The Experiences Of Libyan Students In U.S. Schools: Fathers' Perspectives On Issues And Challenges

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THE EXPERIENCES OF LIBYAN STUDENTS IN U.S. SCHOOLS: FATHERS' PERSPECTIVES ON ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

by

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DISSERTATION

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MAJOR: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION
(Bilingual/Bicultural Education)

Approved By:

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Advisor                                                      Date

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wife, my children, and my parents. Their unwavering encouragement, patience, and faith in me have been instrumental in helping me reach this pinnacle of academic achievement.
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CHAPTER 1 IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This qualitative research study examines how fathers understand and respond to the challenges that their children face in U.S. schools. The study seeks to provide a clear understanding of how culture and identity influence Libyan emergent bilingual students. In addition, the study investigates the role Libyan fathers play in their children's education and how parents help their children keep their cultural identity and adapt to life in the United States.

I have selected this topic due to my own journey as a Libyan father with children attending school in the United States. I live in Metro Detroit; our suburban community is considered diverse, but there are not many Middle Eastern students. My two oldest daughters were 12 and 9 years old when we moved here, and although they were English proficient, they struggled to fit in at their school. The following two examples will illustrate why this topic is important to me. My daughter was enrolled in a high school in Michigan, the day after the shooting attack occurred in New Zealand in 2019, my daughter went to school and her teacher and peers were talking about how and why the tragedy occurred. The conversation turned into a discussion on terrorism and Islamophobia. My daughter told me that while the students were discussing, they turned to look at her. She said, "I was embarrassed and scared." As a parent and father, I was confused as to what to do. I told her to ignore the looks and conversation and focus on her classes. Another example is when I talked with my second oldest daughter, who was in seventh grade and began wearing a hijab. Hijab is an Arabic word meaning "barrier" or "cover." In Islam, the hijab is symbolic of the principle of modesty and includes both behavior and dress for females. Hijab refers to the complete covering of everything except the hands, face, and feet. A woman who wears a hijab is
called "Muhajaba". My daughter refused to wear the hijab and said, "Dad, all the students will laugh at me, ignore me, and not play with me anymore."

The number of Middle Eastern and Muslim immigrant children in the U.S. has increased during the last three decades, and they represent about 20 countries in the Arabic world. (Isik-Ercan, 2015). According to Ahamd and Szpara (2003), immigrant families in the U.S. seek to maintain an ethnic identity in a heterogeneous country. Middle Eastern families are also concerned about their children’s education in the United States. Immigrant children often struggle painfully when adopting the learning and social expectations of U.S. schools. They face challenges such as discrimination and maintaining their cultural identity and religion. This affects their academic performance and is concerning for many fathers. In the following section, I'll talk about what Libyan students and their families face in the United States.

In the examples above, I shared how my daughters’ experienced embarrassment after a discussion at school. In Libyan families, children generally turn to their fathers to share information, any concerns or ask for help that they may need in school. In the United States, it is commonly assumed that mothers are the child’s confidants, and schools tend to rely on mothers to share information. In Libya, fathers are the children’s confidants, and schools rely on fathers’ communication support. There is not much research that attends to the experiences of Libyan fathers navigating their children’s schooling in the United State, which is why this research can fill an important gap.

**Research Questions**

The primary research question that guided this study was, How do Libyan fathers understand the challenges their children are facing in school and how do they respond? And the secondary research questions were.
● What navigational tools or cultural resources do they call on?
● How do fathers help their kids keep their home culture and adapt to schooling in the U.S.?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to understand Libyan fathers' perspectives on the challenges that their children face in U.S. schools, and how fathers respond to those issues. This study will also provide insight into the schooling experiences of Arabic-speakers, especially Libyan students, and how fathers find strategies and resources to support their children. I also want to contribute to the field of ESL education by looking at how fathers, especially Libyan fathers help, their kids maintain their cultural identity and adapt to life in the United States.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it might strengthen our understanding of important issues students face and specific challenges faced by Middle Eastern and Muslim students, specifically Libyan students in U.S. schools, inside and outside of the classroom. This study will also identify strategies to support Libyan children to avoid school interruption due to cultural differences. In addition, this study will fill in a gap by looking at the point of view of Libyan fathers.

Background/Rationale

According to Isik-Ercan (2015) there are few studies on instructional pedagogies that address the needs of children with religious beliefs and culture. Diverse religious beliefs and cultures are one of the most fundamental influences on the learning process of Libyan students. The minority cultures in U.S. schools are significant, and the differences matter (Ahamd & Szpara 2003). According to McIntyre et al. (2017) the population of students in U.S. schools requires teachers to pay more attention to cultural differences (McIntyre et al., 2017). Isik-Ercan (2015)
states that cultural identities shape individuals, however it is common for teachers in the United States to have a limited understanding of their students’ cultures. There are many reasons for this, including the fact that many teachers are U.S.-born, European-American, monolingual English speakers (Sabry & Bruna, 2007). They may not know where to begin with supporting students and some teachers have not reflected on their own cultural knowledge (Isik-Ercan, 2015). Richards (2011) goes further by noting that it is important for teachers to identify or recognize their own view of the world. Thus, it is important for teachers to recognize how students’ views are shaped by their experiences, including race, ethnicity, social class, and gender.

Sabry and Bruna (2007) focused on the challenges faced by Muslim youth in U.S. schools. In their qualitative research, they examine the cultural mismatch in terms of the areas of curriculum, instruction, and home-school relations. In their study, Sabry and Bruna found schools (teachers and staff) need to be aware of inaccurate information about Islam and its beliefs. Students as well as parents expressed their discontent towards teachers who could not hide their biases about different issues. They came up with several suggestions were made to improve schooling, including holding conferences at different times throughout the school year between teachers and Muslim parents. Schools need to be modified in order to provide more positive and equitable schooling in the curricular, instructional, and home-school relationship elements for Muslim students. Incorporating information on the cultural backgrounds and languages into the curriculum, as well as collaborating with fathers will affect home-school relations positively and will enhance those relations and the Muslim student's identity (Sabry and Bruna, 2007).

Ahmad and Szpara (2003) argue that it is important to first know what Muslim children think and feel about their educational experiences in public schools. Callaway stated,
"Muslim students reveal their difficulties and uncomfortable experiences in American schools even though they highly value education." Thus, it is a necessity to learn more about Muslim students' needs in the classroom "(Callaway, 2010, p 220). Hence, Ahamd and Szpara explain, it is necessary to allow Muslim children to tell their stories and express their ideas in an informal conversation. Because of that, they conducted interviews with groups of Muslim adolescents and their parents. They wanted to know and learn from authentic sources, the Muslim children themselves, how they felt about their personal experience in Western culture and also how they reconciled the two worlds, the Islamic and the secular. In other words, they wanted to investigate if U.S. schools demonstrated that staff had knowledge of the diversity of the Muslim community (Ahamd & Szpara, 2003).

A second important challenge is ethnicity and identity. Muslim students’ identities play a significant role in the classroom environment (Isik-Ercan, 2015). Libyan students’ identities need to be recognized. According to Toppel (2015), "the most significant aspect of being a culturally responsive educator is building relationships with culturally and ethnically diverse students" (p. 554). Hence, Isik-Ercan stated that teachers want to use their respect for their students’ diversity to create an environment where they know they are part of the community of learners. In addition, teachers need everyone to feel they belong, and they must care for all of their students emotionally, socially, and academically. This includes setting high expectations for all, no matter their culture, ethnicity, or prior educational experience. This part includes teachers’ sensitivity when they use grouping and their knowledge of how people in different cultures work together (Isik-Ercan 2015).

As Toppel noted, "culture strongly influences communication styles and how people convey understanding to others" (2015, p. 556). For instance, some cultures place more value on working together, while many American schools promote independent thinking and individual
work. As a result, students whose working styles are different from their teacher’s styles can suffer serious academic consequences and not flourish. In teachers' culturally responsive classrooms, they must be knowledgeable of different cultural practices and supportive of them all. Toppel (2015) stated that teachers look at how those children interact with changing social, cultural and local experiences.

Callaway (2010) suggested that while teachers may assume that they are meeting their students' needs, they need to be aware of their own teaching methods. Keeping in mind that many of their ELLs may not fully comprehend the language or culture and may be unable to express their emotions, this possible fear and frustration can be avoided through positive practices in their classrooms. Teacher pedagogy is just one aspect of educator awareness in the ELL classroom. Lee and Oxelson argued that teachers need to understand that the scope of their responsibilities goes beyond what they assume to be their job in the classroom. Another way student encounters a cultural mismatch is in home-schools relations. That is when Muslim students experience pressure from their family’s expectations, the community’s pressure, and the pressure from teachers and classroom guidelines. (Lee & Oxelson, 2006).

The classroom environment and interaction are the fourth and most important concerns. Teachers have to be aware of their own culture and beliefs as they create a classroom environment (activities) for ELLs (Moran, 2001). He stated that, "how they teach, how they see their students, and what they teach may be points of concern" (p. 65), even when they set out with the best of intentions in their classrooms. Essentially, understanding their own pedagogy is a key element to creating a classroom that is accessible for their students (Moran, 2001). He creates a framework for educators who are seeking to be catalysts in the classroom and outlines the methods by which teaching culture can be delivered. It is important for student academic and social growth for them
to gain experiences forming friendships with peers and developing skills around seeing differences and becoming a leader (Moran, 2001).

In addition, Moran (2001) stated that one of the most important ways in which educators can allow for social interaction is through the admission of both emic and etic perspectives into the classroom. He stated that, "Emic perspectives are those articulated by members of the culture to explain themselves and their culture, while etic perspectives are those of outsiders to the culture who use their own criteria to explain the others’ culture" (p.80). When educators have open discussions in the classroom, they create space to break down barriers and rid themselves of stereotypes. When they create discussions in the classrooms, they are allowing for social growth and potential friendships to blossom. By giving students an opportunity to voice their ideas, teachers can step back and allow for authentic learning. Native and ELL students can talk freely about the differences in what they know about each other, which can help students understand and clarify cultural differences. They can also try to understand each other and improve the social interaction of students. Cultural awareness and shared perspectives will help teach both students and teachers. By building these cultural awareness activities, teachers can also help to teach culture to their ELLs, who may need help interpreting the many mixed signals that they receive as they move further into their new lives and experience a new culture (Moran, 2001).

Lastly, parents and the community play a role in students’ education. Consensus from numerous studies, (Menard-Warwick, (2005), Norton and McKinney, (1995), and other experts), especially from the work of Epstein and Sanders (2006), supported attitudes among educators that parent’s participation is integral to students’ success, for students from all backgrounds and languages. However, many other studies note the difficulty schools with a high percentage of ESL students have with parent’s participation. When teachers don't get parents to help their kids learn
by using creative methods that encourage additive bilingualism and heritage language use, they don't do a good job.

Menard-Warwick (2005) stated that ESL education is becoming very challenging because teachers have to understand their students’ linguistic needs and establish strong relationships between home and school. According to Nason (2011), academic English is considered to indicate how students perform in the future, which leads some school staff to recommend parents speak English at home. Even though this might be suggested unintentionally on their part, linguists consider this message as subtractive bilingualism. If parents do not speak their native language with their children, that will result in language loss, and the children not receiving the proper grammar and academic vocabulary because the parents' language skills are weak in their second language. In addition, due to a lack of control and communication, the parents will distance themselves from their children. Language loss leads to heritage loss, and this might cause serious problems for these students (Nason, 2011).

Limitations

I recognize that this study has specific limitations. Only Libyan fathers will be included in this study. This study will only examine how Libyan fathers understand and respond to the challenges that their children face in U.S. schools. In addition, it tries to give a clear picture of how Libyan emergent bilinguals are influenced by their culture and identity. The findings from this study may not be applicable to other nationalities. The study only looks at fathers who have kids in k-12 schools.
CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

The theoretical framework for this study is based on the socio-cultural theory of Vygotsky, more specifically his concept of social interaction. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of human learning describes learning as a social process and the origination of human intelligence in a society or culture. Social interaction plays a fundamental role in culture and identity development (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). In other words, Libyan students attending U.S. schools will be affected by their interactions in the school environment. Callaway states that children learn their culture through socialization. Socialization and self-development are lifelong processes that are influenced by a variety of factors, such as family, peers, the media, and school. That means social interaction helps children shape their individual identity and culture (Callaway, 2010). This research will rely on Vygotsky's social interaction theory through Libyan students attending U.S. schools and how they absorb and develop American culture and identity, which affect their original culture and identity.

Sociocultural theory introduces crucial concepts and tenets about learning and teaching (Lavadenz, 2010). Sociocultural theory holds that learning precedes development and occurs in those social interactions in which students interact with the surrounding world. According to Lantolf and Thorne, mediation, which is the central concept of learning, regulates, shapes, and constitutes learning mental and pharisaical activities, and it is largely responsible for development and the ability to accomplish actions on one’s own. It happens through the support provided by a more capable peer, teacher, or more knowledgeable parent (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Mediation allows learners to develop their abilities in a manner that may not be possible when working alone.
People who have more experience can help people learn how to speak a new language as they complete tasks and solve problems (Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky suggested that learning is a social process that takes place between people interacting in the society they live in. Vygotsky believes that social processes are essential elements of learning, and he describes learning as the origination of human intelligence in society or culture (Vygotsky, 1978). The theoretical framework for this study is based on the socio-cultural theory of Vygotsky (1978). It is the most famous theory that supports the current understanding of effective language instruction. This study will explain how the main constructs of this theoretical perspective interact through interaction and mediation to support Libyan students in U.S. schools.

The first approach is interaction. Interaction plays an important role in the teaching and learning process in terms of interaction between teachers and children or students through cultural context inside the classroom. The second element is related to mediation and mediational tools to develop language through language instruction. It is important to know that culture and identity are the main ways that schools, families, and society interact with each other every day (Vygotsky, 1978).

**Interaction.** Interaction is an important concept in sociocultural theory, in which world language education will be affected. According to Vygotsky (1978), social interaction plays an important role in language development between the developing child and linguistically knowledgeable adults. Aside from the need to learn about a new culture, space, language, and adaption, students also need to feel that they are safe and, in a community where learning can take place. This concept of social interaction is a looming concern for both students and teachers alike. (Yang & Walker, 2015). According to Spolsky, there are many facets to the transition of the ELL population that need to be addressed by the educational system or educational decision makers.

Understanding the needs of social interaction such as creating friends, relationships, integration,
density and the importance of teacher pedagogy and how teachers' own personal views affect their students' needs, the need to not change the new ELL students of their cultural heritage (Spolsky, 1998). Callaway (2010) stated that this balancing act can seem overwhelming to educators, but it is mandatory for ELL students in order to not only acquire language, but also be able to access educational opportunity and success.

