

CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Canada is the first country in the world to adopt multiculturalism as an official policy (Government of Canada, 2004). This policy was cultivated from Canada's constant concern about immigration policy and the processes of immigrants' acculturation and adaptation to Canadian culture¹. Currently, half of all population growth in Canada is accounted for by immigration (Statistics Canada, 2006). During the previous waves of immigration, the representatives of culturally close (or similar) European nations dominated immigration, whereas now, the citizens of the culturally distant (or dissimilar) Asia and Middle East countries constitute the majority of immigrants. Statistics Canada 2001 Census reported the largest increase of immigrants came from Muslim countries: 253,265 in 1991 to 579,640 in 2001. Muslims represented 2% of the total Canadian population in 2001, up from under 1% a decade earlier (128.9% increase), and immigration was a key factor in this increase. Accordingly, modest prairie regions like Saskatchewan have experienced a large increase of Muslim immigrants, with the population growing from 1,185 in 1991 to 2,230 in 2001 (88.2% increase).

In recent years, the number of first generation (i.e., foreign-born) female immigrants to Canada from different regions of the world has increased dramatically, with women comprising more than half of all persons who immigrate to Canada (Statistics Canada, 2006). In 2001 more than half (58%) of all immigrant women residing in Canada came from Asia and the Middle East. Of these, the majority (90%) of Muslim women who immigrated were first generation 15 years of age and over (Statistics Canada, 2001a).

In Saskatchewan, 5% of the population is first generation immigrants with 25,295 immigrant women province-wide. These numbers are expected to continue to rise based on the 88% increase of Muslim immigrants observed in the last decade (Statistics Canada, 2001b). These statistics raise questions concerning acculturation (i.e., the psychological and sociocultural processes and outcomes of intercultural contact; Berry, 1996) and adaptation (i.e., well-being and intercultural "fit"; Berry, 1996) of Muslim immigrants who come to Canada, and especially to less multi-ethnic Prairie Provinces like Saskatchewan with a very different cultural heritage. This may result in consequences for both the immigrants and society at large when these individuals

¹ The term 'culture' here and throughout the text refers to "the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group" (Merriam-Webster Online, 2008).

encounter problems with acculturation and integration. For example, immigrants can experience acculturative stress when adapting to a culturally unfamiliar environment, thereby generating uncertainty and subsequent lack of adjustment. This lack of adjustment may contribute to in-group favoritism, thus having a negative influence on the perception of the new host culture (Sharlin & Moin, 2001).

Muslim immigrant women likely face unique issues, and may be especially adversely affected because of their triple burden of being a gender (female) minority in relation to their socioeconomic positions in their traditional heritage cultures, and religious² (Muslim) and cultural (immigrant) minorities in Canada. For example, studies indicate that women who immigrate from traditional³ cultures are susceptible to impeded access to health information and services due to their multiple roles and unshared family responsibilities (Anderson, Blue, Holbrook, & Ng, 1993; George & Ramkissoon, 1998). These immigrant women must bear dual workloads – domestic and salaried – in addition to settlement and adjustment challenges, thus making them prime targets for compromised health (Ahmed et al., 2004).

Research suggests that compared to men, women experience more difficulties in the new cultural context with regard to language skills, credentialing, employment, health and culture/family (Aroian, 2001; Aroian, Norris, & Chiang, 2003; Ataca & Berry, 2002). Specifically, first generation Muslim immigrant women in Canada are likely to experience significant immigration and settlement challenges and may be considered a population at high risk for physical and mental distress as a result of the diverse and confounding roles and expectations of both their heritage culture communities (local or international) and those of the new host communities (Meleis, 1991). The purpose of my research is to explore first generation Muslim immigrant women's experiences living among cultures.

1.2 Purpose and Aims of the Study

The primary purpose of my study is to explore first generation (i.e., foreign-born) Muslim immigrant women's acculturation experiences and strategies from a religious, cultural, and gender perspective to increase our understanding of the diverse and confounding roles and

² Relating to or manifesting faithful devotion to an acknowledged ultimate reality or deity; of, relating to, or devoted to religious beliefs or observances (Merriam-Webster Online, 2008).

³ The term *traditional* pertains to both (a) an inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior as a religious practice or a social custom (Merriam-Webster Online, 2006), and (b) the belief that a woman's primary responsibilities are in the domestic sphere, while men are accountable for financially supporting the family; Naidoo & Davis, 1988).

expectations of two distinct cultures – their heritage culture and their new host Canadian culture. The specific aims of this study are to explore and describe the shared and unique: (a) overall experiences of Muslim immigrant women living in a Canadian Prairie City; (b) experiences transitioning from their role in the family in a traditional non-Western culture to their role in the family in an egalitarian⁴ Canadian culture; and (c) factors that hinder and facilitate their adaptation in Canada.

1.3 Study Overview

In order to explore the essence of the acculturation phenomenon experienced by first generation Muslim immigrant women in Canada, it is necessary to examine not only the context of the culture of settlement (i.e., Canada), but that of the culture of origin (e.g., Pakistan, Afghanistan). This exploration establishes cultural aspects that can subsequently be compared to the culture of settlement and serve as a tool for gauging cultural discrepancies. Therefore, I begin by conducting a literature review that provides a brief overview of the Islamic faith and outlines general characteristics of traditional Muslim culture regarding women's roles as they are tied to culture, the community, and the family. This is followed by discourse on egalitarian Canadian culture. Next, I address the divergent traditional Muslim and egalitarian Canadian cultural values, followed by a general synopsis of the process of acculturation and adaptation of immigrants. Upon a brief review of the multicultural perspective of immigrant adaptation adopted in pluralistic Canadian culture, I conclude my background research with a review of the documented literature on Muslim immigrant women living among cultures. The literature review demonstrates that immigrant women must confront old (i.e., culture of origin) and new (i.e., culture of settlement) cultural values and domestic practices that coexist, and at times, conflict. It illustrates further that women interpret some of the differences between the cultures as negative, stressful and a hindrance to their adaptation to the new host culture; and essentialize and stereotype cultural differences between their heritage culture and the unfamiliar new host culture⁵. Finally, the literature review addresses⁵ potential factors influencing women's

⁴ Marked by *egalitarianism* defined as both (a) a belief in human equality especially with respect to social, political, and economic rights and privileges, and (b) a social philosophy advocating the removal of inequalities among people.

⁵ The tendency to essentialize and stereotype cultural differences (e.g., between two cultures) is evidenced in both the literature review and the study participant's discourse; it is not constructed by or endorsed by the researcher of this study.

understanding of their place in the host culture, and women's sources of both support and stress in their cultural adaptation.

The theoretical perspective of phenomenology and specifically, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used to explore first generation Muslim immigrant women's acculturation experiences and strategies from a religious, cultural and gender perspective. The *phenomenological* facet of this approach provides a forum for women to express their unique lived experiences and allow for a deeper understanding of the essence of Muslim immigrant women's actual lived experiences in managing the divergent roles and expectations of their heritage culture and Canadian culture. The *interpretative* facet of IPA, with its emphasis on understanding the significance of individuals' experiences, requires the researcher to access individuals' experiential accounts and meaningfully interpret the way individuals make sense of the world. This approach acknowledges the researchers' active, rather than passive, role within the research and analytic process (Smith, Jarman, & Osborn, 1999).

In conjunction with IPA, in-depth semi-structured interviews with first generation Muslim immigrant women living in a Canadian Prairie City were conducted regarding: (a) their experience of participating in both their heritage and Canadian culture; (b) their experienced maintenance and/or shifting of roles and expectations and how this affects other aspects of their lives (e.g., work, family, cultural adaptation); and (c) the aspects that hinder and facilitate their adjustment to the new host Canadian culture.

This research adds to our knowledge about the impact of immigration and acculturation on a group of first generation Muslim immigrant women, and elucidates the nature of their experiences in negotiating identities influenced by the coexistence of their traditional heritage culture and Canadian culture. Specifically, this study serves to: (a) create a detailed picture that illustrates the essence of the acculturation experiences of a small group of first generation Muslim immigrant women in Saskatchewan, based on an interpretation of how these women individually and mutually describe, understand, make sense of, and cope with their experiences and the factors influencing their experiences; (b) add to the body of knowledge in the areas of acculturation and acculturative stress as they relate to immigrant groups from traditional non-Western cultures; (c) inform immigrant and refugee serving agencies in the development of culturally sensitive programs of support that are both gender- and cultural-specific; and (d) inform immigrant health services and immigration policy.

CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to establish the contexts of both culture of origin and culture of settlement, this chapter starts with a brief overview of Islam, followed by an examination of women in traditional Muslim culture and the egalitarian Canadian cultural context. Literature on divergent cultural values, acculturation and adaptation, multiculturalism, Canada and integration also will be reviewed. Finally, research on the stress and conflict first generation Muslim immigrant women experience living among cultures and their use of coping strategies to deal with such stress will be presented.

Research in the area of cultural diversity, family structures and the impact of religious beliefs on family life is growing (Haj-Yahia, 1995; Modares, 1981; Tseng & Hsu, 1991). However, there is a gap in the literature on Islamic beliefs and its impact on the lives of Muslim immigrant families in Canada. In order to fill this gap, it is first necessary to understand Islamic beliefs and the basic link it creates among cultures.

2.1 Islam

There are more than one billion Muslims worldwide, with almost seven million in the United States alone (Sechzer, 2004). Although all Arab countries follow some form of Islam, there are many non-Arab countries that are populated predominantly by Muslims such as Afghanistan, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, Turkey, as well as much of Northern Africa. Specifically, only 10-26% of the world's Muslims are Arab, while the majority are Asian or African (Ott, Al-Khadhuri, & Al-Junabi, 2003). At present, Christianity is the world's largest religion with 33% of followers worldwide. However, Islam is the world's second largest religion and is the fastest growing religion with 21% of followers worldwide (Sechzer, 2004).

It is necessary to clarify certain terminology in order to describe Muslim culture in relation to women. *Islam* is a form of worship or religion, and the Arabic word itself means submission, specifically submission to *Allah*, the supreme and only God (Hodge, 2005). Both the terms *Muslim* and *Islamic* can be used (and in the current research are used) to refer to the followers of Islam (Campbell & Guiao, 2004). The *Qur'an* is the holy book of the religion of Islam, and is understood to be the Word of God revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, the founder of Islam (Hodge, 2005). The *hadith* means the traditions and is the collected sayings and practices of Prophet Muhammad gathered after his death (Treacher, 2003). The *shari'a* is a legal interpretation or Islamic law derived from the Qur'an, and governs all aspects of life (Waines,

1995). The prescribed way of life is “based on practice and not theory with explicit acts that will assure *his* salvation” (Sechzer, 2004, p. 264). Muslims must submit to Allah by adhering to the Five Pillars of Islam or requirements of the faith: (1) the *creed* that there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah; (2) the *ritual prayer* recited 3-5 times a day (dependant upon the sect⁶) from a state of mental and physical purity; (3) *almsgiving* to the poor; (4) the observance of *Ramadan* or fasting from sunrise until sunset during the lunar ninth month of the Muslim calendar; and (5) the religious *hajj* or pilgrimage to Mecca, a once in a lifetime obligation if feasible to undertake (Ott et al., 2003; Sechzer, 2004).

The two main branches of Islam are the Sunni Muslims and the Shi’ite Muslims (Campbell & Guiao, 2004; Sechzer, 2004). The Sunnis, the largest group, comprise approximately 90% of Muslims worldwide, whereas the Shi’ites form the remaining 10% of Muslims. The difference between the two groups dates back to the time of Prophet Muhammad’s death and is based on who was seen as his true successor. Renard (1998) makes a helpful comparison between Protestantism and Sunni Islam and Roman Catholicism and Shi’ite Islam. In Sunni Islam, like in the Protestant faith, a direct relationship between the believer and God unmediated by external authority structures is emphasized. On the other hand, Shi’ite Islam, like in the Roman Catholic faith, utilizes a hierarchical authority structure of legal scholars based on Shi’ite community consensus who are responsible for interpreting God’s Word for the followers (Mottahedeh, 1985).

2.2 Women in Traditional Muslim Culture

Today, approximately half a billion Muslim women reside all over the world (Smith, 1987). There is diversity in Muslim women’s roles both across and within different Muslim cultures (Charrad, 1998). This may be related to the Qur’anic prescription of a *way of life* being based on practice with a range of individual options. Further, although there is widespread agreement among Muslims that following the straight path of Allah’s precepts should govern all aspects of life, the way in which these laws are practiced varies greatly and depends on contextual variables related to, for example, culture, political realities and issues of interpretation (Hodge, 2005). Thus, although the degree of adherence to Islam varies from culture to culture, it is the common identity that exists among Muslim women (Bodman & Tohidi, 1998). In Islamic

⁶ The Agakhani Ismailis do not recite the obligatory ritual Islamic Prayer (Arabic; *Salaah* - Persian; *Namaz*), five times a day. In lieu thereof, Ismailis recite in their Jamat Khanas a ritual prayer called “*Holy Du’a*”, three times a day (Meherally, 2006).

regions, gender roles are primarily prescribed by the Qur'an, and are interpreted and experienced differently by different Muslim sects (Smith, 1987). It is for this reason that the experience of gender in Islam cannot be conceptualized independently from the experience of the Islamic faith (Treacher, 2003). Thus, it can be said that regardless of the interpretation of women's roles, the experience of women's roles and the degree of adherence to Islam, the practice of the Islamic faith encompasses and unifies Muslim women all over the world. It is from this perspective that I represent Muslim women in my research.

As with any religion, there is much diversity. Therefore, conflicting value positions within Islamic discourse and ideology – due to various laws and cultures in different countries, as well as local social, economic, and historical factors – affect the ways in which Islam is interpreted and practiced (Daneshpour, 1998; Sechzer, 2004). That is, Islam practiced in Pakistan is distinct from the Islam practiced in Afghanistan, as is the practice of Islam in Kenya different from Islamic practice in Iran. For example, at least two Muslim positions, the liberal and the conservative positions, exist regarding women's rights and beliefs about their appropriate roles (Khalid & Frieze, 2004). While the conservative group promotes the marginalization of Muslim women, frowning on their independence from their roles as wives and mothers, the liberal group maintains an egalitarian view of women and men, encouraging liberation of women in Islamic societies (Haq, 1996). Thus, it is difficult to make universal statements about Islam, Muslim culture and women's roles. However, three interconnected values – the sovereignty of God, the community, and the family – are widely acknowledged as the *foundation of Islam* (Hodge, 2005), and therefore, will serve as a basis for the ensuing cultural comparison.

The principal tenet in the doctrine of the Qur'an is the "absolute oneness of God"; the basic Islamic creed is "there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is His prophet" (Sechzer, 2004, p. 267). Allah, understood to be all-powerful and all-knowing, is at the core of existence for Muslims, and therefore, everything that happens to the Muslim is due to Allah's will (Husain, 1998). This belief guides the Muslim during difficult times and encourages perseverance through life's hardships. Through such adversity, Allah may test His followers. However, through self-reflection and recognition that one may have strayed from the Shari'a, Muslims are confident that Allah, the most beneficent and merciful, will forgive His true follower (Waines, 1995). In cases where the follower accepts his or her fate – that it is God's will – with unwavering belief, bravery and endurance, he or she is confident that Allah will recompense

them in the next life and has endowed the support of the community as a means to help the afflicted endure (Jafari, 1993).

As with every aspect of Muslim life, because Islam dictates how one lives, religious and social structures also cannot be conceptualized independently (Ott et al., 2003). Community is observed as an essential Islamic value, whereby the welfare of the community, the *ummah*, is to be reinforced and protected by all (Haynes, Eweiss, Mageed, & Chung, 1997). Entrenched in the belief that before God all people are equal, Muslims primarily value kindness, compassion, empathy, goodwill towards others, solidarity, equality and justice between individuals, the significance of social support and affirmative human connectedness (Kelly, Aridi, & Bakhtiar, 1996). To this extent, individual freedom is restricted to safeguard members of the community, since it is the community that keeps and empowers the individual (Jafari, 1993). Hence, ideals and values such as autonomy, self-sufficiency, self-actualization and personal achievement (Western individualistic values) are not as important for Muslims. Rather, Muslims' ideals and values are synonymous with interdependence, accord, community development, and collective achievement (Kelly et al., 1996).

The family is the fundamental social unit for Muslims and is conceptualized to comprise relatives and/or the Islamic community at large (Fernea, 1995; Ott et al., 2003). Family structure is predominantly patriarchal⁷, and is typically comprised of three or more generations of extended family, which improves and contributes to the community (Daneshpour, 1998; Sheikh, 2000). Respecting and taking care of one's parents and the elderly is an Islamic teaching that is highly significant in the expression of faith (Ott et al., 2003). Important events in both individual and family life cycles are celebrated through diverse cultural customs and ceremonies that often have religious underpinnings (Amini, 1994). For example, celebrating the birth of a child involves thanking Allah and can include practices such as whispering the daily calls to prayer into the child's ears, almsgiving, or slaughtering a lamb for a family celebration (Hedayat, 2001). Although the responsibility for propagating spiritual and social values is shared by both the nuclear and extended family, it is primarily the responsibility of the husband and the wife (Fernea, 1995). Seen as a serious life-long commitment, marriage is encouraged or arranged by

⁷ The *belt of classic patriarchy* includes regions of North Africa, the Muslim Middle East (including Turkey and Iran), South and East Asia, and is characterized by male domination, son preference, restrictive codes of behaviour for women (e.g., veiling and sex-segregation), and the association of family honour with female virtue (Kandiyoti, 1992).

members of the family (Ott et al., 2003). Marriage is conceptualized as the union and the establishment of a social contract between two extended families, wherein the husband and wife are regarded with equal worth and as having complementary roles (Corbett, 1994; Daneshpour, 1998; Smith, 1999; Treacher, 2003). That is, men and women are different but complementary in that they assume different responsibilities in the public and private sphere (based on biological differences) and marriage, and family life and the community hinge on this special reciprocal relationship (Treacher, 2003).

Within this complementary gender system, women's roles as wives, mothers and daughters are viewed as vital to the maintenance of the family's spiritual well-being and the social order (Treacher, 2003). Generally, women's duties are related to the domestic sphere where they have the primary responsibility for maintaining the home and raising the children (Daneshpour, 1998; Hodge, 2004; Predelli, 2004; Treacher, 2003). It should be noted that although women are not necessarily restricted from working outside the home, there is often strain between employment and appropriately caring for the family, especially since procreation is a main value (Corbett, 1994; Sechzer, 2004). Furthermore, women are responsible for maintaining the ritual purity of the home (i.e., protection from pollutants such as blood, pigs, and alcohol), and because they typically follow a stricter adherence to the daily requirements of Islam, women are the custodians of their family's faith and are particularly concerned with raising committed Muslims (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2001; Moghaddam, 2003). Men assume responsibility for material sustenance and family leadership (Treacher, 2003). This gendered division of labor is seen as natural and based on the biological differences between men and women (Predelli, 2004). Thus, this emphasis on complementarity promotes less conflict and more accord within the family with far-reaching benefits to the community, such as fostering a stable upbringing for children and caring for the elderly (Daneshpour, 1998; Ott et al., 2003).

To uphold the family and the community, beliefs regarding sexuality and virtue are of primary importance (Treacher, 2003). Specifically, modesty is a significant spiritual and cultural value that is imperative for women as they are expected to be virtuous, righteous, and maintain the moral order. Conversely, men are characterized as sexually weak-willed. Therefore, in order to lessen the sexual distraction to men, genders are segregated in the Mosques (i.e., Islamic house of worship). Moreover, when women enter public space they may choose not to (or in some regions and cultures are not permitted to) intermingle socially with men, and may (or must)

adopt Islamic dress, including the practice of veiling or *hijab* (meaning curtain), wearing a *chador* (i.e., material covering the entire female body), or in Afghanistan, wearing the *burqa* (i.e., material covering the entire body and face) as a means of expressing respect, dignity, and modesty (Sechzer, 2004; Treacher, 2003). This practice of Islamic dress assures women's chastity, allows women to be recognized as decent, and serves as protection from harassment and negative attention from potential viewers (Sechzer, 2004). Finally, for some, the hijab (i.e., Muslim women's dress) can be understood as "a very powerful, pervasive symbol of Muslim women's identity" (Ruby, 2006, p. 60), serving as a tool for both proclaiming and reinforcing Muslim identities.

At this juncture, it is important to note the ongoing debate about Islam's oppression of women (Treacher, 2003). In some regions and cultures (historically and today), the practice of women's exclusion from some religious and communal aspects (educational, work-related, social) of life, seclusion of women via their dress, proximity to men and being relegated to the home are critical factors in the diminishing status of Muslim women (Sechzer, 2004). While some secular feminists characterize Islam and the Arab world as patriarchal and oppressive (El-Saadawi, 1999), Muslim feminists suggest that Islam, the Qur'an and the hadith (i.e., Prophet Muhammad's recorded teachings) actually provide frameworks that confer women respect and honor (Ahmed, 1992). Muslim feminists argue that "Islam has delivered women from being perceived and treated as commodities" (Treacher, 2003, p. 64), unlike their exploited (as cheap labor) and demoralized (as sex objects) Western counterparts. Finally, the aforementioned *complimentary* gender system, which inherently stresses the balance between duties and rights, does not necessarily contradict the traditional patriarchal Islamic family system as the emphasis on duties overrules the emphasis on rights (Treacher, 2003).

