changing and shifting context that the phenomenon of Pakistani Muslim newcomer adjustment to schools in Saskatoon will be explored.

Diversity of Immigrants

The current growth of the Canadian immigrant population is culturally and linguistically diverse as it includes newcomers from many countries and regions of the world. This diversity brings opportunities and challenges to make the best use of diversified ideas, innovations and, at the same time, generate opportunities where immigrant children and families feel comfortable sharing in the economy and building the Canadian nation. However, diversity also brings challenges, especially when it is a new phenomenon, as Falihi and Cottrell (2015) noted.

Fear of diversity and difference as deficit

Over the years, research has repeatedly revealed that many teachers are not well prepared to work effectively with immigrant parents (Malatest & Associates, 2003; Turner, 2007). In their daily encounters with cultural diversity, many teachers still confront many challenges. One of the challenges is the fear of diversity (Palmer, 1998). Currently, the group most affected by a deficit view of diversity are Muslims, particularly after the September 11th event (McDonough & Hoodfar, 2005). This results partially from a lack of knowledge and readiness to approach cultural and religious diversity from an appreciative perspective. As Saskatchewan is seeing a new wave of immigrants who bring many cultures and religions, including Muslims, the province is on a learning curve to be more tolerant and welcoming to newcomers. The most common areas of cross-cultural meetings, sharing, learning and sometimes conflict are academic institutions, including schools.

Religious Diversity

Given that Statistics Canada predicts that the number of Canadians belonging to minority religious communities will grow to approximately 30% of the population by 2021, public schools that promote multiculturalism can no longer afford to ignore questions of religious pluralism and barriers to religious freedom (Seljak et al., 2008). Religious freedom is a fundamental right in Canada (Russo & Hee, 2008; Syed, 2008), protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) and the Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1988), both of which recognize that all individuals have the right to freedom of religion.

Misconceptions about the Muslim Headscarf

Research into the experience of Muslim immigrants in schools in other contexts revealed that one of the most common issues that Muslim immigrant parents face is the negotiation of the religious expressions of minority groups in schools (Ahmed, 2016; Guo, 2012, 2015). This

includes the practice of Muslim girls wearing a headscarf or hijab. The participants explained that Muslim girls and women wearing the headscarf were merely exercising their right to practice their religion. Still, this practice was not widely accepted by the wider Canadian society (Guo, 2012).

Socio-cultural perspectives of Newcomers from Home Countries

Migration research suggests that immigrant families and their children go through a complex process of settlement in a new country and that this experience has a direct impact on the learning and achievement of children (OECD, 2015). An individual feels more comfortable living in a society and embracing a culture where he or she spends most of their lifetime. Culture is a learned behaviour constructed from the environment in which an individual lives and practices. Culture shock begins when an individual is placed in a foreign society that functions on different socio-cultural parameters, which are sometimes seen as alien attributes to that specific individual and their cultural background.

Canadian Immigration Trends

Issues of multicultural education are a well-documented topic in the literature, as immigrant students frequently face challenges affecting their learning, often leading to poorer educational outcomes than mainstream students (Alsubaie, 2015). Immigrant students often feel like outsiders to the Canadian mainstream (Wilson, 1984), or they feel uncomfortable because of negative perceptions towards them (Hughes & Kallen, 1974). Some students tend to become invisible and avoid having their “learning problems” adequately diagnosed (Graham & Jenkins, 1992). Many immigrant students feel unwelcome, teased, unacknowledged, unmotivated, and afraid. Additionally, many of these children and youth are battling psychological issues from past and present traumas,

exacerbated exponentially by the classroom climate (Lee, 1997). Language difficulties are probably the most common challenges experienced by immigrant students, with a widespread perception that they do not receive appropriate and sufficient help to learn the new language quickly enough (Guo, 2012; McDonnell & Hill, 1993). Additional challenges relate to the inadequate capacity for the provision of instruction in EAL as well as school environments that do not meet the social and emotional needs of immigrant students (Kuperminc et al., 2001).

Adaptation to the New Country and Education Performance

Several investigations have shown that the adaptation experience of immigrant students can affect their educational performance (Baffoe, 2012; Bhagat & London, 1999). Researchers examined the issue of immigrants' adaptation experiences, especially how they experience psychological distress and uncertainties as they strive to adapt to the new environment. They found that when immigrants arrive in a new country, foreign to their upbringing, they frequently experience depression, anxiety, and acculturation stress (Ritsner & Ponizovsk, 2003), in their attempt to integrate into their new culture (Hovey & Magana, 2000). Stiffman and Davis (1990) define acculturation as "the acquisition of patterns of another's group" (p. 329). They list reasons for the acculturative stress which occur amongst many minority groups such as poverty, discrimination, unemployment, low socioeconomic status (Ogbuagu, 2012), and fewer educational opportunities, among other things.

While teachers face challenges in the classroom, school leaders play a critical role in developing a culture in the school which respects diversity (Dimmock & Walker 2005; Suarez-Orozco, 2003). Scholars and practitioners around the world recognize that school

leaders are essential in helping to raise student achievement and build successful schools in which all students thrive (Elmore 2004; Fullan, 2004; Steiner-Khamsi & Harris-Van Keuren, 2009). Yet few studies have examined the extent to which school leaders actively use the assets of immigrant students or adapt a school to its changing population (Santamaria et al., 2016). In a qualitative study of 14 school leaders (principals and assistant principals) in nine school districts in suburban Connecticut, it was found that, while many school leaders recognized the presence of immigrant students, most also favoured assimilation over the celebration of diversity (Schiff, 2008). The research revealed that one participant argued that immigrant students should be treated like the rest of the students and be absorbed in the general population. Only one school leader in the study saw the need for institutional adaptation in combination with student adaptation. This principal practiced ‘culturally responsive leadership’ by positively using diversity to improve school culture and the socio-educational experience of all students.

Gay (2002) defined culturally responsive educational approaches as using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively. Based on the assumption that when academic knowledge and skills are situated within the students’ lived experiences and frames of reference, they are more personally meaningful, have higher interest appeal, and are learned more easily and thoroughly (p. 106) by minority students.

This exemplary school leader encouraged and used the cultural diversity of immigrant students across two spheres of activity. These are (1) making institutional adjustments to welcome and support immigrant students in administrative procedures and school culture;

and (2) encouraging academic enhancement by assisting teachers in integrating immigrant experiences into their classes and lessons. The literature supports both spheres as helpful in mitigating the effects of cultural mismatch and immigrants' lack of cultural capital, privilege and power (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Paris & Alim, 2014; Siegrist, 2000) and in involving students in their learning for the benefit of all (McCarty & Lee, 2014; Nieto, 1999a, 1999b; Rong & Brown, 2002).

Engagement of Immigrants in Canadian School systems

Some immigrant parents come to Canada with pre-conceived ideas about education based on their earlier experiences. They do not engage with schools as they assume it is not their job to discuss their children's learning with teachers and school administrators. For example, in Pakistan, many parents consider it the responsibility of teachers and schools to provide education, and they assume a limited role in ensuring that their children attend school regularly. Public schools in Pakistan have a policy of Parent Teachers' Associations (PTAs), but most often, these PTAs are not functional or effective. The school administration and teachers in public sector education in Pakistan often find disengaged parents comfortable. Such parents do not engage with teachers or question school administration on the learning and development of their children. On the other hand, teachers and school administrators typically share the perspective that parents are not concerned about the schooling of their children. As a result, the quality of education is affected by not sharing responsibilities between parents and schoolteachers and administration around student outcomes.

Uncertain Future and Fear of New Immigrants in Canada

Immigrant, first-generation children often occupy two parallel cultures at the same time. Parents want to continue the culture, values, and language of the family's country of origin. Still,

engagement with Canadian society, especially through attendance at school, pulls immigrant students towards the new culture, values, and language of the host society. This often becomes a point of conflict between the new culture and the culture of origin, which has a direct impact on immigrant students' adaptation and learning within the new education system.

Second and Third Generation Children of Immigrants

This conflict frequently diminishes between the second and third generations of immigrants. The third generation of immigrants, in many cases, are more flexible towards the host or adapted culture but still maintains some founding principles from the culture of their grandparents' country of origin. Teachers often misjudge some behaviours of immigrant students in their first years in education in Canada. For example, some cultures do not encourage eye contact with a teacher of the opposite gender, but this might be considered inappropriate in the Canadian context. In Canadian classrooms, students are expected to look the teacher in the eye and to walk beside their teachers. But parents from countries like Korea and Pakistan would consider these behaviours as unacceptable acts of disrespect and insolence. Their children, however, often unaware of social interaction rules in the Canadian classroom, are framed by their original cultural references, that is, lowering their heads and walking behind teachers to show respect. Regretfully, without appropriate transcultural knowledge, teachers can misinterpret students' actions (Guo, 2012).

Children adapt and learn new languages faster than their parents. Yet, it is a struggle in the first few months to achieve the desired learning results in reading, literacy, and numeracy because of their limited competencies in the language of instruction and communication. While children generally learn the language of the school faster than parents, there is also a tendency to lose their first language. The decline in the use of the first language depends on what age a child

comes to Canada and how parents keep the balance in learning new languages while encouraging their children to retain their first language. A child with multi-lingual abilities has the potential to learn better in these environments. Beyond cultural knowledge, research participants emphasized the importance of the first language in their children's learning. However, most parents reported that schools often ignored their children's previous language knowledge. Many parents, thus, informally taught their first languages to their children at home (Guo, 2012).

Professional Development of Teachers and School Administrators

Saskatchewan is a province where multiple languages are spoken in the host, immigrant, and Aboriginal families. Hence, the professional development of teachers and school administrators is highly important to understand new students and to meet their needs in culturally appropriate ways. Education professionals who come from various cultural groups could serve as mentors for students, school teachers, administrators, and education policymakers. Strong coordination among school, home, and community are vital for understanding the issues and challenges and addressing them with collective approaches and solutions. Strong and adaptive educational leadership at the policy and implementation level will likely have a trickle-down impact on the school, home, and community; and requires strong political will with adequate resources (Okoko, 2019).

In Saskatchewan, most teachers are Caucasian, and until recently, Aboriginal students were considered the only significantly different group under the umbrella of diversity (Falihi, 2019; Falihi & Cottrell, 2015). This diversity expanded and transformed with newcomer children and their parents, who speak multiple languages and dialects, share various cultures, faith, beliefs and who bring specific values and principles from their regions. Based on the researcher's observations, cultural and linguistic diversity within the teaching profession and school

administration is not yet visible to match the diversity of the students in public schools. Major Canadian urban centres have a large population of immigrants, and these cities have implemented education strategies appropriate for their context. Saskatchewan could learn from evidence-based initiatives for instruction, learning and student achievement, which have been successful elsewhere. A recent study on school leadership in Saskatoon suggested that it is important for school leaders to have a cross-cultural and intercultural understanding and communication that make them competent to work with newcomer students from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Okoko, 2019).

Research indicates that it is vital to enhance teachers' and school administrators' cultural fluency with professional development opportunities to ones that respect diversity and appreciates cross-cultural competency (Darling-Hammond, 2017). These new competencies will help teachers to better understand the challenges faced by the newcomers and to equip them with the tools and resources to address those challenges. Teachers and school administrators with these dispositions are more likely to forge positive relations with newcomer students and their parents, thereby facilitating better connection and integration into the Canadian school system. Many teachers and administrators are not trained to relate to parents and promote parent involvement. Such training is essential because when educators treat parents as partners and put them at ease, parents often put aside their hesitations about getting involved (Learning First Alliance, 2001; Pushor, 2007).

Increased Demand for EAL among Newcomer Students in Saskatchewan

The demand for English as an additional language (EAL) has increased in Saskatchewan urban schools with the growing immigrant population since 2006. This increasing need requires other resources and professional development to provide opportunities for new language learning

to immigrant children through early intervention. Statistics Canada indicates that over 30 languages are spoken in Saskatchewan homes (Statistics Canada, 2012). In another research, Okoko (2019) opined that as the population of newcomer students increases in Saskatoon Public School division, the demand for English as an additional language (EAL) also climbs. This trend will continue as the demand grows with newcomer students attending EAL classes.

The 2011 National Household Survey shared a picture of the city as an increasingly popular destination for newcomers to Canada. Between 2006 and 2011, the number of Aboriginals inched up from 21,535 to 23,895. Over the same period, the immigrant population of the Saskatoon census metropolitan area, which includes communities around the city, increased by 11,470 to a total of 27,355 (Government of Canada, 2013).

Newcomer families and immigrants with education and experience find ways to seek economic opportunities. Some of them may not find opportunities equal to what they had in their home countries, and gradually with years of hard work, they become economically independent and contribute to communities. Some refugees may not have the same experiences, as the refugees leave their home country forcibly to live in a safe country like Canada. Some newcomers with low education, low English language skills and not enough work-related transferable skills and some mental and physical health needs take longer with the process of resettlement, integration, and economic independence.

Existing evidence suggests that entering the labour market is a difficult task for most refugees. Immigrants face more challenges to find employment as compare to Canadian born, and it creates an economic gap. Some of the reasons may be the required set of skills, required training and education and systemic barriers to address for better employability outcomes for newcomers (Desjardins & Cornelson, 2015). Overall, their unemployment rate remains higher

than that of other immigrant groups in Canada even five years after arrival. While refugees do experience eventually, on average, employment rates and incomes that are equivalent to the Canadian average (both for other newcomers and for persons born in Canada), it can take years or even decades to reach this point. On average, it takes between 12 and 15 years for refugees to integrate into the Canadian labour market fully (Government of Canada, 2017).

Practical Implications of Education for Immigrant Students

Guo (2015) suggested that educators and administrators need to “recognize that educational tasks may be given culturally divergent interpretations; that is, teachers and parents may have culturally divergent views of the educational agenda, such as homework” (p. 31). Schools need to learn the views of immigrant parents on education and cultural differences in home-school communication (Dyson, 2001; Guo, 2007; Li, 2006; Ran, 2001). Schools need to understand that cultural differences in conceptions regarding schools, teachers, and education underlie often conflicting views of parental involvement between immigrant parents and North American educators (Guo, 2007, 2012). Schools, therefore, should become learning organizations “where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire; where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured; where collective aspiration is set free; and where people are continually learning how to learn together” (Senge, 1990, p. 3).

Religious intolerance and illiteracy can be addressed with mandatory education on world religions as subjects for respectful study by elementary and secondary students as religion is an important part of a well-rounded academic program (Guo, 2012). Learning about other religious beliefs could help teachers and students overcome their fear and support social interaction between immigrant and non-immigrant students (Guo, 2012). Educators often assume from different ethnicities are uninterested or uninvolved in their children's academics. This perception

many times come from their stereotypical views and attitudes toward outsiders (Lopez et al., 2001).