Educators have to be aware of the presence of sociolinguistics in their classrooms and places of learning and the struggle that their ELLs face while learning a new language (Callaway, 2010). Thus, Spolsky stated "children acquire language and social skills together... there is, in fact, a vast suite of social rules about language that a child must acquire to be successfully socialized." (1998, p.44). According to Yang and Walker, language acquisition and social integration while maintaining a heritage language are pinnacle concerns that educators must address to ensure the growth of their ELL students. Educators seem to express great concerns over the ability to ensure that students have access to language and the curriculum while still being able to afford social interaction and cultural heritage. The struggle for educators is to find a way to keep this balance in the classroom while not burning themselves out in the process. Social interaction and cultural heritage preservation can be the pillars of the ELL's classroom and help them achieve the balance that can be so hard to achieve (Yang & Walker, 2015).

**Mediation.** The second aspect of sociocultural theory that is relevant to the study is mediation. According to Lantolf and Thorne, mediation is a significant construct in sociocultural theory. It controls and shapes the learners’ mentality. In addition, it plays an important role in helping and supporting enhanced performance and improved development (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). "Human mental functioning is mediated especially by language and other culturally constructed symbol systems such as literacy, gestures, narrative, and tools, including computers,
metaphors, particularly through private speech and inner speech” (Duff, 2007, p. 312). According to Lantolf (2006), individuals rely on physical and symbolic tools to mediate their development. That means people's relationships with the surrounding world are mediated through the use of tools. In order to mediate and regulate our relationships with others and with ourselves, we use symbolic tools, or signs. Both symbolic and physical tools are artifacts that are created by people through specific cultures and historical conditions. People modify these artifacts over time based on specific circumstances before passing them on to the next generation, and each generation justifies those tools in terms of their needs as individuals and as a community. Humans use symbolic tools to create an indirect or mediated relationship between themselves and the world (Lantolf, 2006). Vygotsky thinks that it's important to know how human social and mental activity is organized through culturally made things (Vygotsky, 1978).

Children will deal with a variety of tasks and demands in their sociocultural environments, and they will be engaged in their world through tools. In their early ages, children are completely dependent on other people, in this case, their parents or guardians. Parents control the children’s actions by giving directions or instructions such as what to do, how to do it, as well as what not to do. Because parents pass and represent their culture to their children, those instructions and directions will be passed through language (Lantolf, 2006). According to Vygotsky, children will acquire knowledge by instruction with people first on the interpsychological plane and then by adding to their knowledge on the intrapsychological plane. The transformation from social to personal is a transformation from what the child learned from interaction. Thus, Vygotsky claims that this is exactly similar to the school process, when students transform what teachers offer them through class instruction and do not merely copy what their teacher says. He thinks that children
have a natural ability to see, remember, and solve problems that helps them to pass acquire on knowledge from parents and teachers (Vygotsky, 1978).

**Scaffolding.** Scaffolding refers to temporary structures to facilitate the construction of a building (Peregoy & Boyle, 2008). They described it as temporary support provided by more capable people that permits learners to perform a complex process before they are able to do so unassisted. Scaffolding is a concept that originated from cognitive psychology and scholars, in addition to Vygotsky’s theories of social learning. According to Vygotsky (1978), the learning process takes place in sociocultural contexts as humans (children) engage with peers and experienced adults. In other words, "learning is a social process rather than an individual one. In particular, the theory of scaffolding depends on Vygotsky’s conceptualization of the ZPD" (Wilson, 2014, p. 92). According to Turuk (2008), scaffolding can be described as "the variety of instructional techniques". He explained that through social contact, children can participate in social interaction with a speech and supportive conditions from a knowledgeable participant to get a high level of competence. It is the process that teachers use to create models and instructions to show how to solve a problem only by offering support as needed. According to Phillipson (2013), scaffolding’s advantages are important, and it supports students in the learning process. For example, through scaffolding, students will get clear directions for a task as well as an explanation of its purpose. In addition, scaffolding will assess students to clarify outcomes and will point students to earnest sources (Phillipson, 2013).

According to Wilson (2014), by using scaffolding, teachers can reduce the language demand of any instructional or assessment task to set clear criteria. Basically, scaffolding is when we provide contextual support to explain meaning by using simplified language, teacher modeling, visuals, graphics, cooperative learning, and hands-on experiences. Through the use of scaffolding,
teachers can provide access to higher-order thinking skills. Wilson divides scaffolding into three types, first simplifying the language, which means using shorter sentences and small paragraphs, giving a less wordy dictionary, using the present tense, and idiomatic expressions must be avoided. Second, ask for completion rather than generation. That can be done by asking the students to complete the task by selecting answers from a list or filling out a partially completed outline or paragraph. In the third place, using visuals is when students use graphic organizers like tables and charts to show information or give feedback on a task (Wilson, 2014). These graphic organizers can be used to show information and give feedback.

**Zone of proximal development (ZPD).** Mediation occurs in a learner’s Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which Vygotsky (1978) describes as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). That means, to develop language proficiency, interaction with the surrounding world is significant and essential. In the zone of proximal development, the more ‘capable peer’ or adult serves as a bridge (or scaffold) between a learner’s current developmental level and their potential development. Cognitive development is limited to ZPD, which means it is limited to a specific range at any given age. Also, mediation occurs in the learners’ zone of proximal development. Working and interacting as a group, learners will gain experience from the individuals involved (Vygotsky, 1978). Shrum & Glisan (2016) stated that,

"The Vygotskyan concept of ZPD suggests that language learning occurs when the learner receives appropriate types of assistance from the expert, e.g., a teacher. In order to provide scaffolding assistance, it is important that the teacher knows where the students are in terms of their language development. Furthermore, the teacher’s role is: (1) to recognize that assistance is contingent on what the novice is doing, not on what the expert thinks should be done; and (2) to know when to turn the task over to the novice for solo performance" (p. 26).
Additionally, Vygotsky argued that to mediate people's social environments, people use tools that are reacted to by culture, such as speech and writing. Through social interaction, children develop the tools to serve as asocial functions and support them in communicating. He thinks that when children learn how to use mediation tools, they will be able to think very well (Vygotsky, 1978).

Learning and development. One of the most important considerations in Vygotsky’s theories is the role that language plays in the learning process. Through language, children can transform cultural knowledge from their environment into themselves, and children learn how to use language for social communication and experiences (Lantolf, 1994). Lee stated that second language acquisition is a complex system, composed of several variables and a process of innovation. Also, Lee believes that the prime way to attain linguistic competence is through engagement in meaningful interactive activities where authentic language can be exercised while the interaction takes place (Lee, 2014). In addition, Turuk stated, in order to develop their higher thinking, children use language as private and inner speech. Children develop their culture as they interact with their environment from the time they are born (Turuk, 2008). According to Vygotsky, both behaviorist and information-processing approaches to understanding development see thinking and learning as natural processes in the human brain (Vygotsky, 1965).

Vygotsky claimed that social experiences and culture shape human development from birth, and that understanding both the role of social experiences and culture is important to investigating human development (Vygotsky, 1965). According to Phillipson, children have an active role and they are born with natural skills and abilities. Those skills and abilities support them in the learning process through the surrounding environment. As Phillipson stated, Vygotsky explained that,
"although individuals are born with a set of basic skills, abilities, and reflexes and are actively involved in their own learning, it is by interacting with the environment that the basic mental functions (e.g., attention, sensation perception, and memory) are developed into higher mental functions" (Phillipson, 2013, p.221).

Intellectual development is a mediated process whereby culturally produced tools (e.g., ideas, signs, and symbols) develop, shape, and are shaped by interaction with the world; through interactions, learners are required to work independently to perform an action (Phillipson, 2013). Dewey (1956) claimed that educators should create an authentic, ethical, and meaningful curriculum, and schooling should build on students’ curiosity and desire to learn through social interactions. He also believed that education should tap into students’ real-world interests and not be isolated from them. Students should be engaged in academic knowledge and critical exploration that is connected to life outside of school. Dewey asserted that students learn best when dealing with real-life problems, negotiating with their peers, and solving problems, which leads students toward independent and critical thinking. The connection between academic subjects and the real world will make the students more eager to learn and more passionately engaged in exploring different fields of study. Dewey felt there wasn't enough connection between the school curriculum and the way people live in the world (Dewey, 1956).

Vygotsky (1978) explained the idea of knowledge acquisition through interactions as Interaction can be important in the idea of a cross-curricular approach that also seeks to provide more open discussion between students. Because society is interconnected, there should be just as much, if not more, discussion among participants as between these learners and their instructor. To this end, education needs to be an interactive process. The social, emotional, and behavioral skills learned in such an interactive environment may be just as important as the desired learning goal. Students should, in the best environment, be capable of learning from each other. Vygotsky suggests that language learning never develops in isolation and that meaning is created and
transformed socially through interaction with others. In other words, relationships that allow students to work together to create meaningful dialogues in the target language are very important to the foreign language curriculum (Vygotsky, 1978), and this is why.

**Literature Review**

**Arabic Students in U.S. schools**

Many English language learners from different parts of the world come to the United States as immigrants or refugees every year (Zhang & Mi, 2010). According to Nason (2011), ELLs in public schools increased by up to 51% between 1999-2000 and 2012-2013 (Center for American Progress). This growing number of English language learners in the United States, indicates the importance of educators becoming more knowledgeable about what they can do to meet the academic level and English proficiency needs of those children (Nason, 2011). As Zhang and Mi stated, according to the TESOL International Association, the ELL population in American public schools is approximately six million. During that time, English language learners (ELLs) want to learn just as much as their native English-speaking classmates do. Those students go to schools to learn English and improve their academic performance. Most of the students whose first language is not English start to learn English beyond the academic level. Indeed, those students need special services in American schools. Therefore, for many years, educators have made many improvements to the quality of education for all of the nation’s students in different areas. However, certain populations of students, particularly students of color and English language learners, are still behind. This inequity is a big challenge and needs to be corrected (Zhang & Mi, 2010).

Many scholars and educators, such as Callaway (2010), Schecter and Cummins (2003), Swain (1986), and Lantolf (1994), have seriously taken the relationship between schools and
children into mind. Most of those researchers are focused on bilingual education and instructional methods. For example, Cummins and Swain (1986) focused on the aspect of bilingualism. They stated two different hypotheses. The first is that "in order for the positive consequences of bilingualism to manifest themselves, a 'threshold’ level of proficiency in both languages must be attained" (p. xvi), which means developing good language skills, such as speaking, writing, reading, and listening in both languages, is significant for a high level of bilingualism. The second hypothesis is that "some aspects of linguistic proficiency are cross-lingual" (p. xvii), which means the instruction for the aspects of language proficiency will benefit both targeted languages. Then, they will support bilingual children with more understanding, according to Cummins and Swain. Ben-zeev (1977) reported that Spanish-English bilinguals were able to use hints as cues to finish classification tasks successfully (Cummins & Swain, 1986).

Understanding Students’ Culture

To best help English as a second language (ESL) students to be successful, we need to help educate them in every way we can (Lantolf, 1994). They stated that, to support ESL, teachers need to know their students’ culture. Students who come from diverse backgrounds are already at a distinct disadvantage when they enter school in the United States. They have academic challenges that far exceed those of their peers who are of the dominant culture. In fact, research has shown that, children of specific ethnic backgrounds, and students whose first language is not English perform worse in school than native-speaking, middle-class, white, and Asian students across the country (Lantolf, 1994). According to Gay (2002), those students are expected to break away from their own culture and integrate into European American culture. "This place them in double jeopardy – having to master the academic tasks while functioning under cultural conditions unnatural (and often unfamiliar) to them" (p. 114). Essentially, these students are being set up to
fail. For example, as Grant and Wong (2003) found, 30–40% of ELLs fail to reach an acceptable level of English language proficiency when they finish elementary or high school. In order to help close this achievement gap and create a level playing field for all students, we must find ways to support those students who come from different cultural backgrounds (Gay, 2002).

According to McIntyre et al., culture is a fundamental piece of a person that needs to be aware of it inside the classroom today. Teachers cannot ignore minority cultures in schools because they are more diverse than ever, and they want to know that differences matter. Because of the variety of students in U.S. schools, more attention to cultural differences is required. McIntyre et al. also added that our cultural identities help define who we are as individuals, yet teachers do not know how to aid students of minority cultures. There are many reasons for this, including the fact that teachers do not know where to begin with supporting students. Furthermore, some teachers do not realize that they have their own cultures (McIntyre et al., 2017). As Moran (2001) detailed, it is important for learners to understand themselves and their own culture in order to be able to be understood, adapt to, or integrate into a culture. Richards (2011) noted that it is important for teachers to identify one’s view of the world and recognize that one’s view is shaped by experiences including race/ethnicity, social class, and gender. By using cultural references to bring in knowledge, skills, and attitudes, Paris and Alim said that students will be better off as a result of culturally based pedagogy in terms of how they think, feel, and act.

As Gay (2002) explained, by using the cultural characteristics, perspectives, and experiences of ethnically diverse students, they will learn to think effectively. She goes on to remark that, "It is based on the assumption that when academic knowledge and skills are situated within the lived experiences and frames of reference of students, they are more personally meaningful, have higher interest appeal, and are learned more easily and thoroughly" (p.106).
Essentially, Grant and Wong (2003) believe that the goal is to improve the academic achievement of these ethnically diverse students in that they are being taught through their own culture. They stated that if this does not happen, children’s school success will be limited and that will result in fewer opportunities for college and technology training. It will also impact on getting access to well-paid jobs, and children will fail to participate in and integrate into their community and society. If teachers fail in their part, there are life-long consequences for their students (Grant & Wong, 2003).

According to Gay, the first element of the philosophy of teaching is to develop a cultural diversity knowledge base. This knowledge base must be explicit and go beyond just an awareness of or cursory knowledge of culture. Part of this learning must include understanding the cultural characteristics and contributions of different ethnic groups. This understanding is essential and is part of this learning. For example, ethnic groups’ cultural values, traditions, communication, learning styles, contributions, and relational patterns (Gay, 2002) Therefore, Palmer et al. (2007) stated that cultural learning is essential for teachers in that it lays the foundation for us to create an engaging and accepting classroom for all students, not just those students who are part of the dominant culture. Including specific ethnic and cultural diversity content in the curriculum is an important element of culturally responsive teaching. This is relevant because it is about taking our learning about each culture and applying it to our curriculum. Without this application, teachers will not be able to create a classroom that will support each one of their students (Palmer et al, 2007). As Gay explained, culturally responsive teachers must be able to determine the strengths and weaknesses of curriculum designs as well as instructional materials. In addition, he added that teachers must know how to make the necessary changes and justification to improve quality. Teachers also need to ensure that they dig deeply to connect their content area and culture since
"many teachers do not know enough about the contributions that different ethnic groups have made to their subject areas and are unfamiliar with multicultural education" (p. 107). It does take time, but to make a real difference in our students’ lives, teachers must make meaningful connections between their cultures and the curriculum (Gay, 2002).