2.3 Egalitarian Canadian Culture

As with Muslim women from traditional cultures, diversity among Canadian women's roles both across and within different Canadian societies/communities also exists. One must "expect that variant norms, values and attitudes toward family life and gender roles are likely to be found in different regions and among different linguistic groups" (Wu & Baer, 1996, p. 439). To this extent, it is difficult to make universal statements about Canadian culture and Canadian women's roles, particularly since Canada is a pluralistic culture. Furthermore, it is necessary to clarify that in my research I do not intend to compare Muslim immigrant women from traditional

(i.e., the belief that a woman's primary responsibilities are in the domestic sphere, while men are accountable for financially supporting the family; Naidoo & Davis, 1988) Muslim cultures to, for example, Protestant women from egalitarian (i.e., a belief in human equality especially with respect to social, political, and economic rights and privileges) Canadian cultures. Therefore, any attempt to explicitly outline Canadian women's values and their roles in the domestic sphere would render itself a futile task. However, in order to understand Muslim immigrant women's acculturation process (i.e., general psychological and sociocultural processes and outcomes of intercultural contact; Berry, 1996) in the new cultural context, it is necessary to explore the basic Canadian value system, which is partly informed by the culture (Preston, 1986).

According to the Statistics Canada 2001 Census report, seven out of every 10 Canadians identify themselves as either Roman Catholic or Protestant. Specifically, Roman Catholics were the largest religious group with approximately 12.8 million believers (43 % of the population), followed by 8.7 million Protestants, the second largest religious group (29% of the population). Additionally, 2.6% of the population identified themselves as *Christian*, yielding a combined total of almost 75% of the Canadian population, in contrast to the aforementioned 2% of Muslims in Canada. In Saskatchewan, Protestants outnumbered Roman Catholics with 449,200 (47%) followers compared to 286,800 (30%), respectively. Thus, it is clearly evident that the population of Saskatchewan and Canada in general, is predominantly Protestant and Roman Catholic, and therefore, it can be said that the dominant values of Canadians are shaped by Christianity in its various forms.

In addition to Christian ideology, the basic values of Canadians also have been shaped by the ideals of liberalism and egalitarianism that can be traced back to the Enlightenment movement in Europe in the 16th – 18th centuries. A deliberately *egalitarian culture*, Canada guarantees all Canadians *equality before the law and equality of opportunities regardless of their origins*. Both liberalism and egalitarianism are based on individualism, a political philosophical doctrine whereby the interests and rights of the individual should take precedence over the interests of the state or social group (Lukes, 1973). Thus, the liberty from government oppression, equality in all spheres and the value of individual (human) rights could be highlighted as the highest values of Canadian civil culture. In Canada, individualism is inherent in Canadian citizenship, the Canadian Constitution, and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Inevitably, these values have an influence on the role of women and functioning of a family in a modern Canadian culture.

Statistics Canada 2001 Census shows the ongoing changes in family structure that has been taking place over the past 20 years (Statistics Canada, 2002). The proportion of nuclear families continues to decline, while childless families are on the rise. For example, in 1981, married or common-law couples with children aged 24 or younger living at home represented more than half of all Canadian families (55%); in 1991, they accounted for 49% of all families; and in 2001, only 44%. Low fertility rates, childless couples, and couples who are delaying having children are some of the reasons behind this change. Saskatchewan parallels these national trends as two-parent families with children aged 24 or younger are declining, while childless couples are rising.

There is a general mainstream way of life in Canada that allows for and consists of dual family incomes (even though parents are having fewer children), mothers working outside of the home and both parents participating in the domestic sphere (e.g., cooking, cleaning, and childcare; CIC, 2006). Under Canadian law, marriage is viewed as a legal contract between a man and a woman, whereby they are considered equal partners. Common-law couples, or unmarried couples who have lived together for a certain period of time, are widespread and in most provinces also comprise heterosexual couples.

An example of the value Canadians, and particularly Canadian women, place on independence comes from the Statistics Canada 1995 General Social Survey. An issue on *Attitudes toward Women, Work and Family* indicated that women were more likely than men to endorse women's participation in the labour force and recognize the growth of women's roles outside of the domestic sphere (Ghalem, 1997). Interestingly, women and men were equally likely to agree that having employment is the greatest way for a woman to attain independence (45% and 44%, respectively). It is important to note that data from this study suggested women are expected to maintain primary responsibility for the home and family, even when they are employed. Concurrently, a Status of Women Canada (1993 as cited in Status of Women Canada, 1995) study indicated that women do nearly two-thirds (63%) of family and community work including household work, meal preparation, child care, care of elderly people and people with illness or disabilities. Regardless of their reasons for working outside the home, this study

suggests that similar to their Muslim counterparts, Canadian women also are strongly tied to their familial duties.

2.4 Divergent Cultural Values

As mentioned previously, community and family are acknowledged as foundational values in Islam. Therefore, interdependence and harmony both within the community and family are favored over the interests of the individual. These values parallel Triandis' (1995) position that people from traditional non-Western cultures are more likely to maintain a *collectivistic (or communitarian)* orientation. That is, values, social norms and obligations, value judgments of those in power and authority, and social ties are of paramount importance. In a similar vein, Markus and Kitayama (1991) suggest that *interdependent* cultures view the self as an integrated part of social relationships; the individual is viewed as embedded within a social context and network of human relationships (e.g., defining oneself in terms of relationships with others; high value placed on social connectedness).

On the other hand, Markus and Kitayama (1991) suggest that *independent* Western cultures (e.g., egalitarian Canadian culture) view the self as a unique entity; the individual is viewed as an *autonomous* independent person whose behaviour is made meaningful through reference to one's own personal characteristics and internal attributes (e.g., defining oneself in terms of separateness and uniqueness; high value placed on personal goals, achievement and independence).

Counter to intuition, most cross-cultural psychology research does not include cultural comparisons. That is, acculturation research typically emphasizes one culture – the new or host culture – while little attention, if any, is paid to the culture of origin. Consequently, my method of comparing traditional Muslim culture and Canadian culture is unique, organic and does not borrow from, nor is it based on, any existing method of comparison. Thus, although the comparison may simplistically position the given cultures in a polarized form (i.e., collectivistic vs. individualistic, respectively), it does so in acknowledgement of the diversity of women within each culture. As stated previously, however, the purpose of my comparison is to establish a dominant narrative of Muslim immigrant women's culture of origin and culture of settlement in an effort to yield a greater understanding of their acculturation experiences; not to compare and evaluate the degree of interdependence and/or independence exercised by Canadian women. To this end, my chosen method of comparison and subsequent results is appropriate.

The cultural comparison I have conducted exemplifies some of the marked differences between traditional Muslim culture and egalitarian Canadian culture. These differences are as follows:

- (a) Gender roles for Muslim women are prescribed by Islamic doctrines (i.e., the Qur'an, Shari'a and Hadith). By contrast, gender roles for Canadian women are less restrictive and flexible to the extent that they are informed more so by egalitarian values and social change;
- (b) Religious and social structures also cannot be conceptualized independently in Islam, as individual freedom is restricted for the welfare of the community that is to be protected by all Muslims. By contrast, autonomy and individualism are defining characteristics of egalitarian Canadian culture;
- (c) Family, the fundamental social unit in Islam, is inclusive of the community at large, multigenerational and predominantly patriarchal. Further, procreation is a core Islamic value. By contrast, the family in Canada is contemporary and shifting away from the traditional nuclear structure;
- (d) Marriage in Islam is encouraged or arranged by family members and is viewed as a social contract between two extended families. By contrast, marriage in Canada is viewed by Canadian law as a contract between a man and a woman who are considered equal under the eyes of the law. Further, marriage is a choice among other alternatives such as common-law couples;
- (e) Muslim women's duties are primarily acknowledged in and related to the domestic sphere where they are responsible for maintaining the physical and spiritual purity of the home. By contrast, women in Canadian culture are not confined to the domestic sphere as they constitute half of the workforce (Ghalam, 1997) and come from dual-income families where husbands participate in domestic duties; and
- (f) Women in traditional Muslim cultures are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is chaste, modest and virtuous; this may include not socializing with men in public space and covering their body, so as to not *tempt* the male or invite undesirable male attention. By contrast, women in Canadian culture are free to make their own decisions regarding their sexuality and sexual behaviours, and men are expected to show sexual restraint.

In order to set a context for understanding the experiences of Muslim immigrant women living among cultures, the following two sections review literature on acculturation, adaptation, multiculturalism in Canada, and clarify key related terms and concepts.

2.5 Acculturation and Adaptation

The term *acculturation* has been used to denote shifts in attitudes, subjective norms, values and behaviours undergone by migrants as a result of intercultural contact or exposure to their new host culture (Kosic, Kruglanski, Pierro, & Mannetti, 2004). Acculturation of immigrants involves changes and experiences within their daily life resulting from contact with new cultural groups, by the formation of new relationships, and by the loss of old ones (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936). These experiences entail questions of self-identity and changes in values, attitudes, and behaviours as immigrants adapt to new communication patterns, social structures and different goals (Safdar, Lay, & Struthers, 2003).

Although immigrants' fundamental goals consist of improving their economic and political status and life satisfaction, they also strive to maintain their heritage culture (e.g., identity, language, ways of life) while simultaneously participating in the new culture. Further, immigrants attempt to maintain psychological and physical stability in the face of acculturation-specific and non-specific sources of stress (Safdar et al., 2003). Considering the challenges they face, immigrants often find themselves in a genuine crossfire of social and psychological forces. These forces place immigrants in the position of having to reconcile whether, and to what degree, to assimilate into the new host culture, and to what extent to retain their cultural identity and maintain close ties to their culture of origin from which members may offer support in the face of adversity (Kosic, et al., 2004).

The term *acculturation* has been used interchangeably with the terms *adjustment*, *integration*, and *adaptation*, with two forms of adaptation distinguished by Searle and Ward (1990). The first form, *psychological adaptation* refers to feelings of well-being and satisfaction, whereas the second form, *sociocultural adaptation* emphasizes immigrants' ability to "fit in" or their success in effectively organizing their daily lives in the new context (e.g., learning a new language, gaining cultural knowledge, and establishing social relationships). For the purpose of the present research, the term *acculturation* will denote the general psychological and sociocultural processes and outcomes of intercultural contact and the term *adaptation* will denote relatively stable changes that take place in groups or individuals as a result of environmental demands (e.g., well-being and intercultural "fit" vs. conflict; Berry, 1996).

The perceived discrepancy between culture of origin and culture of contact (e.g., language, religion, and values), called *cultural distance*, has been associated with psychological

and sociocultural adaptation (Babiker, Cox, & Miller, 1980; Ward & Searle, 1991) and relates to both clinical and social learning approaches to cross-cultural transitions (Berry, 1997; Searle & Ward, 1990). Clinically driven perspectives typically emphasize the role of personality, life events, shifts, losses, and social supports that hinder or facilitate the adaptation process (Searle & Ward, 1990). Research has shown a general association between life changes and physical and psychological illness (Babiker et al., 1980; Berry, 1997; Monroe, 1982). For example, Babiker et al. (1980) developed an instrument specifically designed to measure the difference between two cultures and established the relation between cultural distance and medical consultations and symptoms. Specifically, greater cultural distance (i.e., greater perceived discrepancy between culture of origin and culture of contact) was associated with increased rates of mental health indicators such as anxiety in foreign students. Accordingly, Berry's (1997) *acculturative stress* paradigm, drawn from the broader stress and adaptation paradigms (e.g., Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) and comparable to the 'culture shock' concept (Oberg, 1960), emphasizes the study of the process of how individuals cope with acculturative problems (stressors) upon initially encountering them and over time. That is, the strategies individuals employ in attempting to confront the experiences that are evaluated as problematic.

Conversely, social learning approaches to cross-cultural transitions emphasize the acquisition of culturally appropriate skills and behaviors through contact with the new host culture (Searle & Ward, 1990). Research has shown that general cultural knowledge, duration of residence in the host culture, and degree of contact with the hosts influence sociocultural adaptation (Ward & Kennedy, 1992; Ward & Searle, 1991) and that the extent of adjustment difficulties is a function of the disparities between culture of origin and culture of contact (Babiker et al., 1980). For example, Furnham and Bochner's (1982) examination of the relationship between cultural distance and social skills in foreign students (via classifying countries of origin into three groups according to similarities in religion, language and climate) established that cultural distance and social difficulty are strongly related. From a social learning perspective, individuals who are more culturally distant lack culturally appropriate skills for negotiating daily situations in the new host culture (Searle & Ward, 1990).

A recent study (Ataca & Berry, 2002) examining acculturation and adaptation of married Turkish immigrants in Toronto, Canada, via self-report questionnaires, established adaptation as multifaceted and differentiated between three forms of adaptation: psychological, sociocultural

and *marital*. Adaptation of married Turkish couples was consistent with stress and coping models, as well as social learning approaches. That is, psychological adaptation of Turkish married couples was related to personality variables (i.e., hardiness, social support, acculturation attitudes, and discrimination), while sociocultural adaptation was related to acquisition of host social skills variables (i.e., language proficiency and contact with the hosts). Lastly, marital adaptation was mainly related to marital stressors and marital support. This study supports the argument that there are multiple dimensions to adaptation and although they are related to a degree, the dimensions are conceptually discrete and mostly related to different sources (Ataca & Berry, 2002; Berry, 1997).

Thus, cultural distance and its relation to psychological and sociocultural adaptation is consistent with both stress/coping models and social learning models, whereby those who perceive a greater discrepancy between culture of origin and culture of contact may experience more significant life changes, acculturative stress, as well as greater social difficulty (via a strong heritage cultural identity and cultural segregation) in transitioning to the new cultural context, compared to their counterparts coming from culturally similar regions who perceive less discrepancy between culture of origin and culture of contact (Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward & Kennedy, 1992). Ultimately, greater cultural distance hinders psychological and sociocultural adaptation in the new host culture (Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward & Kennedy, 1992), while minimal cultural distance, via increased contact with and knowledge of the host culture, and the pursuit of effective acculturation strategies (Berry, 1997), facilitates adaptation to the host culture. In multicultural societies such as Canada, psychological and sociocultural adaptation is a key element (Aycaan & Berry, 1996).

2.6 Multiculturalism, Canada, and Integration

The multicultural perspective of immigrant adaptation, adopted in pluralistic cultures such as Canada, acknowledges ethnic diversity and “posits that ethnic groups or individuals can coexist and maintain, albeit to varying degrees, their respective sociocultural distinctions as they acquire the norms, values, and behaviours of a dominant or host culture” (Kim, Laroche, & Tomiuk, 2004, p. 8). Thus, in Canada, cultural groups and their individual members must confront the issue of how to acculturate and adopt strategies regarding two key issues: *cultural maintenance* (i.e., retained or maintained aspects of one’s cultural heritage) and *acquisition of*

new cultural traits/contact and participation (i.e., acquired skills and or traits enabling one to function and participate within a host culture; Berry, 1997; Kim et al., 2004).

Berry (1997) distinguished between four acculturation strategies (i.e., attitudes and behaviours towards ways of acculturating) from the point of view of immigrant groups. The *Assimilation* strategy is defined when individuals no longer wish to maintain their heritage cultural identity (i.e., culture shedding) and seek daily interaction with the host culture. Conversely, *Separation* is defined when individuals value their heritage culture and wish to avoid interaction with (i.e., reject) the host culture. *Integration* is defined when individuals wish to both maintain their heritage cultural identity and participate as an integral part of the host culture. Finally, the *Marginalisation* strategy is defined when heritage cultural maintenance is unlikely (often due to involuntary cultural loss) and contact with the host culture is undesirable (often due to exclusion or discrimination).

Only in explicitly multicultural societies such as Canada can the Integration strategy be pursued as it requires *mutual accommodation* (i.e., the presence of mutual positive attitudes and absence of prejudice and discrimination; Berry, 1997). Thus, the integration strategy is typically the most successful as it entails participation in two cultural communities (i.e. having two social support systems) and the acceptance by both the immigrant group and the new host culture of the right of all groups to live harmoniously as culturally distinct peoples (Berry, 1997).

2.7 Among Cultures

Immigrants' experience of stress can be a result of culture shock (an emotional reaction to an inability to understand control and predict behaviour; Bock, 1970 as cited in Bhugra & Ayonrinde, 2004), culture conflict (tension experienced by members of a minority culture), changing self-notions in the new cultural context, and incompatible goals and accomplishments (expectations prior to migration not matching immigrants life course; Bhugra & Ayonrinde, 2004). Factors existing prior to acculturation also impact the psychological stress experienced by immigrants. Researchers suggest that there is increased risk when: (a) immigration takes place later in one's life; (b) the immigrant has no or a low level of education; (c) the immigrant enters into the new cultural context with a loss of status and limited mobility, and; (d) the immigrant is a female (having to confront changing and conflicting roles; Berry, 1997; Aroian, Norris, & Chiang, 2003).

Research indicates that immigrant men and women have different experiences in the new cultural context. Generally, immigrant women are less likely to speak either of Canada's official languages, experience more complications in the new cultural context (e.g., low education, credentialing issues and unemployment) and may be more susceptible to psychological distress and mental health problems such as high levels of anxiety and depressive symptoms (Aroian, 2001; Aroian, Norris, & Chiang, 2003; Ataca & Berry, 2002). Further, they are often excluded from certain activities like decision-making, are often dependent on their husbands, and are often discriminated against in the labor market (Garcia, Ramirez, & Jariego, 2002). Immigrant women also experience elevated levels of cultural/family conflicts (Ross-Sheriff, 2001). Research suggests that Muslim immigrant women who are from traditional cultures are likely to experience significant immigration and settlement challenges due to their changing multiple roles and unshared family responsibilities, and thus, time constraints to learn about and integrate into the new host culture (Ahmed et al., 2004). Aggravating these stressors is that women often cannot rely on extended family as they did in their country of origin (Ross-Sheriff, 2001). Women also experience isolation from no longer having their social networks, which is amplified by feelings of uncertainty and restriction enforced by the husband in lieu of the novel cultural context (Abadan-Unat, 1985 as cited in Ataca & Berry, 2002).

Meleis (1991) argues that immigrant "women who live between two cultures" are viewed as an "at risk population" (p.367) due to: (a) the multiple roles they juggle; (b) the energy and effort that is expended in trying to understand, negotiate, and reconcile two distinct and opposing sets of cultural patterns; (c) differences between their native language and that of the host culture; (d) differences between the symbolic meaning in their interactions (with host individuals) and the interpretation of these interactions, and; (e) having to confront disappointments resulting from a novel life trajectory that is incongruent with their traditional heritage cultural.

Further, Meleis (1991) suggests that first generation immigrant women confront different stresses than those who are second generation because they "truly live between two worlds that are pushing and pulling them in different directions" (p. 369). Although the new host culture can offer them newfound conveniences, there is the sentiment that they can always go back home if things do not work out. This sense of temporariness, or sense of a lack of permanence, works as a pressure-release valve or strategy for coping with new stresses and is manifested through their

attempts to resist the establishment of roots. Such stresses come from the expectations and demands of the host culture that conflict with the maintenance of cultural patterns expected and required by their heritage culture communities. Women, in particular, maintain the responsibility of both adopting and imparting the host culture's mainstream values (e.g., abiding by the new roles of preventative health care and new school systems), while simultaneously tending to a household that reinforces heritage culture values (Meleis, 1991). For example, in a study examining the influence of family members on South Asian⁸ immigrant women's health and health-seeking behaviour, women reported that in addition to carrying out traditional roles of wife and mother, lack of finances demanded increased labour both inside and outside the home; women accepted the demands of coping with this dichotomy (Grewal, Bottorff, & Hilton, 2005):

A woman's life is like. You see, men go to work. Women also work, and it doesn't matter if [men] they are highly paid and women are not. There are lots of men that help with the housework. But majority of them do not help with the housework. They never do [house] work. As well, the responsibility of looking after the children is predominantly on the mother. She has to go to work, look after the kids, and do the housework. (p. 252; square brackets in original text)

Women reported that these expectations influenced their health and well-being, their ability to adhere to their preferred traditional roles and their family status. Further, few women perceived their shifting roles as positive and most experienced a lack of control over their experienced role changes. To deal with these issues, most women relied on the support and assistance of family members to provide transportation, language translation and emotional support.

Other studies also have cited that the family acts as a source of stress and a source of support (Choudhry, 2001; Meleis, 1991). For example, *family reunification* is a Canadian immigration policy that allows immigrants to sponsor their elderly parents and other family members (Choudhry, 2001). In accordance with customs (and for financial reasons), these family members reside with their children, which can lead to conflict, especially when elders perceive that they are no longer revered in the manner consistent with their traditional culture (Choudhry, 2001). Furthermore, mainstream Canadian culture's values of individuals rights,

⁸ "The term *South Asian* refers to individuals from India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, as well as those from Africa, Mauritius, Fiji, the Caribbean, Guyana, Great Britain, and European countries who trace their origins to the Indian subcontinent" (George & Ramkissoon, 1998, p. 102).

autonomy and independence is seen as selfish, and a threat to cultural norms, social and family relationships (Agnew, 1990). As a result, elders and other family members experience a sense of erosion of their status and traditional family structure leading to feelings of isolation, loneliness, despondency and depression (Choudhry, 2001). On the other hand, immigrant women – who define themselves in terms of the psychological and moral needs of their family and who find themselves in a new culture where race, class and gender affect them differently – have to re-negotiate and reassess their self-notions and their place in the new cultural context. Additionally, they have to reconcile the conflicting needs, demands and perceptions of both their heritage culture and their host culture (Agnew, 1990). The “uneven and shifting mixtures of family loyalty and responsibility on the one hand, and autonomy and agency, on the other hand” (Ryan, 2004, p. 367) is a merciless reality for immigrant women. The negative experience an immigrant woman undergoes during the process of acculturation creates ambiguity about her sense of self and the resulting stress restricts her expression of ethnic identity to the home and family (Agnew, 1990):

...they are really living in two distinct societies. It's not the same person that you see out there that you see at home. And yet we don't know what is happening back home in terms of the culture so we come out really cultureless. On the one hand, we want to preserve our own culture, our own identity. On the other hand, peer pressure in society will also come into this. We don't know which direction to take and what's the best solution. (¶ 18)

Finally, another source of family stress is the conflict between parents and children in their ways of acculturating (i.e., acculturation strategies) to the host culture. Research has shown that adolescents are more easily influenced by and readily accept peer influences and norms of the host culture, while parents struggle to maintain their heritage cultural norms in the home (Aycañ & Kanungo, 1998; Maiter & George, 2003). For example, a study exploring parenting approaches of immigrant South Asian Canadian mothers found that in the host culture, mothers' parenting goals were related to character formation and identity formation (Maiter & George, 2003). Qualities they strived to impart to their children were informed by the mothers' internalized cultural value system (i.e., respect for elders, modesty, humility, hard work, persistence, perseverance, and having a disciplined life) embedded in and attained through adherence to their religion. However, isolation from social networks back home, a lack of a local heritage community, and multiple demands (and thus, time constraints) heaped on the

mother in the new host culture make it difficult to transmit cultural values. Consequently, the door to outside negative influences (e.g., peer pressure and the media) is opened and unmonitored as children, encouraged to make independent choices by Canadian culture, assimilate into the new culture and begin to question parents' authority.