Occasionally, parents from minority or ethnic backgrounds do not participate in their children's school activities because they are not sure if their input will be welcomed by the classroom teacher or because they are unsure if their language skills or cultural preferences will be appreciated or even understood (Palermo, 2009; Trumbull et al., 2001). According to Hasan and Periyakoil (2010), Pakistani Americans are the eighth largest group of Asian Americans in the United States. Oda (2009) indicated that approximately 600,000 Pakistanis are living in the United States. Pakistani Americans are well educated, and according to Hasan and Periyakoil (2010), about 60% hold a bachelor's or other professional degrees. While most Pakistani Americans belong to middle- upper-class families, some have a lower socioeconomic status. These (Pakistani immigrants) typically prefer to live in larger cities like New York, where there are more opportunities to find blue-collar jobs (MacFarquhar, 2006).

Cho and Haslam (2010) noted that “school adjustment poses significant challenges to immigrant students, who often feel internal and external demands to excel academically (Ogbu, 1987), and these demands may be especially strong among Asian parents (Sandefur, 1998). Academic pressures are especially difficult to manage given students’ frequent difficulties with English (Constantinides, 1992) and with the cultural differences in educational practices, such as the more individualistic and discussion-oriented approach adopted in American schools (Parr et al., 1992). More general acculturative stresses may be just as challenging as academic stresses” (p. 372).

Effective Teacher Professional Development

Cho and Haslam (2010) noted that

acculturating Korean adolescents, for example, must unlearn tendencies to be unassertive and to act deferentially to teachers, both of which are linked to cherished social values and virtues in their home culture. Research indicates that unfamiliar customs and values are among the primary difficulties experienced by Korean immigrant students, along with communication problems. (p. 375)

Although some American research has shown lower rates of suicide among foreign-born adolescents and young adults than their native-born peers (Shen & Sorenson 1998), other work suggests that immigration-related experiences may increase the risk. Roberts et al. (1997) found that Mexican-, Pakistani-, and Vietnamese American middle-school students showed elevated levels of suicidal ideation. Additionally, immigrant post-secondary students face distinctive familial expectations and pressures (Li, 2001; Pong et al., 2005). Even more, these students may feel a duty to succeed academically to show gratitude to their parents for the sacrifices they made in immigrating (Cho & Haslam, 2010; Maramba, 2008; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2009).

The subject of women's educational experiences attracted attention in the 1980s when research on Pakistani and Bangladeshi women found the strong influence of parents in the education of their daughters (Ijaz and Abbas, 2010). While all parents valued education and success for their daughters, they were also concerned about the effect of 'Westernisation.' They wanted their daughters to have the best of both worlds: to receive Western education and yet maintain their ancestral religious-cultural values (Ahmed, 2001; Basit, 1997a, 1997b; Bhopal, 1998; Haw, 1998; Dale et al. 2002).

South Asian parents value education for their Muslim daughters for several reasons. Shaikh and Kelly's (1989) researched with South Asian Muslim parents living in Manchester, to learn about their attitudes towards single-sex education, included questions about the reasons for young women receiving education. They concluded that the overall response was positive, as 38% of the fathers and 71% of the mothers deemed education vital because it "helps in getting a job" (p. 23). More recent research by Ahmed (2001), based on South Asian undergraduate students from working-class backgrounds, showed that despite their low levels of education, parents strongly valued education for their daughters, but feared Western norms. Parents considered freedom and independence that may make them more independent with western values and may become clash with Muslim values and cross the boundaries of freedom, such as sex before marriage.

The issue of wearing Western clothes was raised by some parents as well. Anwar (1994) provided evidence that 60% of British Muslims in his sample population were opposed to the idea of Muslim women wearing Western dress. Basit (1997) argued that British South Asian Muslim families attach a great deal of importance to education, but many parents, however, while encouraging their daughters to receive a full education, remained concerned about the 'perceived corruptive influence of a largely secular society' (p. 426). These findings suggest that while, on the one hand, schools are instrumental in determining social mobility upward, on the other, they pose a possible risk to youthful daughters (Afshar, 1989).

Okoko's (2019) research article on school leadership and EAL newcomers in Saskatoon affirmed the need for school leaders to be comfortable with cross-cultural and intercultural communication. It also provides an understanding of the personal, cultural,

and systemic phenomena that are pertinent to the preparation of school leadership for work with EAL newcomers. (p. 223).

The Complicated Characteristics of Student Identifications

Historically, Western schools in countries like the United States, Canada, and Australia, focused on helping students develop commitments and allegiance to the nation-state. Little attention was given to their need to maintain commitments to their local communities and cultures or their original homelands (Banks, 2008). Schools assumed that assimilation into the mainstream culture was required for citizenship and national belonging and that students could and should surrender commitments to other communities, cultures, and nations. Greenbaum (1974) stated that U.S. schools taught immigrant students *hope* and *shame*. These students were made to feel ashamed of their home and community cultures but had hope that once they culturally assimilated, they could join the U.S. mainstream culture. Cultural assimilation worked well for most White ethnic groups (Alba & Nee, 2003) but not for people of colour, which frequently continue to experience structural exclusion after they become culturally assimilated.

El-Haj (2007), Nguyen (2008), and Maira (2004) found that immigrant youths in their studies did not define their national identities in terms of their places of residence but felt that they belonged to national communities that transcended the boundaries of the United States. They identified themselves as Palestinian, Vietnamese, Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi. They believed that an individual could be Palestinian or Vietnamese and live in many different nation-states. The youth in these studies made an interesting distinction between *national identity* and *citizenship*. They viewed themselves as Palestinian, Vietnamese, or Pakistani but also recognized and acknowledged their U.S. citizenship, which they valued for the privileged legal status and other opportunities it gave them (p.37).

In my experience, immigrant parents bring their values, language, culture, religion, and educational backgrounds to schools, thereby enriching the educational environments they enter. The literature on immigrant parents, however, frequently uses a deficit model. According to the 2006 Census of Canada, almost 6,293,000 people, about one out of every five people in Canada, speak languages other than English or French as their mother tongue (Statistics Canada, 2008).

Refugee Children and Interrupted Education

Some immigrant students, especially those who come as refugees, have experienced interrupted education opportunities in their countries of origin or in other countries where they had refugee status. These children living in refugee camps have often experienced and witnessed physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. They often need counselling and mental health support to deal with post-trauma conditions. Unless supported with appropriate remedial education, such children often drop out before finishing school and have a strong tendency to become involved in anti-social activities (Anisef & Walters, 2008).

Immigrants and refugees often differ in their pre-migration, migration, and post-migration experiences. For refugee families, the resettlement process may follow traumatic circumstances related to persecution or life-threatening events. Such multiple sources of stress can result in cumulative effects and lead to feelings of instability, physical problems, as well as difficulties in psychosocial adjustment. Refugee children's developmental histories often include information about disrupted lives, malnutrition, deprivation, significant losses, and gaps in education (Ajdukovic & Ajdukovic, 1993; Williams & Berry, 1991).

Safe School Environment for all Students

Student learning and achievement require a school that is safe and supportive for all. Immigrant children become an easy target of bullying for many reasons, such as the colour of

their skin, the way they dress, their physical appearance, their English communication skills, their accent, and a general clash of cultures between the Canadian and their native culture. Bullying is a form of aggression in which one or more children intend to harm or disturb another child perceived as being unable to defend himself or herself (Glew et al., 2000). Some reasons children become victims of bullying include attending irregular education overseas, domestic violence and family break up, mental and emotional issues resulting from physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. These lacks result in failing grades, missing classes, social isolation, putting personal and others' lives in danger, suicidal ideation and committing suicide. Educators need to be aware that immigrant and refugee students are at a high risk of experiencing bullying.

Integration of Newcomer Immigrant Students

The integration of Newcomer students has now become more crucial in the Saskatchewan context since most immigrants prefer to have their children complete their secondary and post-secondary education here. Immigrants typically give higher value to education for their children, and many immigrants see this goal as the sole purpose of moving to Canada. Immigrants to Canada usually value higher education, and most assume their children will attend a college or university (Krahn & Taylor, 2005). For many, however, the goal of post-secondary education (PSE) may not be achievable. The precipitous decline in immigrant earnings over the last two decades suggests significant modifications to family spending priorities and constraints on their capacity to save for their children's future education (Anisef & Phythian, 2005; Fleury, 2007; Li, 2003; Picot et al., 2007). When capable immigrant children cannot access the post-secondary system, both the individual and society suffer a form of "talent loss" (Plank & Jordan, 2001). Perhaps more importantly, failure to realize PSE aspirations can lead to frustration with the

educational system and its promise of social and economic mobility, with a consequent impact on social cohesion (Bonikowska, 2007; Boyd & Kaida, 2006; Sweet et al., 2008).

The large number of new immigrants arriving in Canada each year is rapidly changing the social and cultural composition of the country. Evidence suggests that a significant portion of immigrants seek post-secondary education, which has been identified as a practical path to improving their post-immigration occupational outcomes (Adamuti-Trache et al., 2011). Factors affecting the educational achievement of immigrant students include socioeconomic status (SES), language proficiency, social support, parental expectations, and self-efficacy. In addition, parental education helps to mediate educational attainment, wherein immigrant children with university-educated parents are more likely to obtain university degrees themselves (Abada & Tenkorang, 2009).

Increased Number of Immigrants in Canada

In 2001, there were about 310,000 immigrant school children between the ages of 5 and 16 (Statistics Canada, 2001). Immigrant children are the fastest-growing sector in the Canadian child population. Children of immigrants account for nearly one in five of all Canadian school children, and by 2021 one in three children will fit this description (Badets, 2003). Given that Statistics Canada predicts that the number of Canadians belonging to minority religious communities will grow to approximately 10% of the population by 2017, public schools that promote multiculturalism can no longer afford to ignore questions of religious pluralism and barriers to religious freedom (Seljak et al., 2008). Immigrants and children of immigrants make up a growing minority of students in schools in Europe, North America, Australia, and New Zealand. The successful integration of these young people is a policy and practical challenge facing these countries. School plays a central role in supporting integration by providing opportunities to

learn academic skills, as well as a better understanding of the language and culture of the receiving country (Christensen et al., 2011). Schools must be inviting for all, but especially Muslim youth, given fears about radicalization if alienated from mainstream culture. The isolation of Muslim youth is an opportunity for some to exploit their situation and, through brainwashing, steer them in a very different direction. The isolated Muslim youth finds comfort when someone reaches to them to reduce their isolation. Both the parents and schools have important and equal roles to play to provide opportunities for social integration in schools and breaking the barriers of isolation at home.

Teacher-Parent Relationships

Schools should also encourage parents to visit the school frequently, participate in school activities, school planning, and school events, make presentations to the students and faculty, and develop mutually supportive relationships with school staff and administrators (Learning First Alliance, 2001; Pushor, 2007). Research supports this argument, as parents need, and want, to be partners, not just customers, in their children's education (Noonan & Reihan, 2005). The Learning First Alliance (2001) noted that "supportive relationships help parents, especially those who otherwise would feel vulnerable or ill at ease, to take active roles in the school and the children's education. Parents should feel valued and welcome in the school as their participation helps create and maintain a sense of community in the school. Students are more committed to the school's goals when they see close collaboration between their parents and the school (Learning First Alliance, 2001).

Okoko (2019) explained that the parent-teacher relationship is more important when parents bring knowledge and the background of newcomer students' cultures, past experiences, and values. She shared that it is critical to have the active engagement of newcomer parents to be

able to be part of the decision process and make informed decisions that benefit students and schools for better learning outcomes and school social experience.

Education priority of Immigrant Parents for Their Children

New immigrant parents are typically not proactively engaged in the education and achievement of their children. Lack of connection between schools and immigrant parents creates a gap that prevents the school from learning from the parents, so their perspectives on education are not fully recognized. In addition to the academic and cultural knowledge, the knowledge that immigrant parents possess about their children is unrecognized by teachers and school administrators (Guo, 2012; Jones, 2003). This non-recognition of immigrant parents may be based on misconceptions and lack of knowledge about cultural differences.

According to Guo (2011),

parent knowledge may be seen as transcultural knowledge construction, achieved as new arrivals change themselves by integrating diverse cultural life-ways into dynamic new ones. The resulting blended forms lead either to opposition and discrimination or to cultural creativity and the integration of new knowledge within academic and societal positioning. (p. 44)

For example, in her study of Chinese immigrants in Toronto, Liu (2007) reported Chinese parents adapted to the Canadian way of educating children by integrating new knowledge gained from interactions with Canadian schools with the experience they had brought from their home.

“Knowledge is power; knowledge is socially constructed, culturally mediated, and historically situated” (McLaren, 2003, as cited in Guo, 2012). “In addition to socially mediated forms of knowledge, immigrant parents’ knowledge can play an important role in school relations. Personal knowledge refers to wisdom that comes with embodied meaning” (Polanyi,

1958 as cited in Guo, 2012, p.123). “Parents gain knowledge from their lived experiences. It has temporal dimensions in that it resides in “the person’s experience, in the person’s present mind and body, and in the person’s plans and actions” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, as cited in Guo, 2012, p. 124). “Parent knowledge

includes that drawn from their own educational backgrounds, their professional and personal experiences of interacting with schools in their countries of origin as well as their current understanding of the host country’s education system, their struggles as immigrant parents, and their future aspirations for their children.” (Guo, 2012, p. 130).

Okoko’s (2019) study on school leadership about EAL newcomers in Saskatoon identifies, in figure 1, themes of “difference and the associated stereotypes, cultural diversity and variations, dominance minority dynamic, (iv) dissonance as a learning opportunity, (v) self-knowledge and reflection, (vi) parental and community involvement, and (vii) collaboration and partnerships” (Okoko, 2019, p. 214). This empirical resource helps further fuel this research.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented a literature review to explain the context of this research on newcomer Pakistani Muslim students in the Saskatoon public school system, in particular, to understand recent immigration and migration dynamics and to appreciate how these impact schools. The review highlighted a growing cultural and ethnic diversity among school-age populations in Canada and Saskatoon, owing to increasing global mobility. It also frames schools as meeting places between immigrants and the host society, with critical implications for the long-term adjustment experience of individuals and groups of newcomers.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

This inquiry sought to understand the lived experiences of Pakistan Muslim newcomer students who attended public schools in Saskatoon, Canada. In this chapter, I present an overview of the research methodology, the constructivist paradigm, qualitative methods, and semi-structured interviews. This chapter also explains the selection of participants, the data analysis procedures, and the development of findings from the research.

Brief Restatement of Problem

In addition to the many benefits, the sudden increase in immigration to Saskatchewan has caused challenges related to diversity. These challenges are especially evident in the human services and educational sectors, requiring increased cross-cultural competency and cultural responsiveness among educators, school leaders and service providers. This research sought to document the problems, challenges and opportunities encountered by Pakistani students and families as they try to integrate into the Canadian education system. It is believed that insights into their socially constructed realities can inform policy and practice in the Saskatoon context, including the professional development of teachers and administrators. This research was premised on the assumption that greater cross-cultural understanding and competence within the education sector could improve the current situation in Saskatoon. Multicultural societies face the problem of constructing nation-states that reflect and incorporate the diversity of their citizens and yet have an overarching set of shared values, ideals, and goals to which all citizens are committed. In a democratic society, civic equality and recognition are important values (Gutmann, 2004).