**Identity/Cultural Heritage**

Cultural heritage is part of teachers’ job to ensure that they are not stripping their students of their identities in the classroom (Lee & Oxelson, 2006). They believe that teachers have the responsibility to ensure that they promote and understand the adverse effects of heritage language loss. It is unlikely that the needs of heritage language speakers will enter into the interest span of teachers. They also believe that when classrooms allow for interactions that reflect cultural identity, teachers can improve their students’ ability to grow and interact. As educators, teachers must emphasize their role in advocacy of their ELL students. Teachers are the voice for their ELL students and often their families as well, even if it is a label that teachers did not expect (Lee & Oxelson, 2006).

As a result of the research findings, Isik-Ercan (2015) provided different strategies to support children’s religious identities to be visible and found ways to negotiate their identity and religious practice. First, curricular contexts that make Muslim identity visible, for example, Islamic holidays. Second, religious practice, for example, modest dress and eating pork at lunchtime (Isik-Ercan, 2015). Callaway suggested that teachers must respect the cultural and religious identities of all groups and manage their classrooms so as to teach more effectively and make a positive difference in the lives of all students. In addition, he suggested that public schools accommodate clothing, halal food, music, sex education, the separation of sexes, prayers, and religious festivals such as Ramadan and Eid without penalties (Callaway, 2010). Third, choosing to make religious
identity invisible. Forth, making sense of Muslim identity in relation to national identities. For example, when the people in this study said that they were Turkish, American, and Muslim at the same time (Isik-Ercan, 2015)

**Language learning**

In their study, Sabry and Bruna (2007) conducted interviews with Muslim fathers, their children (students), and teachers. They also utilized one of the author’s experiences as a member of the local Muslim community. Sabry and Bruna focused on the challenges faced by Muslim students in American schools. Relying on the theoretical framework of cultural mismatch, the study uses the areas of curriculum, instructions, and home-school relations as a key theme for the interviews. The paper concluded by using other scholars to investigate the schooling of Muslim students in America. In addition, it encouraged other scholars to investigate the Muslim community to share their U.S. schooling experiences.

Sabry and Bruna (2007) stated that the ongoing political climate has affected Muslim students and their families. Those students face many challenges, which affect their achievement negatively. Sabry and Bruna stated that those challenges need to be taken care of in order to ensure an equitable and positive educational experience. As Callaway (2010) stated, it is clear there are misconceptions and even ignorance regarding Arabic and Muslims, and many radical images have been created throughout history. He mentioned September 11, 2001, and explained how people in the west often link and relate terrorism to Muslims. Since the September 11 attacks, Muslims have been characterized negatively in the media. In particular, girls who wear the hijab face many challenges and discrimination. Callaway also explained that there are different branches of Islam, and in many cases, cultural differences influence Muslim lifestyles and worldviews more than their religious beliefs and practices (Callaway, 2010). Hence, according to Sabry and Bruna, most
teachers are not ready for Muslim students to be in their classroom. Due to the misinformation and stereotypes provided by the media and press, as well as their own preconceived notions and biases. Sabry and Bruna also suggested that what we need is to create a professional development plan in which teachers enhance and improve their knowledge and skills related to Islamic history and practices (Sabry & Bruna, 2007).
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Creswell explains that qualitative research design is a broad methodological approach that consists of many substantial research methods. Qualitative research varies from one discipline to another. For example, psychologists seek a deeper understanding of human behavior and look for the reasons that cause that behavior. Qualitative research is not concerned with what/where/when/and who, but examines the why and how of decision-making. In addition, because of their strong basis in the field of sociology, qualitative research methods are designed to understand society and social programs. Among other things, qualitative research is used in political science and special education as well as in social work and education research (Creswell, 2014), as well as in many other fields.

According to Creswell, qualitative research design is both interesting and enlightening in research design. Creswell addresses five types of qualitative research—narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. He explains, throughout each of these approaches, they are important conceptions and points. He also shows the similarities and differences between them in terms of focusing on the types of issues that can be examined through analysis, data collection, and written reports. These similarities and differences can be best shown by looking at how they are used during the process of research, such as when a study is started, its purpose and research questions, when data is collected, when data is analyzed, and when a report is written (Creswell, 2013).

In the next sections, I will explain qualitative research and the types of methods and data collection. Then, I explain and describe the research design that I used to support my understanding of how teachers can support language learners in U.S. schools.
Qualitative Research

Mannen stated that it is appropriate for researchers to use qualitative research when there is a problem or issue that needs to be explored. Researchers also conduct qualitative studies when there is a need for a detailed understanding of any issue. In addition, they do qualitative research when they want individuals to be able to tell their stories (Mannen, 2011).

Qualitative research developed out of the fields of sociology and anthropology (Creswell, 2013). Denzin and Lincoln explain that qualitative research is primarily exploratory research. In particular, it is used to gain an understanding of underlying opinions, reasons, and motivations. It provides insights into the problem or helps to develop ideas or hypotheses for potential solutions. Qualitative research produces only information about particular cases of study. In addition, qualitative research is a methodological approach that consists of different research methods. The result of qualitative research is descriptive rather than predictive (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). As Creswell states, "qualitative research has underscored the importance of not only understanding the beliefs and theories that inform our research but also actively writing about them in our reports and studies" (p. 15). Therefore, he provides various philosophical assumptions, theoretical frameworks, and an interpretive framework to support his beliefs. Creswell (2013) says that qualitative research is a process that takes place in a real-world setting. The observer is placed in relation to the rest of the world.

Qualitative research is a set of interpretive and material techniques that help us see the world around us. These activities have a profound impact on the globe. They transform the environment into a sequence of representations, which include field notes, interviews, dialogues, images, recordings, and self-memo. Qualitative research takes an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world at this level. This implies qualitative researchers look at things in their
natural environments, aiming to understand or interpret events in terms of the meaning individuals assign to them (Creswell, 2013). Researchers design qualitative research studies to reveal and explore a specific audience’s range of behavior and the perceptions that drive it with reference to a target problem or issues (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Qualitative researchers engage in the study of individuals or specific groups of people to understand a specific issue or problem. This means that, qualitative research is descriptive but not predictive.

Qualitative research methods have evolved and are used in many fields (Wyse, 2011). Thus, Creswell encourages researchers to utilize new, innovative methods to collect data other than interview and observation methods. Using qualitative research as a method means focusing on the natural setting and the perception of the participants (Wyse, 2011). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) pointed out that qualitative research is interactive and connective. They describe it as "an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means qualitative research means studying cases (issues or problems) in their natural setting. Attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them "(p.3). It is important for qualitative researcher to include themselves in their writing. As a result, qualitative researchers will be aware of the benefits, values, and experiences that they will bring to the research study (Creswell, 2013).

Furthermore, the richness and complexity of social experience are one of the qualitative researchers’ goals. This goal is achieved by attending closely to the interactions and social contexts of daily life (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). According to Wyse (2011), qualitative research encompasses examining people in their everyday settings and contacting people to see their feelings and thoughts. Therefore, qualitative researchers may help to prove that everyday experience is meaningfully constructed in social interaction. Basically, qualitative research deals
with the qualities of social life, which means that qualitative research can provide us with information about human behavior, emotions, and personality characteristics.

Wyse (2011) also added that qualitative research has some unique aspects that help researchers obtain rich and insightful results, for example, ethnographic interviews, focus group discussion. In this case, researchers will be able to develop understandings of participants’ behavior. As a result, qualitative researchers immerse themselves in the setting to observe, record, and interpret body language and non-verbal communication as well as interact. Creswell says that "you may look at the physical setting and the people who are there, as well as their activities, interactions, conversations, and your own behavior. Use your senses, including sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste" (Creswell, 2013, p.166).

**Research Design**

The specific design that I used in this research study is a qualitative case study. According to Creswell, because this approach focuses on understanding a group, the entire culture-sharing group might be considered a case. This qualitative research study consisted of only interviews. As Creswell stated, "qualitative researchers tend to collect data in the field at the site where participants experience the issue or problem under study" (p. 185). A case study researcher determines how the culture works through developing an understanding of a single case by exploring a problem or an issue using the case as a specific illustration. He stated that "case study research involves the study of a case within a real-life, contemporary context or setting" (p. 97). Qualitative researchers collect data in the field where participants experience the issue or problem. Individuals will not be brought into a lab, and researchers do not typically send out instruments for individuals to complete (Creswell, 2014).
Qualitative data was collected and analyzed by topics for this study. Each one was discussed and explained in detail. The qualitative data was gathered through audio recordings and face-to-face interviews with the fathers who were chosen. Following that, a qualitative case study of the same Libyan fathers was conducted. A case study is a sophisticated, in-depth data collection involving numerous sources of information and rich in context that examines a bounded system or a case across time. The data was interpreted in a way that considered the opinions of the people who took part in the study, and themes emerged from all of the interviews.

Case Study

Wyse (2011) defines case studies as the most important and most familiar approach for research related to culture. A researcher needs to involve or immerse himself/herself in the targeted participants’ environment in order to understand the goals, culture, challenges, and motivations. Experiencing the environment and sharing life with participants is an essential part of ethnographic methods (Wyse, 2011). Thus, Creswell specifies that in the case study approach, the researcher describes and interprets the shared and learned patterns of values, behaviors, beliefs, and language of a culture-sharing group. Therefore, basically, the case study approach seeks to develop a complex, complete description of the culture-sharing group (Creswell, 2013). It required researchers to spend a long-time observing participant or conducting interviews (Creswell, 2013).

The interview method is important to getting the data, but case study researchers may also use other tools, like questionnaires or surveys, to get information (Creswell 2014). Hoyt and Bhati stated that the case study approach focuses on the complex exploration of a small group in which the researcher will have a deep understanding of the participants in a unique environment (Hoyt & Bhati, 2007). For Creswell (2013) in the case study approach, researchers involve themselves in a real-life context or setting for developing “understanding of a single case or exploring an issue or
problem using a case as a specific illustration" (p. 97). Therefore, case study is a good fit for understanding a specific cultural group is an important element in the case study.

In this case study, I selected participants with very specific criteria: fathers of school-aged children who are Libyan citizens. Each participant was interviewed once. The interviews lasted approximately 90–120 minutes each. I believed that time was enough to collect information. I only recruited participants that met these criteria because it is not appropriate in Libyan culture for men to interview women. Also, in Libyan culture, women play a major role in society, and fathers influence every step of family life. It is more appropriate for men to communicate with other men and women to communicate with women. When making big decisions, the man will talk to the woman first. Then, he will tell the public his decision. This is due to men's being the primary communicators for the family. A man's role in society is to lead, and this is why men can only communicate with other men. Basically, this leads to how there is only men-to-men communication outside of the home. In Libyan culture, it is very unusual for a man to sit and interview a woman; in this country's culture, this is unacceptable and unprofessional. Additionally, children and teachers speak with fathers about schools and schoolwork. For example, if communication is needed and the teacher is male, it is the father who must communicate with him, not the mom. Mothers only communicate if the teachers are female. Therefore, I only recruited male participants.

**Research Site**

Metropolitan Detroit is a prosperous area with a strong Arab identity, as evidenced by the food, culture, and religion. Dearborn has the largest Muslim population. Libyans strive to adapt to areas where a culture related to theirs is prominent. Libyans reside in different cities around Detroit, such as Westland, Canton, Dearborn, and Hamtramck. These areas allow fathers to decide
what schools they want to place their kids in, either private schools or public schools. Many Libyan fathers believe that raising their children to preserve their culture and identity is much easier than doing so in a heavily Americanized area where ethnic foreign culture is only seen on television and taught in schools. Many resources are available from the homeland. As Libyan fathers seek ethnic and cultural foods, these predominantly Arabized areas provide resources that other areas lack. Also, religious attributes are easier to find, as enrolling your kid in religious classes is far easier in the Metropolitan Detroit area than anywhere else in the state, as Islam is widely practiced in the region.

In the Metropolitan Detroit area, many ethnicities are present, but the majority of them come from the Middle East. To Libyans, the Middle Eastern majority is what attracts them to this area. These ethnicities consist of Chaldeans, Assyrians, and Arabs of Lebanon and Iraq. Although these groups have different languages, and dialects of Arabic, their culture is particularly similar. Since Libya is highly influenced by the Middle East, being located in North Africa, it does not make a difference. In the areas where discrimination is seen, ethnic groups will feud, and many ethnic groups have an egoistic state of mind. Therefore, many think they are more supreme than others, which causes a sense of discrimination. Tension is slim to none and only occurs when a certain person from a group engages in an argument with another. Over all, the region is very welcoming and division is usually uncommon. Challenges occur in every region, but specifically in this one. The challenge is to maintain your minority culture. Although Detroit is very diverse in culture, if you are a minority (like Libyans), it is hard to not be immersed in the cultures of others. Many Libyans are here on student visas, so their professions are to be determined. Libyans that are here and have a profession are usually engineers or college professors. Some are also doctors. Libyans are usually of middle-class status, but describing one specific social economic status is
very inaccurate due to the difference in each household. The economy of Metropolitan Detroit is statistically poor. That is due to Detroit's being high in debt. Some economic strengths in the region are the food industry and store businesses, restaurants, and the cultural foods that are available to people around them, allowing the economy to flourish as people desire to experience such events.

The two largest school districts reside in metro Detroit, amongst numerous others. Detroit Public Schools and Utica Community School are the two schools with the most students in the region. Although Detroit public schools are not ranked the highest school district nationally, amongst the region's school districts, some are among the top in the nation. Schools can be found in urban or suburban areas, and they are usually in the middle of neighborhoods.