Intergenerational conflict also can revolve around adolescents' dating and relationship choices versus arranged marriage (Naidoo, 2003). Again, the divergent values of the host and heritage cultures clash when "The father may want to arrange a marriage for a young girl, and the girl says, 'That's it. I'm leaving home. Good-bye.'" (Agnew, 1990, ¶ 19). Some research indicates that parents' attitudes have shifted to a more liberal view of their children's relationships and marriages, provided that parents get to participate in their children's choices (Vaidyanathan & Naidoo, 1990). While parents (first generation) attempt to acclimatize to changing times and values of the host culture, children (second generation) strive to integrate into the host culture, via participation in both cultures (Naidoo, 2003).

From the review of the literature it appears as though immigrant women have limited or no coping mechanisms for dealing with the diverse and confounding roles and expectations of what they perceive as two distinct and seemingly opposing cultures (i.e., heritage culture and host culture). Although some research states that women cope by their reliance on spiritual and religious teachings (prayer) and the support of family members, they typically endure experienced conflict in silence due to their reluctance to verbalize their problems and cultural constraints impinging on possible solutions (Choudry, 2001; Grewal, Bortorff, & Hilton, 2005). In other words, women's collectivistic, traditional family roles and values take precedence over their own happiness and comfort, consequently making them even more susceptible to physical and psychological distress in the new host culture. Thus, the conflict women experience can be seen as both a process in their adaptation to the new cultural context (attempting to establish a "fit" among cultures) and an outcome, in the sense that their lack of coping mechanisms and lack of help-seeking further augments their compromised place in the new host culture. My study seeks to elucidate the nature of immigrant Muslim women's experiences living among cultures, and delve deeper into the aspects that hinder and facilitate their adjustment.

CHAPTER THREE – METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Questions and Nature of Study

The purpose of my research is to explore first generation Muslim immigrant women's experiences living among cultures. The specific questions that were explored in my study are as follows:

- 1) How do first generation Muslim immigrant women describe their overall experiences living in a Canadian Prairie City?
- 2) How do they experience transitioning from their role in the family in a traditional non-Western culture to their role in the family in an egalitarian Canadian culture?
- 3) What factors hinder and facilitate their adaptation in Canada?

Qualitative methodology is a useful means by which to explore the nuances of human behaviour and specific phenomena that are overlooked when using statistical analyses within quantitative methodology alone (Berg, 1998). Acculturation experiences of Muslim immigrant women may be more adequately explored through the use of qualitative methodology to allow the voices of women to increase our understanding of how it feels and what it means to be a first generation Muslim immigrant woman living in a Canadian Prairie City. The qualitative approach of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which aims to understand the participants' lived experience and how they make sense of their experiences, was used in conjunction with open-ended, semi-structured face-to-face interviews to address my research questions. Thus, the focus of this study is on the phenomenology of the women who were interviewed, giving them a voice using their own words. The interviewees are the co-participants, while the researcher is the interpreter in this process.

3.2 Participants and Recruitment Procedure

The purposive sample consisted of $n = 8$ first-generation, married with children, English-speaking Muslim immigrant women who have lived in Canada for a minimum of three years. The rationale for minimum years in Canada was based on my attempt to capture processes and outcomes related to women's acculturation and adaptation experiences, as opposed to initially encountered immigration experiences alone. Ages of participants ranged from 25 and 52 years ($M = 37$ years). They were born in Iran, Bangladesh, Sudan, Pakistan, India and Afghanistan, and have lived in Canada between 3 and 30 years ($M = 7$ years). Some women had lived in other provinces in Canada (Newfoundland, Ontario), while others had resided in Saskatchewan since

they emigrated. Women had between 1 and 4 children ($M = 2.25$ children) ranging in age from 2.5 to 30 years ($M = 13$ years). Women's original first languages include Turkish, Bengali, Arabic, Urdu and Pashto. All of the women's highest level of schooling was obtained prior to immigrating and ranges from secondary (high school) to post-secondary (undergraduate university degree) education. Women's occupations' prior to immigrating include homemaker, student, secretary and entrepreneur, while current occupations include student, salesperson, laundry services worker, bank teller and homemaker. All women indicated they have both immediate (parents, siblings) and extended (in-laws, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins) family back home.

3.3 Data Collection Materials

An open-ended, semi-structured face-to-face interview consisting of 25 questions was used to explore first generation Muslim immigrant women's acculturation experiences and strategies from a religious, cultural and gender perspective (see Appendix A). The questions – based on the results of the cultural comparison, literature review and theoretical perspective of IPA – were designed to elicit themes related to Muslim women's maintenance and/or shifting of roles and expectations regarding work, family, community, religious/cultural values; and the impact and consequences of the maintenance and/or shifting of roles and expectations as a result of living among cultures. For example, participants were asked, “When you lived back home, what things did the people in your community value most?”, “What is your life like in Canada?” and “What are/were the biggest changes you experienced since coming to Canada?” Prior to commencing the interviews with participants, the interview schedule was pilot-tested and revised for clarity and relevance of questions.

To facilitate mutual understanding during my discussions with women, I arranged the interview questions into three chronological categories; *Traditional Culture/Family*, *Pre-Immigration*, and *Acculturation and Adaptation to Canada* (see Appendix A). The first two categories of questions gave me a contextual understanding from which to fluidly conduct the interviews, while helping to foster women's narratives.

A demographic form also was administered, whereby participants responded to questions regarding their age, level of schooling, marital status, occupation, income, country of birth, and other background characteristics (see Appendix B).

3.4 Procedures

Ethical approval was obtained from the Behavioural Research Ethics Board at the University of Saskatchewan on November 27, 2006. I conducted all interviews and collected all data. Women were recruited through key community members (i.e., Muslim women) who network with the target group at community Mosques and non-profit organizations that provide services to immigrants and refugees (i.e., IWS and SIA).

To assist with participant recruitment, key community contacts were given a detailed explanation of the study and were provided with ongoing opportunities to ask questions and receive clarification. They also were provided with a brief description of the study (see Appendix C) that they used to inform potential participants. Interested participants agreed to be contacted by me to further discuss project and potential participation details.

Initially, I contacted all participants by telephone to explain to them the purpose of the study, the extent of their participation (i.e., voluntary participation in semi-structured interviews), and consent regarding participation and audio recording of interviews. All potential participants were approached with sensitivity and provided with my contact information. The purpose of this initial follow-up was to give all potential participants ample time (approximately 1-2 weeks) to consider participating in the study and allow them the opportunity to contact me with any questions or concerns that they may have had regarding their participation. Next, only those individuals who agreed to consider participating in the study were contacted and asked if they would like to participate in the study. For those who expressed interest, interviews were arranged at times convenient for the participant. To ensure confidentiality, I had originally intended to conduct all interviews in private rooms at the University of Saskatchewan within the Department of Psychology. However, all women were adamant that their participation in interviews would be most comfortable and convenient if conducted in their homes. Therefore, all interviews were conducted in private at women's places of residence.

Before the interview began, all participants were provided with a \$10 honorarium. They also were informed again that participation is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty of any type. Participants were read and supplied a written statement of the information conveyed in the consent process (see Appendix D). At this time, individuals were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study without penalty and told that

any data they provided would be destroyed completely. All individuals chose to participate; giving their verbal consent and demographic information (see Appendix B).

Participants were reminded that interviews (see Appendix A) would be audio taped for future transcription and that confidentiality would be maintained during the recorded session through omission of any identifying information in the transcripts (i.e., transcripts would restrict identification of the interviewees via pseudonyms) and no identifying information would accompany direct quotes in the final manuscript. At the beginning of the interview, all participants gave their verbal consent and this was audio recorded. At the end of the interview, all participants were given the *option* (to ensure participant privacy concerning direct release of data/transcripts) to receive a copy of their interview transcript for review, revision and/or approval of accuracy. Of the eight participants, only two chose to receive their transcripts; they were provided their transcripts and a modified Data/Transcript Release Form (see Appendix E) to review. I then followed-up with each participant, read the modified Data/Transcript Release Form and obtained verbal authorization (as I obtained verbal consent to participate in the study) for the release of the transcript to me for the research purposes outlined in the written statement of information.

A personal log of occurrences during the interviews was kept and notes were taken during each interview. Interviews lasted close to two hours in length due to the nature and scope of the 25 open-ended questions (see Appendix A). At the end of the interviews, I thanked all women for their participation, provided them with a debriefing sheet (see Appendix F) and referred them to my contact information in case they have any questions or concerns in the future, or want to follow-up with the study. In light of the potential risk for emotional discomfort when discussing their experiences, women also were provided with counseling services should the interview process have elicited emotional distress.

Interviews were transcribed verbatim by me with the assistance of three research assistants (undergraduate students from the Department of Psychology, University of Saskatchewan). I use direct quotes from the transcripts in data analysis, but ensure women's confidentiality is kept by the use of pseudonyms.

3.5 Data Analysis Strategy

Based on the nature of my research questions, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA; Smith & Osborn, 2004) – which attempts to “explore/understand/make sense of the

subjective meanings of events/experiences/states of the individual participants themselves” (p. 229) – is a natural approach for my thesis research. Additionally, IPA also assumes that this understanding of the world from the participants’ perspective can only be done through the interpretative work of the researcher who is trying to make sense of what the participant is saying. I accessed the IPA website (<http://www.psyc.bbk.ac.uk/ipa/>) to compile the following description of the methodology. A recent qualitative approach developed specifically within psychology, IPA aims to understand the participants’ lived experience and how they make sense of their experiences. Thus, IPA emphasizes the meanings that experiences hold for the participants. Sharing the same aims as phenomenology, IPA intends to explore an individual’s personal perception or account of an event or experience, rather than aiming to produce an objective record of the event or experience. However, while attempting to get close to the participant’s personal world, IPA deems that one cannot do this directly or completely. Access is dependant on the researcher’s own conceptions, which are required to make sense of that other personal world through interpretative activity.

The bulk of IPA work has been conducted using semi-structured interviews that enable the participant to provide a fuller, richer account than would be possible with a standard quantitative instrument. Using semi-structured interviews also allows the researcher considerable flexibility in probing interesting areas that emerge. Interviews are tape recorded, transcribed verbatim and subsequently subjected to detailed qualitative analysis, whereby key themes in the participant’s talk are identified and extracted.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis is a relevant methodological tool for my study which, rather than making actuarial claims to a wider population, aims to explore the intricacies of a small group of first generation Muslim immigrant women’s experiences in order to understand their meaning and significance within the context of contemporary culture. Consequently, IPA has the potential to address and uncover the idiosyncrasies of individuals’ experiences (i.e., the subjective, unshared aspects of experience that are internal and unique to an individual), as well as culturally constructed elements that are shared by others (i.e., the shared aspects of experience that are constructed by external forces within a culture or sub-culture). These two aspects come together to create a series of accounts that ultimately represent an individuals’ comprehensive narrative. Thus, IPA will serve to benefit my research by providing a rich understanding of human experience.

3.5.1 Data Analysis Technique

An active contribution from the researcher is a requirement of several qualitative methods of analysis, including IPA (Shaw, 2001). The researcher's task is two-fold and includes familiarizing oneself with the data (i.e. revealing the themes that are addressed by participants) and making sense of the data (i.e. creating a sequence of analytic codes reflecting the nature of participants' experiences, thereby providing answers to the research questions).

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis begins with detailed specifics (i.e., detailed analysis of the case either as an end in itself or before moving to similarly detailed analyses of other cases) and slowly works its way up to generalizations in attempting to identify themes (<http://www.psyc.bbk.ac.uk/ipa/>). To make the analysis more manageable, I followed Smith's (1995) five step recommendation: (1) reading and re-reading transcripts several times and making notes about those things that are interesting or significant in the participants' responses; (2) documenting emerging theme titles using key words that capture recurrent patterns in the text; (3) listing emerging themes and identifying connections between them, making sure to both cross check these with what the participants actually said in the primary source material and simultaneously draw on the researchers own interpretative resources; (4) producing a coherently ordered list of dominant themes; and (5) creating identifiers indicating the place in the transcripts where examples of the dominant themes could be found.

Smith (1995) suggests two possibilities for the analysis of more than one transcript that works well with a small group of participants. One option is to use the dominant theme list from the initial interview to analyze successive interviews (i.e., identify more examples of previously identified themes and consider new ones as they arise). The other option is to go through steps one to five with each successive interview, each time generating a new list of dominant themes that can be consolidated into a final list of dominant themes. To emphasize uniformity and diversity in women's experiences related to my research questions, I used the latter approach for data analysis.

3.6 Data Quality and Reflexivity

To quell the risk of my qualitative research compromising quality and presenting itself as too subjective (e.g., going beyond what is said by participants, thereby becoming the story of the researcher, instead of the participants), it was necessary for me to diminish bias through vigilant self-monitoring and reflexivity throughout the entire research process. Quality (i.e., integrity,

competence and thus, legitimacy) was established through data trustworthiness and demonstrated through credibility, dependability and confirmability (Tobin & Begley, 2004).

Credibility, which addresses the issue of “fit” between respondents’ views and the researchers’ representation of them, was demonstrated through: (a) consulting with my thesis supervisor and committee; (b) offering participants a chance to review their interview transcripts, soliciting participant’s approval that transcripts indeed reflect their words during the personal interview; (c) debriefing with peers and colleagues, and; (d) using audit trails and memos that enabled me to organize and track themes and variability in participants acculturation experiences and strategies. It is of key importance to note that IPA, when used as intended, has an inherent credibility check through the process of reflexivity; throughout each of my discussions with women, I recurrently expressed and sought confirmation of my interpretation of participant’s words. My stated and verified thoughts served to facilitate both discussions with women and analysis of subsequent interview transcripts. Furthermore, during analysis, I continually returned to participants’ unaltered relayed accounts in an effort to stay true to them.

Dependability was achieved through a process of auditing and ensuring a logical research process that is traceable and clearly documents the research process. Confirmability was established through the use of direct participant quotes from the data to show that my interpretations of women’s stories are rooted in the data and are not solely a product of my personal biases and assumptions.

CHAPTER FOUR – ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

4.1 Grounding Themes

Qualitative research characteristically produces a surplus of data beyond a researcher's immediate focus. The abundance of rich data produced via IPA with its ideographic and interpretative approach required me to be discriminating, so that I could firmly concentrate on my research aims. Therefore, only emergent themes corresponding directly to my three research aims are structured into predominant themes and sub-themes. Women's unique experiences related to the presented themes are incorporated throughout the analysis.

4.1.1 Women's Contexts

To help set the context and obtain some insight into their lives before immigrating to Canada, women were asked preliminary questions related to how they came to live in Canada and their hopes and fears about coming to Canada. Women's responses are incorporated into the following brief biographies (based on the interview transcripts, demographic information and country descriptions from the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) 2008 World Fact Book), which help to set a general context for each of the women and the predominant themes that follow (pseudonyms are used to protect women's identities).

4.1.1.1 Afsar -- Iran

Afsar emigrated from Iran less than 10 years ago. Iran is located in the Middle East, bordering the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf, and the Caspian Sea, between Iraq and Pakistan. Until 1935, Iran was known as Persia. In 1979, Iran became an Islamic republic after the ruling monarchy was overthrown and a theocratic system of government with ultimate political authority vested in a learned religious scholar (referred to commonly as the Supreme Leader) was established. The ethnic groups in Iran include Persian (51%), Azeri (24%), Gilaki and Mazandarani (8%) and Kurd (7%), Arab (3%), Lur (2%), Baloch (2%) and Turkmen (2%). Islam is the main religion (98%). Languages spoken include Persian and Persian dialects (58%), Turkic and Turkic dialects (26%), Kurdish (9%), Luri (2%), Balochi (1%), Arabic (1%), Turkish (1%) and other (2%) (CIA, 2008).

At the time of the interview, Afsar was a landed immigrant between the ages of 24 and 33, married for six years with a Canadian born pre-school aged daughter, and employed with a family income of \$20,000-29,999. In Iran, Afsar was a student with a 3 year diploma in Natural Sciences. She initially came to Canada to support her husbands' pursuit of his second doctoral

degree, which eventually turned into the decision to live and work in Saskatchewan permanently. Afsar's original first language is Turkish. Before coming to Canada, Afsar's hopes included living and raising a family in a free country, and learning English so she could attend university. Afsar feared isolation and missing her family back home in Iran. During the interview, Afsar talked about how her increased workload (with both traditional work inside the home and a part-time job outside the home) acts like a blessing in disguise; keeping her from missing her family too much, while enabling her personal empowerment.

4.1.1.2 Bani -- Bangladesh

Bani emigrated from Bangladesh more than 20 years ago. Bangladesh is located in Southern Asia, bordering the Bay of Bengal, between Burma and India. In the 16th century, Europeans began to set up trading posts in the region that eventually became part of British India. The primarily Muslim West Pakistan and primarily Muslim East Bengal separated from primarily Hindu India in 1947, coming together to create the country of Pakistan. Eventually, East Pakistan (territorially separated from West Pakistan by 1,600 km) separated from West Pakistan in 1971 and became Bangladesh. The main ethnic group in Bangladesh is Bengali (98%). The main religions include Muslim (83%) and Hindu (16%). Languages spoken include Bangla (official, also known as Bengali) and English (CIA, 2008)

At the time of the interview, Canadian citizen Bani was between the ages of 44 and 53, married for thirty-two years with a grown daughter and son (both born in Canada), and employed. In Bangladesh, she had completed two years of post-secondary education with a major in Sociology. Bani and her husband were married and lived together for a year back home when her husband decided to come to Canada to pursue a Master's degree in agriculture. After waiting a year for the immigration process to complete, Bani joined her husband in Canada, which eventually turned into the decision to live and work in Saskatchewan permanently. Bani's original first language is Bengali. Before coming to Canada, her hopes included living a "better life" that is free from poverty and political turmoil. Bani also looked forward to a better future for her children with unlimited opportunities for education and employment. She feared not being able to communicate with others because of her lack of English language skills. During the interview, Bani talked about how she has a "good life" in Canada compared to in Bangladesh. She also talked about how raising her children in Canada makes them "half

Canadian, half Muslim” and because of that she appreciates their autonomy and personal choices.

4.1.1.3 Cala -- Sudan

Cala emigrated from Sudan less than 10 years ago. Sudan is located in Northern Africa, bordering the Red Sea, between Egypt and Eritrea. Islamic-oriented governments, favoured by Military regimes, have dominated national politics since independence from the United Kingdom in 1956. During most of the remainder of the 20th century, Sudan was involved in two extended civil wars; conflicts were rooted in northern economic, political, and social domination of primarily non-Muslim, non-Arab southern Sudanese. The provision of humanitarian assistance is challenged by armed conflict, poor transport infrastructure and lack of government support. The ethnic groups in Sudan are black (52%), Arab (39%), Beja (6%) and foreigners (2%). The religions include Islam (70%; in north), Christianity (5%; mostly in south and Khartoum) and indigenous religions (25%). Languages spoken include Arabic (official), Nubian, Ta Bedawie, diverse dialects of Nilotic, Nilo-Hamitic, Sudanic languages and English (CIA, 2008).

At the time of the interview, Canadian citizen Cala was between the ages of 34 and 43, re-married for one year with three boys (pre-pubescent to young adult) from her first marriage of twelve years, and employed in two different jobs with a family income of \$20,000-29,999. In Sudan, she was a homemaker, but worked in an office for a term of five months. Cala has a secondary education. She had not intended to come to Canada at all, but circumstances involving her first husband lead her to Egypt from Sudan, where she and her family became refugees. Between the United States, Canada and Holland, the UN Refugee Agency chose Canada to send Cala and her family. Cala’s original first language is Arabic. Before coming to Canada, her only hopes were for her children; their higher education, health and raising them in Islam. Cala’s fears about immigrating to Canada were related to fitting in/functioning in a new culture, acceptance and discrimination, and her children growing up without prevalent traditional heritage religious/cultural values. In particular, Cala had experienced some anxiety over “...wearing my hijab and dressing wrong and if it was going to look okay or not okay, and if I’m going to look different.” During the interview, Cala talked about the importance of living the “Islamic way” and raising her children accordingly. She also talked about the challenges to marital and family relations when women have to balance traditional roles/work inside the home with new roles/employment outside the home.