At the time of the study, I noted that challenges associated with the settlement of newcomers and issues related to the sudden experience of multicultural diversity within

classrooms remained contentious. This investigation tried to uncover the various factors influencing the construction of immigrants' realities in Saskatoon, which impacts immigrant students' learning. It sought to understand Pakistani students and their parents as they transition from pre-arrival to post-arrival and further into settlement and integration over a five to seven-year period. This study focused on students who already graduated from the Saskatoon public school system.

Constructivist Theoretical Framework

Chinn and Kramer (1999, p.258) explained that a “theory is an expression of knowledge, a creative and rigorous structuring of ideas that helps provide tentative, purposeful, and systematic views of phenomena”. They further suggested that a “theory is a systematic abstraction of reality that serves some purpose”. I used the constructivist theoretical framework to guide and inform my research. Constructivism posits that social reality is constructed by individuals who participate in it. Thus, a constructivist research design “focuses on the perspectives, feelings, and beliefs of the participants” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 237) in an “attempt to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 3). Underlying assumptions informing the constructivist paradigm are that “knowledge is socially constructed by people active in the research process and that researchers should attempt to understand the complex world of lived experience as much as possible from the point of view of those who live it” (Schwandt, 1998, p. 221). My goal in this research was to understand the experiences of Pakistani Muslim students in Saskatoon school by exploring their feelings and perspectives to interpret the meanings participants ascribed to them. These interpretations are based on the ascription of meanings to the social environment by participants (Gall et al., 1963). The participants of this research are part of the

social construct with a focus on newcomer Muslim students to understand their lived experiences.

In using the constructivist paradigm, the qualitative researcher must be aware that various interpretations could be gleaned from the same phenomenon. Therefore, the constructivist framework aims to derive meaning and understanding rather than objectivity and explanation (Swinton & Mowat, 2006). In using the constructivist paradigm, the researcher must strive to understand how the data reveals participants' constructed reality while they adjust to a new environment.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a critical part of any research as it represents an integrated way of looking at the problem (Liehr & Smith, 1999). Developing a conceptual framework is “akin to an inductive process whereby small individual pieces (in this case, concepts) are joined together to tell a bigger story of possible relationships” (Imenda, 2014, p. 189). Following constructivist insights, Figure 3.1 below delineates the various influences on the experiences of Pakistani Muslim students in public schools in Saskatoon. These include parental influence on students and engagement with school, students bridging between Pakistani home cultures and Canadian school culture, students' experiences of bullying with Islamophobia in schools, gendered influences on Muslim students' identities, and SSWIS workers contributions to students' school adjustments.

Figure 3.1 Conceptual Framework - Experiences of Pakistan Muslim Students



Trustworthiness

To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, I used member checking. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), member checks are “the most crucial technique for establishing credibility” (p. 314) in a study, whereby the participants themselves confirm the accuracy of the transcripts. After transcribing the data, transcripts were forwarded to participants to confirm that the data they provided was accurately represented.

Triangulation

Triangulation was employed in the data analysis process to ensure validity. As stated by Guion et al. (2013), “the data triangulation process involves using different sources of information to increase the validity of a study” (p. 25). According to Janesick (1998), (as cited by McMillan and Schumacher, 2010), “triangulation is the use of multiple researchers, multiple theories, or perspectives to interpret the data; multiple data sources to corroborate data and multiple disciplines to broaden one’s understanding of the method and the phenomenon of interest” (p. 110). To achieve triangulation, I combined participants’ interview data with my researcher’s memos and field notes compiled during the data-collection process and insights from the literature review. Triangulation of methods ensures the “consistency of findings generated by different data collection methods” (Patton, 2002, p. 556).

Research Location

Since the purpose of the study was to explore the lived experiences of Pakistani students as they integrate into Saskatoon schools, it made sense to choose a high school as the research site. However, the school was not directly involved in the research, and the participating students were graduates from the school. Pakistani newcomer, high school students, were most likely to be to provide data, which led to thick descriptions that would inform a sophisticated analysis of

this complex process. The main criterion for selecting this site was that the high school must have experienced a significant increase in the number of newcomer students enrolled over the last five to seven years.

Selection of Participants

I used purposeful and convenient techniques to select the six research participants. These included one male and one female Pakistani Muslim student, one Muslim male and one female Muslim parent of Pakistani origin, and two SWISS workers from the Saskatoon Open Door Society. The Muslim students all identified themselves as moderately liberal in following the basic principles of Islam, including praying five times a day, observing 30 days of fasting in the month of Ramadan in the Muslim Calendar, maintaining facial hairs, eating only halal food and not consuming any alcohol, and equally having school friends from all cultures and religions. The female Muslim student, in addition to the above, did not practice wearing hijab and was socially very active in school in academic and extra-curricular activities.

The Muslim mother described herself as moderately Muslim with the above Muslim practices regarding prayers, observations, and dietary restrictions. She is professionally employed and does not wear the hijab, is fluent in English, has postgraduate level education, wears both Western and Pakistani traditional dress and actively engages professionally with members of other cultural and religious groups. The Muslim father shares the same moderately Muslim values and liberal perspective of society to value and respect all religions and cultures. Both SSWIS workers are from Muslim families and are moderately Muslim. They observe the basic principles of the Muslim faith, including regular prayers, fasting, consuming halal food and work professionally with individuals from all cultures and religions. The female SSWIS worker practices Hijab as part of her dress code and wears Western clothes such as pants and shirts.

I selected these participants because of the valuable insights they could provide into the integration processes of Pakistani students to understand the experiences of those students better. In subsequent paragraphs, I will elaborate on the contribution of each participant to the study.

One Newcomer Pakistani Muslim Male Student

Interviewing a male student allowed me to capture the male youth perspective on the research issue. Because Pakistani society favours males in terms of social status and family inheritance, I expected that there would be little difficulty in recruiting a male participant. I also perceived that their lived experiences integrating into a Canadian high school were both similar to and different from female students.

One Newcomer Pakistani Muslim Female Student

The female student perspective is critical, especially concerning issues around clothing such as niqab (veil) and religious sensibilities, and parental influences on young girls. However, I anticipated some difficulty recruiting such a participant because Pakistani parents are often reluctant to allow female children to participate in interviews. Many of the female Muslim Pakistani students remain in their cultural, social groups. The isolation within one group is often considered a pressure from the parents to socialize with Pakistani Muslim females; many of them practice Hijab. Wearing a hijab makes young women more comfortable to socialize with those who look the same under the Islamic dress codes. Fortunately, it did not become a challenge to recruit a female participant, and the parents allowed this and gave social consent.

One Muslim Male Parent of a Newcomer Student

Pakistan is a patriarchal society, and the husband is the head of the family; he makes important decisions. In many cases among Pakistani families living in Canada, both husband and wife

work, but the decisions of the family remain solely with the male head of the family. It is often the husband who influences the environment of the house in terms of being conservative or more liberal. Male parents often have limited interaction in the school affairs of their children. As the head of the household, they focus more on earning a livelihood and give limited time to children, so the mother fills that role. Nevertheless, male parents play a critical role in forming family culture; hence, he needs to be represented as a participant in the research.

One Muslim Female Parent of a Newcomer Student

Most newcomers come together in nuclear families, including husband, wife, and children. The wife is dependent on the decisions of her husband from moving to Canada to any other decisions in life. The mother is considered the custodian of the children's development and growth under the family traditions, Pakistani cultural values, and Islamic religious practices. She is the one who consistently reminds children how their values differ from Canadian culture and how they should dress and behave in school and public places. A Pakistani father often uses the mother to communicate his decisions to the children. Mothers often play the connecting role between school and home, so it was important to include their perspective in the research.

Selection of Newcomer Pakistan Muslim Parents and Students

I enlisted the Pakistan Canada Cultural Association to assist with the recruitment of Pakistani parents and graduates from the Saskatoon Public School Division for this study. After securing approval from the president of the society, I approached several individuals who met the desired criteria. Fortunately, the first four people I approached agreed immediately to participate in the research.

Two Settlement Support Workers in Schools (SSWIS)

The SSWIS program of Saskatoon Open Door Society, in partnership with Saskatoon Public School Division, has been providing settlement and integration support to newcomer students in Saskatoon for almost a decade. This program extensively works with school administration, class teachers, EAL teachers, newcomer students, and their parents. The SSWIS program provides resources and various services which help smooth settlement and integration, which is equally vital for schools, newcomer students and their parents. The program also works closely with the Student Newcomer Centre of the Saskatoon Public School Division. This centre provides student assessment for English language abilities and skills for math. The centre connects students with services and resources where they can improve their English language and math skills and knowledge. The centre also works with parents to determine where the newcomer family lives, and which elementary and secondary school best serves the needs of the parents for their children's education. Having SSWIS workers participate in the research produces significant insight based on the program's in-depth engagement with newcomer students in the city of Saskatoon and area.

Research Tools and Techniques

For the constructivist researcher, qualitative data best explains the lived experiences of humans. I intended to understand the lived experiences of Pakistani Muslim students as they settle and integrate into the Canadian public high school system in Saskatoon. Thus, the constructivist approach was appropriate for this study. Semi-structured interviews are a standard method for collecting qualitative data. Gall et al. (2007) articulated that a semi-structured interview "involves asking a series of structured questions and then probing more deeply with open-form questions to obtain additional information" (p. 246). In this study, I constructed

questions to understand participants' insights on Pakistani students' experiences. I also used additional informal questions to probe more deeply.

Timeline

Once participants agreed to participate, I shared the various ethics documents that outlined their rights as participants with them. I also informed participants that they could withdraw from the research at any point until the thesis was presented for defence. I collected data between February 5, 2019, and May 2019. I then analyzed the data. I presented the thesis to my committee for defence in April 2020.

Recording Interview Data

Interviews were audio-recorded. I also took notes to understand participants' visual and emotional responses and link those with the audio-recorded transcriptions. I used these notes to support the analysis of the qualitative responses of the participants. I saved the compiled data in a secure computer folder. I transcribed each interview carefully, verbatim. The transcription process took significant time as each interview recording required listening multiple times to capture the accurate data and make it ready for description and analysis. I stored the recordings in a locked safe in the College of Education-Department of Educational Administration. I also kept a copy in a secure place at home. Once I defend my thesis, I will delete all recorded material.

Researcher Positionality

Sharing a similar cultural and religious background as most of the participants made me an emic researcher. I speak and understand Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, and Sindhi languages of that region, which helped me to connect with my respondents. My image as a postgraduate researcher brought some authenticity and respect for the research. It contributed to the collection of honest

and insightful data from participants. I have been working with newcomers in Saskatoon for the last 12 years. Currently, I am working as Program Director Settlement and Family Services for immigrants and refugees in Saskatoon through the Saskatoon Open Door Society. This professional role helped build trust and rapport with my participants as an emic researcher and provide insights into the various challenges experienced by newcomers in adjusting to Saskatoon, including children's adjustment to schools. These attributes qualify me to work as an emic researcher in this study, especially when working with Pakistani participants who are culturally and linguistically diverse.

Ethical Considerations

Participants in this research were in three groups, including Muslim students, Muslim parents and SSWIS workers of Saskatoon Open Door Society. I used deontological ethics by looking at the morality of their decisions. Research done through a deontological approach is seen through the morality of the decisions and actions of the researcher, so it does not harm the participants physically or in any other form. For this research, I considered relational ethics with a caring attitude towards others by showing sensitivity to the participants' community. I am a researcher from a Pakistani Muslim community, and I professionally working with immigrant communities in Saskatoon. Thus, I understood the ecological ethics for this research by looking at participants' cultures as part of social systems when approached participants for the study and asked to participate by considering sensitivities with cultural, religious, sex and gender interpretation to maintain the neutrality of the study (Gall et al., 1963)

I ensured to avoid plagiarism, fabrication and falsification in research literature and findings by using the best possible sources such as the University of Saskatchewan database for data search. I followed all the guidelines required for human research, including securing

participants' informed consent and maintained their privacy and confidentiality throughout the research process. Through the research process, I respected participants' identities of race, age, gender, cultures, religions, or disability. I ascertained that the respondents in this research did not become vulnerable and would not experience any negative impact on their personal, academic, and professional lives because of their participation.

This research does not serve a personal agenda or benefit one group of people only. Instead, the value of this research would be understood at the provincial level to be useful for policymakers and policy implementers based on new initiatives. The research findings will be widely available as a reference document for future research work in Canada and many other countries working with immigrants in schools.

Confidentiality and Privacy of the Respondents

It is paramount to ensure that the information and identity of the respondents are kept confidential. The real identities of the participants were not disclosed. The informed consent of the participants was sought by clearly identifying that the respondents' identity and information would not be compromised. The identity of participants was kept confidential throughout the research process to ensure that this research does not have negative consequences for the participants at the personal, academic and professional levels. Participants' names and identities will not be disclosed, and generic terms were used to identify participants in this research.

Data Collection and Analysis

I used semi-structured open-ended interviews to collect data from the participants. This method of data collection allowed participants to respond with flexibility while maintaining their sense of comfort and safety. This method also allowed me to pose follow up questions to seek

more information or to clarify some of their responses. I also took notes during the interviews, to record participants' non-verbal cues and to record my initial reactions to their answers.

The participants and I met in a safe place of their choice, where we conducted the interviews, which ranged from one hour to two hours in length. This process generated data equal to eleven hours. All interviews were conducted in English and transcribed manually by listening to the audiotapes carefully multiple times. I recorded the interviews to ensure the accuracy of the participants' responses. I transcribed each recording verbatim. The recordings and transcripts are now available in a safe and secure place. Transcripts were then sent to participants to ensure the accuracy of their responses.

Once I transcribed the data, the process of data analysis began by coding. Saldaña (2013) defined a code as “a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (p. 3). In other words, codes are labels that assign symbolic meaning to the descriptive or inferential information gathered during a study (Miles et al., 2014, pp. 71-72). Coding is the process of marking segments of data with descriptive words or category names. Initially, I segmented the recorded data into meaningful analytic units pertinent to the study; then, I coded them. “A segment can be a word, a single sentence, several sentences, or any other type of text the researcher deems meaningful to the study” (Johnson & Christensen, 2014, p. 592).

Saldaña (2013) divided coding into two major stages: first cycle and second cycle. First cycle coding is a way to initially summarizing the data (Miles et al., 2014, p. 86). Second cycle coding is a way to group summaries into a smaller number of themes and constructs (Miles et al., 2014, p. 86). Saldaña (2013) outlined many different approaches to the first cycle and second cycle coding, each one with a particular function, depending on the purpose of the study (pp.

261-268). An initial review of these coding methods and approaches suggested descriptive coding for first cycle coding and pattern coding for second cycle coding. For this study, I used both coding cycles to uncover constructs, themes, and patterns from the data to understand the phenomenon.