Participants

Participants were chosen using a snowball sampling method (Creswell, 2013). When there is a single participant and the sampling group develops, snowball sampling is used. Snowball sampling is a method of recruiting in which volunteers are requested to help researchers find more possible subjects. The qualitative interview component of this study drew in six participants. The research was carried out in the Detroit area, Michigan. The population recruited to participate in this study are Libyan fathers who have children in grades K–12 in public schools. The research was conducted at the Sterling Heights public library. Sterling Heights is a city located in the northern area of the Detroit Metropolitan Area. In order to maintain confidentiality, the participants' names are pseudonyms. The pseudonyms were selected by similar methods as in the following chart (1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Pseudonym</th>
<th>Years in the U.S.</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Home language</th>
<th>Profession</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The interviews took place in Detroit because all the participants live in the Detroit Metropolitan area. I had a one-on-one meeting with each participant. Each interview took between 90-120 minutes to complete. Because all the fathers worked during the weekdays, all of the meetings were held on the weekends. I gave the fathers the study questions one by one. Every time I ask a question, they respond. They were quite accommodating and presented me with a wealth of information.

**Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

Libyan citizen fathers are the selection criteria for participants. As mentioned above, the selection criteria for participants was the snowball sampling method. The fathers must have children in K-12 schools. Because it is considered impolite in Libyan society for men to interview women, I only interviewed fathers who fit these qualifications. Despite the fact that other Arabic fathers have a culture that is nearly identical to Libyan fathers', I concentrated on Libyan fathers because I wanted to develop a deep understanding of the issues Libyan students encounter in American schools. I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years in U.S.</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Profession</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mohamed O.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Libyan</td>
<td>Doctoral student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salem S.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Libyan</td>
<td>College Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khahed D.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Libyan</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ali B.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Libyan</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiman F.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Libyan</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nouri L</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Libyan</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart (1): Participants pseudonyms, years in the U.S., children, language and profession
did not focus on one specific district or school. All participants were selected from different cities and areas around the Detroit metropolitan area.

**Researcher’s Role**

In qualitative research, the researcher’s role is significant. The researcher must acknowledge and recognize the prior experiences and context that shaped data interpretation. I am part of my participants’ culture, identity, and social interaction. Since I am a Libyan citizen and have the same language, culture, and similar experiences that the participants have, I believe I will be able to understand the participants’ perspectives, views, and ideas. In addition, my experiences as a teacher, temporary resident (nine years) and father of five children who are identified as English learners, are significant for gathering accurate information. Basically, those important experiences helped me get to know my participants through interviews and observations, and they also helped me with my work interpreting the data.

According to Creswell (2014), since qualitative research is interpretative, "the inquirer is typically involved in a sustained and intensive experience with participants" (p. 187). That provides the qualitative research process with a range of strategic, ethical, and personal issues.

The researchers’ biases, values, background, culture, and socio-economic status influence their interpretations of data. A researcher must be knowledgeable and have prior background and experience to provide them with a clear understanding of the study. Creswell provides some significant guide for researchers. First, a statement about past experiences must be included in the research problem or with the participants in order to help the reader understand the connection between the researcher and the study. Second, researchers must be explicit about how their experiences shape the interpretations that arrive at as a result of their research. Third, the
connection between the researchers, participants, and the study site is important because those connections may affect the interpretations (Creswell, 2014).

Data Collection

According to Creswell, researchers "indicate the type or types of data to be collected" (p. 189). Research utilizes different kinds of data collection. They spend enough time in their participants’ real-day lives and in natural settings gathering information. The data collection procedures include the following items, unstructured and semi-structured interviews, observations, field notes, and audio transcripts. According to Creswell, the types of information that can be collected in case study methods are "extensive forms such as interviews, documents, recorded observations, and physical artifacts" (Creswell, 2014, p. 149). In this section, I list the research instruments that I used for the qualitative research phase of my study and provide detailed information about each instrument.

Interviews

Ethnographic interviews were the primary data gathering method used in this study. Participants give historical and cultural knowledge through ethnographic interviews (Creswell, 2014). The face-to-face interviews took place at the Sterling Heights library. Each interview lasted between 90-120 minutes and was conducted in person. Before the interviews, the questions were organized and planned. However, in order to get a whole image of Libyan fathers, I also posed semi-formal questions. Both types of questions asked fathers to think about their thoughts and ideas about the issues and problems that their children face, as well as how they deal with and respond to these issues. "The more open-ended the questioning, the better," Creswell said, "as the researcher listens carefully to what people say or do in their daily lives" (p. 8). I was able to obtain
a comprehensive knowledge of what Libyan fathers think, see, and believe about the challenges that their children experience in American schools.

Reducing participants’ bias in a study is significant. In my study, I first asked indirect questions to limit bias. Asking indirect questions and asking participants to think about what a third party would do in a particular situation, for example, if you're interviewing a coworker or a friend, don't ask them if they're unhappy at their current job. Reframe the question so that it is not as direct. What do most of your coworkers think about the management in your office? This indirect question about a third party can foster an honest response from the participant. Second, asking participants open-ended questions will allow me to gain a better understanding of the scope of my research topic. These types of questions allow additional information to flow freely, which may reveal emotional responses and attitudes toward the topic that I may not have considered before. Include these types of questions in my interview to collect more meaningful data.

**Audio-Recording**

Approximately 90-100 minutes of audio recordings captured the participants' perspectives and the strategies they implemented to deal with such issues. I also collected evidence via audio recording that demonstrated how often fathers implemented many of those strategies. Audio recording was an easy way to save important information. One audio-recording of each fathers was collected. All those audio-recordings were transcribed for further analysis. Important quotes from participants’ interviews were exported from the transcripts and included in chapter four as evidence of fathers’ opinions and beliefs about their children’s challenges. During the audio recording, I did not review newspapers, school documents.
Data Analysis

Qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a way to look at qualitative data. It involves looking at a data set for patterns, understanding them, and reporting them. It’s a visual representation of how data is structured. When you pick codes and create themes, it also requires interpretation (Alhojailan, 2012). The review of the data with respect to the research questions is the first phase of this procedure. The goal of thematic analysis is to find commonalities and contrasts, as well as patterns, across data and data sets. Each theme is explained and analyzed separately. According to Creswell, preparing and organizing the data for analysis are important steps in data analysis procedures, but they aren't the only ones. Creswell (2013) puts the data together and organizes it, codes it, and then puts the data into a theme, table, or discussion. Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that interpretation is when a researcher makes sense of the data. According to them, "interpretation involves abstracting out beyond the code themes to the large meaning of the data" (p. 187). Lincoln and Guba stated that interpretation consists of a process of developing the codes, then coming up with information from codes, and later organizing those themes to make sense of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, the data analysis procedure was as follows: each interview was interpreted, and the transcript was finalized. Key words related to the research questions in each interview were recorded. Examining all the information across the interviews to see patterns or themes. These themes helped the study get a general idea of the research problem or issue it was trying to solve.

Process of Analysis

After reading each transcribed interview and listening to the audio recording, I took notes of the obstacles and issues that were raised consistently in the interviews. Those concerns were organized into themes by me. This qualitative data analysis was crucial because it allowed me to
go through each transcript's data in detail, one component at a time, in a time-consuming but useful procedure for each interview. After listening to and transcribed the audio tape, I double-checked all of the information gathered during the father’s interviews. To conclude, I combined all of the most important elements I discovered. Following that, I continued with the audio recording, interview transcription, and so on until the analysis of the six participant interviews was done. In addition, I learned a lot about why Libyan fathers deal with or solve some of the problems and concerns their children have.

**Summary**

In this chapter, I explained the qualitative research method that I used to investigate Libyan fathers’ perspectives on their children's difficulties in American schools. I gave specific information regarding the instruments for data collection and the methods for both data collection and data analysis that I implemented in my study. Findings that emerged from data analysis will be covered in greater depth in the following chapter.
CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH FINDINGS

In Chapter Three, I presented the research methods that I utilized to examine and understand Libyan fathers’ perspectives of their children’s challenges in U.S. schools. In this chapter I present the primary findings from the research study that address the following research questions: How do Libyan fathers understand the challenges their children are facing in school and how do they respond? What navigational tools or cultural resources do they call on? How do fathers help their children keep their home culture and adapt to schooling in the U.S.? These findings reflect the viewpoints of Libyan immigrant fathers on the challenges and difficulties faced by their children in American schools. The enrollment of Libyan children in U.S. schools has a significant impact on their identity formation. From the perspective of fathers, this study presents new insight into the schooling experiences of Libyan children and youth.

According to Vygotsky (1978), people learn from communication with more expert others based on the context or environment that they are in. The participants in this study discussed the ways their children made sense of their experiences in school. Vygotsky can help us see the complexity of this work that Libyan children are doing. They are learning their home language, ways of being, spirituality, communication, and gender norms at home. They are then entering schools that function in very different ways. What they know from home may seem to contradict the norms and communication practices in schools.

Through data analysis, three themes emerged: identity development, a sense of school belonging, and navigational tools. In this chapter, I will discuss each of these themes. First, identity development, including dual identity, gender norms, dating, and fathers expectations. Second, lack of a sense of school belonging or fitting in, including cultural events and holidays, food and attire, and modesty/dress. Third, navigational tools, including the Qur’an and faith.
Identity development

**Dual identity.** Libyan fathers were concerned about their children's cultural identification. Even though the interviews were designed to focus on the topic of children's identity and cultural challenges in American schools, many participants focused on their children's academic challenges and described how they viewed their children's identity. The issue of dual identity was the first significant theme fathers discussed in terms of their children's identity and culture. The Libyan fathers discussed how difficult it was for their children to have a dual or triple identity, identifying as Libyan or Muslim as well as American. Fathers discussed how their children's multiple identities caused them to hide and isolate the aspects of their lifestyle that was influenced by U.S. culture, which they thought would anger and displease their fathers. "I am concerned because I know my daughter will remove her hijab when she goes to school, which is utterly inappropriate," Ali added. Girls remove the hijab because they feel embarrassed, and they do not want to be different. Khaled also revealed a similar experience with his daughter, stating that he never permitted her to attend school events such as homecoming and prom during her high school years. Because of gender mixing and unsuitable attire. "She constantly gets furious at me," he continued, "but I know it's crucial for her to not attend events like those as a Muslim." In the above quotes from the interviews, it is clear that dual identity is one of the most crucial issues for both the Libyan children and their fathers.

Fathers frequently explained their children's identities in terms of the difficulties they saw them experiencing. Fathers described this as stressful (Khanlou et al., 2019). According to Khaled, "When it comes to your children, there are a lot of things that may go wrong. Issues don't seem to go away. The difficulty of raising and disciplining their children was frequently acknowledged by fathers, which could be related to both acculturation and migration. This could be due to a cultural
divide in the family as a result of migration, or it could be due to constant fighting between fathers and children.

The study participants stressed that students’ cultures must be known by teachers and school staff to support their children's identity. Aiman explained that if teachers and school staff knew about the immigrant culture, it would help children’s school performance. He said, "Teachers must learn about their immigrant children's identity and culture." Mohamed and Salem shared the same belief. They believe it is important for school staff and teachers to understand the children's culture and identity. This understanding is significant for children’s performance. Mohamed said, "If teachers know my children's culture, they will succeed and feel more comfortable." According to Gay, this emphasizes the need for instructors to get to know their students, particularly those from different backgrounds than their own. She writes, "Ignorance of people different from us often breeds negative attitudes, anxiety, fears, and the seductive temptation to turn them into images of ourselves" (Gay, 2010, P. 25). These educational techniques recognize the relevance of students' dispositions and attitudes to academic accomplishment, and they aid in the development of a sense of community by bridging the gap between home and school experiences.

Individually, many students complained to their fathers about having identity insecurity. Khaled stated that Libyan students tend to isolate themselves from the culture that makes them seem like outcasts. Ali discussed his thoughts that by doing this, children isolate themselves. This not only affects them but also their sibling, fathers and the whole family. He also added that dual identity is a hard concept to truly dissect. There is always going to be a culture a person feels more comfortable identifying with, especially at school, where students struggle the most. Salem said, "School is the hardest place, as that is where a child develops a social perspective." While acquiring this perspective, Libyan children realize that the way they view the world and the people around
them is very different from their fathers. Dual identity emerged as a challenge for Libyan students, dual identity is very difficult to deal with, as the expression of both cultures are not equal.

**Gender norms and dating.** Across the participant interviews a frequent topic was the difference in gender roles between the U.S. and Libya. Mohamed stated that norms are highly valued in Libyan culture, as these norms govern lives and shape children’s identity. These specific norms determine whether actions, behaviors, and choices are considered appropriate or inappropriate. In Libya morals and taboos are enforced severely. Libyans use their Islamic morals to maintain their culture. Some examples of these norms are, respect elders, modest dress, kindness and keeping promises. If a child break one of these norms or rules, there are consequences, for example taking away toys or privileges. Libyan culture is heavily based on consequences. The prevailing philosophy is that improper actions or behaviors must result in a consequence to encourage appropriate or proper behavior and choices. This means that fathers teach their children that if they do not act in a particular way, there will be a negative consequence. For example, fathers will let their children know that if they do not respect their elders (a very valued norm), then they will be spanked. Spanking in Libyan culture occurs with an open hand usually on the back. Khaled explained that Islamic morals are significant in Libyan culture, and if they go against the grain and commit a taboo, there are severe punishments. He added that fathers teach their children these morals at such a young age, hoping their kids will grow up to value these rules. These cultural resources are passed on through generations as fathers continue to teach their kids about important norms that are very valued in Libyan culture.

One example of the difference in cultural norms, expectations, and rules between Libya and the United States is dating. In Islam, dating is prohibited, even though in the U.S. it is a common thing high school aged youth. According to Jafari (1993), Many Muslim parents try to
avoid allowing their daughters and sons to date. Usually, children will grow up knowing that dating is forbidden and should wait until they are older to engage in the halal method of finding a spouse. When children grow up, they will understand that dating is not allowing by Islamic rules and that there are specific ways to engage in relationships. Although Libyan fathers typically set these rules, it is very common for children to date behind their parents' backs. Libyan fathers, like Muslim parents in general, growing up in very conservative environments in their home countries, more conservative than their children can comprehend. Also, fathers sometimes provide their children with important rules they feel are good for them, such as, no use of phones, no opportunities to watch shows or spend time with friends. Fathers are socialized in the ways of the past and in the countries where they grew up. They raise their offspring in this manner, which results in culture shock for their children.

When it relates to dating, it is hard for young people to understand because in the United States of America, the country they’re growing up in, this is a very talked about topic, it’s the norm. While in their native homeland and their parents’ culture, it is taboo. Islam prohibits dating, viewing it as a path that leads to more negative side effects than good results. Islam prohibits dating, so you’re not caught up in scenarios or experiences that will distract you from your daily life and studies. Fathers know how difficult it is for their children to understand these concepts, so they teach them, and then hope for the best when coming to trust them. Libyan parents and Muslim parents are both aware of this and want their children to grow into the best adults they can be without any distractions.