4.1.1.4 Daliya -- Pakistan

Daliya emigrated from Pakistan less than 10 years ago. Pakistan is located in Southern Asia, bordering the Arabian Sea, between India on the east and Iran and Afghanistan on the west and China in the north. Pakistan was once occupied by the Indus Valley civilization (one of the oldest in the world and dating back at least 5,000 years). The migrating Indo-Aryan peoples blended with remnants of this culture during the second millennium B.C. In subsequent centuries, the area underwent successive invasions by the Persians, Greeks, Scythians, Arabs (who brought Islam), Afghans, and Turks. In the 18th century, the British came to dominate the region. The separation in 1947 of British India into the Muslim state of Pakistan (with West and East sections) and primarily Hindu India led to two wars between India and Pakistan over the disputed Kashmir territory in 1947-48 and 1965. A third war resulted in East Pakistan becoming the separate nation of Bangladesh. The ethnic groups in Pakistan are Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashtun (Pathan), Baloch and Muhajir (immigrants from India at the time of partition and their descendants). Islam is the main religion (97%). Languages spoken include Punjabi (48%), Sindhi (12%), Siraiki (a Punjabi variant) (10%), Pashtu (8%), Urdu (official; 8%), Balochi (3%), Hindko (2%), Brahui (1%), English (official; lingua franca of Pakistani elite and most government ministries), and Burushaski and other (8%) (CIA, 2008).

At the time of the interview, Canadian citizen Daliya was between the ages of 34 and 43, married for 16 years with two boys and two girls (pre-school to teenage), and a homemaker with a family income over \$60,000. She also was a homemaker in Pakistan. Daliya has a secondary education. Daliya had decided alongside her husband to immigrate to Canada for their children's futures. Her husband works in a specialized field of medicine. Daliya's original first language is Urdu. Before coming to Canada, Daliya's hopes included a future of higher education and greater opportunities for her children. Her biggest fear was the same reason her husband's parents back home in Pakistan were not happy when Daliya and her family came to live in Canada; the children "losing the culture and Islam". During the interview, Daliya talked about the importance of imparting Islam to her children and the differences between gender roles, work and family, and support in her tradition heritage community compared to in Canada.

4.1.1.5 Geena -- India

Geena emigrated from India less than 10 years ago. India is located in Southern Asia, bordering the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal, between Burma and Pakistan. The classical

Indian culture was created by Aryan tribes from the northwest (infiltrating onto the Indian subcontinent about 1500 B.C.) merging with the earlier Dravidian inhabitants. By the 19th century, virtually all Indian lands were under Britain's political control. In 1947, independence was won by nonviolent resistance (led by Mohandas Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru) to British colonialism; the subcontinent was divided into the secular state of India and the smaller Muslim state of Pakistan. A third war between the two countries in 1971 resulted in East Pakistan becoming the separate nation of Bangladesh. The ethnic groups in India are Indo-Aryan (72%), Dravidian (25%), and Mongoloid and other (3%). The most important language for national, political, and commercial communication is English, but Hindi is the national and primary language (30%); 21 other official languages include: Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, Dogri, Gujarati, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Maithili, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanscrit, Santhali, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu; Hindustani is a popular variant of Hindi/Urdu spoken widely throughout northern India but is not an official language (CIA, 2008).

At the time of the interview, Geena was a landed immigrant between the ages of 20 and 29, married for five years with a Canadian-born pre-school aged daughter, and employed with a family income of \$40,000-49,999. In India, she was a student with a three-year Bachelor of Commerce degree. She initially came to Canada to support her husband's pursuit of his Master's degree, which eventually turned into the decision to live and work in Saskatchewan permanently. Geena's original first language is Urdu. Before coming to Canada, Geena's hopes included living in a more modernized culture with more freedom and opportunities. However, she quickly learned that Canadian cultural norms and values pose a challenge to how she intends to raise her young daughter; in a "typical Indian Muslim" fashion. Geena's fears about immigrating to Canada were related to fitting in/functioning in a new culture, acceptance and discrimination, and missing her family back home in India. During the interview, Geena talked about the differences in cultural philosophies, including cultural/family and religious values and practices.

4.1.1.6 Erum -- Pakistan

Erum emigrated from Pakistan less than 10 years ago (for geographical and historical background on the country of Pakistan, including ethnic groups, religion and languages spoken, refer to section 4.1.1.4 above). At the time of the interview, Canadian citizen Erum was between the ages of 44 and 53, married for twenty-seven years with a grown daughter and son, and employed. In Pakistan, she was an entrepreneur with a secondary education. Erum initially

came to Canada to support her husbands' dream of a higher education in engineering, which eventually turned into the decision to live and work in Saskatchewan permanently. Erum's original first language is Urdu. Before coming to Canada, Erum's hope included her family's stability, security and freedom, and their children's higher education. Her fears about immigrating to Canada were related to acceptance and discrimination, particularly since the 9/11 terrorists' attacks in the United States occurred prior to her family relocating. To exacerbate her fears, Erum also had friends in Toronto who advised Erum's daughter to refrain from wearing her hijab (head scarf) in order to avoid negative attention. In Saskatchewan, Erum's daughter continued to wear her hijab without experiencing any discrimination. During the interview, Erum talked about how she chooses and prefers to keep busy with work both inside and outside the home.

4.1.1.7 Faiza -- Pakistan

Faiza emigrated from Pakistan less than 10 years ago (for geographical and historical background on the country of Pakistan, including ethnic groups, religion and languages spoken, refer to section 4.1.1.4 above). At the time of the interview, Faiza was a landed immigrant between the ages of 34 and 43, married for fourteen years with a daughter and two sons (pre-pubescent to teenage), and a homemaker with a family income over \$60,000. She also was a homemaker in Pakistan. Faiza has a secondary education. She had decided alongside her husband (now a researcher in the field of medicine) to immigrate to Canada for their children's futures: "We came for our kids; for their education, for their better future. In Canada we have lots of opportunities; we came for our children." Faiza's original first language is Urdu. Before coming to Canada, Faiza's hopes revolved around her children's higher education. She also hoped to upgrade her own education, which she is currently pursuing with Adult Basic Education. Faiza's fears about immigrating to Canada were related to fitting in/functioning in a new culture, acceptance and discrimination. During the interview, Faiza talked about the personal freedom and confidence she has gained living in Canada, the importance of imparting Islam to her children, and how not having the familial and community support she had in Pakistan impacts her life.

4.1.1.8 Shahla -- Afghanistan

Shahla emigrated from Afghanistan less than 10 years ago. Afghanistan is located in Southern Asia, north and west of Pakistan, east of Iran. In 1747 Ahmad Shah Durrani unified the

Pashtun tribes and founded Afghanistan. Before the country won independence from national British control in 1919, it served as a buffer between the British and Russian empires. In 1979, the Soviet Union invaded to support the floundering Afghan Communist regime, catalyzing a long and destructive war and a series of civil wars. In 1996, Kabul finally fell to the Taliban (a hard-line Pakistani-sponsored movement that emerged in 1994 to end the country's civil war and anarchy). After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in New York City the Taliban was toppled by the United States and Allies. On December 7, 2004 Hamid Karzai became the first democratically elected president of Afghanistan. The ethnic groups in Afghanistan are Pashtun (42%), Tajik (27%), Hazara (9%), Uzbek (9%), Aimak (4%), Turkmen (3%), Baloch (2%) and other (4%). Islam is the main religion (99%). Languages spoken include Afghan, Persian or Dari (official; 50%), Pashto (official; 35%), Turkic languages (primarily Uzbek and Turkmen; 11%), 30 minor languages (primarily Balochi and Pashai; 4%) and much bilingualism (CIA, 2008).

At the time of the interview, Canadian citizen Shahla was between the ages of 24 and 33, married for five years with two Canadian-born daughters (pre-school and kindergarten aged), and a student with a four-year Bachelor of Science degree with a family income of \$20,000-29,999. She initially came to Canada unmarried and childless after receiving an academic scholarship through the World University Services of Canada (WUSC). Shahla eventually married (a university student who is also Muslim) and applied for Canadian citizenship. Shahla's original first language is Pashto. Before coming to Canada, Shahla's hopes included finishing her studies, finding a good job and bringing her family (refugees at the time) to Canada. Shahla feared isolation and missing her family back home in Afghanistan. During the interview, Shahla talked about the dissimilarity between Canadian values and her traditional heritage religious/cultural values, especially with regard to parent-child relationships. Shahla also talked about the emotional and physical difficulty she has had to endure without the support of her family back home in Afghanistan.

4.1.2 Predominant Themes

To identify themes, first generation (i.e., foreign-born) Muslim immigrant women's acculturation experiences and strategies were explored from a religious, cultural and gender perspective. I explored women's maintenance and/or shifting of roles and expectations

regarding work, family, community, religious/cultural values; and the impact and consequences of the maintenance and/or shifting of roles and expectations as a result of living among cultures.

As stated earlier, I structured emergent themes from the analysis of the interview transcripts that corresponded to my three research aims into predominant themes, sub-themes (where applicable) and components (see Table 1). Not unlike the findings from my review of the literature, Islam was central in women's experiences, informing their perceptions, beliefs and behaviours. Accordingly, Islam is incorporated throughout the presentation of themes, in addition to being a distinct predominant theme.

4.1.2.1 Muslim Immigrant Women's Overall Experiences Living in a Canadian Prairie City

The first aim of my study was to explore and describe the overall experiences of Muslim immigrant women living in a Canadian Prairie City. Three predominant themes emerged from the analysis of interview transcripts: (a) increased freedom of choice; (b) more work, less time; and (c) Islam is a 'different' way of life. Predominant themes, sub-themes and components are discussed in detail below.

4.1.2.1.1 Increased Freedom of Choice

Women spoke about their positive and negative experiences living in a Canadian Prairie City. Positive experiences include greater independence and opportunities in their lives. However, for some women, these were construed as positive experiences at the cost of familial support and accustomed heritage lifestyle conveniences.

4.1.2.1.1.1 Positive Experiences: Greater Independence and Opportunities

Women described Canada as a place where "you decide what you can do and nobody can tell you anything. For everything from what you wear, what you want to do, everything." Women spoke about how in their traditional heritage culture back home they had less independence and fewer opportunities. Afsar continued, "I think in Iran they [women] really depend on their husband. They are not independent. And I think government rule make that. Men have more power in the family." In Iran, Asfar lived in a community where Islamic law made it difficult for women to exhibit independence both in public and in the home:

I think in Iran it's because in Islam they say men should do this and women can't be active outside; working outside of the house. Now they're working outside, but it's not like here. Some husbands, they never let their wife go outside and work.

Similarly, Bani expressed how much better her life as a woman in Canada is compared to

Table 1

Research Aims, Predominant/Sub-Themes, and Components

Overall Experiences of Muslim Immigrant Women Living in a Canadian Prairie City

| Sub-themes | Components |
|-------------------------|--|
| | Increased Freedom of Choice |
| Positive Experiences | Greater independence and opportunities |
| Negative Experiences | Lack of familial support and accustomed conveniences |
| | More Work, Less Time |
| Schedules are Necessary | Need to plan ahead to accomplish work |
| | Islam is a ‘Different’ Way of Life |
| New Cultural Milieu | Maintaining the ‘old’ Islam is a challenge Women attend Mosque with men |

Experiences Transitioning From Their Role In The Family in a Traditional Non-Western Culture To Their Role In The Family in an Egalitarian Canadian Culture

| Predominant Themes | Components |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Working In and Out of Home | Traditional and new shared roles/duties |
| Maintenance of Traditional Role | Traditional unshared duties |

| | |
|---|---|
| Marital Tension/Conflict | Exhibiting independence questionable by traditional standards |
| Instilling Traditional Values in Children | Increased heritage culture contact |

Factors that Hinder and Facilitate Women's Adaptation in Canada

| Predominant Themes | Components |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Cultural Contrasts | Less sense of family and community among Canadians |
| Familial and Social Support | Feelings of identity loss and isolation Approval and relatedness fosters feelings of cultural fit |

in Bangladesh: "Back home women did not work. There is no jobs for women. Nowadays like you know, a banker or something but here is more opportunity; most of the ladies work. I like that, independence like that." Like Bani, Afsar compared her heritage culture to Canada; an egalitarian culture wherein individuals, regardless of sex, are free to exercise autonomy:

Everything that men say women have to do it and they don't have any way but to do it. These days it's a little bit changed but not like here. Here, it's totally different; if you want to be divorced, for sure government helps you, but in Iran no.

As our discussion progressed Afsar revealed to me how deeply Islamic law in her Iranian community dictates women's behaviour, even in the home. She spoke of how much she missed her family and friends. When I asked her what she did when she met with her friends she told me that if she met with only women, they would dance. Afsar stated, "Because we are Muslims it's not in a good way to dance in front of men. It's not good. In our language it's *haraam* [religiously forbidden]. It's not good because of our religious beliefs." Similarly, Geena spoke about women's freedom and equality in Canada:

It's a more Westernized kind of a culture, when compared to what it was in India because it's not that Westernized in India and you're restricted to a few things. Like women are not supposed to do this and that, men are the head of the family; women are always placed a little low when compared to men. But here it's more equal; more modernized culture or Westernized culture.

Faiza also shared how her life and demeanor in a Canadian Prairie City exemplifies emancipation in her basic day to day life compared to when she lived in Pakistan:

Oh, here my life is very good, simple. Right now my husband is in Pakistan, but here is good; I can go myself, I can drive, I don't need my husband or my brother to come with me. But in my country for me is difficult, different, not like here. In Pakistan it's very difficult without my husband because wherever I go, for example if I go to hospital, if I go to shop, whatever, I must go with my husband. I cannot go alone; my husband or my brother must come with me. Here I feel more confident, more independent, I have opportunity, I go to basic education, and I do myself a lot, that thing I like here.

When I inquired about what contributes to her increased confidence and independence in a Canadian Prairie City, Faiza seemed to describe the individualistic orientation of Canadian culture, which for her also includes a welcome sense of anonymity:

I think that is culture. For example, in village or anything if I go alone it's not good a woman go alone by herself everywhere, go like this and that. Everybody's looking what I'm doing and talking. But here now wherever I go, whatever I do, nobody cares. I like the things here. It's more open and nobody, even I didn't know my neighbor, what they are doing or who they are.

In more direct terms, Shahla expressed a deep appreciation for egalitarian Canadian culture's value system. Shahla's family members in Afghanistan are currently refugees. Although she has much love for her country, she believes it will never be a place where people are valued, where equal opportunity prevails:

There are many, many things that I want my people to learn from Canadians, honestly, from the West. One thing; that they value every person as an individual. Everybody can have a house, everybody can enjoy having a car, everybody can enjoy whatever they want, their children can go to school, they can enjoy going to university.

4.1.2.1.1.2 Negative Experiences: Lack of Familial Support and Accustomed Conveniences

Although women's positive experiences living in a Canadian Prairie City make them feel like they have greater independence, increased opportunities and equality, some women viewed these as attached to a cost; familial support and accustomed heritage lifestyle conveniences. Geena talked about how the sheltered and privileged way in which she was raised in her Indian community back home did not prepare her for this modernized Western culture. For Geena, the increased independence and equality she has experienced in a Canadian Prairie City comes with a struggle she and her husband had not experienced back home:

With my culture when you are at a certain income group where you can afford everything, you don't tend to send your kids away to struggle, you tend to help them out with whatever, and so you just make the life easy, just with no struggle at all. That's what happened with me and my husband.

Geena explained how the media, which depicted hedonistic images of the West, combined with the way she was raised gave her a false impression and unrealistic expectations of how life would be in Canada:

It's like the grass is always green on the other side; it always looked nice when on the TV people had fun and roamed around in limousines and parties. I think the TV too gives you quite a different image than what it is actually here. That was another reason why I was all excited to come; but then when I got here it was nothing like it was on TV and what I imagined. When we came here we had a struggle so we learned more about how you live. Back home it was all taken for granted; here we don't have anyone, we have to do everything by ourselves.

Geena described how she experienced difficulties adjusting when she first came to Canada, and how these negative experiences became even more salient to her when she was ill and had to deal with a new fact; there was no parent or extended family member to care for her:

The negative hard times that I've had is when I'm sick, not feeling well; when I have no one to go to, when I have no one who can come here. My husband has to go to work, he can't take [time] off. I can take [time] off and I can stay home but he can't take off to help me. When he had to go on conferences and I was alone at home, those were the

days when, apart from in the beginning, when I wished I had my Mom next door to run to, or even my in-laws.

Likewise, Shahla revealed to me how she struggled, and still struggles, without her family's emotional and physical support, and how she was compelled to substitute friends for her family back home in Afghanistan:

When I was with my family I was quite dependent on them; everything I would do with them. But here I had to find friends, I had to join groups, I had to do things; I needed people. And then I found them and they were there to help me. So I had to reach people. If I had stayed in my room saying that 'oh I am alone', I don't know what would've happened to me, but I had to reach people.

Faiza, who in Canada no longer has to be accompanied by her husband or a male relative to go out in public, spoke in terms of the pros and cons of both living back home and in a Canadian Prairie City:

If I needed help, I have my family; everybody is ready to help me with anything. Here, if I need help, nobody is here to help me. I have to do myself even if I am sick. When you are sick, when you are happy, whenever, you miss a lot your family. Other times you are cooking, you are busy, so it's not like that. But, for 8 years for sure I miss my family; we were together, every meal, every time go to everybody's house. Family, I always miss that. Some things are good here, some things are good there, but it's not like Canada is perfect, or Pakistan is perfect no.

In summary, women's positive experiences living in a Canadian Prairie City entail greater independence and increased opportunities in their lives. Women readily acknowledged this as a stark contrast from the restriction, and in some cases, subordination they experienced in their traditional heritage cultural communities. Some of these discussions exemplified how for some Muslims, their culture is not distinct from Islam. Negative experiences living in a Canadian Prairie City entail lack of familial support and accustomed traditional heritage lifestyle conveniences; interpreted by some women as a fee for their new found freedom and personal value. In sharing their positive and negative experiences, for most women, their initial immigration experiences appeared to be most salient.

4.1.2.1.2 More Work, Less Time

All the women continue to experience an increased workload exacerbated by less time for their work. Women shared how in their traditional heritage cultures, day to day work never felt as singularly overwhelming as it does now. Back home, maintaining their lifestyle did not take much effort. Time for everything from leisure to daily work (whatever that entailed) was inherent in the culture, which included support from others. For Afsar, life in Canada means working in and out of the home, leaving her little to no personal time:

I'm more busy than in Iran. When I was home for the first three years, I had to do everything by myself; raise my daughter by myself, take her to the doctor, get groceries, everything, so I was busier than Iran. In Iran I had time to go to my family or my friends' home. But now I have a job outside, so I'm so busy.

Cala also talked about having no personal time. However, for Cala, the difference in her experience of work is far-reaching. Although not typical for women in Sudan, Cala worked in an office for five months. She explained to me that in her community, work “is really very easy and totally different from here” and that “the way you did [styled] your hair from home is the same [style is still intact] when you come back. Not like here.” I asked Cala to describe her experience working in an office in Sudan:

They [women] go but not for eight hours...I used to work from eight o'clock to three...I still I practice my religion there. I pray in my office....not all the day is full day's work. We do our job and sometimes we don't have anything, just we sit and talk and talk about our religion and read the Qur'an; we talk with each other and teach each other; we spend our time like that. And nobody coming and telling me 'You are praying now? Why you are praying?' It doesn't mean I don't work. No I work. I do my job but still a good time, not like here; eight hours of working, working, working, only in the break time you have your break. Maybe there is different jobs, but I work as a housekeeping and now I'm working at the central laundry at...and my day is always full; you have no time to talk about anything during the work.

4.1.2.1.2.1 Schedules are Necessary: Need to Plan Ahead to Accomplish Work

Women talked about how they had time for anything and everything back home. While some women talked about the support of their family with their daily work in the home, others stated they had hired help, which was common for middle income families. For women like

Daliya (Pakistan), life in Canada is: “Work! Work! Work! A lot of work! You have to do everything; cleaning, cooking, dishwashing; everything here!”

As all of the women I interviewed have lived in Canada for at least three years, they have had some time to learn to adjust to Canadian culture without the help of their family or hired help. Women exemplified adjusting to their busy lives in Canada through their talk of time-management, schedules and organization. To complete all her daily work, Bani (Bangladesh) states that “here you have to watch the clock, you know; here always you have to time everything.” Similarly, Erum had to find a way to balance her work outside the home with her work inside the home:

Like there [Pakistan] I’ve got plenty of time because I’ve got a [paid] helper and they used to do the things, and most of the things can be done. But here when we came, like everything we have to do our self. Now I have to make my schedule and just go according to it, otherwise it’s not done.

I asked Erum to describe what a typical day entails for her. It sounded much like a typical full day for most of us who balance work and family. However she forgot to mention food preparation – an important part of women’s daily work – when she described her day, so I asked her, “Do you cook when you get home after work?” Unlike the way most of us who balance work and family spend our days off, Erum replied:

No [I cook] on my day off; today I made three dishes. I don’t like when I come back, I’m so tired, I don’t feel like doing anything at all, so on my day off I do that. Sometimes I have to work three days and then I get one or two days off, sometimes I work four. So according to my schedule I make the dishes [based on] how many days I’ll be working; that’s how many I make, so then I don’t have to worry.

Afsar also talks about how being organized helps her do all of the things she needs to do. However, for Afsar, being extremely busy with her work in and out of the home is rewarding and also leaves her with little time to miss her family back home:

I think it’s good because I just focus my work; after that I come home and clean, cook, and I don’t have any time to focus on my family in Iran or get homesick. And for sure, I make some money and it makes me happy to work and to buy something or to have purpose to go out for shopping and things like that.