“Descriptive coding assigns a word or short phrase to summarize the essential topic of a passage of qualitative data” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 74; Saldaña, 2013, p. 88). “Descriptive coding focuses on the topic rather than the content” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 88). Descriptive coding was appropriate for first cycle coding in this study because I used data from interview transcripts and researcher field notes. I then categorized the descriptive codes into topics. Descriptive coding laid the groundwork for second cycle coding. Categories, which may be regarded as “themes or patterns, were constructed by analyzing the coded data” (Merriam, 2009, p. 178). Collections of codes of similar content were grouped into categories. The goal was to construct a set of categories that “adequately encompasses and summarizes the data” (Gall et al., 2007, p. 467).

“Pattern codes are explanatory or inferential codes, ones that identify emergent themes and explanations, pulling together a lot of data into a more meaningful unit of analysis” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 86; Saldaña, 2013, p. 210). “Pattern coding is a way of grouping summaries into a smaller number of themes or constructs”(Saldaña, 2013, p. 210). As pertinent to this study, pattern coding was appropriate for developing the major themes from the data and for seeking explanations in the data (Saldaña, 2013).

Summary

The highlighted issues are currently causing tension in Saskatoon because of the sudden increase in diversity resulting from an influx of immigrants. These challenges are especially evident in the human services and education sectors, requiring increased cross-cultural and interpersonal

competencies among educators and service providers. This research sought to document the problems, challenges and opportunities experienced by Pakistani Muslim students and families as they sought to become integrated into the Canadian education system, to derive insights that will inform policy and practice in the Saskatoon context, including professional development of teachers and administrators.

The research is underpinned by the constructivist theory with an appropriate conceptual framework and employs qualitative data collection techniques through semi-structured interviews with six purposefully chosen participants. Data were analysed using a two-cycle coding process: descriptive coding for first cycle coding and pattern coding for second cycle coding. These allowed me, the researcher, to uncover constructs, themes and patterns which contributed to understanding the integration experiences of Pakistani students in the Saskatoon school context.

CHAPTER FOUR

Presentation of Data

In this chapter, I summarize the data collection and transcription methods, explain how data was analyzed, present the data with quotes from participants, and identify the main themes emerging from the data analysis. I will revisit those themes in Chapter Five.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six purposefully selected participants to create data to address the research questions. The research participants included two Pakistani Muslim students, two Pakistani Muslim parents and two SSWIS workers from the Saskatoon Open Door Society. Participant interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. Once the data were transcribed, the responses were read and reread multiple times to facilitate the analysis of the data. Data analysis began with a coding process to capture the key themes related to parents, students and SSWIS workers. The major themes identified by coding the data across the three sets of participants are explored below.

Table 4.1 List of Major Themes Identified by Student Participants

Muslim Student Participants' Themes
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. High School Experience of Muslim Students2. English language and Integration3. Faith Practice and School Space4. Islamophobia and Muslim Student Identity5. Bullying and the Muslim Faith6. Students' Educational Transition

High School Experiences of Muslim Students

Both students appreciated the opportunity to attend public schools in Saskatoon to attain their high school education and concluded that, in general, the quality of the education they received was high. Both student participants, however, noted that they experienced various forms of isolation while attending school, especially in the non-academic realm. Participants supported the argument that integration is enhanced if Muslim students are engaged in schools in various social, sports and extra-curricular activities. They also noted that the process of integration for minority culture students improves when mainstream students and teachers are knowledgeable of the values and principles around the faith of Muslim students. Participants also shared the pressure they faced from their parents to behave in the community and the school in a manner consistent with their traditional religious and cultural practices. In this regard, students found schools were not fully accommodating of their needs as expected by parents. For example, they highlighted a lack in the provision of halal food in the school cafeteria or the allowance of prayer time and space in the school.

English Language and Integration

Student participants considered learning the English language an essential part of their integration. They suggested that newcomer students should have as many resources as possible to support their language learning. The male student explained, “as an example, some newcomer students struggle with science subjects because they don’t understand the concept of the words because half of the time, they don’t understand what is going on.” This lack of knowledge makes the student learning and integration process challenging and may lead to additional barriers.

These participants shared that students who come as refugees to Canada often struggle more as they did not have enough opportunities to learn English in their countries of origin and the countries where they lived as refugees before coming to Canada. Students appreciated English as an additional language (EAL) classes for the newcomer students who have recently arrived in Canada, but also suggested that more targeted supports would be beneficial.

Faith Practice and School Space

Participants shared that the school system should be faith-inclusive for all students. They noted that many Muslim students prefer to do Friday noon prayer as a group because it is an essential weekly prayer. However, prayer time often conflicts with class time, and some students who are committed to their faith choose to skip classes to attend Friday (Juma) prayer at a mosque in the city. Participants noted that having school-based supports, including providing space for one-hour prayer, would help reduce class absenteeism and send a welcoming message to Muslim students.

One student shared that as a religious duty, he had to do Friday pray (Juma) during lunchtime with his congregation at the mosque. The prayer time conflicted with one of his classes, so the student “had to skip the class to attend the Friday prayer.” He said, “I appreciated the teacher who understood this religious need.” The teacher spent extra time every Friday after class to share the notes and the learning material, which he said was helpful for his learning. The student confirmed that he was not the only Muslim student who would skip classes to attend Friday prayer at the mosque. He suggested that having prayer space for a group of Muslim students in school would help reduce class absenteeism. He confirmed by saying that “there is one school in Saskatoon School Division with a higher number of Muslim students that is practicing a model of providing space for Friday prayers, and it is being practiced successfully.”

Islamophobia and Muslim Student Identity

Both student participants noted that they experienced negative treatment based on what they perceived to be ignorance and hostility towards the Muslim faith. In particular, they felt their religion was judged based on the behaviour of a small number of extremists and that they had to answer for all. One participant commented, “Yes, it feels like you have to defend yourself for some reason, which is like I did not do anything and feeling like you have to say something on behalf of everyone.”

The male student participant noted that female Muslim students who wear the hijab are more vulnerable to be judged unfavourably by non-Muslims. But the female participant pointed out that this also caused difficulties within their community. The female student participant said, “You get judged if you don’t wear the hijab, and in other situations, you also get judged where you do wear a hijab. So, either side, if you wear or don’t wear it, there is a judgment,” she argued. She continued to explain:

on the other hand, because of the way the “hijab” is perceived in the media, so I guess people have a negative image of it. Generally speaking, people who are not familiar with it, so when they see you wearing a “hijab,” the reaction is like; “Oh! You are terrorist or whatever.” So, either side, if you wear or don’t wear it, there is a judgment.

The students explained the practice of Muslim cultural faith, including wearing hijab for female students and having a beard for male students is mostly attached to the family influence as the children are raised and brought up differently in each Muslim family. The female participant contended, “I agree that someone not wearing a hijab or any other Muslim cultural dress code does not mean that person is not a good Muslim; since that person may be practicing the religion but not choose to adopt the dress code.”

The participants also agreed that once students from other cultures and faith groups get to know them better and feel more comfortable, they are curious to know more about the Muslim religion, dress code, food, and prayer practices. Student participants found that this sharing helps other students to understand both perspectives better. Both the male and female student participants agreed that they have friends from different faiths, socio-cultural and ethnic groups, and they share the traits of being young and looking forward to the future.

Bullying and the Muslim Faith

The female Muslim student participant explained that she did not experience bullying based on her Muslim identity as she never observed or practiced wearing the hijab. But she knew of Muslim girls who were called names such as *ISIS* based on how they dress and identify as Muslim girls. She declared,

since I didn't wear 'hijab' for a very long time, I didn't feel bullying based on my Muslim faith. But it does happen to people who are probably a little more visible in their Muslim origin and Muslim dress code than I. Yes, it does happen a lot, and it can be extremely hurtful and frightening.

The male student participant shared a school incident where a fight broke out between two students, and he got in to help to break out the fight. He said, "the school blamed me for the fight, which it was later proved it was not my fault." The school administration subsequently apologized to him. Further, he shared, "I think the school may have taken sides against me based on my Muslim identity as I have a beard, and on Fridays, I was more visible with my religious dress for prayer and my identity as a Muslim was known."

He further stated,

We (Muslims) should also introduce the fact that we can't have a Muslim only school because that also brings ignorance upon us. Yes, I understand you wanna teach your kid in a certain way, and you wanna raise them in a certain way, but that starts out at home, and it doesn't start at a school.

The other student participant added,

What you are teaching your kid starts at a young age, and you are essentially the person (parents) who makes the child the way they are today. And obviously, most people wouldn't understand that if they are young, but once you grow older, you start to realize that. I should say once you have a kid, you realize that the way you teach to your kid is the way they will become when they grow up. And having any sort of religious school and only having that religion in that school I think it is wrong just because it doesn't allow people to have an open mind and that comes back to the public system as well. Because then there is the only, let's say everybody is sending their kids to an Islamic school and there is no Muslim student going to public schools because of the fear that there might be mixed cultures, but in my opinion, it is a good thing, we should mix cultures.

Participants believed that bullying should be addressed openly in schools. Still, they also felt that bullying should not encourage Muslim students to go to Muslim only schools, where they will have limited opportunities for social integration by being in an isolated group based on their religious identity. Participants understood that parents want to teach and raise children in a certain way and "that starts at home and doesn't start at a school and Children become who they are today as they have been raised and taught," one participant explained.

Participants shared their thoughts that the school system needed to be open to new ideas and approaches of teaching and learning as one participant said, “each student is unique with its learning needs and abilities.”

Students’ Educational Transition

Student participants noted that adjusting to the new curriculum, teaching styles and language of instruction in the Saskatoon public school was extremely challenging. Both students noted that they had been excelling in their education in Pakistan. However, because everything they encountered in the Saskatoon education context was new, they had to relearn to fit into the Canadian education system, which caused them significant emotional and psychological stress. Student participants felt that many teachers made few efforts to provide additional support when needed and also seemed to show very little interest in the students’ religious and cultural background or see any benefit in engaging with these as part of class learning. The male student noted, “I have a wealth of information about Pakistan and South East Asia and the Muslim faith, but there was only one teacher who seemed to see that as an asset and encouraged me to share this knowledge with the rest of the class.”

Students shared some examples from the school where some Pakistani students struggled in the beginning as the school system was very different from Pakistan. But once the students felt engaged and comfortable in the new learning environment, with hard work, they began to excel. One participant shared the example of two newcomer Pakistani Muslim students who graduated from the same school and won the Saskatchewan Governor General Award for academic achievement with distinctions and scholarships.

Parent Participants

I interviewed two parents (a father and a mother) of two separate students to get their input on the experiences of Pakistani Muslim students in the Saskatoon public school system. The Muslim father has been living in Saskatchewan for more than ten years, and all his children attended a Saskatoon public school before going to the University of Saskatchewan. He has a Ph.D. from the University of Saskatchewan. The Muslim mother is also well-educated and is currently working as a substitute teacher with the Saskatoon Public School Division. She knows that she was interviewed as a female parent and not as a teacher, and she was not representing the public school board in any capacity. She has two children, and both attended Saskatoon public schools.

The parent interviews had a smaller number of questions compared to students and SSWIS workers to focus on particular perspectives to best support this research.

Table 4.2 List of Major Themes Identified from Parent Participants

Parent Participants' Themes
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. School Gaps for Integration2. Integration and Muslim Values3. Muslims and LGBTQ+4. Islamophobia Bullying and Harassment of Muslim students5. School Staff's Cross-Cultural Competencies6. School's Role in Integration

School Gaps for Integration

Both parents appreciated the opportunity to send their children to public schools in Saskatchewan. They noted that the quality of public schools in Saskatchewan was far higher than

public schools in Pakistan. Parents shared that not all children in Pakistan attend public schools, and many parents who could afford it send children to private schools, which are more expensive. But they also highlighted shortcomings with the Saskatchewan education system, in particular a lack of general knowledge of other cultures and religions among educators. One parent said,

I think it is the lack of knowledge that the teachers are not aware of all the cultures and backgrounds of immigrants. Where do they come from and what they have been through? There are so many things teachers need to learn, and so far, I don't see any agency teaching them. So, somebody needs to put certain things together, so teachers are more aware of the cultures of the students they are working in the classrooms.

The other parent participant pointed out that,

When you see a textbook, you generally see images of white students in those books. So, putting more pictures of all the cultures and putting different names, for example, Ali and Huda, and Abu along with names like Peter, Jim and Jack will help newcomer students to see themselves as normal and included. At the moment, they don't see themselves in the system, they see themselves as outsiders, and they see white Canadians as the only real citizens of Canada.

One of the key reasons why Pakistani families choose to move to Canada is to provide a safe and better quality education for their children. For Pakistani parents in Canada, it is a constant struggle to have their children retain the cultural and religious values of their parents and grandparents. Close supervision of their children is often a result of the acculturation process and fear of losing their culture, language and the possibility of a diversion in faith. One parent shared,

it is extremely important to us. We have that culture and environment (cultural and religious) at home. So, it is important that public schools at large do not impose certain restrictions on performing religious activities. For example, if children (girl child) want to wear 'hijab,' then they can wear a 'hijab,' and if they don't want to, then they don't have to. So, there is no systematic restriction.

Parent participants suggested that the lack of diversity within the teaching profession and even more so among administrators warranted investigation. They suggested that the best and most inviting schools had teaching and administrative procedures that complement and reflect the diversity of the student body.

School Integration and Muslim Values

Both parents acknowledged that accessing high-quality education for their children was one of their main motivations for immigrating to Saskatchewan. They believed that sending children to faith-based schools, either Islamic or non-Islamic, isolates students from the Canadian mainstream and denies them critical social learning opportunities. One parent explained her decision to send her children to public school in the following way:

... mainly because I believe that we have to live here, we have to integrate with the community and kids have to grow and educate themselves and go into the mainstream.

So, they need to have the skills and knowledge that they can be successful in society. And we were confident that the public school system is good enough to have that knowledge and skills for the kids. So, that's why we decided to do that.

The other parent participant noted that when they moved to Canada, there were few options available in terms of private schooling, and Saskatoon's public schools had a good reputation.

There was only one Muslim school at that time, and it was in the very initial state of

establishing, so I thought it is better that my child gets exposed to the Canadian public school system because we can keep our Pakistani values from home and then she can go and learn Canadian values from school.

One parent admitted, “I am pretty happy that I chose public school.” The other parent supported this argument and shared his goals as an immigrant parent for his children is “to pursue their objectives and mission in their lives.”

Nevertheless, the parents also believed that it is extremely important for children to retain their Pakistani culture and Islamic religious values; and they believed that public schools could be more accommodating in supporting parents in this regard. The male parent concluded,

So, it is important that public schools at large do not impose restrictions that prevent our children from performing certain religious activities. For example, if one of our female children wants to wear the hijab, then they should be allowed to wear a hijab, and if they want to pray, surely it would be possible for the schools to accommodate that without requiring our children to be absent from class.