**Parental expectations.** American culture is highly different from Libyan culture. It is impossible to compare the two (Ahmad & Szpara, 2003). Both have different ways and approaches, based on viewpoints of independence and cultural development. Individualism, in which the
virtues of self-reliance and personal independence are valued, is preferred by Americans, whereas collectivism is preferred by Libyans. Libyans prefer to perform things in groups since it allows them to accomplish more Alhawsali, 2019).

As stated above, there are many ways that U.S. culture differs from Libyan culture, these differences are not just regarding parenting but reflect ideological and religious beliefs. Due to this, when students grow up in this environment, they struggle to understand who they truly are. Although fathers try to teach their children at a young age to balance the two perspectives, it is still difficult. Salem stated that “Libyan fathers advise children to take the best out of each culture” meaning to take the beneficial aspects of American culture and the beneficial aspects of Libyan culture and merge them into one. This causes a dilemma, as a whole new culture is founded, but it's almost physically impossible to perfectly balance the two. One participant, Mohamed, stated that all Libyan fathers try to explain the importance of Libyan culture to their children, even advising them that if they had to choose between the two, they should choose the Libyan one.

Participants discussed their perspectives on schooling, and their sense that the Libyan regard for education was beneficial. At school, in the USA, extracurricular activities are highly encouraged, while in Libyan culture they are frowned upon since studying and learning are far more important. For example, many U.S. high school football games and sports events are a major part of school spirit and culture in the USA, while many Libyan fathers do not understand this concept, and don't allow their kids to attend. Therefore, a Libyan student in the American school system struggles to fit in and make sense of their feelings. They grow up being taught by their parents’ cultural beliefs that were once part of the Libyan school system and seeing school staff and students promoting activities that counter their parents’ beliefs.
The participants contrasted their own experiences with acculturation to that of their children. They regarded themselves as undergoing rapid acculturation and having a limited understanding of American society. For example, Ali and Khaled described that their children are more receptive to learning about new cultures. Therefore, fathers expressed concern that their child's dual identities prompted them to classify and hide information. Children, worried that their fathers will disapprove of their choices that are more aligned with American lifestyles, may omit details of their lives at school. For some study participants, problems inside the family emerged as a result of the lack of honesty between fathers and children. Other participants were aware of their children's feelings of loneliness and how much they missed their friends and family back home. These children were behaving according to their parents wished, but with consequences, as Mohamed described, “my child always tells me that he plays and eats alone and he missed his friend in Libya”.

**Lack of Sense of School Belonging/Fitting in**

A sense of school belonging refers to the way students may feel part of a school community and connected in some way to peers and staff within their school (DeNicolo, Yu, Crowley, & Gabel, 2017). Many scholars have noted that an increased sense of school belonging has a positive effect on student learning, language development, and overall mental health. Participants described specific ways that schools failed to take up opportunities to create environments of belonging for students: cultural events, U.S holidays, clothing expectations, and dietary needs.

**Cultural events and holidays.** According to Mahalingappa for Muslim children at school in Western countries, Islamic rules and Islamophobia provide distinct obstacles. Muslim seculars believe that public schools are not a religion-free environment for Muslim children because their Islamic beliefs and values are vital to their way of life. Therefore, non-Muslim
holidays, such as Christmas, Valentine's, and Halloween, might be challenging (Mahalingappa, et al., 2017). Ali, Salem, Aiman, and Mohamed agreed that Libyan fathers do not allow the celebration of Valentine's Day, Christmas, and any other holiday that is not Islamic related, especially the religious holidays. Salem said, "We only celebrate two holidays in Islam: Eid Al-Fiter and Eid Al-Odeh. Anything else is forbidden (Haram)." Those holidays are forbidden because it is not related to Islam. Islam, as scholars believe, Muslim only celebrate Muslim holidays. Therefore, Salem stressed his concerns with the holiday season. He said “My children have significant issues throughout Halloween, Christmas, and Easter. Those are holidays that we do not observe. We didn't let them go to school on those days when they were small children. They do, however, attend those vacations since they grew up and went to middle and high school. During the holiday season, they encounter numerous problems and issues”.

Mohamed’s daughter had some issues last Valentine's Day because it fell during Ramadan, and she was fasting throughout the daylight hours. She had to sit in the school office for her class's Valentine's breakfast, but when she returned, the class was still eating. That made her feel uncomfortable about her lack of engagement in the celebrations and how she stood out from the other kids. fathers are concerned that their children may be regarded as different, which could lead to difficulties. Children voiced dissatisfaction with the school's Christmas celebrations. After hearing his daughter singing a Christmas song with her classmates, one father spoke with the school about the event and indicated that it was a breach of their beliefs and the Islamic faith. The only-way to solve this problem was for the youngster to have excused absences from class.

Most Muslim children appear to be at ease with such an arrangement, but others say it causes humiliation for them to be separated from their classmates and miss out on exciting classroom activities (Zane, 2001). Libyans have their national holidays that have been celebrated
before the Islamic and Arab colonization. Native Libyans, the Amazghi, celebrate many holidays. These holidays are considered pagan, but they are celebrated culturally. One holiday celebrated in Libya is the Amazghi New Year. Libyans continue to celebrate these non-Muslim holidays because they are native holidays dating back to our heritage. Libyan children like to share these holidays amongst their classmates. They truly believe that these holidays should be acknowledged by the majority. Although Libyan people do not celebrate religious holidays such as Easter and Christmas, they do celebrate holidays that are activity based at school. For example, President Day, Marathon Lothar king day and Mother’s Day etc. Libyans encourage their children to learn about these other holidays and be aware. They also encourage them to learn from their friends and be as educated as possible, as this is such an important thing to have for kids growing up in American culture.

**Clothing.** Most instructors are aware that men and women must dress differently in Islam. These restrictions are based on Muslim values of religious modesty (Litchmoreca & Safdar, 2016). It is critical for instructors to keep clothing in mind. According to Islamic scriptures, men and women must dress appropriately in the public domain. Between their belly buttons and knees, men must conceal themselves. Women's needs are typically more extensive than men. For example, woman has to wear hijab and cover all her body anytime outside home (Cole & Ahmadi, 2007).

School accounts for a significant portion of a child's day. Their educational experience is influenced by what they eat and wear (Alhawsali, 2019). Ali and Salem agreed that Libyan students, like all students, want to fit in, but they also want to be themselves and express all aspects of their identities without suffering discrimination or rejection. In this vein, Mohamed said, "I want my daughter to wear her hijab at school and I will be very happy if she did." This applies to their religious affiliations as well. It is critical for educators to explore how they might accommodate
Muslims in public schools in terms of dietary and dress modifications. Mohamed also stated that "Libyan students in the United States have the same rights as religious majority students under the law." This implies that they should have equal access to educational opportunities and services, as well as religious freedom. Food choices in cafeterias and vending machines, as well as class activities and school events, are examples of the kinds of things that schools can offer.

Dressing modestly is advocated for both Libyan men and women. Muslim girls wear the hijab, a phrase that refers to both the religious head scarf and the full clothing that covers everything except the hands and face. According to Cole and Ahmadi, the hijab is typically worn by girls beginning at puberty. A girl who wears a hijab may face taunting, bullying, or ostracism from her friends, especially if current events are centered on Muslims (Cole & Ahmadi, 2007). Most instructors are aware that men and women must dress differently in Islam. These restrictions are based on Muslim religious modesty values (Litchmore & Safdar, 2016). It is critical for instructors to keep clothing in mind. According to Islamic scriptures, men and women must dress appropriately in the public domain. Between their belly buttons and knees, men must conceal themselves.

Libyan children, especially females, always get embarrassed because of their clothes and outfits, Aiman said "Clothing is a crucial consideration". Children, particularly females, are frequently embarrassed by their clothing and appearance. Ali stated that his daughter gave up last year and wanted to leave school because some of her classmates were always bothering her. They call her stupid, laughed at her, and told her to go home. Muslim children are members of religious and cultural communities that are separate from one another. Some Muslim children whose parents may have emigrated from a variety of Muslim cultural traditions, such as Libyan, are either born in the United States or have become naturalized Americans. When these youngsters go to school,
they should not have to leave their Islamic beliefs at home. They can't be Muslims on the side. Salem said that public schools should be able to meet the religious and cultural needs of Muslim students to be respectful and sensitive to their socialization and to offer the best learning environment.

Ali described feeling that the school atmosphere has influenced his children's identities in a variety of ways. Clothing is one of the most crucial effects. His younger, high school student, is dressed inappropriately for our society. She wishes to be like her buddies, which is regarded as an identity issue. Libyan females are encouraged to wear respectable clothing that covers their entire body. He explained, "I don't mean it has to be Aba'a (Aba'a is a dress covers all woman body) and Hijab," he explained, "but any sort of decent clothing." As Muslim Libyans, there are traditional clothes that are based on religious practices and the way society works.

Aiman stated that it is critical that school administrators are aware of concerns like Libyan Muslim girls’ clothing. While it may be impractical for schools to be totally flexible, simple improvements can be quickly implemented. He also said, "Girls have a particular challenge with acceptable clothes in educational environments." Salem's daughter described how she was the only Muslim student in a gym class, and in order to avoid the Islamic prohibition on showing one's body in front of men, she skipped class for a few weeks until her father called the school and told her she had to wear full-length pants. Salem told me that his daughter said, "They were gazing at me like I was crazy". The girl recounted the incident after her teacher stated in front of the class that she was wearing pants because she was a Muslim. Nobody seemed to understand. I was so embarrassed. People viewed me as an outcast for a long time. Participants felt strongly that school administrators must make it possible for Libyan Muslim students to observe prayers and religious festivals such as Ramadan and Eid without fear of punishment.
from fathers or school administrators. Several students and fathers shared stories of times when children missed school due to such problems and had to explain themselves or make up tests.

Half of American Muslim women wear head coverings while another half don’t (Litchmore, & Safdar, 2016). Among those that do, the top reasons are religious. Khaled referred to daughter stating, "The journey with the headscarf has changed as well as continues to encompass the following: cultural, religious, political, and as a sign of resistance as a woman. The fact that I am visibly Muslim (covering) does make me stand out in most spaces I am in. There is a sign of confusion when people see me at school. Especially as an outspoken and outgoing Muslim girl, my appearance does not match what people assume of me”.

**Dietary considerations.** Religious beliefs greatly influence the behaviors of Muslim students (Mahalingappa, et al., 2017). Participants discussed their concerns about their children consuming halal food (foods that are allowed under Islamic guidelines). Minns stated that, due to the limited access to halal food items in the U.S. school system, children are consuming fewer food items during lunch time (Minns, 2001). One father said, "My children do not eat food at school because of our religion”. They either can't find halal meat or are concerned about food products in general. Ali said, "I always talk with my children to not eat at school. That is only to help them avoid eating Haram (Haram means forbidden) food." Libyan fathers must make sure their children's diets meet religious rules while not having many options in most school cafeterias. Alcohol and pork products are both forbidden in Islam. Pork products, however, can be found in any vending machine or school lunch item, while food at home is strictly regulated by fathers. According to one participant, this is the most difficult issue. Libyan children, like all Muslim students, also adhere to the prohibition of eating only meat and poultry that has been slaughtered.
in a certain way, known as "zabiha or halal." When halal meat is unavailable, some fathers feel that vegetarian foods, dairy items, and fish products are good replacements.

According to Hampton (1992), halal meals follow the Quran's principles, with different Muslims adhering to different levels of compliance. Furthermore, halal meat must be slaughtered by a Muslim adult in a way that minimizes the animal's pain while reciting a commitment (Mahalingappa, et al., 2017). It's also crucial to consider how the meat is cooked for ingestion, as it can't meet any non-halal dishes. "It's essentially a food insecurity issue because children have grown up eating these foods their entire lives and then, when they get to school, they don't have any options, so they go completely vegetarian and don't get the nutrients they require" (Hampton, 1992 p.65). According to Mohamed, students' mental and physical health has been harmed by their diets, which are producing problems in and out of the classroom.

Ali said that "the teacher doesn’t know that Muslims do not eat pork and they only eat halal food." He explained that in school lunches, a non-pork choice and halal food should be available. According to Hampton, Muslims' dietary requirements extend beyond physical sustenance to encompass a person's spiritual well-being. Muslims, on average, have a diet high in vegetables and vegetable protein. They are not permitted to consume pigs or any other meat that has not been ritualistically slaughtered and prepared using specific utensils (Hampton, 1992). Such meat is referred to as halal, or permissible. Mohamed stated that his child was compelled to eat only bread and snacks for lunch while the school prepared a meal consisting mostly of seasoned pork and veggies. Mohamed attributed his inability to prepare ahead of time and send a suitable lunch with his child to a menu change. At the very least, he believed the school should have called him so he could bring his child's lunch. Schools with a large number of Muslim pupils, according to Aiman, may provide alternate or halal cuisines. While this may not be achievable at most schools, certain
accommodations might be made for children who are unable to consume the usual meal (Minns, 2001).

Food was one of the most difficult challenges that Salem felt his elementary and high school youngsters encounter and that have impacted his children's culture and identity. For all Muslim children, breakfast and lunch at school are extremely important (Mahalingappa, et al., 2017). Muslim students must choose a specific food to consume. We must eat halal meat as Muslims, so our food must not contain any form of meat. As a result, his children either go hungry during the school day or eat only snacks. Furthermore, and this is crucial, pigs and any other items containing port are forbidden to Muslims. Salem said, "My kid informed me one day that she had eaten food containing a pig product by accident." Pizza was served. It was a pepperoni pizza, to be precise. To make it easier for children who don't eat pork to have their lunch, food aid at school removed the pepperoni slices from the top of the pizza. I appreciate it, but because some of the pepperoni on the pizza melted, it's still pork-containing food". The prohibition of pork in Islam is clearly mentioned in Qur’an (the Islam Book). There for eating pork is haram and a big sin.

Navigational tools

The finding of navigational tools refers participants identification of cultural, religious, and linguistic practices that supported their role as fathers and functioned as a guide for their children. In the following section, these practices and their significance will be discussed.