As our discussion progressed Afsar stated, “I don't have any relatives, so I like to be busy. I like to be busy, especially here.” I asked her what would happen if she was not as busy as she is now:

I'll be homesick and I wouldn't have any purpose to go out. Just you are lazy and don't want to go out. But, when you are busy and everything is organized and then you have time to go out, you will enjoy when you are outside. You are relaxed because you know you are too busy and you don't have any time.

Geena also talked about the positive side to staying busy. In Geena's case, being really busy raising a family in a Canadian Prairie City helped her adjust to Canadian culture and also gave her less time to miss her family in Pakistan:

Now it's good. Now it's much better. I think even with being busy, now that I have my own family, I have my daughter, I have my husband, I know the community well now; I have lots more friends now, so it gives you a little more, you know, that feeling of you belonging here. At that time I think it was more like I didn't belong. I wanted to be here, I wanted to come, but I couldn't see myself fit in here, getting adjusted to the lifestyle, the people; maybe it's good for a vacation but it's not for a lifetime. But now I'm so used to it that I've got adjusted to it. I have friends, family, I have my little girl who was born here and she keeps me busy; I think that's another key to no family. Just have your have kids, and they keep you busy. You don't have time to think about anything else.

In summary, women are experiencing an amplified workload aggravated by less time for both their work and themselves. Everyday life in Canada requires exceedingly more effort; effort that necessitates a schedule, time-management and organizational skills, especially for those women who are also employed outside the home. Women had to adjust to being solely responsible for everyday work inside the home without the support of their family and accustomed hired help in their traditional heritage communities. While women feel overwhelmed with their workload, some women who are working outside the home are finding blessings in their work; their work is rewarding and consuming enough to keep them from missing their families back home.

4.1.2.1.3 Islam is a 'Different' Way of Life

Women spoke about their experiences practicing Islam in Canada. Women find that lack of time, coupled with not having the support of their family and traditional heritage culture

community makes maintenance of Islam in their lives – as it was back home – a challenge. Some of these women, who never attended Mosque in their traditional heritage cultures, found the practice of attending Mosque in Canada to be an adjustment.

4.1.2.1.3.1 New Cultural Milieu: Maintaining the ‘Old’ Islam is a Challenge

Women talked about how lack of time, family and traditional heritage culture to support Islam as a way of life in Canada, impacts them on a daily basis. Bani, who used to recite Namaz (pray) five times a day, read the Qur’an and participate in religious events like Eid (annual Islamic holy day and festival), says that Islam in her life has changed in Canada: “Sometimes we have no time. We still pray and read Qur’an and all that, but not like in our own country [Bangladesh].” Bani explained that the demands of employment can sometimes act as a barrier to actively participating in Islamic practice:

Back home, it was different because there is time to do everything, but here sometime you work; you skip all this here. Life is busy; you can’t go [to Mosque]. Sometimes you can’t get shift work and you miss that. So we pray at home. But, if you can do outside [pray at Mosque], you have to.

Cala also talked about how Islam was different in Sudan compared to in a Canadian Prairie City. For Cala, having her father to support her in modeling Islamic practice for her children was essential:

Teaching our kids since they are young about the religion, about the culture is very important. That is what my dad and me used to do before to my kids; we used to teach them how to pray, how to read Qur’an. And he [father] used to always take them to the Mosque to go to pray with him or if he’d pray at home, beside him because he want to show them what he’s doing exactly, time by time. Not like here; we are not getting this time or that time. [Back home] I praying five times a day exactly on time, reading Qur’an; we read almost everyday Qur’an. In the in Ramadan going every night to the Mosque; that is what we were doing about practicing our Islam over there.

Cala explained that Islam was ever present because it was perpetuated by her family and community, especially her elders: “My dad he was the oldest one at home, he was the one who was even asking us about that; even after I was married and having kids he was still asking me did you pray, are you praying?” In Canada, without her family and traditional culture to surround and transmit Islam, much of the experience of significance is lost:

That is why you feel Islam it tastes really different over there, it tastes really different. In [month of] Ramadan, I don't taste in Ramadan here, nothing. For me the only special thing of the day, the only special time is when I come home and eat. But there, you feel it really, you know, feel it really that it's Ramadan. 'Cause all the family they come together, all of them. You know what it does mean, Ramadan, over there.

I asked Cala if it is hard to practice Islam in Canada. To feel connected with Islam, Cala stated that the family and the culture provide the time to both practice Islam and experience its meaning:

It is not hard really, but you don't get really enough time like in my country. I wasn't working there; I have enough time to practice everything over there. Maybe here there are some women who have time to practice and go to the Mosque. But for somebody working, like me, I don't think I am getting enough time to practice, really. I used to go to evening class for Qur'an for only ladies. Now I have no time because I started working evening again you know. That is what I mean. Still, we try to practice at home, to pray at home but I feel like we are missing important things; going to the Mosque, especially on Friday.

Similar to Cala, Daliya talked about feeling connected to Islam: "The thing is as Muslims, we were close to our holy places, like it's the Muslim country, so we can hear the prayers five times a day. It was really good; that for our children was good." Daliya expressed how her children were immersed in their culture back home: "The public you know, it's good outside, you can see and hear the prayers. During Ramadan it was so nice and we visit, many times we visit to our Holy places. Life was good." She talked about how easy it was for her children to learn about and practice Islam back home. Now she sees the need to put more effort into making Islam transparent in her home in Canada, so that the traditional significance is transmitted to her children:

I learned a lot about Islam when I move here, outside of Pakistan. In Pakistan, I know people practice Islam, they go to the Mosque. But here I think they practice more because when you are a minority you want your children to know and we put more effort than they do in Pakistan because everybody celebrates Eid (annual Islamic holy day and festival), but here you do something special so your children feel that it's Eid.

I confirmed with Daliya, "...because you don't have your traditional surrounding community," and she replied:

That's right. I remember Eid after Ramadan; we would always get money from our elders. And here we do the same; my brother and my husband's brother they always phone and they talk to the children and they tell them take gift – we call it Eidy – from your Mom, and we manage between them [kids]. They say give them this much money and this much money, and we do; we all learn to give. Even in our [local heritage] community the close friends, we exchange gifts so our children know this is our special day. You have to do effort because on Christmas the Canadian or Christian people they do a lot of effort. So we show our children the same effort, you know.

Faiza, who tries to, but is not able to practice Islam regularly in Canada, also explained that in Pakistan it is easier to be regular and consistent in practice with the support of the family/culture, especially because "you hear the Azaan [Adhan; Islamic call to prayer]." Similar to Daliya, Faiza also talked about making a concerted effort for her children, but the lack of time coupled with no longer being able to rely on her family/culture back home makes it difficult: "We are trying our best. They are praying but when we read the Qur'an and try to teach them at home (because we can't go to Mosque), they say sometimes 'oh it's boring, it's too long', but I'm trying." Faiza explained that in Pakistan religious school was integrated in her children's school day, which not only kept her children from questioning and boredom, but also made it easier on her because she had others to help model and teach Islam to her kids. In Canada, Faiza states, "I have to do everything because if I didn't do it then they cannot practice their religion, say their prayers, read their Qur'an or anything. I have to do because in [Canadian] school they're not teaching anything."

Geena also told me that time and work does not allow her to attend Mosque as often as she would like. She spoke of how she maintains Islam in a Canadian Prairie City and the importance of having a local Muslim community:

We still do Namaz [prayer] here at home, we still read Qur'an, we still follow all the rules, we still keep Rozas [fasts], we still give Zakat [almsgiving]; everything that mainly Islam is made of, including teaching our daughter these things and what is Allah and what is Islam all about. Whatever we learned when we were kids – how to respect your elders, how to respect food, how to respect your parents, and you know all that – those

little things we do teach her and I think when we do teach her it refreshes whatever you learned, so you tend to follow it more because she has to look to you and learn. That's why we have to meet more Muslim community, so she can learn more from the kids and families that are Muslims.

Although not having enough time to practice was a shared reality for all the women, a couple of the women are able to maintain Islam in their Canadian lives as they did in their traditional heritage culture. Erum explained how she was able to incorporate Islam into her work day:

It's the same thing [Islam], like even at my work I told my supervisor that I want to get my breaks according to my prayer time, because my, you know like the prayer time changes, in summer time it's different, everyday it's a different time. So whenever she make the schedule she asked me 'is this okay with you?' So I don't get any trouble, I have my prayers there; there is a room where I can go and have my prayers there.

In Erum's home, everyone prays independently: "If you make your routine then you know your prayer time and according to that you can adjust yourself. Lots of people say they don't get time; it's not a matter of time because it just takes five minutes." Similarly, Shahla maintains Islam as she did in Afghanistan: "It's the same as before. You can't forget your religion, like you pray five times and this is in your mind that's it." For Shahla, full Islamic dress in public also is an important practice to uphold because it serves as a reminder of Allah to her and her young kids:

Even my kids know what I'm wearing, and if I go outside – then they know, and they never forget it – they know that if I'm taking my dress, like my hijab, then they're like, 'oh, where are you going?', just even if I take it for the prayer they're kind of like, 'oh where is she going?' They have this in their mind, this association.

4.1.2.1.3.2 New Cultural Milieu: Women Attend Mosque with Men

Women stated that in their traditional heritage cultures they would practice Islam (e.g., pray five times a day and read the Qur'an) in their home, while the men and boys would practice in the Mosque. In Canada, some women found that attending Mosque was yet another adjustment. Geena explains this difference in her experience:

The main thing when I came, it was so different with Muslim culture there [India] and the Muslim culture here. It was difficult for me to adapt to because there Muslim women

never went to Mosque; we used to pray at home all the time. For Eid [annual Islamic holy day and festival] we all met at home; all the men went to the Mosque for Namaz [prayer], and we – all of the women – met at home in one house and read the Namaz together. When I came here I had to go to Mosque because they do go to Mosque here, Muslim women. It was so different for me to go to the Mosque [here] with my husband, read the Namaz there, meet people then come back home. Even now I'm still trying to adjust with them, but now I can see the concept; I can see them [Muslim women] go, I can see myself go pray there and all that, so I'm getting used to it.

Like Geena, Faiza (Pakistan) and Bani also were used to praying at home with the other women in their family, so they experienced an adjustment attending Mosque in Canada. I asked Bani why women did not attend Mosque in her community in Bangladesh:

It's called *purdah* [keeping women from public view]; all women have to cover up, their hair and everything, so they don't go in front of the man face to face, you're not supposed to. Like in front of the dad it's okay, but other people, no. Even this Mosque here in [city], during pray time, the women sit at the back and men sit at the front – they are separated. And back home women didn't even go to mosque.

In summary, most women are experiencing a different Islam in a Canadian Prairie City. As with their daily work, women are solely responsible for maintaining Islam in their homes without the support of their family and traditional heritage communities back home. While some women accept this change and are satisfied with their personal best efforts, others feel an obligation to make more concerted efforts so that Islam is reflected and transparent in their Canadian homes – as it was for them in their traditional heritage homes – in order to transmit *Islam as a way of life* to their children. Some women, who never attended, nor ever conceived of attending a Mosque in their traditional heritage cultures found attending Mosque in Canada, alongside men, to be an adjustment. Women's overall experiences living in a Canadian Prairie City suggest that while they are adjusting to doing everything on their own – from domestic duties to the practice and transmission of Islam to their children – they are adopting strategies to cope with increased workload (use of schedules/time management) and homesickness (staying busy).

4.1.2.2 Women's Experiences Transitioning From Their Role In The Family in a Traditional Non-Western Culture To Their Role In The Family in an Egalitarian Canadian Culture

The second aim of my study was to explore and describe immigrant Muslim women's experiences transitioning from their role in the family in a traditional non-Western culture to their role in the family in an egalitarian Canadian culture. Four predominant themes emerged from the analysis of interview transcripts: (a) working in and out of the home; (b) maintenance of traditional role; (c) marital tension/conflict; and (d) instilling traditional values in children. Predominant themes and their components are discussed in detail below.

4.1.2.2.1 Working In and Out of the Home: Traditional and New Shared Roles/Duties

As my discussions with women progressed, it became obvious to me that women's personally constructed identities are, in part, informed by their daily work; as their work undergoes shifts and changes, so too does the construction of their identities. Women expressed how back home their roles and duties were clearly defined compared to the flexible and indistinct roles and duties of women in Canada (Afsar):

For Canadian women I think it's a part of their life to go out and work and bring money to the family. But for Iranian women, no, they just relax and stay home and just cook and do ordinary things like that at home. And their husbands have to bring money home.

Similarly, Cala makes a comparison of women's roles in Sudan versus Canada.

Cala related that although the women's role in her heritage Sudanese community is slowly beginning to evolve, they are still solely responsible for maintaining the home and family, unlike the shared responsibility in the Canadian home:

For example, before my husband comes home from work, before the kids come from school the food needs to be ready. We have time, we have time for everything to be ready, never late because she don't do nothing, ladies all day; she used to just work at home. But now they start working out. But still she is a mother of the home; she is the one who's cooking, cleaning. Not like here; really sharing life. It's totally different there (Sudan).

Women are continually learning to adjust to working in and out of the home, juxtaposing their traditional roles and duties with newly acquired ones. For Erum, life and sharing domestic work in Canada is quite different from her Pakistani community: "It's not compulsory he has to

do, it's not his responsibility, but if he wants to then he can do vacuuming and stuff sometimes. Like he never did cooking in his whole life but now he try to sometimes.”

Bani also spoke about such changes when she came to Canada several years ago. At that time, while her children were still young, Bani kept a full-time job in retail for five years. She was able to adjust relatively easily with the support of her husband who began to share in some of the domestic work like cooking on the weekends, and devoting time to their children. Her now grown kids, who preferred Western food over the traditional Bangladeshi cuisine Bani and her husband like to eat, prepared their own meals by choice. Now that her children are self-sufficient, Bani is able to enjoy her traditional hobby of sewing ethnic dresses, while working part-time. I asked Bani how she feels about all these changes and adjustments over a lengthy span of time: “Everything, like the working inside/outside house, work is different, our house is different, cleaning is different in that we have to do everything. But I like it, all this change; this life is better than, now I think, better than ours back home.”

During my conversation with Geena, I learned that she prefers the traditional gender roles in her community in India, particularly because of the uncompromised time she would be able to devote to raising her children:

I would rather do what my Mom did; take care of the house and be with [daughter] and focus everything on her. Everything should be about her; how she is doing, how her education is, how much she knows about Islam. I'd rather stay at home and teach my kids, and give them more attention because now I don't know if I can, living here. If I was in India, I would give more than what I can right now; in Canada, I am working outside so I get to spend, say, 10% of the time I have towards her [daughter], whereas if I was in India I would usually finish all my work before the kids come home and 100% of my time is given towards them.

Geena expressed that her and her husband's mutual priority is family and teaching the significance of family to their daughter to “make her feel what family is”. Rather than professional and monetary pursuits, “it's always about the kids” and therefore, dedicating as much time as possible to them comes before all else.

I asked Geena what she thinks about all theses changes and she replied, “It was really difficult at first, but now that I have no option, I know I have to, so I do my little bits to stay with

her and give her Muslim time.” Geena explained how she ‘steals’ daycare time and goes to work later in the day just to spend time with her daughter:

I don’t send her to daycare at nine o’clock and relax until one o’clock [when it’s time for work] and take that beauty sleep or time off and give that time to myself. I think people who I work with, Canadians, do that; they tend to send the kids off, take time for them self, take care of them self. I don’t do that. I don’t send her until one o’clock to daycare so that I can stay with her. That I think is so different from what people here do.

Geena was very expressive about her intense dedication to Islam and family, describing her role as an agent by which the two are conveyed to her daughter. I wondered about the potential consequences of minimal to no personal time for self-renewal. Geena explained to me how she learned about things like “husband-wife quality time, going out with friends, leaving the husband with kids and going out with friends to have fun” from her co-workers when she first started working:

We’ve never gone out without her anywhere. If we have to go out and spend time, we take her to fun factory; we take her to McDonalds, that’s what we do. We take her to places where she can have fun and we can enjoy seeing her have fun. That’s what we do different from Canadians. Canadians would hire a babysitter, have the babysitter in and go for a movie, and get that time away and get that break, but we don’t do that; we would rather take a break with her, not from her. I don’t think we can ever do that. Even my friends who work, who are Muslims, I think for them too it’s more about staying with the family and taking break with the family, not away from the family. But for Canadians I think it is taking a break away from the family.

Although “stressed and busy”, the key to self-renewal for Geena is not to escape, but rather to do what she has learned – what her Mom did – growing up:

I can say she’s [daughter] young, she’ll be okay and I can take off; go out with my friends, go for movies, go for dinners with them, but I would rather not take off and do that because I would not be happy that way. I am much happier this way and I think dealing with all that stress is just spending more time with her.

In summary, women’s experiences maintaining their traditional domestic roles in addition to working outside of the home is an ongoing adjustment that has implications for the way women identify themselves. Considering women are at different stages of adjustment, they

have different reactions to sharing domestic work with their husbands and family members; some women are happy with the changes, while others are at most contemplative of them. Working in and out of the home competes with the traditional role of the mother who used to be able to focus solely on the home and family, and devote one hundred percent of her attention to the children.

4.1.2.2 Maintenance of Traditional Role: Unshared Duties

The roles and duties for two women, Faiza and Daliya – neither of whom are working outside of the home – adhere strictly to those ascribed in their traditional heritage cultures. Like the other interviewees, their roles and duties in their traditional heritage cultures were connected primarily to the domestic sphere (while the men were responsible for providing financial sustenance) and they had the physical and emotional support of their parents, siblings and in-laws. Although their traditional roles and unshared duties have not changed in Canada, both Faiza and Daliya have become conscious of the vital function of these supports as well as the loss of them; in addition to having to adjust to doing everything on their own, in a different way, and in a different environment.

After describing a typical day of work, “lots of things; take care of the kids, go to school, groceries, cooking, cleaning and most other things,” Faiza stated (as did Cala previously) that Canadian men and women share domestic work:

I met lots of [Canadian] woman their husband is cooking, so I think they both do similar, men and woman both do similar; they share I think. But not like mine; women do different and men do different. But here I think they’re sharing; they both do work out and in. Even their children, they talking about their husband’s helping with the children too. I heard that they are changing diapers! It’s just impossible in my [Pakistani] village; most of the men, if they take care of children then it does not look good; they say ‘no’ to take care of children, ‘it’s woman’s job’.

Faiza declared that although she does not work outside of the home – like most Canadian women – the biggest difference between her and a Canadian woman is the work of imparting Islam to her children: “This is part of my life and I have to teach my children about Islam, it’s my religion, it’s my life.”

Similar to Faiza, Daliya also maintains her traditional role in a Canadian Prairie City and acknowledges significant changes in her domestic work like cooking and cleaning:

Here, you would only sometimes make two meals a day, breakfast and dinner. But in Pakistan, in the morning is when the husband and children go so they take proper breakfast. You have to give them lunch when they come back home in the afternoon, especially in my family because we always have nice food in the afternoon; lunch is really special! And at night we take snacks and light food. So we have to cook three times a day. It is difficult, for ladies; there's a lot of work. Mostly, less men who help you, mostly women have to do it.

Although a lot of laborious domestic work in Pakistan, Daliya realizes the great help she had at home, especially with cooking traditional meals – that are very elaborate and time-consuming – three times a day. Daliya finds that without the help she had back home, it is more difficult and time-consuming, so now she only prepares two of these kinds of meals daily in Canada:

In my community back home we had a lot of help. If you have any dinner – everybody do dinners for us and we do for them – but you don't have to do it alone. Every time, all the family is there so we share together. My mother in-law she helped me cook, she helped me a lot. I helped her and she helped me; the whole day I'm in the kitchen. But now my family comes home like four o'clock. I give them to eat and in the night I give them snacks.

Daliya stated that her husband's busy work schedule does not allow him much time to help out at home, but that she is able to get her children to pitch in with simple things like loading the dishwasher. She also talked about the cultural differences in the division of labour, explaining that she thinks Canadian women are able to accomplish more because they have the support of their husbands:

They do lot of work, especially taking children out. They are responsible more than us, I think, about their kids; they go to the games, take them for soccer, hockey and we appreciate too, but I think they do more. But the thing is their husbands help them a lot, I think because once I remember I had to take my daughter for fundraising and every home I saw the men were helping in the kitchen. So if these men help them [women] a lot in cooking and all, then you have a lot of time for yourself and for kids. But they have only one or two children so they have a lot of time and are more active. The main reason is that they get a lot of help at home. The husband and wife, they put in effort together.

Further into our discussion, I could see and feel Daliya's frustration – as she compared the differences between gender roles, work and family in her traditional heritage culture and Canadian culture – almost to the point of self-imposed judgment. It also was clear that her now lost familial aid with her daily work is taxing on her, both physically and psychologically, as she referred to herself as “lazy” compared to Canadian women, even though she previously stated that Canadian women achieve much in their daily lives because they have their husband's support. She finally submitted:

You don't get a lot of support from your husband. You do but not that much. I remember my Mom did mostly everything, but now I'm the mother and all the responsibility is on me. Maybe I'm wrong, but it's my opinion what I say, it's my experience.”

In summary, for a couple of the women, their traditional roles and duties have remained constant in a Canadian Prairie City; they are responsible for maintaining the home and family. However, these women are aware of the cultural differences between Canada and their traditional heritage community (i.e., shared versus unshared roles/duties) as well as the loss of familial support in their daily work. This awareness of having limited to no support from their spouse and extended family/community is exacerbated by having to adjust to doing different work, in a different way, in a different setting, and completely on their own.