Muslims and LGBTQ2+

A significant area of contention for both parent participants involved the tension between Islamic values and the general support for LGBTQ2+ rights in Canada. One parent expressed that

Islamic teachings and values do not support the intimate relationship of the same sex, and this is the reason Muslims do not support relationships that are not under the values and principles of our religious teaching. In terms of Islamic law, same-sex acts are normally treated as sin and equivalent to adultery in the case of a married person or fornication in the case of an unmarried person. Even consensual relationships between males and

females are not allowed until a religious decree allows them to be religiously married couples.

Both parents expressed discomfort with having their children attend sex education classes where alternatives to heterosexual relationships were presented as appropriate and wished that their children would be allowed to absent themselves from such classes without penalty.

Islamophobia, Bullying and Harassment of Muslim Students

Both parents worried their children might be bullied because of their Muslim identity and the presence of Islamophobia in the school and outside the school. They suggested that it is the responsibility of the school to ensure a safe space for their children as bullying can significantly “compromise their children’s learning and integration and potentially impact their emotional and psychological development for the rest of their lives.”

The female parent participant shared one racial incident that happened to her daughter when she was in Kindergarten.

She came home crying, and she said, one kid was not playing with me because she said you are dirty because you are black. It broke my heart, so I went to the school, and I talked to the teacher, and she said, oh no, that’s not going to happen in my class. So, me and her we sat together and prepared a project where the class learned about “the children around the world.” She brought the books from the library, and we did quite a few crafts and activities where the students learn about children from different cultures where kids can be of any colour. They can be black or can be white, and the ones who were thinking they were whites, often they were not white. So, we showed the kids what white looks like and what black looks like, and that we are all kind of a blend of those colours. But

again, as I said, it depends on what school they go to, and what teacher they are with.

Some of them are better than others.

Both parents were happy to report that, to the best of their knowledge, none of their children had been exposed to this kind of harassment in high school. However, the female parent noted that her daughter had been exposed to criticism and harassment from other Muslims, especially young males, based on her decision not to wear the hijab.

They are always staring. They are always judging why my daughter is not covering her head with hijab. But the same male Muslim students don't reflect what they have been doing at times, which does not align with their own cultural and religious values.

School Cross-Cultural Competencies and Role in Integration

The parent participants noted a tension between their image of Canada as a diverse and multicultural society, characterized by multiple cultures, languages, foods, rituals, ethnicities, faiths, races and identities, and the realities experienced by their children in public schools in Saskatoon. One parent noted, "it's not like Canadian or non-Canadian anymore. And even non-Canadian is not the same culture or one culture, but that seems to be the message that our children receive in school." Both parent participants noted the preponderance of Caucasian teachers and administrators among school staff and general inattention to issues of religious and cultural diversity within the curricula.

The parents also suggested that insufficient attention was paid to the prior experiences of newcomer students, especially those that came as refugees having experienced significant trauma, and they recommended that it's "very important that teachers, especially the new ones, are sensitized to those issues." The parents also noted that many newcomer parents have very little knowledge of the Canadian education system and that better mechanisms need to be

developed by schools to bridge that knowledge gap, so these parents can better support their children's schooling.

While identifying limitations with schools' capacity to respond well to the presence of newcomer students, the parents who participated in this research also acknowledged that newcomer parents had an important role to play in fostering better relations with schools and improving the cross-cultural capacity of educators and administrators. Both parents who participated in this research indicated that they had done little to engage with their children's school beyond attending parent-teacher meetings, and they now saw this as a missed opportunity. As one parent noted:

I think it's important, and what I would do differently, is to become more involved in the school. Not only just parent/teacher meeting, but I should have done more than that. For example, volunteering more on school field trips and sporting and social events. As you get involved more and more, as a parent of the immigrant student, that process helps teachers as well as school administration to understand our cultures, our practices, and the differences.

Settlement Support Workers in Schools Participants

The Saskatoon Open Door Society (SODS) is a non-profit organization that works closely with newcomer immigrants and refugees to support their settlement and integration in Saskatoon. SODS has developed a formal partnership with the Public and Roman Catholic School Divisions in Saskatoon as well as Le Conseil de Ecoles Fransaskois and Prairie Spirit School Division to provide trained individuals known as Settlement Support Workers in Schools (SSWIS). These organizations work together to support newcomer students by serving as a liaison between schools, newcomer students, parents, and their new community. Typically,

SWISS personnel provide assistance to teachers in the form of translation and cultural insight, act as advocates for newcomer students and work to connect newcomer parents to their children's schools, teachers and other resources. The responses of SSWIS workers provided more detail based on their experience and observations working closely with the school divisions, and immigrant and refugee families.

SSWIS counsellors, through their interactions with students' families and the school system, bring a third perspective to the research, which is explored below.

Table 4.3 List of Major Themes Identified by SSWIS Workers Participants

Settlement Support Workers in Schools -SSWIS Participants
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SSWIS Workers' Role for Newcomers in Schools 2. School's Role to Facilitate Integration and Settlement of Newcomer Students 3. Islamic Values Important for Muslim Female Students 4. Muslim Students and Gender Identities 5. School-Based Gaps Identified for Muslim Newcomer Students 6. Stereotypes Towards Muslim Students 7. Experiences Working with a Newcomer Muslim Students Vs Non-Muslim Student 8. How Do You Understand Islam and Islamophobia? 9. School Staff Professional Development 10. EAL Teacher Role for Newcomers 11. Bullying and Muslim Student Identity

SSWIS Workers Role for Newcomers in Schools

The SSWIS worker participants pointed out that they play a bridging role between schools and the newcomer immigrant and refugee children and their families in Saskatoon. They provide practical culturally sensitive advice to students, parents and educators and serve as advocates for newcomer students and families. Furthermore, consistent with what is promised on Saskatchewan SWIS Coordination (SSC) website, they promote respect for cultural diversity by

providing multi-cultural training to school personnel, parents, students, and the community regarding settlement challenges (SSC, 2020).

One SSWIS participant admitted, we deal with people irrespective of their background and religion, and we don't talk about these things that we treat in confidence. However, we become careful when we talk about some cultural behaviours and food. When we talk about food and such things, we become careful whether the family knows about the differences and food that might have gluten or be gluten-free, and halal- haram food issues. But overall, we find that the main issues with Pakistani Muslim students are that on Fridays, they would like to go for Jumma prayer. But for some of them, it's hard to go on Friday for Jumma prayer at the local mosque as often it conflicts with some school classes and activities.

The female SSWIS participant identified significant differences in the English language capacity of Pakistani students, as some speak very good English while others struggle to communicate when they arrive. For those who are not fluent in English, SSWIS workers provide English/Urdu translation for school, students, and their parents whenever possible. Participants further shared that EAL teachers are often the point of contact for SSWIS, as many newcomer students attend English as an additional language (EAL) classes. The SSWIS participants note massive differences between various newcomer families, including cultural practices, food habits and practices, the safety of children, children's supervision, expectations around roles and responsibilities of parents and roles and relationships within families, and expectations between school and home. The SSWIS participants suggested that these differences were initially a major challenge for educators unaccustomed to such diversity. But over time, thanks in part to the efforts of the SSWIS, school personnel have become more adept in responding to the presence of

newcomer students, including those from Pakistan.

Schools' Role in Fostering Integration and Settlement of Newcomer Students

SSWIS participants suggested that greater collaboration, coordination, and partnership among all stakeholders, including schools, school division, teachers, students, parents and SSWIS staff was necessary to promote the integration of newcomer students. Since newcomer parents tend to be reluctant to attend events where they are a minority, SSWIS participants recommended that having separate school-based information sessions for newcomer parents would increase the likelihood of their attendance, improve communication between schools and newcomer families and foster greater parental engagement. Participants agreed that information flow was critical to increase academic and social participation. One participant affirmed,

It's not because they (parents) are stubborn or they have any other issue, but its just because they are not well informed. For example, if we inform them that soccer has two kinds of teams, one for girls and another for boys, and girls can wear longer shorts and hijab if they want to play soccer, that will make a big difference. So, if this key information is communicated to parents and they become educated about ways that they and their children can participate in a culturally appropriate manner, then parents will feel comfortable and then integration will happen faster.

The other participant believed the demographic map of urban schools had changed significantly in the province in the last 10 to 15 years. He emphasized the importance for teachers and administrators to learn more about different cultures to orient themselves and make schools inclusive and safe for all students. This avoids them judging newcomer students based on their socio-cultural, Religious, racial, and ethnic identities.

Muslim Students and Gender Identities

In commenting on the differences between Pakistani and other newcomer students, one participant indicated that gender-based or segregated education and recreational activities are particularly important for some Pakistani Muslim parents. Pakistani parents are typically more concerned about young girls as many girls in Pakistan do not have an opportunity to experience co-education with boys or to socialize informally with boys who are not part of their family. For this reason, Pakistani parents are reluctant to have their daughters participate in non-gender segregated recreational activities, especially activities such as swimming, where their daughters would be dressed in what would be considered inappropriate attire. One SWISS participant noted:

The Open Door Society understands these cultural sensitivities and differences and provides swimming lessons for Muslim girls separately. This is one thing female Muslim students are not allowed to do even if their parents are outgoing and do not wear the hijab. They don't want their daughters to go into the water with swimming costumes in public swimming times unless the time is exclusively designated for women only with strict privacy enforced. So, we need to educate the parents, and having more covered swimming costumes will also be helpful, and we also need to educate schools regarding these gender-based sensitivities when classes go out for recreation and learning activities. Observations shared by the other SSWIS participant suggested that at least fifty percent of Muslim Pakistani girls integrate differently as they often only socialize with girls from their own Pakistani culture. He noted that the socialization of Pakistani boys in school is slow, and newcomer Pakistani students mostly play cricket, which is not a popular sport in schools in

Saskatoon. But he believed that Pakistani boys integrate faster compared to Pakistani girls. As he explained,

Boys still manage to integrate more easily compared to girls. While Pakistani boys find common ground with others in soccer and video games, Pakistani girls try to hang out with the girls who are from their (same) background or similar background.

School-Based Gaps Identified for Muslim Newcomer Students

Both SSWIS participants commented that they were not aware of a strategy or a plan to support the integration of newcomer students coming from multiple faiths, especially those with very strict rules around the interaction between students of different sexes. Giving an example, one responded,

So, if some girl from Pakistan says she doesn't want to go on a school trip because many of the other students are males, and she doesn't want to stay and sleep there at the camp, for a night or two. It should be the school's role to figure out how these sensibilities can be accommodated to ensure that all students have equitable opportunities to be able to participate in school learning and recreational activities fully.

One SSWIS participant, who is also a Muslim, expressed that since Islam is one of the most popular religions in the world in terms of the number of adherents, it was becoming increasingly important for non-Muslims to acquire some basic understanding of the faith. She explained,

If they see one Muslim walking by the road saying, "Allah O Akber," it doesn't mean it's a bad guy, and he will hurt others. We, as Muslims, usually use the phrase "Allah o Akber" in our conversations, to express our shock and surprise. So, people need to be educated that these are culturally-based sayings, and Muslims don't say that to hurt people.

This participant also suggested that it was important for schools to pay more attention to religious education as a means of combatting Islamophobia and other forms of religious prejudices. For example, all Canadians must understand that “Islam is a religion of peace and tolerance, and it respects other religions and their followers, including Christianity and Judaism.”

When questioned about resource allocations, one SSWIS participant responded by comparing schools with a lower or higher number of immigrant students to explain disparities in resource allocation. This participant observed that the schools with higher numbers of immigrants receive more resources and support services to accommodate newcomer students, which often leaves other schools disadvantaged. “Some schools don't get many (newcomer) students, so they (the school division) think they don't need more support,” he noted.

Experiences of Newcomer Muslim Students Compared to Non-Muslim Students

One SSWIS participant noted that Newcomer students come to Saskatoon from multiple cultural and religious backgrounds, but some have an easier time adjusting than others. In his opinion, it was easier for newcomer children from Christian backgrounds to adapt and to integrate into Saskatoon schools and the wider society as these students share the same faith as the majority of the Canadian population. Muslims not only have a very different belief system, but their religion has significant implications for many other facets of life, including food. This participant shared an example where a teacher believed she was acting in the best interests of students.

There was a hot lunch, and the teacher knew that the Muslim student could consume chicken, and when the order came in, the teacher assumed that because the student consumes chicken at home and he also brings a chicken burger to school, then he can have a chicken burger. The teacher ordered the chicken burger, not knowing that for

Muslims, chicken, lamb and beef must also be halaal before consuming it. So, the student could not eat the burger and had to go hungry. This whole episode really became very hard for the teacher. I have never seen anybody cry like this. The teacher was really sad because she did not know. So, this way, teachers are suffering and also the students.”

The SSWIS participants suggested that schools and especially EAL teachers were working very hard to help newcomer students succeed academically. While they identified language as the main barrier facing many Pakistani Muslim students, they also noted the impact of cultural differences around schooling and learning. The example was shared that in Pakistan, children come home with textbooks every day. Parents and students talk about schoolwork, and parents sometimes supervise the homework as the students have the textbooks. In Saskatoon, by contrast, students typically do not have textbooks, and they frequently are not assigned homework. So, newcomer parents often feel confused. “Students don't have textbooks to take home, and when parents ask the teachers, then they are provided the website link to the Saskatchewan Curriculum, and the parents are told to check this website,” the participant explained. She added,

also those students who have good English language skills, who have educated parents who are working in Canada, they are also suffering because they don't understand our education system. So, the need is to somehow facilitate their needs too. Give them (parents) some sort of help to understand the Canadian education system so they can support and be involved in their children’s learning.

Both SSWIS participants agreed that Pakistani Muslim parents need to be engaged more by schools to facilitate awareness about the education their children will receive and curricular expectations. One of the examples provided is that Pakistan (and many other source countries of

immigration to Canada) do not have sex education as part of their curriculum at Elementary and High School levels. For many Pakistani parents learning that it is part of the curriculum is very shocking and disturbing as this is considered a taboo subject in their home. These cultural differences erode parents' confidence in the schools and make it difficult for them to place trust in the teachers.

School Staff Professional Development and Cross-Cultural Competencies

The SSWIS participants shared that school personnel, including teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals, were often unaware of the challenges, barriers, and restrictions encountered by Pakistani students and their parents. Because most of these professionals were Caucasian, they saw the world through the lens of their own dominant culture and there appeared to be very little professional development available to enhance their cross-cultural competence. These participants believed that most teachers desired to be culturally respectful and wanted the best for all students, but their limited cultural understanding often caused miscommunication with Pakistani parents and students. As an example, one SSWIS participant related an episode where a teacher had used a simulated game of Bingo as a pedagogical device to assess her students' mastery of basic numeracy. The students enjoyed the game, but when a young Pakistani girl confided to her parents that she had played Bingo in school, they were outraged, as all forms of gambling are strictly prohibited among certain Muslims. The episode was ultimately resolved satisfactorily, but it does indicate the potential for significant miscommunication and misunderstanding among educators and parents from minority cultures.