Qur’an and faith. The Islamic book, the Quran, is highly used when it comes to navigational tools used to reference culture (Sabry & Bruna, 2007). Ali, Mohamed, Salem, and Aiman agreed, saying, "Quran is our navigational tool when we speak with our kids about culture or any other thing in life." They believe that the Qur’an is the basis of their lives. Libyan culture is heavily based on the Quran and the Islamic teachings of Prophet Mohamad, especially when the
family lives abroad. Ali said, "Fathers use Islamic teachings to keep the culture going." All Libyan fathers state that living abroad and finding ways to teach culture is difficult. Since a commitment to Islam is not positioned as a minority in the way that being Libyan is, the fathers talked about how they use Islamic teachings such as how to behave, how to dress, and behavioral expectations for each gender. According to Salem, since Libyan children grow up in the United States, they see many cultural aspects as permissible. Relationships are highly permissible in American culture, but in Islamic and Libyan culture they are prohibited. Salem also added that teaching children that what they see in their outside culture is permissible and that at home it is forbidden is a hard topic to grasp. At such a young age, Libyan parents teach their children about the importance of these cultural aspects and how many acceptable acts are forbidden in their culture. Fathers such as Salem, Ali Khaled, and Mohamed believe that their culture reigns supreme above all else since they want the best for their children.

Religion, values, and respect for others are the navigational tools Ali uses as a cultural source while speaking with his children. According to Sabry and Bruna (2007), the Holy Quran is the most commonly utilized source. When there is a cultural issue, Ali stated he always refers to it as an essential source. He tells his children that we must respect others and their many cultures, and that it is OK to comprehend them, but that we must conserve and be proud of our own culture. Ali regularly emphasizes to his children the contrasts and similarities between the Libyan and American cultures. The Holy Quran also connects Libyan culture to the Islamic faith and the history of other civilizations.

When talking with their children, Libyan fathers rely on the Holy Quran as a single cultural source. Our origins and basis, according to Khaled, are our Islamic faith and God's instructions as recorded in the Holy Quran, as well as from the time of our holy prophet, as well as our Libyan
customs and traditions. He said, “When I chat with them, I also like to bring up my identity. I'm continually teaching them how essential it is to preserve our identity and culture.”

**Language.** An additional navigational tool that was identified through data analysis was language. According to Mohamed, language is an important cultural tool used by Libyans to spread their culture throughout the next generation. He said, "Language allows people to pass on ideas, knowledge, and culture to their cultural society". Culturally, Arabic, the main language spoken in Libya, is crucial. Language is a key tool to create connections amongst Libyans. According to Nason, language makes effective social interaction possible. influences how people conceive concepts and objects (Nason, 2011). Ali said, "Libyan fathers, including me, provide their children with TV services with Arabic channels, specifically Libyan channels, so their children are aware of their home language and culture." They believe that will help and support them, at least to learn and maintain Libyan identity and culture.

Aiman referred to how difficult it is to communicate in a foreign language in school. “Because my wife and I only speak Arabic at home, my children mostly speak Arabic as well. As a result, they may use Arabic words or even small Arabic sentences, which may cause them to drop out of school or at the very least despise it. In my opinion, those cultural obstacles are difficult to overcome. It is also the obligation of parents to educate their children on the subject. Furthermore, my children, who are in middle school, have begun to absorb and merge with the surrounding culture by emulating their friends' and classmates' clothing and the manner in which they dress indecently. This is a major concern for us since it violates not just our culture but also the rules of our faith.”

Libyan fathers also encourage their children to attend Sunday school, which teaches Arabic and religious classes. Writing is also taught by Libyan fathers. According to Khaled, when my
child learns to write in the language, he will be culturally educated. The Libyan dialect is very valued by Libyans. "He stated that parents try to provide as much exposure to the Libyan language and content to their children as possible. Language allows a person to understand the culture on levels not comprehended by non-native speakers. To fully understand Libyan culture, a person needs to know slang, famous sayings, metaphors, and hyperbole. Therefore, acquiring the language is very important to the culture to maintain and understand it in depth. Everything in the Libyan Arabic language is influenced by culture, and that is what makes each dialect of Arabic different. Libyan fathers know that these are important tools, so they teach their children so that they can pass on the culture to their next generation.

Fathers’ Perspectives and Beliefs

I will provide the participants’ perspectives and beliefs separately in order to highlight the participants voices.

Ali B.

When children live in a more culturally diverse setting than their original home, Ali feels that cultural difficulties are unavoidable. As a result, cultural issues are a typical occurrence that can have an impact on children and their learning processes, whether favorably or adversely. Positively, learning new things may be beneficial to his future. Cultural loss will have a negative impact on his identity and cause him to have a different personality than his home mate. "My kid was exposed to certain cultural difficulties by American minors on the school bus," Ali says. They labeled my child, as well as other Muslim youngsters, as terrorists (ISIS). It was difficult for me to deal with. I had to go to the school administration and speak with the principal since the students denied saying anything. Despite the fact that we brought other students who were with them, as
witnesses, the school administration did nothing. I saw the administration's silence as a major obstacle in and of itself.

Religion, values, and respect for others are the navigational tools Ali uses as a cultural source while speaking with his children. The Holy Quran is the most commonly utilized source. When there is a cultural issue, he always refers to it as an essential source. He tells them that we must respect others and their many cultures, and that it is OK to comprehend them, but that we must conserve and be proud of our own culture. Ali regularly emphasizes to his children the contrasts and similarities between our Libyan and American cultures. It also connects our culture to the Islamic faith and demonstrates how clear it is on the issue of other civilizations.

Ali feels that the school atmosphere has influenced his children's identities in a variety of ways. Clothing is one of the most crucial effects. Obviously, his youngster (female) is dressed inappropriately for our society. She wishes to be like her buddies, which is regarded as an identity issue. Libyan females are encouraged to wear respectable and polite clothing that covers their entire body. He explained, "I don't mean it has to be Aba'a and Hijab," he explained, "but any sort of decent clothing." As Muslim Libyans, we have our own traditional clothes that are based on our religion and the way society works.

Participation in children's education is the most effective way to educate them. Ali feels that engagement is encouraging and boosts students' self-esteem. It also assists kids in learning and succeeding. Participation in children's education is extremely effective and beneficial. Children adore people who assist them, especially when you say, "Let's do it together," he remarked. Furthermore, talking with the school to keep track of children's growth and level, as well as asking about their performance, is important for them to learn well. "I constantly communicate with the teacher if there are any worries or problems that could hinder my children's
academic progress," Ali added. Attending teacher conferences allows fathers to keep track of their children's educational development. This is a good time for students to meet with their teacher and talk about any problems that might happen.

Khaled D.

"Culture issues at school are a very serious issue that has a direct impact on children's academic achievement," Khaled remarked. Children who confront cultural barriers or obstacles at school will have a negative impact on their lives. Furthermore, because they are uncomfortable, their learning process will be hampered. We are all aware that cultural disparities exist in American schools, but we must work very hard to protect our children and communities. Sometimes, my children ask cultural questions, such as why my mother covers her hair or why she doesn't eat with us meals given by American schools, Khaled explained. They consistently refuse to accompany their mother to school while she is wearing her hijab. They urged her, "If you're driving us to school or coming to pick us up, please park a bit further away and we will walk to you." That is primarily because they do not want their friends to see their mother wearing a headscarf, which would demonstrate her Muslim status. He explained that he always responds to them by explaining cultural differences and how individuals have various religious views. I try to build their confidence by teaching them about cultural standards and religious rules, as well as how to be proud of their own work.

When talking with their children, Libyan fathers rely on the Holy Quran as a single cultural source. Our origins and basis, according to Khaled, are our Islamic faith and God's instructions as recorded in the Holy Quran, as well as from the time of our holy prophet, as well as our Libyan customs and traditions. When I chat with them, I also like to bring up my identity. I'm continually teaching them how essential it is to preserve our identity and culture. Furthermore, anytime there
is a cutlery or identity issue, I always strive to explain and resolve it. My daughter, for example, refuses to wear a hijab, and we understand why. The hijab is a religious and cultural requirement. All Libyan females are expected to wear a hijab since the age of 12. Mom and I realize that it is difficult for her to wear a hijab since she will be embarrassed and even in danger. When I watch how my children dress, I get the impression that their identities are being influenced. I notice that their outfits are drastically different from what they are supposed to be wearing. Wearing tight clothing, such as "leggings" or shorts, is an example. As far as I'm concerned, I think the clothing issue is a question of who they are because they are supposed to be well-dressed and moral.

Mohamed O.

Because they live in a completely different culture, Mohamed believes that cultural problems are the biggest source of irritation for the fathers. When children live far away from their birthplace, it is critical that they maintain their culture and identity. Children must learn to switch back and forth between two domain identities. He indicated that my his 14- and 17-year-old children had numerous obstacles and challenges at school each day as a result of their clothing, food, and language. They struggled to make friends and were harmed academically and socially as a result of their identification and cultural differences. "My daughters usually beg me not to approach close to the school when I pick them up," Mohamed added, quoting his wife. They ask that I wear a hat instead of a headscarf in the cold. They were terrified, and they didn't want me to take part in any school activities. If I have to go, they both make every effort to remain as far away from me as possible. I was initially confused, but then I understood that something was amiss. Following a lengthy discussion with them, I don't like it if her friends see me wearing a hijab because they will make fun of her and she will lose friends, I've been informed. I experienced a major psychological effect.
By making children ashamed of their individuality, they will lose confidence in themselves. They felt unwelcomed by their peers, which had a negative impact on their academic performance and educational attainment. Says Mohamed, "My children seemed lost to me since they were going through a major internal conflict. They were attempting to imitate their classmates because they dislike being different and believe that doing so will help them be accepted. When they were at home, on the other hand, they were extremely sensitive and easily enraged. I assist them by holding traditional festivities and religious holidays at home with our own Libyan family and encouraging them to invite and partake with their friends. In addition, I show my support by attending school events and celebrations. Sharing traditional events with friends and participating in school activities, in my opinion, is quite beneficial and makes it easier for kids to communicate with one another.

Salem S.

Cultural differences have a significant impact on Libyan children's academic success in American schools. Salem remarked that "I recognize that my children's cultural issues may occur in US schools because we live in a country with a very different culture than ours." However, I am attempting to instill confidence in my children by helping them understand the cultural contrasts between ours and the surrounding culture. I always tell my children how important it is to preserve and practice our culture to maintain our identity. As a father, I must be proud of our heritage and instill it in my children.

Food and holidays are the two most difficult difficulties that Salem's youngsters encounter. And his children's culture and identity have been influenced by these challenges. For all Muslim children, breakfast and lunch at school are extremely important. They must choose a specific food to consume. We must eat halal meat as Muslims, so our food must not contain any form of meat.
As a result, they either go hungry during the school day or eat only snacks. Furthermore, and this is crucial, pigs and any other items containing pork are forbidden to Muslims. Salem said, "My kid informed me one day that she had eaten food containing a pig product by accident." Pizza was served. It was a pepperoni pizza, to be precise. To make it easier for children who don't eat pork to have their lunch, food aid at school removed the pepperoni slices from the top of the pizza. I appreciate it, but because some of the pepperoni on the pizza melted, it's still pork-containing food". Another concern is the holiday season. My children have significant issues throughout Halloween, Christmas, and Easter. Those are holidays that we do not observe. We didn't let them go to school on those days when they were small children. They do, however, attend those vacations since they grew up and went to middle and high school. During the holiday season, they encounter numerous problems and issues.

There are numerous difficulties affecting the identity and culture of Libyan youngsters in American schools. Islamic law, for example, mandates the wearing of the headscarf. My daughter, Salem explained, refuses to wear a hijab. She considers it humiliating, and she claims she does not want her friends to unfriend or hate her as a result. Religious activity has another influence. Every day, we must pray five times as Muslims. Two of those five occur between 12:00 and 3:00 p.m., so that is within school hours. My children are adamant about not praying at school. I understand that this is a difficult task for them, but they must pray. Therefore, Libyan children's identities have been harmed by their school environment. Between significant cultures and identities, children are torn. An environmental identity, in which they make their new life and friends, and a home identity, which symbolizes their original and who they are.
"Culture is important," Aiman stated. For immigrant children in school, culture is the most difficult issue, especially if they live in a completely different environment than their home culture. We moved and left our friends because of the cultural issues, he noted. For several years, we lived in California. Our children were growing up and needed to be with or near people of the same culture, so we had to migrate to Canton Township, Detroit Area. Cultural barriers, in my opinion, are important for students' success because they have a substantial impact on their academic advancement. I know that one of the most important factors in my kids' success is how they deal with cultural differences at school. Immigrant students' academic achievement will be hampered if they face difficulties at school. When my daughter wears a hijab to school, for example, she is uncomfortable because she has seen anti-Muslim discrimination in the form of words and actions.

It's difficult to communicate in a foreign language in school. Because my wife and I only speak Arabic at home, my children mostly speak Arabic as well. As a result, they may use Arabic words or even small Arabic sentences, which may cause them to drop out of school or at the very least despise it. “Shukran” and “Habiby”, for example. In my opinion, those cultural obstacles are difficult to overcome. It is also the obligation of fathers to educate their children on the subject. Furthermore, my children, who are in middle school, have begun to absorb and merge with the surrounding culture by emulating their friends' and classmates' clothing and the way they dress indecently. This is a major concern for us since it violates not just our culture but also the rules of our faith.

It is difficult to keep one's identity in a place that is vastly different from one's home. Aiman believes that his children's personalities are evolving on a daily basis. They dress identically to their American counterparts, which is regarded as an identity issue. A big part of being a Muslim
in Libya is dressing well and morally. Girls, in particular, are expected to do this. "We always explain to them and emphasize the idea that we must remain and keep our identity as Libyan people," he added. It is critical for us to preserve and follow our culture in order to be ourselves. We chat and explain the differences almost every day to help children understand our identity and culture. We rely on Libyan channels to watch Libyan shows and other programming because the Libyan community in this city and the United States in general is limited.

Nouri L.

Nouri said “My kids' biggest problem at school, I think, is the culture and identity aspects”. He stated that there are a lot of things that we try to teach our children so that they can be like us. It is where Libyan children live that they feel at home and can adapt to the way things work in the United States. So, they act and live like their classmates and friends, so they do the same things too. fathers, of course, will be angry and will do everything they can to help their children keep their culture.

My kids sometimes have issues with their cultural and personal identities. Nouri told that “When my daughter was walking down the hall, for example, one of her classmates told her about cultural differences. Hey, go home! He told her to because she had a headscarf on.” She was depressed and upset when she came home. When I talked with her about the issue, she told me that she no longer wants to wear a head scarf. Because of this, fathers get confused and don't know what to do. Main point was that hijab is required by Islamic law, and girls must be patient. He said that I always sit down with my youngsters and talk about how we can fix and avoid problems with culture, and I do this every time. When I have to deal with situations like this, I always say that we live in different cultures than where we are from and that we need to be patient and smart.
My daughter is worried that she won't be able to pray at school Nouri stated. As a Muslim she has to pray at least once a day because she has to be a good person. In Islam, it is a must to pray (Sala). He said, “She told me, daddy, I'm sorry, but I can't pray at school because it makes me feel bad. I was humiliated and teased by my classmates because they all looked at me and made fun of me”. He continued, I think she's right, but she must pray. It is clear that his child's identity is being hurt. He stated that I understand but I can't do anything about it. I understand that no one prays at school, and that it's hard for her. As I said before, she must be patient and try.