4.1.2.2.3 Marital Tension/Conflict: Exhibiting Independence is Questionable by Traditional Standards

Husbands also were central to my discussions about work and family with a few of the other women. For Afsar (Iran), the main topic around role transition had to do with “Canadian women's freedom” and that “they have more than Muslim women”. Afsar stated that the freedom and independence that Canadian women exhibit is because “they grew with this culture” and is a part of their upbringing:

They [Canadian women] are free when they speak with their male colleagues or something like that. But, Muslim women they don't have that much freedom. Their husband's don't let them talk so much. But for Canadian people, I think that it's solved for them. But it's a problem for Muslims.

When I began to talk about personal implications, it was apparent that Afsar did not feel completely comfortable divulging her experiences around this topic. However, she readily acknowledged that it is an occasional “problem” for her and that she is “not like a Canadian

woman; they have more freedom than me.” I asked her, “Do you ever feel like you want to say or do something, but feel that it might not be right?” and she replied, “I think so, sometimes, yes, exactly.”

In talking with Erum (Pakistan), it was evident that she did exhibit a certain degree of independence in her home, albeit to her husband’s dislike:

No, actually my husband is not very like, not very happy with my working because he says ‘you can stay at home, why do you have to work?’ Well, I said, I want to keep myself busy too because if I’m at home all day, I’m just wasting my time and doing nothing.

In Pakistan, Erum was the founder of the “committee party” – a close social network wherein the women who participated would take turns hosting gatherings during the day in their homes, while the men and kids were away. Very active and social, Erum has created a similar social committee in her local heritage community; one in which children and men participate. For Erum – who describes herself as confident and outgoing – staying home would be “too boring.” Unlike some of the other interviewees, Erum’s financial situation allows her to stay home if she wishes: “that’s what my husband wants and my kids too actually.” Like the other women, Erum learned to stay busy from watching her own mother while growing up. In Canada, this philosophy extends to work outside of the home, and Erum’s husband lives with her choices.

My conversation with Cala around marriage and work was the most revealing and uninhibited. Cala explained to me what it means for a man in her traditional Sudanese community when a woman works outside the home:

Some of them they are strong in the religion; they don't like their daughters or their wife to go to work. They think, ‘I'm a man, I'm not going to let her to be wanting something to go to work’. Everything, he has to bring everything. ‘I'm the man and who's going to bring the money and everything for you, you just cook and clean’, that is what I mean. I think for some on one side, it is good because they [men] are scared and they just care about you a lot. But from other side, not good because she has to have a little bit also some fun, right?

Cala explained how this philosophy prevails in all areas of a women’s life:

If there is a party you have to have permission, you have to ask your husband or your Dad if you are still not married. If there’s party for my friend, birthday, wedding,

whatever, ‘Can I go Dad?’ If he said no, means no; I’m not going. Even now I am married, and if I go to visit, when I stay with him at home [Sudan], I have to respect him [father] still. I have to ask him, ‘I am going here, I am going there’ and if he say ‘no, don’t go’, I am not going.

I asked Cala if things are different in Canada:

Here what I do now is total different; these are the things now make us divorce, also. It is exactly what make me divorce from him because he wanted it like there. He wants me to be staying home, he doesn’t want me to go out wearing jeans and work or do anything else; too many things.

Cala and her now former husband started experiencing conflict upon coming to Canada: “Our life just started breaking; he doesn’t want me to do this, he doesn’t want me to do that.” They were forced to contend with cultural differences infiltrating into their marriage: “We get into a fight and we saw that, you know, you have a little bit of problem, it goes to immigration, to the office here.” Cala’s only concern was for their children: “I was only thinking about raising my kids beside their dad; never take them away from their dad. That is what made me stay the five years.” Ultimately, Cala – encouraged by her father and her brother – got a divorce. She qualified this by adding: “In Islam, if the husband away seven months or more and he don’t take care about kids, working, sending money or calling and asking, you can get a divorce. You can ask and get a divorce.” Cala is now re-married and awaiting her husband’s arrival in Canada.

In summary, for a few of the women, their role transition in Canada has had negative implications for their marriage, and in one particular case, resulted in divorce. Marital tension and conflict were presented by women to be the byproduct of the desire to participate in or practice Canadian living; exhibiting freedom and independence appears to be construed by unwaveringly traditional husbands as questionable and opposing of traditional heritage values, beliefs and practices.

4.1.2.2.4 Instilling Tradition Values in Children: Increased Heritage Culture Contact

Salient to all women in my study is raising their children in accordance with their traditional heritage culture values, as women themselves were raised. For most of the women, this means having to contend with the “outside” Canadian culture and working diligently to impart to their children what it means to be Muslim. Faiza (Pakistan) states:

As a Muslim, it's my responsibility here to teach them; if I didn't teach them, who will teach my children? They learn things from home. If I didn't teach them prayers, fasting, about Islam, about Allah, everything, then when they grow, they will not practice.

Similarly, Daliya (Pakistan) talked about the importance of relating Islam to her children, making a cultural distinction:

At home they learn something different. Outside they learn something else. So sometimes you need to remind them what to do. It's good to learn at home, so you have to put more effort into telling them each and everything; we are Muslim, we don't smoke – I mean smoke is not a big deal – we don't drink, we are Muslim; we don't do that, we are Muslim; we eat halal food [food that is “permissible” and prepared in the manner described by the shari'a/Islamic law].

Daliya explained to me that when she and her family first came to Canada, she had to teach her children about what eating halal food means because they did not understand at the time why they were not allowed to eat at McDonald's. In Pakistan, halal food is widespread so it was never something they had to explain to their young children. Her children now understand and abide, but still “it's a big sacrifice for them. Some people they just say Bismillah and eat [make exceptions in the name of God]. But we don't, no way.” Daliya states, “we bring the things they can eat. Now you can get chicken nuggets, hot dogs, if we go to Calgary or Edmonton. We have Asian shop here too or bring from there; lots of effort for the kids.” I asked Daliya how she feels about having to put so much effort into raising her children the Islamic way in Canada:

The thing is it gets more difficult if your children have lot of Canadian friends. The good thing is my children they do not have that many Canadian friends. Mostly they are in the [Muslim] community; they go to school, after school I never see anybody come here.

Sometimes my son he goes to play with them. So, if you have a lot of relations with the Canadian community then it gets difficult, but thank God, at the moment it's not.

Daliya explained that she must continually monitor her children to make sure that they are not influenced by their Canadian friends, and that she herself does not make any compromises:

Our daughter is very social she has many friends- ‘oh she [daughter's friend] is having a sleepover!’ I said ‘no, we cannot do it. You can't go.’ It's not that I don't believe it, but I don't want it. They were a very nice couple [parents of daughter's friend]; husband and

wife both doctors, really nice couple. But once I give them [children] permission, then she is set for every sleepover.

Daliya talked about how she perceives Canadian culture, “Here, you get a lot of stories, news from media, child abuse, and drugs. Need to avoid this.” More importantly, she states, “You never know, you never know cause for us, our own Mom she never leave us with anybody.”

Again, the sources of her thoughts and behaviour regarding her children became clear:

You do what you see in your home; what you see your moms do. My children sometimes say ‘why can’t we do the sleepover?’ I say ‘because my Mom never allowed us, we never did so how can I give you permission?’ This is the way we were brought up in our religion, our custom; we don't sleepover. ‘Play in the day time and come back home.’ And in Islam, especially in the night, don’t leave your young children, young daughters with the father even. I don’t know because it’s even in Islam; never leave with the brother, with the father; so how can I leave [my daughter] at somebody’s home?

Daliya also talked about the importance of her children being able to explain to others what Islam is, especially now that they are among different cultures in Canada. Similar to the way she had to explain halal food and its significance for Muslims to her children (because it was taken for granted in Pakistan), Daliya talked about other realizations:

I learned a lot about Islam when I come out of Pakistan. There you think, yes I'm Muslim and that's it your responsibility is finished. But when you come out, people ask you different questions all the time. The same thing I was telling my older son, ‘You should read Qur’an with translation.’ I said, ‘if anybody asks you a question you should know what Islam is.’

Daliya ensures that her children learn “good things” by sending them to religious classes held at their Mosque. In addition to religious classes, both Daliya and her husband schedule time to read the Qur’an with their children at home. For Daliya, it is most important that her children are in the presence of other Muslims:

Mostly, I prefer my children to have friends from the Muslim community and we tell them everything; if somebody’s coming, instead of ‘hello’ and ‘hi’, we prefer to them to say ‘asalamualaikum’ [peace be with you]. We teach them lots of little things, which you have to teach them; ‘when you're starting food say Bismillah (in the name of Allah),

finish food say alhamdulillah [all praise is due to Allah], if you sneeze say alhamdulillah' – small things but we try to teach them because small things mean big.

Daliya's preference for her children to have primarily Muslim friends is not uncommon. During my discussion with Erum, I learned that many Muslim women are purposefully close-knit with their local heritage Muslim community. She explained to me that a close community provides a mutual place of belonging, where parents can instill religious values and practice in their children that they otherwise would not receive in a Canadian Prairie City:

When we moved here, my kids were almost grown up, but the ladies who have young kids or kids born here, they want to be in their own Muslim community, so their kids learn about religion and stuff. In the schools they've got their Christian and all other religions' friends, so that's the only way their kids can know about the Muslim things and stuff. That's why they just want to be in their own community; their kids are brought up here so they don't know anything about their religion and culture and stuff, so they move to their own community, then they learn about more things.

In summary, women's role transition in a Canadian Prairie City emphasizes instilling traditional heritage culture values in children. Just as women themselves were brought up, it is their duty to impart to their children Islam and its application to daily life. For some women, Islamic values and practice contrast with the values and practices of Canadian culture. Thus, they are more diligent to monitor and shelter their children from espousing Canadian cultural values; an applied strategy to prevent this from happening is to maintain closer relations with their local heritage Muslim community. Additionally, women are reconciling traditional roles and values with new roles (working outside the home) and values (autonomy and equality in Canada). With their diverse experiences, preferences, and personal circumstances, women are constantly undergoing shifts in their personally constructed identities.

4.1.2.3 Factors that Hinder and Facilitate Women's Adaptation in Canada

The third and final aim of my study was to explore and describe the factors that hinder and facilitate immigrant Muslim women's adaptation in Canada. Two predominant themes emerged from the analysis of interview transcripts: (a) cultural contrasts; and (b) familial/social support. Predominant themes and their components are discussed in detail below.

4.1.2.3.1 Cultural Contrasts: Less Sense of Family and Community Among Canadians

During discussions with women, it was evident that greater cultural distance (i.e., greater perceived discrepancy between women's traditional heritage culture and their new host Canadian culture) is the underlying factor influencing their adaptation in Canada. Women unremittingly focused on cultural differences related specifically to family and community. They identified and expressed that in their host Canadian culture there is a great emphasis of the 'self', a vast distinction from their traditional heritage culture's emphasis of the 'other'. Women talked about cultural differences regarding general compassion for others, marriage, raising children, respect and compassion for parents and elders, and emphasis on religion. Women described the importance of community and others as not only what Islam teaches, but 'what Islam is'. Daliya exemplified this to me in a short story:

It's Islam to look after your neighbor. So they don't sleep on an empty stomach. That's the way things are. Nowadays you don't know. There's an old prophet, one woman she used to throw garbage on him every day whenever he crossed her house; she would always do that and the prophet, he always ignored her. So one time he passed her house and no one threw the garbage on him. So he went to see the lady and she was sick. He went there, he looked after her, he cleaned her house, he cooked for her and she changed. To him she said, 'I did a lot of bad things to you and now you are the one who come to my home and you are helping me.'

Daliya expressed her concern over living the Islamic way in a culture that does not share the same values: "In Islam, if a neighbor is hungry, it's bad; you should go and help the neighbor. But nowadays, you don't know who's living next door, so how can we look after them? But if you go to [my community in Pakistan] it's more than that."

Women described the vast differences between their traditional heritage cultures and host Canadian culture. Some women, like Faiza were not able to clearly articulate their initial thoughts about the differences, "The whole life business here; I have friends, but everybody's busy, everybody has job, you cannot meet everyday like in Pakistan." Others, like Geena expressed a wide scope of perceptions and experiences:

The culture is such a big change. I don't think anyone could appreciate if they don't have a family or kids, but once you have family and kids you tend to appreciate so much what you had in India; how important it is for you to mingle with people, and know your

elders, know what your family is, so that at a later stage you know how to bring up your family. I don't know if the Canadians even know their second cousins or not. But with us it's more about caring not only for immediate family but also the extended family. It's so much different for me [in Canada] because it's all about what 'I' did and what 'I' have to do, compared to what I was taught – what we can do for 'others' – that was a big change for me when I came here. I saw the families, how they work. The biggest change was for me to accept that the kids leave the house after they're 18; they go. If they don't they're cursed! That was a big surprise for me when I came here. In India it would be a bad thing to leave your parents and live alone, it would be like 'Oh how could you do that?' But here, I know if someone's living alone by them self it's supposed to be a good thing that the kid left; they're independent all that.

The notion of individualism is viewed and described by women as a detriment to social relations – the keystone of their heritage traditional values. For example, Cala revisited the blurred roles of married Canadian working couples who share work inside and outside the home. She mentioned that in her Sudanese community, she would never ask or expect her husband to help her with her household duties. Cala explained that unlike the distinct yet complimentary roles in her traditional heritage culture, spousal roles in Canada are ambiguous: "Like she's working, he's working; he's doing dishes, she's doing dishes; everything the same. The man and woman, they are equal; there is no difference." However, when she came to Canada, she was forced to work multiple jobs to help financially support the family. While her role and work evolved, her (former) husband retained his traditional attitudes and expectations of her: "It's total different here for some men. That is what happened to me; he wants to sip his tea and find everything ready for him."

Cala indicated that these basic cultural contrasts regarding roles and expectations present a double-edged sword and is why many immigrant couples face such difficulty when they come to Canada. When women come to Canada, they have to modify their central role in the family to include new and additional work; these role shifts foster their family's Canadian subsistence. However, these very changes (and attached connotations of individualism) challenge women's traditional roles and identities, and family/cultural values. Husband's will either expect too much and offer little support, or perceive their wives as defying traditional heritage family/cultural and religious values. This threatening contention places an additional emotional

and psychological (and in some extreme cases, physical) burden on women, ultimately impacting their marriage and family/home life.

Geena also talked about marriage and cultural differences in attitudes toward marriage in her Indian community compared to in Canada. In India, "...that's what is taught to you, that you have one husband or one wife and you live with them for the rest of your life, and try to be honest with them." Geena said that the attitude in Canada is mainly, "...okay if you don't like it, there is a way out." Geena explained:

There [India], it's not about you, it's about your partner. If you have kids, it's about kids; it's about everyone, it's not only about you. So you have to think about each and every other person who is attached to you, your parents, your in-laws; the whole entire family. Here [Canadian Prairie City], they're mainly focused on, 'it's about me'. If you don't like it you can get out, there is no restrictions; you don't like the wedding, just get out of it; you don't want to be with that guy, move out, you can find someone else. I think because of that the divorce rates – I always tell this to my friends at work too – the divorce rates here is much higher than when compared to India.

Similarly, Faiza (Pakistan) talked about how the meaning of family is interpreted differently, and has trouble reconciling the cultural difference: "I met people who are divorced; even my children's friend, you know, they say 'my stepmother', 'my stepfather'. How can they value the family? I don't know."

Geena, like the other women, further explained that it is the essence of Islam to put others first. Geena expressed that her Islamic values are contrary to Canadian values and made an important link to raising her daughter in Canada:

We are mostly taught to have family, think about them and not think about you; not be selfish. It's about the people around you, and that's what I think Islam is; it teaches you to not live for you, but live for others. So that's why it's different for me to bring my little girl up compared to any Canadian family because they teach them to be independent – to have their own values, to have their own priorities – which I don't think I'll teach my daughter. I would always tell her to 'always be attached to the family, always do things for other people, and not think about you all the time'. So that's why it is different.

Geena spoke of compassion for others and how it is fundamental in building a strong family. She stated that she will teach her daughter to selflessly enter into a family, putting them

first because that is how the other (Muslim Indian) families also think and work. This way, everyone will always put others first, so “it doesn’t have to be selfish...you are going to be first, not for you but for some other, you know for your kids or for your spouse or your parents...”

Geena expressly shared her views about the different cultural philosophies:

I think Canadians value themselves most; mom’s thinking about herself, kid’s thinking about them self, spouse is thinking about himself. There is no one who thinks about the whole family, not as much as we do. I think what they believe is ‘if you’re happy, everyone else is happy’, which we don’t. I think, in a way it is true, if you’re happy everyone else is happy, but if you keep everyone else happy you will be happy, that’s what we’ve been taught; if everyone else is good, if everyone else is happy, someday you will be happy and then I think it just comes around, so it’s just different concepts.

Geena like some of the other women also talked about Canadians placing high value on vacations. Once again, Geena was able to articulately convey the deeper meaning and implications behind her statements. She explained:

...they [Canadians] mainly focus on how they live right now and they don’t want to think about anyone else apart from how they live. But with us – like with my parents, my husband’s parents and me and my husband – it’s what we are earning so that the generations to come don’t have to struggle later on. I think with Canadian families it’s about ‘what I’m earning so that at retirement I can live happily and nicely; not for kids, not for grandkids, but it’s for me’. For us it is more likely that we would not go for the trip and save some money so that my kids can have extra tuition, so that they grow up to be doctors. That’s what it is.

Geena’s expressed values are also shared by the other women. For example, Daliya also stated that a big difference between her heritage Pakistani culture and Canadian culture is that Canadians think “about themselves more, we think about the whole family.” Daliya gave me examples related to death and sickness:

I think it’s their [Canadian] lifestyle, but that’s not our lifestyle. Like if like somebody dies in my family like mother or father or anybody, I cannot go to the holidays, no way. You can’t bring them back, you cannot do anything, but for many days I don’t want to do anything. But for them [Canadians], if they have to holiday or something after that then they will go. Even in the hospitals like if anyone is admitted. It is not my experience, but

my friend told me one time there was Canadian husband and wife, and their son was going to surgery and they said 'we are going for coffee'. I mean I can't do that; I can't do anything, but still I can sit and I can pray. I cannot leave alone 'til I know the news, 'everything is ok'. No, I have to consider the family. We should care about our families; that's what makes families, otherwise you will be separate.

Faiza [Pakistan] also spoke similarly: "In my village, for example, if somebody hurt or somebody sick, anything, our village go take care of them and everything. Here is different; if you are sick, you are dying, nobody knows." She talked about how she perceives the community: "For example, last Canada Day a child was crying and my niece say 'Can we go there and ask?' I said if I go ask them, somebody will say 'Why are you not minding your business?'" Faiza expressed how she wanted to help the child as she would have back home, "...in my village you would take the child and you will ask, 'Whose child is this?'" but felt that she could not behave the same way here in Canada. She stated that people in Canada have "...compassion too", but that "it's less personal" and "it's not outward." Faiza reasoned that the cultural differences may be due to the heterogeneity of Canadian culture: "Back home they are same religion, but, here you know, 'I am from Pakistan', 'I am from India', and 'I am from Europe' because of that or something people are more private." She also explained that other people from other cultures – what makes up Canadian culture – may be feeling and experiencing something similar: "Maybe they weren't open because of different culture, different kind of people, and maybe they are thinking same thing. I want to talk with them and maybe they want to talk with me," but the cultural mix and lack of familiarity makes it difficult.

Women like Daliya linked a general lack of caring and compassion for others to cultural differences regarding how parents and elders are revered:

"You have to look after your parents; it is not someone is pressuring you; it is your job to do it. Here they do care I mean, but if my mom and my dad is alive, I don't leave them to old [folks] home, no. My grandma she is still alive and everybody cares about her a lot.

It's a big thing for us; we don't think 'it's my life I need to think about my life', no.

Daliya stated that Canadian parents acknowledge their elderly parents on special occasions like Christmas. She spoke about a couple of her Canadian friends who:

“...say they’ve got their own life and that’s it. They think ‘ok, just put them in the old folk’s home and then that’s it, their duty’s finished now. They don’t worry a lot about their kids and stuff, what they’re doing, what they’re not.”

Daliya explained to me that not everyone is the same, even in her local heritage community, but for the most part these are the strongly held values and “that it’s in our holy book [Qur’an] also” to respect and care for parents and the elderly. As our conversation progressed, Erum divulged to me, “I don’t want them [her children] to get married to non-Muslim. That’s my big, big fear.” She expressed her desire for her boys, when they become of age, to go back to their traditional Pakistani community and marry Muslim girls: “If you don’t get married to the Muslim person where will your children go? I don’t want my generation going Christianity or something. That’s a big fear for me.” Daliya stated that “...we have a lot of respect for all ages and especially elders and like I said, for our neighbors. I don’t see this thing in my children.” That is why she and her husband have agreed to “go back home” yearly, so that their kids can stay connected to their traditional heritage values, “...and learn the good thing.” Daliya stated:

... I don’t say the people are bad here; they are very good people too. They have their own ways and they respect their elders too. But back home, we had different training, I think. And here people help each other, but we do more. I don’t see that much love or caring; these are things I miss really, even in my kids. If anybody elder is working, we never leave them alone; we always go. If we are visiting anybody, my mom, she never just let us sit there; she says, ‘Go and help aunty in the kitchen. Help her.’ We do.

Daliya explained that although she was taught these values by her mother, she did not have to always be told how to behave because she was immersed in a culture that fortified the same values. “That thing I want in my children. These are the thing which I miss you know.”