EAL Teacher Role for Newcomers

SSWIS participants identified EAL (English as an Additional Language) teachers as playing a critical role in understanding the needs of Pakistani and other newcomer students and

in connecting or bridging schools with their homes and parents in order to meet the expectations of the families better. One participant said, “EAL teachers have a close teaching and learning relationship with newcomer students.” These participants suggested that in contexts of scarcity, where it may not be possible to provide professional development to enhance the cross-cultural competence of all educators, EAL teachers should be given priority so that they might subsequently act as catalysts for ongoing professional development for other staff. Both SWISS participants also highlighted the importance of increasing cultural diversity among educational and paraprofessional staff by increasing the hiring of visible minorities. Participants referred to the recently developed Internationally Educated Teachers Certificate at the University of Saskatchewan as an ideal mechanism for expanding the pool of qualified potential applicants.

Bullying and Muslim Student Identity

The SSWIS participants felt that while most schools in Saskatchewan strive to create safe places for students, bullying and harassment, including such behaviour motivated by Islamophobia, is a reality for certain Muslim students. One participant shared an example where a Muslim girl wearing a Hijab got into a conflict with a non-Muslim girl in one of the schools. She recounted, “One non-Muslim girl came behind the Muslim girl and removed her hijab by force, doing this intentionally as she knew the value of the hijab in the Muslim faith.” He stressed that such incidents are ‘red-flagged,’ and schools respond to them very seriously. He shared that SSWIS workers in schools often come across such situations, and they, as socio-cultural mediators, attempt to provide the necessary support to schools, parents, and immigrant students.

Summary

This chapter presented the data from interviews with six participants and delineated various themes emerging from that data. Centred on the experiences of Pakistani Muslim students' adjustment to public schools in Saskatoon, themes highlighted academic, social, cultural, religious, and gendered adjustment challenges and identified a compelling need for greater cross-cultural competency among educators, administrators, and para-professional staff.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion of Findings and Recommendations

In this chapter, I discuss the key findings of the study based on aligning the participants' data presented in Chapter Four and the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. The findings focus on understanding Pakistani Muslim students' school settlement, adaptation, and integration experiences, which may inform school administrators and school division policy levels, parental engagement and delineate training opportunities for teachers and administrators. The findings of this research are grounded in the constructivist theoretical framework as data demonstrated that participants constructed the social reality they live in and ascribe their own meanings to that reality.

Data has been presented from three groups of participants: newcomer public school graduates of Pakistani Muslim origin, newcomer parents of Pakistani Muslim origin and SSWIS workers in Saskatoon schools. Each group responded to a separate set of qualitative questions that were aimed at understanding the key questions of this research. The analysis in Chapter Five will allow evidence-based recommendations that can help newcomer parents, students, SSWIS workers, teachers and school administration to understand better and engage Pakistani Muslim newcomer students to improve school engagement, academic performances and facilitate smoother integration for the benefit of all. The analysis also includes the experiences and insights of the researcher from working with immigrant communities in Saskatoon; thereby, bringing an emic approach to contribute to data triangulation. The discussion and findings were derived from the themes presented through data analysis and coding. The thematic areas which emerged from this research (as presented in Chapter Four) include Muslim students' school experiences and integration, Muslim female students' experiences through a gendered lens, Muslim parents'

engagement, Islamophobia, school leadership, resource-based school readiness, and making schools safe and inclusive spaces.

Muslim Students' School Experience and Integration

Muslim culture is often considered an obstacle to integration, and Muslims have come under the microscope as part of multiculturalism in many liberal societies (Modood, 2011). The education of Muslim students in countries with a strong history of Muslim immigration has been a widely discussed issue, and there have been debates concerning how the educational needs of Muslims should be met (Ipgrave, 2010). The focus has often been on the challenges of considering the values and beliefs of Muslim students as they interface with school practices. Studies have examined this issue in relation to the teaching of music (Harris, 2002), physical education (Tansin et al., 2011) and sex education (Halstead, 1997). Furthermore, issues related to biases in the curriculum and teaching, students' experiences of Islamophobia and racism, and the difficulties in the relationships between schools and Muslim families have all been examined, and possible ways of overcoming these difficulties have been suggested (Bigelow, 2008; Parker-Jenkins, 1999; Zine, 2001).

Muslims often have to choose whether to allow their children to be educated according to Western liberal public-school principles or to isolate themselves and not be considered as full citizens of their adopted country (Halstead, 2004). However, it is also important to notice that the responses of Muslims to modernity vary widely, and their willingness to integrate into Western societies and strategies to achieve this is very different (Ahmed, 1992; Al Sayyad 2002; Daun & Walford, 2004; Niyozov, 2010). In any case, some Muslim parents in Western contexts have strong suspicions toward public schools. These suspicions might be difficult to overcome because Muslims are rarely represented in the school staff, parental associations or among

educational authorities in European or North American schools (Maréchal, 2002). Thus, many Muslim parents deem Western public schools incompatible with Islamic ideals of knowledge and appropriate behaviour (Halstead, 2004). The failure of integrating Muslims in public schools—together with feelings that Islam and Muslims are not appropriately recognized—have in part resulted in the willingness of Muslim populations to establish Islamic schools in, for example, Britain (McCreery et al., 2007; Ipgrave, 2010), the Netherlands, (Niehaus, 2009) and the Nordic countries (Kuyucoglu, 2009; Larsson, 2009; Leirvik, 2009). The West also harbours strong suspicions and critical attitudes toward Islamic education. The fact that Muslims want their education in Europe invokes suspicions among non-Muslims, and Islamic education in the West has even been accused of being a possible cause for Islamic radicalism and terrorism (Bartels, 2000; Douglass & Shaikh, 2004). These arguments are not necessarily based on solid empirical evidence. “In the Netherlands, for example, Islamic schools are constantly accused of hindering the integration of Muslim students into Dutch society, although research results do not confirm this” (Meijer, 2009, p. 24).

Students and parent participants in this research come primarily from the skilled worker /economic immigrant class, so the students are generally fluent in English, and their parents are typically well educated and occupy various middle-class professional careers in Canada. These Muslim students and parents do not share the trauma often experienced by other refugees as they flee to live in a safe country. Rather, they chose to come to Canada as economic migrants in search of opportunity and an enhanced quality of life.

The literature presented in earlier chapters described the development of multiculturalism as an official federal policy in response to the growing diversity of Canadian society: institutions, particularly educational institutions, gradually integrated multicultural approaches into the

operation of their organizations. Multiculturalism is not without critics, however, especially on the basis that it fosters divided loyalties, which potentially constitute a source of tension or conflict between various groups within Canadian society. Findings from this research reveal that Pakistani Muslim parents broadly accepted the multicultural approaches by Saskatoon public schools. While some members of that group sought a high degree of separation from the host society in the form of a faith-based Muslim school, the parents and students who participated in this research preferred to attend the public school system both to avail of quality education but also to develop the competencies and relationships which would allow them to integrate into the wider Saskatoon and Canadian society. However, parents and students expressed a strong desire for aspects of their culture to be accommodated by schools, particularly Muslim requirements around their dress, facial hair, food, and attendance at prayers.

Participant reflections show that they have expectations that schools will support the integration of newcomer students by bringing more inclusive approaches and strategies. The feeling of isolation or delayed integration may result in social and academic challenges that will impact student learning outcomes. Despite a generally high level of English language proficiency among newcomers, adjusting to Canadian English is probably the most common challenge experienced by the student participants, with a perception that they do not receive appropriate and sufficient help to learn the new language and its varied vernacular quickly enough (Guo, 2010; McDonnell & Hill, 1993). Another challenge relates to the capacity for the provision of instruction in EAL contexts, which are inadequate and that school environments do not meet the social and emotional needs of immigrant students (Kuperminc et al., 2001).

Student participants noted that the English language is not only a barrier in terms of communication for those who need extra help, but it is a major impediment for newcomer students learning complex concepts in English if it is not their first language. This suggests that the focus of English language learning be expanded to various levels to cater to the needs of all students, from basic to complex comprehension.

The parent participants held specific career aspirations for their children. They pointed out that minority immigrants must align their career aspirations to the demands of the Canadian labour market and their visible minority status. To avoid competing with mainstream society, they encourage their children to excel in science subjects so they can take up professions in engineering and other technical fields. They generally discouraged their children from pursuing careers in arts, politics, or law.

According to Cho and Haslam (2009), school adjustment poses significant challenges to immigrant students, who often feel great internal and external demands to excel academically (Ogbu, 1987), and these demands may be especially strong among Asian parents (Sandefur, 1998). Academic pressures are especially difficult to manage in view of students' frequent difficulties with the English language (Constantinides, 1992) and with the cultural differences in educational practices, such as the more individualistic and discussion-oriented approach adopted in American and Canadian schools (Parr et al., 1992).

Student participants' responses indicated that parents' expectations of better academic achievements and impeccable behaviour from their newcomer children are very prevalent among Pakistani newcomer families in Saskatoon. Participants found this to be one of the reasons why newcomer Pakistani students work hard to attain high academic achievement. This added pressure may not be visible in the school environment for Muslim children. However, the pressure

manifests as a form of trauma for these children, with their parents repeatedly reminding them of their motivation for coming to Canada, which was a better future for them as children. Parents may think that this constant reminder gives their children a boost to work harder and not to fail the expectations of their parents. Some parents are flexible and let their children decide the path for their future, but many others give limited options. A selected few of these options are engineering, medicine, business administration and finance.

Often the schools may not realize the pressure that these Pakistani Muslim students endure to meet the expectations of their parents. Getting into a trade school to earn a diploma and not finishing university education is not an option for most Muslim Pakistani parents. This is another reason why schools should have close interaction with newcomer parents to understand these parents' academic achievement expectations of their children and how the school can encourage a positive learning experience for newcomer students. Some students may need extra support to deal with the pressure to meet the expectations. Better communication and engagement at the school level between teachers and parents may help both parties understand students in the centre and provide the necessary support.

When immigrants arrive in a country foreign to their upbringing, they frequently experience depression, anxiety, and acculturation stress (Ritsner & Ponizovsk, 2003), in their attempt to integrate into the new culture (Hovey & Magana, 2000). Stiffman & Davis (1990) define acculturation as “the acquisition of patterns of another’s group” (p. 329). They list reasons for the acculturative stress which occur amongst many minority groups such as poverty, discrimination, unemployment, low socioeconomic status (Ogbuagu, 2012), and fewer educational opportunities, among other things.

A female parent participant claimed it

stressful as part of the acculturation process for their children to learn good academic material so they can get ready to go in a good profession where they can earn good money. And socially, we definitely expect them to be good Canadian citizens and good citizen of the world, and you know a good human being. That's what our expectation is, and I see that happening. So I am pretty happy that I chose public school.

While teachers face challenges in the classroom, school leaders play a critical role in developing a culture in the school which respects diversity (Dimmock & Walker, 2005; Suarez-Orozco 2003; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016). In Canadian classrooms, students are expected to look the teacher in the eye and to walk beside their teachers. But parents from countries like Pakistan would consider these behaviours as unacceptable acts of insolence. Their children, however, often unaware of the social interaction rules in the Canadian classroom, are framed by their original cultural references, that is, lowering their heads and walking behind teachers to show respect. Without appropriate transcultural knowledge, teachers can misinterpret students' actions (Guo, 2012).

Often newcomers go through a process of culture shock when they move to a foreign land and try to make it home. This culture shock typically involves four stages. There is often a happy period at the beginning, known as the honeymoon/happy period, as things are new and exciting. The second stage of frustration starts when things do not make sense, and difficulties with settlement and integration are experienced. In the third phase, immigrants begin to do a reality check and make changes to adjust based on the socio-cultural and economic surroundings. In the last stage, immigrants typically achieve some level of adaptation. The process can vary from one individual/family to another with

various socio-economic and cultural variables. Some newcomers to Canada make the transition in a few months, and for others, it may take years.

Schools can be responsive and creative to assess and understand the uniqueness of each newcomer student's level of readiness and progress towards integration and set a plan to support the student to be settled and integrated into the school system. The Pakistani Muslim community could also take the initiative to invite teachers and school leaders to more social and religious gatherings where they can acquire various perspectives of Muslim culture and practices that will strengthen understanding and better assist Muslim students with school integration.

Muslim Female Students' Experiences through Gendered Lens

Pakistani Muslim families consider the religion of Islam very dear to their hearts, irrespective of economic or social status. The degree of closeness and religious practices may vary based on the family and the social environment. Some Pakistani women and young adult Muslim girls in Saskatoon identify more visibly with the Muslim dress code of the Hijab to cover their head than others. Participants find wearing the Hijab is a personal choice as many Muslim girls choose not to wear the hijab. Participants found from their experiences that some hijabi girls (girls wearing hijab) become the targets of derogatory comments to the point that it becomes bullying. A particularly disturbing example was shared of a Muslim female student's hijab being coercively removed in a school. The female student participant shared that sometimes there is a reverse criticism from hijabi Muslim girls to non-hijabi Muslim girls, pointing to them as not being Muslim enough by not observing Hijab as part of the Muslim dress code.

Female students become more visible targets of bullying based on their identity presented through the Muslim dress code. Muslim faith practicing Pakistani girls remain socially active by keeping the boundaries that their parents have set under the code of Pakistani Muslim culture. Pakistani Muslim families, in general, set strict guidelines for girls who have crossed the age of puberty to behave, act, and dress in a way that meets their parents' socio-cultural and religious values.

Muslim parents in the study wished to exempt their children from certain classes such as dancing and swimming and sex education. Zine (2001) explained that the reason Muslim children are not allowed to dance is that physical contact between males and females is allowed only among close family members. Social distance within the Islamic tradition is, therefore, also gendered, and situations of casual physical contact between males and females violate Islamic moral codes.

Gender segregation for girls during social activities is common for some Muslim parents mostly for swimming classes or any other social activities where they have to compromise the Muslim dress code, including if the girls have to remove their hijab or abaya (long gown) to be part of those activities. For some Muslim parents, looking at members of the opposite sex in "immodest dress" is a violation of their beliefs (Spinner-Halev, 2000).

Abbas' (2010) "research on young South Asian women in education found that parents were positive about the education of their Muslim daughters as much as Sikh or Hindu parents were positive about their own, although there were particular issues about social class, the effects of schools, ethnicity and religion that were important to bear in mind in relation to opportunity structures and outcomes" (Izaz & Abbas, 2010, p. 318). Hussain and Bagguley (2007), Tyrer and Ahmed (2006), and Shain (2003) all affirm how young South Asian women,

including Muslims, are able to negotiate their education with cultural concerns in relation to marriage, analyzing this in the context of racism and Islamophobia in wider life. While, on the one hand, schools are viewed as instrumental in determining social mobility; on the other, they pose a possible risk to youthful daughters (Afshar, 1989).