According to question, how do you support your children with challenges? He said “As I said, show them how to be patient and try their best to get what they want”. There are many things I also teach them about our religion, faith, and our own way of life, too. I show them our rules and Libyan customs, and I show them how to practice them. I also show them what is halal (good) and what isn't in Islam. At home, I provided channels in Arabic so they can watch Libyan TV, so they can learn about it. Then, I think they will be able to learn more about Libyan culture and know more about the country. I also want them to speak Arabic when they are at home. In this chapter I discussed the primary finding of this research study. In addition, I provided the fathers’ perspective in detail. In the following chapter, I will discuss these with the scholarly literature.
Chapter 5 Discussion

The findings align with Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory, which considers interaction as fundamentally social and has its origin in the interaction between people. Also, sociocultural theory explains that learning grows because individuals interact with each other in a meaningful way. It’s important for children to interact with each other in order to build culture and their own identities. Social interaction is very important to the development of both culture and identity (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Yang and Walker said that students need to interact with each other in order to learn. From a sociocultural point of view, interaction is more than just a way to learn. It is the main source of both what children learn and how they learn. Students need to learn about a new culture, space, language, and adaption, but they also need to feel safe and be part of a group where they can learn. This way, they can learn (Yang & Walker, 2015).

The findings also align with Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the need for mediation strategies to help children learn. Parental mediation is meant to solve or manage children’s problems and make them run more smoothly (Duff, 2007). According to Lantolf, mediation is the help that more experienced fathers or teachers give to children as they do a task or solve a problem in their Zone of Proximal Development. This support comes in the form of instructional strategies or best practices that are used in schools and other places (Lantolf, 2006). Lampert said that instructional strategies are things that teachers do as a routine to help students learn in the classroom. These practices and efforts have a big impact on how well students learn (Lampert, 2010).

Another way a theoretical framework informed by Vygotsky helps us understand Libyan students’ schooling, is that the father’s described how they try to be a more expert other for their children. The idea behind the zone of proximal development is that we learn best within a zone
that is in between what we can do independently and what can we do with support from someone who knows more. When looking at all the interview data it was clear that fathers were experimenting, trying to find ways that they could help their children maintain their language, culture, religion, but they also were committed to being the more knowledgeable resource for their children.

The goal of this qualitative study was to learn about Libyan fathers’ opinions on the obstacles that their children confront in U.S. schools, as well as how they respond to those challenges. The significance of the findings that emerged from this research study will be explained in this final chapter. I provide specific examples to substantiate each theme gleaned from the viewpoints of fathers during the interviews. These finding educational research, school policies, and teacher training with an important challenges and issue that Libyan children face at U.S. school and how their academic performance impacted. Also, these findings provide fathers with more information about those challenges and how they might deal with them.

**Libyan Students in U.S. Schools**

As described in previous chapters, six Libyan fathers from the Detroit metro voluntarily participated in face-to-face interviews. The research questions guiding the study are, how do Libyan fathers understand the challenges their children are facing in schools and how do they respond? How do fathers help their children maintain their home culture while adjusting to school in the United States? What navigational tools or cultural resources do they call on?

In this section, I will discuss the primary findings in conversation that guide this study. First, identity development, including dual identity, gender norms and dating, and fathers' expectations. Second, lack of a sense of school belonging or fitting in, including cultural events
and holidays, food and attire, and modesty/dress. Third, navigational tools, including the Qur’an and faith.

**Dual Identity**

One of the challenges that was identified through participant interviews and data analysis was the tensions surrounding identity development for Libyan youth. The participants felt that Libyan youngsters are ready to identify as Muslims, and many of them express a great sense of pride in their Muslim identity. They appreciate honest questions about their faith and love discussing certain traditions with their friends, such as holidays and Ramadan. Furthermore, they are extremely proud of their Arabic heritage and speak both Arabic and English fluently. High school students, according to Jafari, take pride in their ability to speak Arabic as well as English. They appear to have a certain standing among their peers because they are bilingual. Counselors must be aware of such difficulties when working with students (Ahmad & Szpara, 2003). Jackson (1995) discusses some of the challenges surrounding students' Muslim identities. Zane stated that immigrants are more concerned with preserving their traditional culture, whereas children growing up in this nation are more likely to lose touch with their roots and become Americanized (Zane, 2001). This frequently causes a gap between the fathers and the child. Recognizing this contrast and working to properly combine two cultures is one of Arabic children's developmental goals (Jackson, 1995).

Immigrant students may react to identity challenges in ways that harm their academic careers and cause them to face an unwelcoming educational atmosphere. Alhawsali (2019) stated

“Understanding multiplicity and complexity of Arab American Muslim’ ethnic identities are a step forward towards social justice within education. Schools need to train the staff to critically analyze how to include members of this vulnerable and marginalized minority group; they also need to learn how to teach and include Arab Muslim Students in their curricula” (178)
Multicultural education efforts can aid in the transition to a more socially just system. School administrators and counselors must collaborate with Arab American Muslim community leaders to engage and learn about these groups in order to comprehend their educational requirements and concerns, which, if met, will result in a greater sense of belonging to the school and society as a whole (Alhawsali, 2019). Separate, assimilated, or dual identity strategies are all ways of combining different identities. When these strategies are used, the researchers thought that the effects of identity threats on minority school performance would be lessened. They also thought that the value of different identity strategies varied depending on the intergroup context (Khanlou et al. 2019).

**School Belonging**

When immigrants arrive in a new country, their children face a variety of unfamiliar and difficult situations, both inside and outside of school. Those children will learn a new language, new customs, and new legal and educational systems as a result of the problems they face, such as multiple movements and geographic dislocations, new economic pressures, and academic deficiencies (Cole & Ahmadi, 2003). Additionally, while living in an unfamiliar environment and enrolling in a completely different educational setting, the reality of a long-term separation from family and friends’ creeps in. Immigrant children face the same long-term problems and stresses as other minority groups (identity discrimination, social isolation), according to Zine in 2001.

It is difficult to feel a sense of belonging thousands of miles away from home. The demands of the host culture may be vastly different from one's own culture in many ways, and the new lifestyle may be diametrically opposed to one's previous experience in their home country. Immigrant Libyan children in the United States confront numerous problems, notably in their new schools. For Libyan children, acclimating to new environments, cultures, and social norms is all
part of an important challenge. Libyan children's school performance suffered as a result of this major change. Previous studies on cultural adjustment have demonstrated that transitioning to a new culture influences students' educational performance, according to Cole and Ahmadi (Cole & Ahmadi, 2003). It has been discovered that children from other nations have more difficulty adjusting to school. Immigrants’ children will face cultural norms and ethnic identity through school. That will affect their academic performance negatively. (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Ethnic identity, such as Muslim, can also have an impact on immigrant children's academic performance and has also been linked to psychological difficulties. Muslim students suffer additional challenges when adjusting to new cultures because they are unfamiliar with their religious rituals and are subjected to anti-Muslim sentiments at school (Cole & Ahmadi, 2003). According to research on practicing Muslims in the United States, religion may be a way to alleviate the obstacles of cultural adjustment (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Libyan students feel lonely in school. One father said that my children told me that they don't have friends and that they are always alone in class and during recess. Libyan children feel socially isolated. According to Zine, when students’ cross-national borders, they encounter a variety of obstacles, one of which is social isolation (Zine, 2001). When joining a new setting, immigrant students, particularly Muslim students, often feel very lonely. The absence of familiar acquaintances, the lack of friends at school, a strange culture, and a language barrier are all examples of isolation (Cole & Ahmadi, 2003). Social support, school support, and strong peer relationships at school are important for immigrant children's success in a new environment, just as they are for other minority kids. It helps people keep their own identities while also promoting cultural values and rules of conduct (Zine, 2001).
Immigrant students benefit from a welcoming community and school environment, as well as having many friends. Immigrant Muslim children need to be involved in school activities and events to connect with their peers and classmates. Interaction with peers in academic-related (at school) activities improved students' comprehension of the prevalent culture. It also has a favorable impact on children’s academic achievement and their ability to keep their personal identity (Wu, Garza, & Guzman, 2015). Schools only pay attention to how well students do in school and don't pay attention to other factors that could affect how well immigrant kids do in a new place (Tidwell & Hanassab, 2007).

According to research, how schools and teachers respect identity has an impact on the academic results of immigrant Muslim kids. It has been claimed, for example, that a school's focus on identity sensitivity, as well as teachers' values of diversity and acceptance of culturally responsive teaching, might boost immigrant children's academic achievement and engagement (Cole & Ahmadi, 2003). Immigrant youth's experiences with discrimination and identity may be directly influenced by the school context, such as ethnic composition of schools, schools' value of multiculturalism, and teachers' attitudes toward diversity, such that children in schools and classrooms that value identity perceive less discrimination and have more positive identities than children in schools and classrooms that devalue diversity. Allegations of discrimination and ethnic identification are likely to have an effect on how well students do in school (Zine, 2001). Ethnic identity may also have an effect on how well students do in school.

Zane stated that immigrant children who grow up in schools where they are the most isolated and marginalized may have larger linkages between discrimination and poor academic performance (Zane, 2001). According to Alhawsali;

“at home, students are expected to speak Arabic, obey their parents, and play a dependent role, while, at school, they speak English and are rewarded for asserting themselves. The
consequences of these cultural differences can lead to feelings of alienation and isolated among these students.” (p. 179)

Arab American Muslims are not alone in facing these difficulties; other cultural minority children in the United States have similar difficulties and do not feel like they belong at their school. Since the first wave of immigration to these shores, immigrant children in the United States have faced this problem (Alhawsali, 2019). Some people think that students who feel supported in their academic goals are more likely to go to schools that encourage multiculturalism and have teachers who enjoy having students from different backgrounds in their classes (Cole & Ahmadi, 2003)

According to DeNicolo, et al. (2017) the sense of belonging that many immigrant children and the children of immigrants may get from going to school may be very important to their success in school and development of language skills. Immigrant-origin young people represent many differences in their priorities for their education, knowledge of English, and adaptation to US cultural norms. This influenced by the reason they or their family came to the United States, for example due to a political situation, forced relocation, or other things. Having a sense of belonging or connection to others in the school community may help them deal with their experiences, and their academic learning.

Youth and children of immigrants and their fathers may not be able to communicate well because they don't speak the same language and because they are under a lot of pressure to learn how to live in the United States. Children may become professional interpreters for their fathers because they have learned how to speak different languages and how to interact with people in their families (Abu El-Haj, 2011). They also become cultural advisors because they have had to deal with school and businesses within their communities. Some children and young people may feel good about being helper for their parents and grandparents. However, the level of skill required
in language brokering may not be recognized in school work, which is why some children and young people feel proud. All young people have to figure out who they are in a new way when they reach puberty. Immigrant youth, on the other hand, have to deal with a lot of different expectations as they figure out who they are. In addition to what their families expect them to do, they may also follow religious principles and cultural practices that don't always agree with gender norms in the US (Abu El-Haj, 2011). Students who start middle and high school face an extra challenge because they have less time to learn the English language skills and content knowledge they need to be ready for college or work. DeNicolo et al. (2017) stated,

“Educational programs that provide sustained instruction in students primary language have been proven to be effective for English language acquisition for emergent bilinguals, however due to restrictive language policies the majority of immigrant-origin students will not have access to programs designed to meet their linguistic and cultural strengths and needs” (p. 4)

Aside from a lack of instructional support in their native languages, their linguistic knowledge is likely to be viewed as a barrier to academic success (DeNicolo et al., 2017).

**Culture**

The need to preserve culture for immigrants' children has been recognized as a significant factor in improving the quality of original identity preservation. Furthermore, it is critical to maintain culture in order to boost maintenance, which will directly lead to improved school performance for immigrant children. We are all culturally recognized by the language we speak in our country, which distinguishes us from those who just speak the community's native tongue. People are proud of their heritage. They don't want to be viewed as the same as everyone else; they want to be unique, which allows them to bring different ideas, traditions, and practices together in a melting pot, creating new traditions while preserving existing ones.
According to Ehlers (2009), culture is shaped by interactions between individuals and groups who share similar values, beliefs, and ambitions. They have discovered that past generations’ ways of thinking, behaving, and believing are passed down through social interactions. Culture is defined as the sum of human behavior, which includes the arts, beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviors, as well as all human works and ideas that influence each individual. Libyan fathers are adamant about keeping their children connected to their local culture by having them practice Arabic at home or in school with their native friends. Cultural identity preservation is a style of thinking and acting, as well as the preservation and protection of a system's equipment and structures. There should be a way for every organization to have its own cultural beliefs, values, norms, practices, and attitudes about how to keep work safe and well-preserved (Marker, 2006).

"We put a lot of emphasis on visiting Libyan families and contributing to Libyan holidays," Khaled remarked. Cultural awareness is not something that comes naturally; it is something that must be taught and nurtured over time. As a result, the internal environment among the members is created through the exchange of ideas, beliefs, and values. It's tough to maintain one's culture and identity as an immigrant from one's homeland, because it's only natural to be influenced by the new lifestyle and prevailing culture (Ehlers, 2009). This clearly communicates our origins and allows us to manage the host country's diversity with ease. "We become fathers, and it's a completely different ball game," Aiman explained. We want our children to be exposed to our culture and to act in the same way that we did when we left that house years ago.

Cultures that are based on the notion of how Arab Muslim cultures impact their children's experiences in American classrooms (Ehlers, 2009). Alhawsali (2019) stated that, cultural identification refers to the manner in which Arab American students' identities are shaped by the
cultures around them as well as their own ethnic traditions. Those cultures come together to form their own unique cultural identities. Cultural identity is always shifting in response to surrounding settings, and he consider schools to be major cultural venues where different layers of Arab American Muslim identities coexist and interact with those of other cultural groups.