In a similar vein, Shahla talked about the differences in Canadian youth compared to her traditional Afghani community: “Back home, there is one thing; the girls take a lot of responsibility; it’s not ‘this is the mother’s house’. The girls [here] will say ‘it’s my mother's house’, they don’t take it as their own house.” When Shahla first came to Canada as a student, she lived with a Canadian family for a short time. Shahla observed some notable cultural differences regarding how teenage girls relate to their parents and how they view their roles and responsibilities within the family:

For example, if the living room is dirty, it's dirty for a month; the girls will not even take a pillow and put it on the side. For us, we do lots; if our mothers do lots of work, we do lots of work. Because we feel the love that the mother takes care of me, she cooks for me, she prepares everything, so whatever I can do for her I would do it; I would wash the kitchen, the dishes for her, clean the kitchen, whatever I can do at that time I have. But here the girls would never, ever touch anything. So that was like something shocking, I said 'Ok she loves you, she makes everything for you, but don't you love her?' This was a question I have asked. That is a difference between us and them.

Shahla began to talk about how the teenage girls' attitudes are an example of larger Canadian culture, which is based on "individuality" unlike "a life that everybody, a group or a family, is together." For Shahla, back home "nobody's income is their own" but "once you come here, a child works for herself or himself or the parents work for themselves, and it's not the same values as before." As our discussion progressed on this topic, Shahla expressed her thoughts about the dissimilarity between Canadian values and her traditional heritage culture values. Shahla stated that Canadians most value "material" things like "having a nice car, a big house, and just going for long vacations, going to Mexico, going here and there; if they can't spend a minute together it's ok, but they go for a vacation. It's not the same as our life." Shahla explained:

I always watch the [Canadian] mothers, how much they care and love their children... immediate family life for parents and young children, it's the same, but once the children grow up then I don't know why the relations change. I don't know why I find it different here, maybe I'm wrong, but the way I look at it, when the children are young it's the same; whatever we [Muslim women] do they [Canadian women] do, even maybe more than us. But once the children grow up slowly the relation changes; I don't know what happens.

I asked Shahla, "What do you see happening?" She replied:

The way they look at it, when a child is 18 they have to leave the house. Maybe the parents look at it as the way to get them more responsibility and then make them learn how life is.... But I've heard from many [Canadian] friends of mine that they're so scared to go outside, like just to be kicked out. They feel as if the parents wanted their freedom; the parents didn't want any kind of responsibility for their children, and they just kick the

kids out of the house. So the kids at that time, they feel hurt so much; I have a couple of friends who just told me.

Shahla closed this part of our discussion by sharing with me her interpretation and appreciation of why Canadian parents let go of their children when they become adults:

Maybe the parents think this is the best for the children; to just go out and see the world, and learn and that's how you can be successful. I think it's right because the kids, after they leave the house, they know, they value, and they have to work hard. I don't know; this is what I think.

The focus of my discussion with Cala, not unlike my discussions with other women, was the cultural differences regarding parent-child relationships and the way Canadian children are raised compared to in her traditional Sudanese community. For Cala, "Everything is about Islam. I don't want my kids or me really to forget or lose our culture because it is very easy here, very easy to lose." Cala talked about how she learned that some Canadian children, if they are not asked to leave their parents' home at the age of 18, are asked to pay rent or otherwise financially contribute to the household: "That is what they do. I don't know, for me it is totally different. I expect them to stay with me until they go and get married." She mentioned the surprise of some of her Canadian friends after telling them that her young adult son still lives with her at home. She also talked about her surprise at learning that some Canadian parents will actually accompany their legal children to bars, "...the way I see it, they turn 18 they can take him to the bar...now he can go with his mom and his dad, he can go and have the first drink with them. But I am not going to allow my kids to do that."

Cala also talked about the freedom Canadian parents give their children in terms of romantic relationships. She explained to me how "totally different" this is from her traditional cultural values:

My oldest one, his wife she's from Iran. She was his girlfriend and we told them to go get married young even before they finished university because we don't want to see them going and coming together and staying and studying together. No, just you have to get married and be together; otherwise you don't stay and study together in one room.

No, even in my religion don't allow it.

By the end of my discussion with Cala, I had a clear sense of her strongly held values and beliefs, and a deeper understanding of the diversity in the way Islam is interpreted in different

geographical regions. For Cala and her traditional heritage community, women's modesty and family honor are of profound significance to the point of life and death:

The big difference I think the way they [Canadians] raise their kids. It's the big, really big difference having girlfriend and boyfriend, very big difference. If you have any friend over there, even if you are getting a friend at school, a boyfriend, you can't show your family. Some families learn the news, they might kill their daughter.

To prevent having to "...clean the mess up", Geena explained to me that she intends to raise her daycare-aged daughter with the same strict restrictions imposed on her while growing up in India, "All the [Canadian] girls want their own independence, they want their own space and all that – I won't give my daughter." Geena believes that she can shelter her daughter from mistakes, pain and regret in life by being "like a typical Indian Muslim Mom" and not allow her daughter to be independent:

I can't imagine giving [daughter] such freedom to go do what she wanted – earn or even decide who she wants to be with, or who she would want to make friends with, or when she comes home, when she goes out, what she does with her life – because her life is not her life. If I've taken care of her for 20 years, 'I want to be part of your life too'. I think Canadian parents just let them [children] do what they want and they learn from their mistakes, whereas we don't want the kids to do the mistake because then they have to pay for it, which isn't good...I can't see my girl suffering through and regretting for what she didn't have to do if I could have done something...

When I prompted Geena about the kind of restrictions she grew up with, she talked about them being different for males and females. "Men get more freedom" because they will eventually become the income earners in the family:

"...they have to learn to adapt to the society and the world outside, but the girls usually who stay at home, they don't need to learn about how the world works and how people work; they just want the kids to be secure at home."

Geena affirmed, "I am so glad my parents had those restrictions" and believes she is a stronger, self-confident and self-respecting individual:

I think what they [her parents] did was the best for me and I'm going to do the same thing for my girl. She might not like me for that little bit, she might think I'm being stupid, I'm being ridiculous, I just have no sense of anything, but I'm sure once she passes through

that she will appreciate what we did. That's what I've heard from my friends, whoever I've known; if there is a restriction and they pass through that it's like 'oh it's a good thing my parents didn't let me do that' because they've seen people who went in wrong ways – maybe had drugs or how they spoiled their lives...then it's really difficult for them to build that self-esteem, the confidence, the respect for yourself and just to live in society...

We then discussed what Canadians value: "They do value family, respect each other...but it's just in a different way. They value family to a certain extent, but when it goes out of that boundary, I don't think they are liable for it." Geena brought up the widespread Canadian perception of a 25 year-old living at home with the parents.

With us it's the other way around; we don't want the kids to go away, we want them to live with us, we want to take care of them. Still they [Canadians] have the same values but not as much as we do; they love the kids for sure, they respect them, respect each other, they do everything for the community and stuff like that, but there are boundaries set, and they have those perimeters where they don't do more than that.

Although Islam runs through most, if not all, of the cultural contrasts imperative to women, Geena spoke specifically about the cultural differences regarding how religion is emphasized:

Islam is such a focal important thing for us, but for Canadians I don't think they build it in the kids whereas we do; we tell them what it is, we tell them they have to know what is Islam, they have to do that. But with them [Canadians] it is left up to the kids mostly to either adapt or don't adapt because their kids go to the church if the parents go; once they grow up they decide if they want to go, and no one is going to ask them. For us, even if you're 40 years old you will get a phone call, 'Did you go to the Mosque today?'; 'Did you do Namaz [prayers]?'

Geena explained that Islam is not optional because it is part of everyday life for a Muslim from the time that they are born. She explained to me the rationale behind emphasizing religion from childhood:

Like how your English and your math – the foundations – should be strong for you to grow up as an individual...knowing your numbers, your alphabets so you can write letters or spell out your name. The same way the foundation for religion is so important

that's why we emphasize so much on the foundation when the kids are small, so that when they grow they know what they did, they know what they're doing, and they know why they're doing it... I think Canadians they don't emphasize so much because they don't have a strong foundation about the religion or what they're expected of...so kids tend to do what they want to do. I think that strong foundation for you to grow as a person is so much more important.

My conversation with Bani (Bangladesh) regarding cultural contrasts paralleled my conversations with others. Bani talked about how neither Canadian children nor their parents want to stay together once the child reaches adulthood. Bani stated that in her traditional heritage culture, parent-child bonding – regardless of age – is of primary importance serving as a foundation for community. Bani reckons that the difference she sees in Canada may be due in part to a lack of mutual respect between parents and children, and children modeling what they learn. Bani also likened this lack of respect to the reason for old folk's homes, "Like your grandchildren are supposed to take care of you, giving food, or anything, but here they put you in home." Bani talked about the pace of life in Canada, and the demands on people for their time and effort, "but back at home everybody's together you know, so people can look after and take care of one another."

I asked Bani, "If you grew up from a small child in Canada do you think things would be different for you?" and she replied, "Yes." Bani's grown children now married and living with their own families, lived in Canada from childhood. Bani described her children as "...kind of Canadian style; little bit half Canadian, half Muslim, but still we keep our religion." She explained to me that because her children grew up in Canada – with norms and values different from her traditional heritage culture – she had to be accepting of their lifestyle choices, including their romantic partners:

...because I living here, so I can't push them, even wedding, or marriage, I can't push my own kind, I can't. This is their life. Lots of things happen here when parents push them [children] in [arranged] marriage, like divorce. So, I said no, I'm not pushing.

A marked contrast from the other women, Bani told me that she wants her children to make their own choices because she does not want to be the cause for blame, "If they are happy, I am happy because it's not my life."

In summary, cultural contrasts related to family and community is at the helm of women's adaptation in Canada. At the core of family and community is connectedness between individuals. Women's traditional heritage cultures are built on compassion and responsibility for others. In Canada, women are experiencing a set of cultural values that challenge and oppose theirs; a different interpretation of relations within the family and greater community. As such, women crave a sense of community similar to what they had before they came to Canada. Some women are apprehensive about social practice; fearing rejection, they have learned to keep to themselves. Women perceive these cultural differences as threatening to their familial relationships, particularly in regards to their children. They are adamant about maintaining their traditional heritage cultural/family values (i.e., compassion for others; selflessness; respect and compassion for parents and the elderly) for their children and successive generations to negate the potential of becoming absorbed by conflicting Canadian values; individualistic, Christian or otherwise.

4.1.2.3.2 Familial/Social Support: Feelings of Identity Loss and Isolation

Support from the family and community is another factor influencing women's adaptation in Canada. For some women, a lack of support invokes feelings of identity loss and isolation. Women like Faiza (Pakistan) described traditional heritage religious/cultural rituals as events that contribute to one's identity and self-perception; traditional family systems and community being the primary medium through which this happens.

During my discussion with Faiza about the stark cultural contrasts regarding family and community, I asked her what she thought about these fundamental value differences: "The same you know, I say some is good, some is bad, and that thing I miss a lot; I am still missing the help, my family." Faiza talked about the impact of not having her family and community to support her in the traditional ways they once did. She gave me an example related to the birth of children, and the traditional symbolism and support she missed with the birth of her child in a Canadian Prairie City: "For example, when my older two children – they born in Pakistan – when they born I didn't do anything for 40 days." Faiza explained to me how for 40 days, the other women in her family – her mother and sister – took care of her by placing a traditional scarf on Faiza's head as a symbol of new motherhood and entitlement to special care and attention: "I miss that a lot when my younger son born in Canada; after the second day I came

home and I have to do everything all on my own. Big difference, very big difference, and I all the time called my mom and I was just crying you know."

As a young mother and student, Shahla realizes more than ever how important it is to have her family's support:

Now it's like from one extreme to another extreme; I don't have a minute to myself. The main problem here is that now I need my family more than before because of the kids; I need them to be with me and to take care of my kids.

I asked Shahla how she feels about her life in Canada. When I think about the significance of children to women (and procreation being regarded in Islam as a primary purpose of marriage), I was struck by Shahla's thought-provoking response:

Sometimes it's a nightmare. Sometimes it's okay. I don't know, I feel as if I'm sleepwalking; it's totally different from what I was, like who I was, and what I was doing but what can you do. It's my own decision; nobody forced me to get married or have kids, it was my own decision because I love kids.

Cala also talked about the kind of support most essential and meaningful to her:

Actually I don't need money to support me, no. I need the good people, you know close to me. Like 'that is good', 'yeah, keep going', 'yeah, you are doing good thing', 'you are working good'. Or somebody ask about you when you are sick. That is the support we want here out from our country. That is what we miss here. Never we want support with money, I mean. I don't look for somebody to come and support me by giving me money. I can work day and night and get more that \$40,000 a year. [In Sudan] we never get out of food, we never get out of drink, we never think about 'I have to go work to get money to...' I told you it was easy life. If you don't have, you can get from your sister, from your mom. Whenever you don't have something we are helping each other.

What Cala seemed to be describing is what we all need as social beings – encouragement and praise for our ongoing efforts; a reminder that we are not alone:

My son he was the one who was always encouraging me and supporting and just beside me...when I thinking too much about life and lonely, he say 'Mom you are strong, keep going, don't give up. I seen you since we grow up, you are strong, you want to do something you do it; you never drive in my country, but you came and you learn English and passed exam and you are driving. You are working; you was just living in apartment

for rent but after that you went to [city] housing authority for low income and, see now what you have, your own place!' That is what I am getting from my son actually, I don't get from anybody support or any encourage.

4.1.2.3.3 Familial/Social Support: Approval and Relatedness Fosters Feelings of Cultural Fit

Although it is evident that women are forced to reconcile the absence of traditional supports of their heritage cultural communities – the kind of support that is sometimes easy to take for granted – some women acknowledged other significant sources of support in their lives. As mentioned previously, Faiza's main source of support is her husband, followed by her local Muslim-Pakistani community:

Emotional, psychological, everything; when you come, you leave a joint family and suddenly you come to Canada and you are all alone, and even you cannot talk. It's at that time my husband supported me a lot, and then my friends you know; when we go outside and I don't understand, they explained to me the meaning. I didn't know anything – even if I go to hospital, I go to grocery – because I didn't know the language you know; somebody had to come with me to help me.

Other women described the role of approval and relatedness in fostering feelings of cultural fit. For example, when Cala first came to Canada she maintained her Islamic dress. Soon after she realized that her dress was not practical in her line of work, and actually made her work more difficult. After receiving approval from her husband, she was able to make a compromise: "I still wear my hijab only just when I go to work, not inside the work because it is hot there. I ask my husband if he don't mind because we work with a machine and it is very hot, sweaty, and he say it's ok."

I asked Cala how she thought Canadians perceived her in her Islamic dress and how she felt about it:

Here they see you are Muslim or different religion and they like to know so they ask you about your religion. They don't see really something different between you and between them. That is good thing also here; they accept all the religion you know. I didn't see any different. They never treat me bad because I am Muslim.

Further to our conversation, Cala explained her appreciation and respect for different religions and how it is essential to living in the country of Canada:

My friend is a Christian; it doesn't mean I can't visit her. No, we don't have that in Islam. I can enter the church with my friend. I can go and share with them. It doesn't mean Islam say 'don't go with a Christian', 'don't help each other', 'don't talk to them' because we came here; this is a Christian country. If it doesn't allow us no Muslim can come to this country, but there is a lot of Muslim community here. We have to respect their religion. It's also in my Book, the Qur'an; we know about all. Only, the last Book it was Qur'an, the last religion is Islam; that is what we believe in.

Similarly, Daliya talked about Canadians with respect to human relatedness:

We feel they are quite similar to us. It's good. It's good. They can understand you. If you have the similar things, you understand each others problem and they understand you are missing family, and this is the group thing. So if you have similar things you can share and connect. They know your problem, and they feel that you are without a family; they feel your pain that you are missing them and that's good.

In summary, support from the family and community – or lack thereof – is another factor influencing women's adaptation in Canada. Some women are deeply impacted by the absence of traditional familial and community support to the extent that they identified feelings of identity loss and isolation. Others acknowledged significant sources of support (e.g., approval from and relatedness to others) that foster feelings of cultural fit. With contrasting cultural values related to family and community, women are reinforcing their own preferred core values (e.g., compassion for others and selflessness) in the family to withstand potential erosion by a culture that does not support the same values. For most women in my study, their level of adaptation in a Canadian Prairie City is clearly linked with the degree to which their cultural values related to family and community are exhibited everyday.

CHAPTER FIVE – DISCUSSION

5.1 Purpose and Nature of Study

My research explored first generation (i.e., foreign-born) Muslim immigrant women's acculturation experiences and strategies from a religious, cultural and gender perspective to increase our understanding of the diverse and confounding roles and expectations of two distinct cultures – their heritage culture and their host Canadian culture. The specific aims of this study were to explore and describe the: (a) overall experiences of Muslim immigrant women living in a Canadian Prairie City; (b) experiences transitioning from their role in the family in a traditional non-Western culture to their role in the family in an egalitarian Canadian culture; and (c) factors that hinder and facilitate their adaptation in Canada.

To address these aims, the qualitative approach of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which tries to understand the participants' lived experience and how they make sense of their experiences, was used in conjunction with open-ended, semi-structured face-to-face interviews. The findings of my explorative study are discussed below, followed by research limitations and future research, and conclusion.

5.2 Muslim Immigrant Women's Overall Experiences Living in a Canadian Prairie City

In addressing my first aim, three predominant themes emerged from the analysis of interview transcripts: (a) increased freedom of choice; (b) more work, less time; and (c) Islam is a 'different' way of life. Women talked about positive and negative overall experiences. Generally, women have experienced greater independence, increased opportunities, and equality living in Canada. They expressed their happiness and appreciation for a culture in which women have autonomy and equal opportunity. Some women, however, view these positive experiences at a cost of the familial support and accustomed traditional heritage lifestyle conveniences (e.g., hired help) they left behind. Consequently, women are contending with being principally responsible for work inside the home without the supports they had from parents and extended family in their traditional heritage culture home. As such, women are adjusting on a daily basis to a greater workload, which for some includes work both inside and outside the home. Women who are also employed outside the home have learned to cope with their exceedingly busy schedules by applying time-management and organizational skills.

Women are overwhelmed by a workload that leaves them little to no personal time. However, some of these women find their busy schedules rewarding, and are grateful to both

have the opportunity to work and have less time to feel homesick. In a previous study, recently immigrated (less than 1 year) South Asian women who experienced deep feelings of homesickness and uproot from family networks and support systems back home also reported sadness, depression, feelings of low self-esteem, problems in their family life, and health problems (Khan & Watson, 2005). Similarly, women in my study also reported feelings of sadness and depression when they first immigrated to Canada. However, they also reported that although they continue to miss their family and support systems back home, the degree to which they experience these emotions has declined substantially, as they are more adjusted to their lives in Canada compared to when they first immigrated three or more years ago. Interestingly, women in my study did not report any other health-related issues. Women may feel increased well-being and satisfaction compared to when they first arrived in Canada as they have learned to communicate in English, have increased knowledge about the Canadian culture, and have built personal and professional social relationships. Furthermore, none of the women in my study reported experiencing credentialing issues, unemployment, or discrimination. Women did, however, experience religious/cultural and family problems, which are discussed in the sections that follow.

In Canada, Islam is a different way of life. Most women find that their daily time constraints compete with the way in which they practiced Islam back home. Without their family and traditional heritage community to support, emphasize, and foster Islam, women have to make a concerted effort to practice Islam (e.g., recite daily prayers, read the Qur'an, and attend Mosque), and make the significance of religious events more transparent for themselves and the family. Women expressed their yearning for their family and community back home as they are adjusting to being solely responsible for the maintenance of Islam in their Canadian home. Without the traditional heritage culture milieu to support Islam in the home, some women feel they must do more to instill Islamic values in their children such as spend more time with their local heritage culture community, and teach their children the Qur'an at home. Similarly, Maiter and George (2004) found that South Asian Canadian mothers face challenges transmitting preferred religious/cultural values due to the lost support of extended family, kinship, and community as a result of migration.

Many women who had never attended a Mosque in their traditional heritage cultures found that they had to adjust to praying alongside men in Canadian Mosques. Back home,

women were used to praying in the home with other females in the family, while the males, both young and old, practiced in the Mosque. The new practice in Canada was more of an adjustment for those women who were used to seclusion and segregation from men (i.e., purdah) in their traditional heritage communities.

5.3 Women's Experiences Transitioning From Their Role In The Family in a Traditional Non-Western Culture To Their Role In The Family in an Egalitarian Canadian Culture

In addressing my second aim, four predominant themes emerged from the analysis of interview transcripts: (a) working in and out of the home; (b) maintenance of traditional role; (c) marital tension/conflict; and (d) instilling traditional values in children. All of these themes, with the exception of “marital tension/conflict”, emerged previously. However, the interview questions that pertain to my second aim elicited more detailed discourse on the topics, reflecting the focused progression of my discussions with women from general to specific.

In their traditional heritage culture homes, women used to be able to direct unconditional attention to the home and their children. In Canada, some women have had to juggle this role with new and additional work outside of the home to financially support their families. As a result, these women are undergoing shifts not only in their work, but also in regards to how they view themselves in relation to their work. While some women are comfortable with their changing roles and sharing work with their husbands, others are ambiguous about their role in the family. Similar to previous research findings, women in my study are faced with having to reconcile the needs of their family (Agnew, 1990) alongside their preference for traditional roles in a new cultural context where personal autonomy is valued and desirable (Ryan, 2004). Some women's negotiation of their personally constructed identities manifested through self-contradiction; while they prefer their traditional roles as homemaker, caregiver, and housewife, they simultaneously desire “Canadian women's freedom”. For a couple of women, this conundrum has led to tension and conflict (and in one case, divorce⁹) in their marriages. These women suggested that the practice of or desire to participate in Canadian living is interpreted by their husbands (who are steadfast in traditional heritage culture values) as questionable and opposing of traditional heritage values, beliefs and practices.