The Muslim cultural and religious interpretation may be complex for schools to understand as all Muslim students do not practice their religion in the same ways. For example, many female Muslim students in schools do not wear Hijab, while others do practice it strictly. This does not mean the girls not wearing Hijab are not good enough Muslims. It is a choice for girls to wear the hijab or not that is also linked to the values of their parents. On the other hand, for the girls who observe wearing Hijab, it does not mean that these girls will not be social and not interact in school activities. These girls socialize if their Muslim values are not challenged and are respected. The complexity of interpretation may bring some challenges concerning bullying based on Muslim identity, so bullying policies in schools need to be reviewed to ensure safety for Muslim students, especially females.

Muslim Parents' Engagement

Pakistanis consider Canada one of the most desired countries to immigrate to with their families. Canada's identity as a multicultural state where there is the freedom to practice any religion, along with access to social services including health and education, makes it a place of attraction to people of Pakistani origin. Pakistani Muslim parents in Saskatoon bring similar perspectives as other Pakistani families living in any other parts of Canada.

In a study, Guo (2015) shared that

“Muslim parents stated that one of the reasons they chose to immigrate to Canada had been their attraction to its official policies on multiculturalism. Understanding, as one of

these parents observed, that religious freedom is enshrined in Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the parents had expected the accommodation of religious practices in schools, including allowing Muslim girls to wear a headscarf. However, from the participants' perspectives, the practice of Hijab remains poorly understood in Canada" (p. 192).

"Twelve out of the thirteen Muslim parents in this study believed that Muslim girls should be segregated from the opposite sex in many school activities. A mother of a 15-year-old daughter said: In our religion, we believe in gender segregation. The man is not supposed to see the beauty of women. I did go and talk to the teacher at the beginning of the school year that my daughter does not swim and dance with boys" (Guo, 2015, p. 199).

Muslim parents in Guo's study believed that Muslim students should be allowed to pray during school hours because Islam requires them to pray five times daily (Guo, 2015). One of the common issues that Muslim immigrant parents face is the negotiation of the religious expressions of minority groups in schools. This included allowing Muslim girls to wear a headscarf. Participants in my research shared that it is challenging to negotiate Muslim cultural and religious values in the public-school system as a minority group. Canada being a secular country, should find ways to balance liberty with freedom of religious practice as guaranteed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom.

Public schools represent secular education; however, schools also must make sure to be inclusive and consider the religion of students as part of multicultural inclusiveness to make the education experience positive for all students. Schools can recognize this by providing a multipurpose space where the students who choose to can go to pray, meditate, or use the space

for some quiet time. This will bring the public-school system to the point that does not promote religious education, yet is willing to be inclusive by accommodating the faith needs of minority students for better integration.

Often, parents from minority or ethnic backgrounds do not participate in their children's school activities because they are not sure if their input will be welcomed by the classroom teacher or because they are unsure if their language skills or cultural preferences will be appreciated or even understood (Palermo, 2009; Trumbull et al., 2001). Schools should encourage parents to visit frequently; participate in school activities, school planning, and school events; make presentations to the students and faculty; and develop mutually supportive relationships with school staff and administrators (Learning First Alliance, 2001). This research supports this argument, as teacher ratings were consistently lower than those of parents when it came to parent encouragement of children to study, and parent involvement in parent-teacher interviews. Parents need and want to be partners in their children's education (Noonan & Renihan, 2005).

Supportive relationships help parents to take an active role in the school and in their children's education. Parents should feel valued and welcome in the school as their participation helps create and maintain a sense of community in the school. Students are more likely to be committed to the school's goals when they see close collaboration between their parents and the school (Learning First Alliance, 2001).

In addition to the academic and cultural knowledge, the knowledge that immigrant parents possess about their children is often unrecognized by teachers and school administrators (Jones, 2003). These forms of non-recognition of immigrant parents can be attributed to misconceptions and lack of knowledge about different cultures (Guo, 2009; Honneth, 1995). "A

deficit model of difference leads to the belief that difference is equal to deficiency, and that the knowledge of others—particularly those from developing countries—is incompatible, inferior, and hence invalid” (Abdi, 2007; Dei, 1996 as cited in Guo, 2012, P.127).

Participants in my study noted that, like any other parent, immigrant newcomer parents play a critical role in the lives of their children. But Newcomer parents’ engagement is limited in schools in Saskatoon for several reasons. Some of the reasons identified are language barriers, a fear of an alien education system, different parental practices, and some cultures give complete authority to schools for education and disciplining of their children. Schools must be more creative and engaging to bring newcomer parents on board, including participation in School-Community Councils and any other forums where they can participate in decision making, which is important for their children. Parents’ ownership through engagement will help them understand the challenges better and support the adjustment and integration of their children.

The parent participants believed that newcomer children are not the same as other children born and raised in Canada, and they have different school needs. Parents find having better ways of engagement with teachers and school management, and better communication will help to address the academic, behavioural, and social challenges newcomer children face. The parents believed there is significant socio-cultural learning required for teachers and school management to understand the challenges of newcomer students. Parents were unaware of any institution that is committed to helping teachers and school administration to understand these challenges better to prepare teachers for this diversity. Participants agreed that Muslim parents and the community could play a significant role to help teachers and school leaders to understand Muslim culture and values by inviting them to various Muslim community events where they can appreciate the positive aspects of Muslim culture.

Immigrants and refugees often differ in their pre-migration, migration, and post-migration experiences. For refugee families, the resettlement process may follow traumatic circumstances related to persecution or life-threatening events. Such multiple sources of stress can result in cumulative effects and lead to feelings of instability and physical problems, as well as difficulties in psychosocial adjustment. Refugee children's developmental histories often include information about disrupted lives, malnutrition, deprivation, significant losses, and gaps in education (Ajdukovic & Ajdukovic, 1993; Williams & Berry, 1991).

Pakistan is not currently involved in any political conflict and is not part of any active war zones. This accounts for most Pakistani Muslim families moving to Saskatoon from Pakistan as economic immigrants. The socio-economic challenges of this community are not very severe when compared to those who have moved to Saskatoon as refugees from many other countries. Pakistani families in Saskatoon are focused more on educating their new generation, economic development, and community engagement as some of the key goals for success and integration. Pakistani economic immigrant families typically do not come with trauma because of any conflicts, prosecution, and violence in their home country. Participants for this study clearly fit in this category.

Islamophobia

Discussions of Islamophobia were highlighted from all participants from different perspectives. These arguments shed light on the visible and invisible practices that make Muslim students feel pressured and targeted based on their names, Muslim dress codes, wearing facial hair for males and wearing the Hijab for female students. The term Islamophobia has been in circulation for twenty-five years (Islamophobia Research & Documentation Project, n.d.) and is defined in the New Oxford American Dictionary (2010) as "hatred or fear of Islam or Muslims,

especially when feared as a political force." A 2010 report published jointly by the University of California, Berkley Center for Race and Gender and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) identified several beliefs that are central to Islamophobia. One is the view that Islam is "monolithic, static, and authoritarian" (Report, 2010, p. 12). This assumption stands in contrast to the reality that Muslims are diverse and dynamic and even disagree substantially among themselves about the way Islam should be lived out. Additionally, this assumption fails to recognize that religions generally are "animated through individuals who practice the religion" (Merchant, 2016, p. 99). Another tenet of Islamophobia is that Islam is totally "other," and separate from the West. This impression does not acknowledge that Muslims share with the followers of other religious traditions, ethical principles, a human experience, and a common space. Islamophobia also incorporates the belief that Islam is inferior, backward, and primitive, remaining static over time. This view fails to recognize that Islam presents ideas and practices which are different from but potentially as relevant and valuable as those offered by other traditions. Lastly, Islamophobia is bolstered by the view that Islam is an aggressive enemy to be feared, opposed, and defeated. This assumption sees violence as somehow inherent in Islam. Such a notion does not acknowledge that Muslims interpret and enact Islamic principles either for peace or for violence, just as the followers of any religion do and have done (Bakali, 2016; Brooks, 2019).

The participants had varying experiences in secondary school. Most of the participants generally felt that their overall experience was positive. However, all the participants experienced some level of racism against Muslims in their secondary schools. Participants suggest that Muslim students have this understanding in their subconscious that they are different; thus, they should always be on guard as many can be bullied and discriminated against

based on their religious identity. Parents in the study believed Islamophobia does exist but is often not acknowledged as the students affected remain silent and do not respond for various reasons. The Muslim students felt an additional responsibility to defend who they are as peace-loving people when large scale acts of terrorism are reported in the news.

Muslim parents and students in this research suggested that schools should take a more proactive role in educating students about Islamophobia and creating a safe learning environment for all students irrespective of their religion or faith.

School leadership

School teachers and administration play a critical role in ensuring that schools and classes provide a safe environment for learning and social engagement. The growing cultural and religious diversity of the schools in Saskatoon demands that the teachers and school leaders be trained in the areas of religious and cultural sensitivity as part of their pre and in-service training to make schools safe and inclusive for all students.

Participants have shared that some school leaders are more proactive than others in taking initiatives to make newcomer students feel welcome, and those leaders are greatly appreciated. Scholars and practitioners globally recognize that school leaders are essential in helping to raise student achievement and build successful schools in which all students thrive (Elmore, 2004; Fullan, 2004; Steiner-Khamsi & Harris-Van Keuren 2009). Yet few studies have examined the extent to which school leaders actively use the assets of immigrant students or adapt a school to its changing population. Guo (2015) suggests that educators and administrators need to “recognize that educational tasks may be given culturally divergent interpretations; that is, teachers and parents may have culturally divergent views of the educational agenda” (p. 31). Schools need to learn immigrant parents’ views on education

and cultural differences on home–school communication (Dyson, 2001). Schools need to understand that cultural differences in conceptions regarding schools, teachers, and education often underlie conflicting views of parental involvement between immigrant parents and Caucasian educators (Li, 2006; Ran, 2001). Schools, therefore, need to become learning organizations “where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together” (Senge, 1990, p. 3).

Besides transformational and instructional leadership approaches, there is a need for leadership preparation programs to emphasize culturally responsive leadership (Toure, 2008). Toure (2008) associated poor leadership programs in leadership training institutions with limited culturally responsive leadership knowledge among school leaders. She recommended the study may serve to encourage educational leadership professors and policymakers to perform “a re-examination of requirements for leadership preparation which currently lack an emphasis on culturally relevant leadership content knowledge or issues of social justice” (p. 200).

Resource-Based School Readiness

Research indicates that it is vital to enhance teachers’ and school administrators’ cultural fluency with professional development opportunities respecting diversity appreciation and cross-cultural competency (Khalifa et al., 2016). This will help teachers understand the challenges faced by the newcomers and to equip them with tools and resources to address those challenges. Teachers and school administrators with these dispositions are more likely to forge positive relationships with newcomer students and their parents for better connection and integration into the Canadian school system. Participants noted that it is critical that schools provide cross-cultural training to make teachers culturally competent and be culturally responsive to the needs

of newcomer students. This awareness can be made part of the professional development of the existing teachers and school administrators. In addition, cross-cultural learning and cultural competency training should be given substantially more attention in the curriculum at the College of Education University of Saskatchewan for new teacher candidates and in masters level leadership preparation courses. Educators and administrators also need to be better educated regarding the major tenets of world religions, including Islam. Deepening their religious knowledge will help teachers and students overcome their fear and support social interaction between immigrant and non-immigrant students and between students of different faiths (Spinner-Halev, 2000).

Making Schools Safe and Inclusive

Student learning and achievement requires schools to be safe and supportive for all. Immigrant children become easy targets of bullying for reasons such as the colour of their skin, the way they dress, their physical appearance, their English communication skills often constitute a clash of cultures between Canadian and their native culture. Participants have identified experiences of bullying based on religious identity, culture, colour, race, accent, language, and dress code. Some participants experienced bullying directly, and others shared examples of others in the community that had such experiences. Bullying often does not happen openly in schools but can occur clandestinely in hallways, washrooms, playgrounds, gyms, and in corners. It also happens through social media, which can be even more painful for victims. Bullying based on being a Muslim is not different from any other form of bullying. It should be addressed with the same level of seriousness to send a clear message that schools will not tolerate such unacceptable behaviour. Participants in this study noted that SSWIS workers were a key resource

in ensuring the overall wellbeing of newcomer students, in part because many of them were recent arrivals themselves or were members of visible minorities in Saskatchewan.

Recommendations

The findings of this thesis support the following recommendations which need to be addressed at school, policy, training, and community levels

Parental Engagement

Public schools should develop strategies to engage Pakistani Muslim parents in more active participation in school academic and social affairs. Similarly, Pakistani Muslim parents and the wider community can play a significant role in fostering closer links with schools and helping teachers and school leaders to gain a better understanding of Muslim culture and values by inviting them to various Muslim community events where they can appreciate the positive aspects of Muslim culture.

Safe School Curriculum Development

Religious intolerance, especially Islamophobia, is a major concern for Pakistani Muslim students and parents, contributing to a lack of safety in schools. School curriculum should be developed to promote greater understanding of all world religions, including the Islamic faith. Most importantly, the curriculum should explicate Islam's gendered dimension, including the rationale for various forms of dress and physical appearance, which marks some Pakistani Muslims as different.

Training and Development

All school personnel, but especially teachers and administrators, should be provided mandatory professional development to enhance their cross-cultural competency. Additionally, cross-cultural learning and cultural competency training should be given substantially more

attention in the curriculum at the College of Education University of Saskatchewan for pre-service teachers and in leadership preparation courses at the masters and doctoral levels.

School Resources and Divisional Strategy

Current supports for newcomer students, such as EAL teachers and SSWIS personnel, should be enhanced and embedded in all schools as part of a wider divisional strategy to respond to growing multicultural diversity as an opportunity for innovation within schools.

Representative Workforce

An aspect of that divisional strategy should prioritize a representative workforce, based on the assumption that the most effective schools are those whose administrative, teaching, and paraprofessional staff are broadly representative of the cultural composition of the student population. The recently developed Internationally Educated Teachers Certificate at the University of Saskatchewan provides an ideal mechanism for expanding the pool of qualified potential applicants to increase diversity within school staff in Saskatoon.

Conclusion

This research explored a relatively new interaction in recent history between Pakistani Muslim students and Saskatoon public schools that previously had very little knowledge of each other. Rigour in the research was ensured by employing strategies common in qualitative research. These included the purposeful selection of participants, ‘thick description’ through detailed data collection, member checking to ensure accuracy of data transcription, and triangulation of various forms of data, including participant interviews, researcher field notes and the literature reviewed. Participants’ data highlighted the pressures experienced by both parties in this interaction, with Pakistani students struggling to adjust and integrate so that they could

achieve academic success and school personnel attempting to respond to the sensibilities of Pakistani students and their families. In light of past encounters, both sides believe that more is being demanded of them. This research delineates the possibilities of finding a middle ground, where reasonable accommodations can be achieved that is acceptable to both parties. However, certain innovations for such accommodation are necessary, and these form the basis of the recommendations emerging from the study.

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APPENDIX A: PAKISTANI FATHER OF A NEWCOMER STUDENT CONSENT FORM

I have read and had the research process explained to me, and agree to the terms of consent required for me to participate in the interview phase for the study: *Integration of Pakistani Muslim Immigrant Students in Canadian Public School System - A Case Study of a public school division collegiate in Saskatoon*

By completing this consent form, I also submit that I have received a copy of this form and understand and agree to its intent.