⁹ It is important to note that the participant who divorced is unlike the others in the study sample; as a refugee, she did not choose to immigrate to Canada. A lack of psychological preparation and knowledge prior to arriving in Canada has implications for her acculturation and adaptation experiences.

Some women who have not undergone a role change per se in Canada also have experienced challenges with their traditional domestic roles. In the face of being cognizant of shared work in Canadian households (this awareness demonstrates a certain degree of sociocultural adaptation in Canada), women have to adjust to different work (e.g., cooking and cleaning) in a different environment, without the support of their husband's and traditional heritage culture family/community. Similar findings have been illustrated in research with South Asian women from traditional patriarchal cultures where, as a result of immigration, women had to cope with not being able to rely on family members for daily support with housework and child rearing (Ralston, 1996; Spitzer et al., 2003).

During discussions specifically related to role maintenance and transitions, women further expressed the importance of their work to impart Islam as a way of life to their children in Canada as their mothers did for them back home. Some women view the values and practices of Canadian culture as competing with Islamic values and practice, which are foundational to one's life and experience. Women recognize their need to work harder on a daily basis to instill traditional heritage religious/cultural values in their children by setting a good example for, communicating with and teaching their children. Similarly, Maiter and George's (2003) study of the parenting approaches of immigrant South Asian Canadian mothers found that to help their children develop a sense of identity in Canada, women used personal example through stricter adherence to religious rituals, compared to in their countries of origin, in order to sufficiently transfer knowledge and practice of religion.

In order to monitor and shelter their children from adopting Canadian cultural values, a few of the women in my study purposely restrict their children's relations with Canadians, while maintaining closer relations with their local heritage Muslim community that shares core religious/cultural values and parenting goals. This is perhaps the clearest example of an acculturation strategy (i.e., attitudes and behaviours towards ways of acculturating) employed by women in my study. It resembles Berry's (1997) *separation* strategy whereby individuals value their heritage culture and wish to avoid interaction with or reject the host culture. It is important to note, however, that few women in my study employ this strategy solely in regards to parenting, and does not necessarily reflect their personal attitudes and behaviors toward Canadian culture.

5.4 Factors that Hinder and Facilitate Women's Adaptation in Canada

For my final aim, two predominant themes emerged from the analysis of interview transcripts: (a) cultural contrasts; and (b) familial/social support. Similar to the progression from general to specific evidenced in my discussions with women in the previous two sections, the topics that emerged in addressing my final aim are both a continuation and a comprehensive description of themes that have emerged previously. Talking with women about their overall experiences (first study aim) and role transitions in Canada (second study aim) incited women's descriptive discourse around themes, providing an overall depiction of their level of adaptation in Canada.

Cultural contrasts and greater cultural distance related specifically to family – the fundamental social unit in Islam – and community has the most impact on women's adaptation in Canada. Women's traditional heritage cultures promote a social conscience and preference for unity, compassion and responsibility for others that is contrary to the individualistic values they are observing in a Canadian Prairie City. Women are not only saddened by this departure in their lives, but they also interpret 'outside' Canadian values as a risk to their family and particularly, their children.

For women, parenting in a Canadian Prairie City has posed challenges beyond those of normal parenting because their internalized religious/cultural and family values (i.e., compassion for others; selflessness; respect and compassion for parents and the elderly) are not reflected or promoted by the greater Canadian culture. Most women are apprehensive about their young children growing up in a culture that promotes individualism and autonomy, fearing that their meaningful core values will be lost among successive generations of Muslims. Because women were reared to take pride in and define themselves by their ability to raise "good Muslims", failing to impart these foundational values not only has negative implications for the family/community, but also for women's self-perceptions. These parenting challenges that women in my study face with the transmission of their own cultural values in an environment that does not share the same values has been found in previous studies (e.g., Aycan & Kanungo, 1998; Maiter & George, 2003).

To deal with divergent cultural values, some women plan to impose on their children the same strict restrictions that were imposed on them while they growing up – no tolerance for personal freedom or independence. Only one of the eight participants indicated that she prefers

her children to make their own choices because she does not want to be the source of any blame or unhappiness in their lives. Interestingly, this participant has lived in Canada longer than any of the other participants in my study (more than 20 years) and gave birth to both her children in Canada. This was another clear example of an employed acculturation strategy in my study; that of *integration* or both the maintenance of heritage cultural identity and participation as an integral part of Canadian culture (Berry, 1997).

Cultural contrast regarding marriage is another aspect of family/community that influences women's adaptation in Canada. Women's collectivistic orientations were exemplified in their expressions of marriage as a social contract between two extended families. Some women articulated their fear of potentially losing their traditional ways should their children ever marry non-Muslims. For these women, Islam provides the building blocks that support and nurture family/community. Women emphasized that neither their age nor their geographical location deters their parents/elders (back home) from encouraging women's regular practice of faith. In turn, women encourage and exemplify religious devotion so that their children learn from a young age how family/community is tied to and rooted in Islam.

Finally, a factor that has repeatedly surfaced throughout my discussions with women is support from the family and community. The absence of support from extended family/community has resulted in feelings of identity loss and isolation for a few women at times such as giving birth to a child in Canada; however, they continue to persevere. Some women highlighted that approval and encouragement from family members (e.g., husband's appreciation of wife's choice not to wear religious attire at place of work due to the nature of the work) is an important source of support related to their adaptation in Canada. Additionally, women's experiences with Canada's religious pluralism and a mutual sense of relatedness to others in the larger Canadian community are important sources of support that foster feelings of cultural fit.

My study supports previous research findings connecting cultural distance to psychological and sociocultural adaptation (Babiker et al., 1980, Ward & Searle, 1991) and social learning approaches to cross-cultural transitions (Searle & Ward, 1990). For example, women expressed that compared to when they first came to Canada (three or more years ago) "things are much better" because they have grown used "to the lifestyle, the people" and have "adjusted to it" by establishing social connections both inside and outside of their local heritage communities. This expression was even more pronounced for those women who gave birth to

children in Canada, since they had and have increased opportunities to acquire culturally appropriate skills and behaviours through contact with Canadian culture via their children (school, children's extracurricular activities, etc.).

Some women, however, revealed difficulties with their sociocultural adaptation as a result of cultural differences. For example, one woman recounted her apprehension about proper social practice at a Canada Day event when she encountered a crying child who appeared lost. Fearing rejection, she made the decision to “mind my own business” even though in her country she would have helped the child. Interestingly, the women who experienced these kinds of cultural “fit” difficulties also were the women who did not work outside of the home. These women have fewer opportunities to learn social skills in the larger Canadian community and build new social contacts outside of their local heritage groups, which has implications for their reconciliation of divergent cultural roles and expectations. Thus, not having additional opportunities to participate in the Canadian community, such as through employment, may impede women's adjustment and integration into Canadian culture.

5.5 Research Limitations and Future Research

The exploratory nature of my study lent itself to interview questions that overall were more general than specific. This, in addition to deliberately simplifying interview question wording and terminology because English was not women's first language may have elicited more vague responses from participants, thus making it more of a challenge to guide and focus on relevant content. Furthermore, as hiring translators was not a viable option for my study, it is possible that meaning and symbolism in participants' words and expressions may have been lost because they were unable to communicate in their native tongue. Future research exploring immigrant women's acculturation experiences and strategies may consider using translators to facilitate women's self-expressions and cross-cultural inquiry.

My study sample also poses some limitations. The first concerns the criteria "English-speaking Muslim immigrant women who have lived in Canada for a minimum of three years". This may have enticed women who were better adjusted in Canada – since learning a new language implies a relative degree of “fit” in the new cultural context – thus potentially limiting the scope of the acculturation experiences of women in my study.

The second limitation regarding the inclusion criteria of “Muslim immigrant women who have lived in Canada for a minimum of three years” was the assumption that these women will

no longer be in the ‘initial stages’ of acculturation. I realized that number of years in Canada alone does not necessarily indicate level of acculturation or adjustment; factors including but not limited to age, where women had their children and their children’s ages, and whether they have extended family in Canada all play a role. In other words, women’s settlement and integration in Canada is influenced by a number of different factors related to her person, her environment, and her experiences. Since all women were raised from birth in a different culture with a collectivistic orientation, they will likely experience personal and social transitions, and adjustment throughout different stages of their lives. Therefore, researchers genuinely interested in exploring acculturation and adjustment may benefit from expanding their view of immigration as a finite transition to recognizing that adaptation to the new cultural context may occur throughout one’s lifetime, and thus consider inquiry through a longitudinal lens.

The third study limitation related to inclusion criteria concerns the specification of “married with children”. Participants in my study gave birth to children either back home, in Canada, or both. Future research exploring role transitions and parenting approaches of Muslim immigrant women from traditional non-Western cultures may want to narrow the focus specifically to women who only have given birth to children back home to better understand role/parenting transitions from one’s traditional heritage culture to the new host culture and the acculturation strategies employed.

In addition to the directions for future research already mentioned, studies may explore acculturation and adaptation of the whole family unit. Since the family is the fundamental social unit in Islam, delving into the experiences of fathers and children may provide a more comprehensive understanding of the acculturation experiences and strategies of Muslim immigrant families from collectivistic cultures.

5.6 Conclusion

The purpose of my research is to explore first generation Muslim immigrant women’s experiences living among cultures. My research findings demonstrate that although the acculturation experiences and strategies of first generation Muslim immigrant women are unique and dynamic, Islam unifies women. Women’s discourse served to support my review of the literature on *Women in Traditional Muslim Culture* as all women expressed the interconnectivity and significance of God, community and family in their lives. Additionally, my review of the Canadian cultural value system and Canada’s multiculturalism paralleled the perceptions (and

translated into positive experiences) that women in my study had of Canada; they expressed their knowledge and appreciation of Canada as a multicultural, religiously pluralistic and egalitarian culture based on individualism. Moreover, women conveyed knowledge of the Canadian family structure (e.g., fewer children, dual family incomes, both parents participating in the domestic sphere, and husband and wife as equal partners).

The Muslim immigrant women in my study evidenced the impact and implications of juggling settlement and adjustment challenges with their multiple roles and changing family responsibilities in their host Canadian culture. Women's personal experiences and goals related to work, family, and community influence how and to what degree they negotiate and reconcile the diverse and confounding roles and expectations of both their heritage and host Canadian community cultures. Women's psychological and sociocultural processes and outcomes living among cultures are constantly evolving, and their psychological and sociocultural adaptation (i.e., well-being and "fit") in Canada is largely influenced by their daily experiences; including the supports they have and do not have both in the home and in the community (local heritage and host). It is important to note that women's experiences in a smaller urban city are likely to be different from those living in a larger metropolitan centre consisting of a greater multinational population, and thus local heritage community to support women.

Furthermore, my study also reveals the central challenge Muslim immigrant women face raising their children in a culture that promotes a set of values that compromises the transmission of their own core religious/cultural values. Women in my study employ strategies such as conscientiously modeling devotion to Islam through practice and teaching, restricting their children's personal freedom and independence, and monitoring and limiting their children's Canadian friendships, while increasing contact with their local heritage community. This study is a compliment to existing broad scale studies and has implications for application to social programs. Insight into cultural distance and its impact on an immigrant's acculturation and adaptation in the new culture of contact may inform social programs that already exist. Culturally-sensitive policies and programs that facilitate familial and community supports for first generation immigrant mothers from traditional non-Western cultures may foster women's sense of belonging among cultures and aid in their integration into Canadian culture.

The current research contributes to cross-cultural inquiry and the existing knowledge about acculturation and adaptation of immigrant women from traditional cultures through my

comparison of the context of first generation Muslim immigrant women's culture of origin (from a religious and gender perspective) as well as the context of the culture of settlement (i.e., Canadian Prairie City). Cultural aspects were established and compared to the general Canadian cultural value system allowing for a method by which to more specifically identify cultural discrepancies, and elucidate women's acculturation experiences and strategies. Ongoing exploration of the whole family unit through a longitudinal lens is essential to facilitate both immigrant's adaptation and integration into Canadian culture, and improved policies and programs that mark Canada as a pluralistic and egalitarian culture.

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APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Date: _____ **Code No.** _____

BEGIN RECORDING

Do you agree to participate in the study I have just described understanding that you may choose to not answer a question or stop at any time and all information you have given will be completely destroyed?

Traditional Culture/Family

1. ...Please tell me, when you lived back home, what things did the people in your community value most?
2. Describe family life of the people in your community back home.
3. What sort of things does a woman do everyday back home?
4. Describe what your life was like back home.
 - a. Who lived in the home?
 - b. What did each family member do each day to help the family?
 - c. Did you do anything different from what other women did everyday? If so, what were they and why did you do them?
 - d. How was Islam a part of your life back home?

Pre-Immigration

5. Why did you immigrate to Canada?
6. Before you came to Canada, what did you think it was going to be like?
 - a. What were your hopes (e.g., self, family)?
 - b. What were your fears?
7. How was the decision to come to Canada made?
 - a. Who made the decision?
8. What did you think about the decision?
9. How did you feel about coming to Canada?

Acculturation and Adaptation in Canada

10. What is your life like now in Canada?
 - a. Who lives in the home?
 - b. What does each family member do each day to help the family?

- c. What do you do everyday?
 - d. How is Islam a part of your life?
11. What sort of things do you think a Canadian woman (i.e., white, European ancestry) does everyday?
 12. Do you do anything different from what they do? If so, what are they and why do you do them?
 13. Is your life in Canada any different than what you hoped for before you came? If so, how is it different?
 14. What things do you think Canadians value most?
 15. What things do you think are the same between what Muslims (back home) and Canadians value (e.g., importance of religion, community, and family)?
 16. How do you feel about these similarities?
 17. What things do you think are different between what Muslims (back home) and Canadians value?
 18. How do you feel about these differences?
 19. What are/were the biggest changes you have experienced since coming to Canada (e.g., personally, with other people, home/family relations)?
 20. What do/did you think about these changes?
 21. How do/did you feel about these changes?
 22. What things do/did you do differently because of these changes?
 - a. What happens/happened in your life because of these changes?
 23. What kind of support do/did you have to help you with living in Canada (e.g., family, Muslim/Canadian friends/community, support program)?
 24. What kind of other things do/did you think would help you with living in Canada (e.g., larger Muslim community; more Canadian friends; family reunification; English language skills; employment; recognition of foreign credentials; education; women's support program)?
 25. What are your hopes for the future (e.g., self, family)?

Would you like to receive a written copy of this interview for your personal records and to check that I have understood your information correctly?

YES (confirm address) NO

APPENDIX B
DEMOGRAPHIC SHEET

Date: _____ **Code No.** _____

PLEASE TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS.

1. What is your age? _____ (Years)
2. What is your country of birth? _____
3. What country did you emigrate from? _____
4. What is your immigration status (e.g., citizen, landed, visitor)? _____
5. How many years have you lived in Canada? _____ ****? _____
6. What is your highest level of schooling: _____
7. In what country did you receive your highest level of schooling? _____
8. How many years have you been married? _____
9. How many children do you have? _____

Male(s), age(s) _____

Female(s), age(s) _____

10. What is your current occupation? _____
11. What was your occupation in country you emigrated from? _____
12. What is your current family income? (Check one)

Less than \$10,000 \$10,000-19,999 \$20,000-29,999
\$30,000-39,999 \$40,000-49,999 \$50,000-59,999 \$60,000+

13. Do you still have family members back home? (Check one)

YES → If YES, please specify relations in the space provided below.

NO

-
14. What is your original first language? _____

APPENDIX C
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF STUDY WITH MUSLIM IMMIGRANT WOMEN
(For Community Members)

Study Participants: First generation, married with children, English-speaking Muslim immigrant women who have lived in Canada for 3 years or longer.

Study Information:

Farzana Karim-Tessem, a graduate student at the University of Saskatchewan, would like to invite you to participate in a study about Muslim immigrant women living in Canada.

Her study will look at Muslim immigrant women's settlement and adjustment experiences in Canada to understand what is the same and what is different in the family/household duties and expectations of their home culture and Canadian culture.

She is looking for Muslim immigrant women to share their experiences in a personal interview (1-2 hours in length) at the University of Saskatchewan. She will ask questions about *how living in Canada is different from living in your home country* and *how your family duties and responsibilities have changed since immigrating to Canada*.

She is offering a \$10 gift of thanks for participation.

If you are interested or think someone you know may be interested, you can telephone or email her for more information about the study.

Student Researcher:

Farzana Karim-Tessem

Tel: (306) 955-9262

fak918@mail.usask.ca

APPENDIX D

STATEMENT OF INFORMATION CONVEYED IN THE CONSENT PROCESS

My name is Farzana Karim-Tessem and I am a graduate student at the University of Saskatchewan. You are invited to participate in a study about Muslim immigrant women living in Canada. My study will look at **Muslim immigrant women's settlement and adjustment experiences in Canada** to understand what is the same and what is different in the family/household duties and expectations of their home culture and Canadian culture. You have been invited to share your experiences in a personal interview where you will be asked questions like *how living in Canada is different from living in your home country* and *how your family duties and responsibilities have changed since immigrating to Canada*. The interview will be held in a private room made available by the department of psychology at the University of Saskatchewan. The interview will take approximately 1-2 hours and will be audio taped, and later written out.

No risks are anticipated from participating in the personal interviews; but, if your involvement in this research causes any troubles or worries that you wish to talk to a counselor about, please contact either Family Service **** (244-0127) or Mental Health Services-**** District (655-7950). There are no direct benefits from participating in the personal interviews.

The information collected in the present study will be used to educate researchers and community organizations that provide services to immigrants and refugees, to help them in understanding settlement and adjustment difficulties of Muslim immigrant women in Canada. **The information that is gathered in this study will be kept strictly confidential.** To protect your privacy, your name will be replaced with a number in the written copy of your interview and any direct quotes from you will be included in the final report in a way that will **not tell your identity**. You also will have the **option to read a copy of your interview** and make any changes to your interview information before I ask for your permission to use the information. All information will be stored in a locked cabinet at the University of Saskatchewan, under the supervision of Dr. Valery Chirkov, for a period of no less than five years. Although the information gathered in this study may be presented at research meetings and/or submitted for publication in academic journals, all information will be presented in combined or group form and any direct quotes from you will not tell your identity.

You may choose not to take part in the study for any reason, at any time, without punishment of any sort and without losing your right to use important services. Should you choose to no longer take part, please tell the researcher at any time and all the information you have provided will be completely destroyed. Also, you may keep from giving any information you wish during the interview without punishment or consequence.

For your participation, you will receive a \$10 gift of thanks that is yours to keep even if you choose to no longer take part. The University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Sciences Research Ethics Board has approved this study on November 27, 2006. If you have any questions or worries about your participation in this study, please do not hesitate to contact either Farzana Karim-Tessem or Dr. Valery Chirkov at the contact numbers listed below. You also may direct any questions regarding your rights as a participant to the Ethics Office at the University of Saskatchewan (306) 966-2084 (out of town participants may call collect). Upon request, a report outlining the major findings of this study will be available to participants. Please contact either Farzana Karim-Tessem or Dr. Valery Chirkov.

Do you understand what I have just described?

Do you have any questions or worries?

Do you agree to participate in the study I have just described understanding that you may choose to not answer a question or stop at any time and all information provided by you will be completely destroyed?

YOU MAY KEEP THIS COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS.

If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to ask.

Student Researcher:

Farzana Karim-Tessem

Tel: (306) 955-9262

Email: fak918@mail.usask.ca

Research Supervisor:

Dr. Valery Chirkov, Department of Psychology

Tel: (306) 966-6529

Email: v.chirkov@usask.ca

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY!!

**APPENDIX E:
MODIFIED DATA/TRANSCRIPT RELEASE FORM**

Dear _____,

Please check the full record of your personal interview in this study. Feel free to add, change and/or remove information you are not comfortable with from the record.

I will contact you shortly to ask if you believe the record is correct and is what you said in your personal interview with me, Farzana Karim-Tessem. I also will ask if you allow me, Farzana Karim-Tessem, to use the record in the way described in the written statement of information.

Sincerely,

Farzana Karim-Tessem

Date

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask:

Student Researcher, Department of Psychology

Farzana Karim-Tessem, (M.A. candidate)

Tel: 306-955-9262

Email: Fak918@mail.usask.ca

Or

Thesis Supervisor, Department of Psychology

Valery Chirkov, Ph.D.

Tel: 306-966-6529

Email: v.chirkov@usask.ca

APPENDIX F
DEBRIEFING SHEET

Study: First Generation Muslim Immigrant Women in Canada

The purpose of this study is to look at Muslim immigrant women's settlement and adjustment experiences in Canada to understand what is the same and what is different in the family/ household duties and expectations of their home culture and Canadian culture. The information collected will be studied by the researcher and made available to professional researchers and community organizations that provide services to immigrants and refugees, to help them in understanding settlement and adjustment difficulties of Muslim immigrant women in Canada.

If you experience any worries or anxiety because of participating in this study, the following counselor numbers have been provided.

Family Service *****

102 - 506 25th Street East
Tel: 244-0127

Mental Health Services-*** District Health**

715 Queen Street
Tel: 655-7950

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your participation in this study, please do not hesitate to contact Farzana Karim-Tessem, 955-9262 or Dr. Valery Chirkov, Department of Psychology, 966-6529.

Upon request, a report outlining the major findings of this study will be available to participants. Please contact either Farzana Karim-Tessem or Dr. Valery Chirkov.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY!!

APPENDIX G

TRANSCRIPTION NOTATION

| | |
|--------|---|
| ... | Material deliberately omitted |
| [text] | Clarifying information added |
| 'text' | Speaker talking from another person's perspective |
| text- | Speaker did not complete her sentence |