I understand that my participation is not part of my regular duties required for my employment. It is an optional activity. I also understand that I will be informed of any new information that may affect my decision to participate or to continue to participate in the study. I understand that the interview will take approximately 45 minutes to complete. I understand that the data from this interview process will be used for the qualitative analysis of this study. I understand that my participation in this study is strictly voluntary and that I may choose to withdraw from the process at any time. Any data pertaining to my partial participation shall be destroyed should I choose to withdraw from the research. **My right to withdraw data from the study will apply until data has been pooled, and the data analysis process has begun. After this, it is possible that some form of research dissemination will have already occurred, and it may not be possible to withdraw my data.** Furthermore, I understand that my name will be kept confidential, and data will be reported only for research purposes.

I have been advised as a participant that I may access the results of the study should I wish to do so by contacting the researcher by means of the contact information provided at the bottom of this form. I have also been advised that any questions I may have regarding my rights as a participant may be addressed by contacting the Ethics office at the University of Saskatchewan at (306) 966-2084 and that if I reside out of Saskatoon, I may call this number collect.

I understand that this research study has been approved by the University of Saskatchewan's Behavioral Research Ethics Board on (date)_____.

Participant's Name_____ Position_____

Address_____ Phone # _____

Signature_____ Date:_____

Contact Information

Ashfaque Ahmed – Researcher

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APPENDIX B: PAKISTANI MOTHER OF A NEWCOMER STUDENT CONSENT FORM

I have read and had the research process explained to me, and agree to the terms of consent required for me to participate in the interview phase for the study: *Integration of Pakistani Muslim Immigrant Students in Canadian Public School System - A Case Study of a public school division collegiate in Saskatoon*

By completing this consent form, I also submit that I have received a copy of this form and understand and agree to its intent.

I understand that my participation is not part of my regular duties required for my employment. It is an optional activity. I also understand that I will be informed of any new information that may affect my decision to participate or to continue to participate in the study. I understand that the interview will take approximately 45 minutes to complete. I understand that the data from this interview process will be used for the qualitative analysis of this study.

I understand that my participation in this study is strictly voluntary and that I may choose to withdraw from the process at any time. Any data pertaining to my partial participation shall be destroyed should I choose to withdraw from the research. **My right to withdraw data from the study will apply until data has been pooled, and the data analysis process has begun. After this, it is possible that some form of research dissemination will have already occurred, and it may not be possible to withdraw my data.** Furthermore, I understand that my name will be kept confidential, and data will be reported only for research purposes.

I have been advised as a participant that I may access the results of the study should I wish to do so by contacting the researcher by means of the contact information provided at the bottom of this form. I have also been advised that any questions I may have regarding my rights as a participant may be addressed by contacting the Ethics office at the University of Saskatchewan at (306) 966-2084 and that if I reside out of Saskatoon, I may call this number collect.

I understand that this research study has been approved by the University of Saskatchewan's Behavioral Research Ethics Board on (date)_____.

Participant's Name _____ Position _____
Address _____ Phone # _____
Signature _____ Date: _____

Contact Information

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APPENDIX C: PAKISTANI FEMALE NEWCOMER STUDENT CONSENT FORM

I have read and had the research process explained to me, and agree to the terms of consent required for me to participate in the interview phase for the study: *Integration of Pakistani Muslim Immigrant Students in Canadian Public School System - A Case Study of a public school division collegiate in Saskatoon*

By completing this consent form, I also submit that I have received a copy of this form and understand and agree to its intent. I understand that my participation is not part of my regular duties required for my employment. It is an optional activity. I also understand that I will be informed of any new information that may affect my decision to participate or to continue to participate in the study. I understand that the interview will take approximately 45 minutes to complete. I understand that the data from this interview process will be used for the qualitative analysis of this study.

I understand that my participation in this study is strictly voluntary and that I may choose to withdraw from the process at any time. Any data pertaining to my partial participation shall be destroyed should I choose to withdraw from the research. **My right to withdraw data from the study will apply until data has been pooled, and the data analysis process has begun. After this, it is possible that some form of research dissemination will have already occurred, and it may not be possible to withdraw my data.** Furthermore, I understand that my name will be kept confidential, and data will be reported only for research purposes.

I have been advised as a participant that I may access the results of the study should I wish to do so by contacting the researcher by means of the contact information provided at the bottom of this form. I have also been advised that any questions I may have regarding my rights as a participant may be addressed by contacting the Ethics office at the University of Saskatchewan at (306) 966-2084 and that if I reside out of Saskatoon, I may call this number collect.

I understand that this research study has been approved by the University of Saskatchewan's Behavioral Research Ethics Board on (date)_____.

Student Name _____

Student Signature _____ Date: _____

Address _____ Phone # _____

Contact Information

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APPENDIX D: PAKISTANI MALE NEWCOMER STUDENT CONSENT FORM

I have read and had the research process explained to me, and agree to the terms of consent required for me to participate in the interview phase for the study: *Integration of Pakistani Muslim Immigrant Students in Canadian Public School System - A Case Study of a public school division collegiate in Saskatoon*

By completing this consent form, I also submit that I have received a copy of this form and understand and agree to its intent. I understand that my participation is not part of my regular duties required for my employment. It is an optional activity. I also understand that I will be informed of any new information that may affect my decision to participate or to continue to participate in the study. I understand that the interview will take approximately 45 minutes to complete. I understand that the data from this interview process will be used for the qualitative analysis of this study.

I understand that my participation in this study is strictly voluntary and that I may choose to withdraw from the process at any time. Any data pertaining to my partial participation shall be destroyed should I choose to withdraw from the research. **My right to withdraw data from the study will apply until data has been pooled, and the data analysis process has begun. After this, it is possible that some form of research dissemination will have already occurred, and it may not be possible to withdraw my data.** Furthermore, I understand that my name will be kept confidential, and data will be reported only for research purposes.

I have been advised as a participant that I may access the results of the study should I wish to do so by contacting the researcher by means of the contact information provided at the bottom of this form.

I have also been advised that any questions I may have regarding my rights as a participant may be addressed by contacting the Ethics office at the University of Saskatchewan at (306) 966-2084 and that if I reside out of Saskatoon, I may call this number collect.

I understand that this research study has been approved by the University of Saskatchewan's Behavioral Research Ethics Board on (date)_____.

Student Name _____

Student Signature _____ Date: _____

Address _____ Phone # _____

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APPENDIX E: SSWIS WORKER OF OPEN DOOR SOCIETY CONSENT FORM

I have read and had the research process explained to me, and agree to the terms of consent required for me to participate in the interview phase for the study: *Integration of Pakistani Muslim Immigrant Students in Canadian Public School System - A Case Study of a public school division collegiate in Saskatoon*

By completing this consent form, I also submit that I have received a copy of this form and understand and agree to its intent. I understand that my participation is not part of my regular duties required for my employment. It is an optional activity. I also understand that I will be informed of any new information that may affect my decision to participate or to continue to participate in the study.

I understand that the interview will take approximately 45 minutes to complete. I understand that the data from this interview process will be used for the qualitative analysis of this study.

I understand that my participation in this study is strictly voluntary and that I may choose to withdraw from the process at any time. Any data pertaining to my partial participation shall be destroyed should I choose to withdraw from the research. **My right to withdraw data from the study will apply until data has been pooled, and the data analysis process has begun. After this, it is possible that some form of research dissemination will have already occurred, and it may not be possible to withdraw my data.** Furthermore, I understand that my name will be kept confidential, and data will be reported only for research purposes.

I have been advised as a participant that I may access the results of the study should I wish to do so by contacting the researcher by means of the contact information provided at the bottom of this form.

I have also been advised that any questions I may have regarding my rights as a participant may be addressed by contacting the Ethics office at the University of Saskatchewan at (306) 966-2084 and that if I reside out of Saskatoon, I may call this number collect.

I understand that this research study has been approved by the University of Saskatchewan's Behavioral Research Ethics Board on (date)_____.

Participant's Name _____	Position _____
Address _____	Phone # _____
Signature _____	Date: _____

Contact Information

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APPENDIX F: Letter to President Pakistan Canada Cultural Association

Seeking Support for Participants Recruitment

Ashfaque Ahmed - 1118 Wilkins Crescent Saskatoon S7J 5E

Mr. – Khawaja Mustafa Rashi

Phone (306) 880-5638

Dear Sir, as a requirement for the completion of my Master of Educational Administration degree, I am seeking your support to recruit participants for educational inquiry in Saskatoon Public School Division

The purpose of this inquiry is to explore integration and settlement gaps, challenges, and opportunities for newcomer Muslim immigrant students from Pakistan. With your support, I would like to select one collegiate in Saskatoon to conduct this research. The research findings shall help address issues at the school level to make changes and improve education services and delivery. The inquiry would focus on socio-cultural, religious, gender, emotional and academic integration, and settlement of the newcomers. Secondly, inform the decision-makers for potential gaps and opportunities to address and incorporate in future strategies. These findings would come out after having data collected from two Muslim students (Male and female) of Pakistani origin, two parents (Mother and father) of Pakistani Muslim students and two SWISS school workers of Saskatoon Open Door Society.

It is a qualitative study using the tool of semi-structured interviews with seven participants. The digital data will be collected during February and June 2019. The data would be analyzed and concluded with recommendations by November to present a thesis for defence.

This study has ensured the confidentiality and privacy of the respondents, so it does not have any negative impact on the personal, academic, and professional lives of the participants. The research would seek informed consent from the participants, and the consent of underage students would be taken from parents who show willingness for their children to participate in this research.

Your support and approval for this research would be appreciated, and it shall help to inquire about newcomer students in the province, which is very critical in the province with a large number of newcomer students attending the Saskatoon School Division and all other divisions in the province. This research would be able to provide new knowledge to the Saskatoon School Division and the province to make the best use of it in future programming and strategies.

If you have concerns or questions regarding this research proposal, I would be pleased to provide you with additional information. I can be reached at (306) 880- 0393 or by email at asa781@mail.usask.ca

Sincerely yours,

Ashfaque Ahmed

APPENDIX G: CONSENT FORM FOR DATA TRANSCRIPTION RELEASE

Study Title: *Integration of Pakistani Muslim Immigrant Students in Canadian Public School System - A Case Study of a public school division collegiate in Saskatoon*

I am returning the transcript of your recorded interview.

I _____ have reviewed the complete transcript of my interview with the researcher. I have been provided with the opportunity to add, alter and delete information from the transcript as I find appropriate. I acknowledge that the transcript accurately reflects what I said during my interview with Joe Pearce, the researcher.

I hereby authorize the release of the transcript to be used in the manner described in the consent form.

I have received a copy of this Data Transcript Release Form for my records.

Participant Signature

Date

Researcher Signature

Date

APPENDIX H: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PAKISTANI ONE MALE AND ONE FEMALE STUDENT

1. Share how your current school in Canada is different from your school in Pakistan in terms of academics, culture and social environment, dress, diversity, language, religion, facilities, gender, race and colour, etc.
2. If you have the opportunity, what changes do you want in to see your current school which will help to improve your education and social experience in the Canadian education system
3. How could your school help to have more freedom of practicing and expressing your faith and religion without fears and any biases from your co-students and your teachers?
4. Please share your experience of how being a student of Muslim origin impact your school life, and what do you want the school to change for you and your fellow students to have better experience?
5. Does your gender identity, as a Muslim male or a Muslim female student bring you different experiences in Canadian education system?
6. In your experience, what steps should your school take to have fast integration of newcomer Muslim students in the Canadian public school system
7. What are some clear boundaries defined by your parents to follow in your academic and social lives?
8. Please share what resources are required to help with faster integration of newcomer students
9. How much does global islamophobia bother you, and has it become a challenge for your social and academic achievement in your school?

10. What are the things which are not working in the current education system and what solutions you bring to improve them?
11. Please share your experiences if you have ever been bullied in school and outside your school based on your Islamic religious symbols such as headscarf for girls, beard for young adults, Islamic greetings or any other dress code and appearance which mark you as a Muslim? If not, do you think some other Muslim students are bullied because they are Muslims?
12. What resources your school provides in terms of counselling and other emotional supports if you are being bullied based on your religious identity?
13. What would be your coping and supporting system if you were bullied based on your religious identity

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FROM PAKISTANI MUSLIM PARENTS

1. Why did you choose to send your child to a public collegiate instead of a private or Muslim collegiate in Saskatoon?
2. What do you expect from the public school for the academic and social development of your child?
3. How important are your Pakistani culture and Islamic religious values for your child to learn and practice in Canada? If it is very important than how the school of your child could help to retain those values?
4. Is the current public collegiate making your child a good Canadian and a good Muslim? If you disagree with this statement, what steps public school and school division should take to make your child a good Canadian Muslim?
5. In your view, what are the gaps that the school needs to address to improve the academic, social and emotional development of your child?
6. Do you think Islamophobia among other communities is becoming a barrier to the integration of Muslim students in school systems in Saskatoon?
7. What Pakistani and Islamic values are important for a Muslim female student to follow in the Saskatoon school system?
8. How do you think some Muslim students are bullied in school based on their religious identity as Muslims based on religious symbols, headscarves for girls, facial hairs for young adult students or based on other features of their identity?
9. How can the school help if your son or daughter is being bullied based on their religious identity as Muslim based on religious symbols, headscarves for girls, facial hairs for young adult students or based on other features of their identity?

APPENDIX J: QUESTIONNAIRE TO SSWIS WORKER – SASKATOON OPEN DOOR SOCIETY

1. How do you support newcomer students in Saskatoon Public School Division?
2. How is it different working with Muslim newcomer students from non-Muslim newcomer students?
3. How could school help in faster integration and settlement of newcomer Muslim Pakistani students in schools?
4. What Pakistani and Islamic values are important for a Muslim female student to follow in the Saskatoon school system?
5. How do you see Muslim Pakistani students based on gender, male and female? Do they learn and socialize differently in Canadian schools based on their gender identity?
6. What are the resources, professional development and strategic planning gaps at school and school division level to address challenges of integration and settlement of newcomer Muslim students in Saskatoon Canada.?
7. How do you see Pakistani Muslim students' needs different from other students in your school in terms of socio-cultural, gender, faith, language, and academic achievement?
8. Do you think Pakistani Muslim students face any biases, prejudice and stereotypes within the school which push some towards isolation instead of being a more integral part of the school?
9. How do you understand Islam as a religion and Islamophobia?

10. Please share your experience working with Muslim parents and how their role could be further engaged in the academic and social development of their children?
11. How do you think the increased number of Pakistani Muslim students have an impact on schools with which you work?
12. Do you think some Muslim students are bullied in school based on their religious identity as Muslims based on religious symbols, headscarves for girls, facial hairs for young adult students or based on other features of their identity?
13. If put in the role of authority with resources, what steps would you take to integrate best Pakistani Muslim male and female students in Saskatoon public schools?