Children experiences and identities are remade, racialized, and recalled at school, which is a crucial socio-cultural venue. From first to twelfth grade, one spends 15,120 hours in school, not counting holidays, at seven hours per day. The dominant culture can re-invent students' cultural identities as a result of such extended, repetitive exposure (Alhawsali, 2019). According to Spiegler, et. al., cultural identities formed by Arab American students in socio-cultural venues established and dominated by members of culture do not appear to value their Arab and Muslim cultures. Schools, as well as their components and activities, such as curriculum, teaching, and learning, should be recognized as key socio-cultural forums where students' experiences and identities are recreated (Spiegler, et. al., 2016)

**Modesty and Dress**

The wearing of modest clothing may increase the visibility of the Libyan children's religious identities, making it more difficult for them to negotiate their religious identities. Zane stated that, many studies have found that Muslim children with religious identities, particularly girls, become the center of attention when they wear modest dress to school, such as head scarves. Head scarves have become the focus of negative attention since 9/11 and carry stereotypical connotations about Muslim women as oppressed, despite research finding that the girls perceived hijab as an intentional and free choice that empowered them (Zine 2006). Aiman's daughter is now in eighth grade, and she chose to wear the headscarf in order to be more modest. When she made
this decision, she wanted to make her religious identity clear. She also knew that being visible and being seen as a representative of her religion meant that she had to do a lot of work.

Khaled added that his daughter stated, "I wanted to wear the headscarf because when people looked at me, they didn't realize I was Muslim. I couldn't be honest with myself. I couldn't be honest with others. My headscarf is one of my favorite belongings. People are aware of my Muslim faith, which I find acceptable. It's something I'm quite proud of, however, since I began to wear the headscarf, I have felt as if I have taken on an enormous amount of duty. Consider the following scenario: I did something that people did not like. Because of this, I try to be more careful with my life and actions." Khaled’s daughter didn't like wearing the headscarf, but she thought about how it would be seen by her friends and other people. “When I first started wearing the headscarf, my friends asked me why. It's hard for them to understand. I was trying to explain that it's required, but it isn't a big deal, because there are a lot of people who don't wear it.”

Libyan children may be denied access to some extracurricular activities or classes because of their religious practices. According to Litchmore and Safdar, Swimming, physical education, and music classes may be environments in which Muslim children feel uncomfortable. Schools must be made aware of issues such as Libyan Muslim girls' clothing, which must be addressed by school authorities (Litchmore & Safdar, 2016). Due to the challenges they face in terms of cultural norms and prejudice, female Muslim students require assistance in school. These students may require safe places in which to express their religious concerns. The decision to wear the hijab is a topic of particular importance for Muslim women on school campuses (Leet-Otley, 2020). Because there is no widely accepted definition of hijab in Islam, women who choose to wear it may appear in a variety of ways depending on their nationality and culture. In most cases, the hijab is made up of a veil that covers the hair and modest clothing that covers most of the body.
Zane (2002) stated that school officials may be able to form support groups for Muslim students who are suffering from hijab concerns, particularly during school hours. Teachers may be able to assist people in navigating their religious identities and the methods in which they express them. It may also improve their ability to give non-Muslim’s knowledge about the religious and cultural practices of different cultural communities.

**Dietary and Halal Food**

Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, and Buddhism are some of the most popular religions in the world, but there are some rules about what you can eat. It can be hard for people who follow a religion to follow the rules, especially when they travel to countries that have a different religion and culture (Zane, 2001). Islam tells its followers to follow a set of rules called halal laws, which the prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) told them to do. These rules are based on what he said. According to Ahmad and Szpara, halal laws say that you should only eat meat that has been slaughtered in the name of Allah and that you should make sure that any food that has been processed or wrapped is certified that it has not been contaminated by forbidden things (Ahmad & Szpara, 2003). Pork and pork byproducts, such as gelatin, are not allowed to be eaten, and alcohol is not allowed to be used in food preparation (Hampton, 1992). Some schools don't have enough optional foods for students to eat, so they have to bring halal food to school. One father said, "I always ask my kids not to eat at school. Because we do not know if the meat is halal and what the food contains. Therefore, my wife has to prepare food for our children every day.”

Muslim children typically do not eat pork, which may present a challenge when they are on typical school days or when they go on a field trip and must avoid hot dogs or pepperoni pizza, despite the fact that these foods are widely recognized as everyone's favorites in the American context (Hasan, 2016). According to Zane (2001), Some Muslim parents teach their children to be
extra cautious about the food they eat, which may include special requirements for meat, dairy, and processed foods. This was frequently a Libyan child's first exposure to his or her religious identity. Sami said, "As I am a Muslim, I don't eat pork, and I am not allowed to do certain things." He also added that he usually makes sure his children's teachers are aware of their preferences and works with them.

Ali described how he assisted his children in negotiating their dietary preferences at a school with little cultural diversity; his son and his friends would sometimes go to lunch with friends or go on a field trip where they would eat out together. “Because he does not want to eat at those places, I try to prepare the same thing (halal meat prepared in accordance with certain requirements), they would eat out, and he takes the food with him so he does not feel bad in front of his friends. I also give him pocket money so that he can buy whatever he wants.” Ali and his son were very good at negotiating their religious practices so that the son could enjoy the experience with his friends in the same way as everyone else and not be the other person.

Another example was Ramadan, an Islamic holy month (beginning on different days each year according to the Gregorian calendar), during which older children who had reached puberty could gradually begin the practice of fasting during the day. He described how six to seven Muslim students at his school fasted during the day while so many students gathered at the same table in the lunchroom and chatted while the other students ate. The table conversations gave them another place where they could use their own power to be the other while forming social relationships with kids who were not their classmates or close friends based on another thing they had in common. Mohamed's daughter described to her friends how she and her best friend, a Lebanese American girl, spent Ramadan at school: "I fasted during Ramadan this year." For the entire month, my friend and I decided to fast [eat or drink nothing] during the day for the first time in our lives. Everyone
at school questioned me about it. My friends would ask me why we were fasting in my first days of fasting, and we would say, "Because Allah orders us to do so, so we can understand the poor and those in need." One friend asked if she could make a list of foods we could eat because she was Christian and could only eat certain things when she fasted.

These examples show how students from two different cultural contexts were able to navigate mainstream and multicultural classroom cultures while also finding support from other friends who shared the same cultural space in order to negotiate their religious beliefs and cultural practices. When the children were involved in religious practices in these contexts, it also opened a space for intercultural dialogue among the children in the class, and the Libyan children felt that their beliefs were respected in this multicultural community.

**Navigational Tools**

By communicating ideas, beliefs, and practices, language performs an important social function in building feelings of group identity and unity. It's a way of passing on and preserving culture, traditions, and shared beliefs (Alhawsali, 2019). As a result, Libyan fathers believe that teaching Arabic to their children is essential. Every father believes that their children should take Arabic classes every Sunday to improve their language skills. On Sundays, the majority of mosques in the Detroit metro area offer Arabic language classes. One father said, "Any of my children who refuse to go to the Arabic school will be punished." He won't be paid and won't be allowed to see his friends.

When it comes to navigational tools used to reference culture, the Islamic book, the Quran, is widely used (Yoder & Lopez, 2013). Libyan culture is heavily influenced by the Quran and Prophet Mohammad's Islamic teachings. especially if the family is located abroad. Fathers use Islamic teachings to preserve the culture. Many Libyan fathers say that living in another country
and finding ways to teach their children about their culture is difficult. Because Islam is not as much of a minority as being Libyan, fathers should consider using Islamic teachings: For example, how to act, how to dress, and how a female and a male act differently. Since Libyan children have grown up in the United States, they have witnessed many cultural aspects being accepted. Litchmore and Safdar (2016) stated that, children have a hard time understanding that what they see in their outside culture is OK, but not at home. As a result, Libyan fathers teach their children about the importance of these cultural aspects and how many acceptable acts are forbidden in their culture at such a young age. fathers believe that their culture is superior to all others because they want the best for their children. In Libyan culture, norms are very important because they rule people's lives and give them implicit and explicit guidance. As a result, many norms determine whether something is appropriate or not.

Libyan culture is heavily based on outcomes. Culturally, there must be repercussions for bad behavior. This means that fathers teach their children that if they do not act in a certain way, there will be a negative consequence (Yoder & Lopez, 2013). For example, fathers will teach their children that if they do not respect their elders (a highly valued norm), they will be spanked. Islamic morals are highly considered in Libyan culture, and there are severe punishments if you go against the grain and commit a taboo. fathers instill these values in their children at a young age in the hopes that their children will value these rules as they grow older. Nouri stated that It's important for fathers to teach their children about important Libyan cultural norms and other things.

Libyan fathers try to expose their children to their own culture as much as possible. This allows children to understand and practice their culture. To fully understand Libyan culture, we need to know slang, well-known sayings, metaphors, and hyperbole. In addition, fathers are
restricted from teaching their children their own language and maybe a dialect. As a result, learning the language is critical for the culture's survival and understanding. Everything in the Libyan Arabic language is shaped by culture, which is what makes each dialect of the Arabic language unique from the others. Libyan fathers recognize the importance of these tools and teach them to their children so that future generations can carry on the culture.

**Conclusion**

Identity and self-concept, offers up a whole new universe of possibilities for both Libyan fathers and their children. From this data, we can analyze the situation and ideas that establish an understanding of Libyans living in the United States of America. Dual Identity focuses on the way Libyan children choose to express themselves at school and maintain the cultural identity they have been exposed to and raised by. Many students struggle with how to express themselves in school. Students and fathers experience conflict about what is right and what is wrong as these cultures compete against one another. Culture is an important part of one's identity, especially when the religions are different. During the holidays, kids can show off their beliefs and sense of fun. Muslim students and their families have a hard time feeling like they belong because they are a minority in a Christian-dominated world.

Clothing and food have an impact on how a child is raised to live and function in society. The way they wear it is how a child expresses themselves. In Libyan families, children are taught this by their fathers. If a Libyan student wears traditional clothing, a student at school may look at them oddly as they are unaware of what the clothing means. This causes insecurity and children in their immigrant households start to rebel to fit into their social group at school. This also goes for food. There are some foods that are common in the U.S. and teachers and students may be unaware of how questioning or comparing can cause Libyan kids to question their cultural food and, if not
guided, will choose to abandon it. It is common in Libyan families to take on the view that a fathers perspective and beliefs will always be passed on to their children. As these immigrant parents are raising their kids with what they perceive as right, these cultural ideas will impact the child’s way of life compared to their peers at school. With these identities conflict with one another, children, being the next generation, begin to create their own culture as they are raised with the culture of their immigrant parents. With greater understanding of students’ Libyan identity development, school leaders can work towards establishing policies and instructional practices that reduce the tension students’ experience. Schools teaching the country's culture, the idea of dual identity can be established.

Limitations

This qualitative research study has a few limitations that were discovered. First, the participants were chosen based on their gender, with only Libyan fathers taking part in the study. Setting or interviewing a woman who is not related is not acceptable in Libyan culture. Therefore, this study will only cover Libyan fathers. Women should not be interviewed by men. It's a fact that men talk to other men and vice versa. Before making a public announcement about a major choice, a man will consult with his female equivalents. This was due to the fact that all of the speakers were males. They have a responsibility to lead and speak out on issues in society. This basically indicates that communication is restricted to men-to-men. A male sitting down and interviewing a woman is unusual; it is both culturally incorrect and unethical. As a result, my interviewers will only be discussed by fathers.

Second, after going over the data from the interviews, some limitations were discovered that will need to be addressed in future research. First, during the conversation, some fathers raised an essential gender issue that their children are dealing with. One father remarked, "I don't like it
when the teacher puts my daughter in a group that just boys." Libyan fathers are worried that their girls must be separated from their classmates' boys, and they can only work with female groups. Gender interaction in Libya, in my opinion, needs to be researched more.

Third, this study exclusively included fathers from the Detroit metro region. I believe that if the participants came from a broader area or from across the country, the findings and conclusions would be more accurate. My recommendation for future research is to include more individuals from various states. Many Libyan families reside in many locations, including Colorado, California, Ohio, and Florida. Examining regional and state differences more closely would create a greater understanding of context and student experiences.

Fourth, Only Libyans were recruited as participants in this study. The Arabic people live in 24 different nations. Even though Arabic people share the same culture, territory, and religion, each country has its own unique accent and way of life. Studies that look across Arabic speaking communities can add to the gap in scholarly literature and in understanding of the school experiences of Arabic speaking students in U.S. schools. Additional research would contribute to policies and practices that support students’ linguistic, religious, and cultural identities.

Implications

The findings of this study demonstrate that there is a strong relationship between Libyan students’ cultural identity and sense of belonging in American schools. Immigrant children's performance improves, and students give their best when school professionals appreciate and welcome their cultural identity in the classroom. These findings indicate the complexity that Libyan students face regarding maintaining their culture and developing a dual identity in a U.S. school setting. This also has an impact on Libyan students' academic achievement. School policies are significant because they could assist a school in establishing processes that would take some
of the stress of navigating home culture, norms, and expectations off of the students. Similar to the ways schools establish quality standards for learning and teaching, schools could establish expectations for teachers to support students and families who have religious beliefs, practices, and holidays that differ from U.S. mainstream culture. Without these, schools would be unable to offer the structure and function required to meet Libyan children’s needs. Finally, well-written and up-to-date policies are vital to a school’s performance and give numerous other benefits.

The outcomes of this study have significant consequences for education policies. Breakfast and lunch are not served in a halal. Muslims, overall, eat veggies and halal meat. They are forbidden from eating any meat that has not been ritually slaughtered. They are also forbidden from eating pork or pig-related products. School cafeterias and vending machines, as well as class activities and school events, are all examples of changes that could be made in schools. Muslim women are required to wear the hijab. If global events are discussed in classroom with a focus on Muslims, a girl who wears a hijab may experience teasing, bullying, or ostracism from her peers (Cole & Ahmadi, 2007). Supporting hijab-wearing students helps girls avoid hurdles that could harm their academic achievement. Mohamed said, "I want my daughter to wear her hijab at school and I will be very happy." This applies to their religious affiliations as well. It is critical for educators to explore how they might accommodate Muslims in public schools in terms of dietary and dress modifications.

**Recommendations for Further Study**

Based on my research, I recommend that future studies focus on a particular difficult issue, such as modesty (e.g., how dress and modesty influence Libyan children in American schools), to investigate how this impacts children's learning and sense of belonging during school hours. This would provide conclusive data on the challenges that students face in the classroom and how they
affect their academic performance. The findings of this study can be compared to those of other similar studies on diverse strategies and conclusions can be drawn to assist students in improving their learning process and dealing with day-to-day school challenges. Another important route to this research is to conduct a similar qualitative research study at random, selecting mothers for face-to-face interview studies and/or a parallel case study for both fathers and mothers in different cities and communities across the United States to draw comparisons on the issues that their children face in schools. In my opinion, it will be difficult, but not impossible, to find both genders interested in sharing their perspectives for the study.
APPENDIX G: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1- How do you as a Libyan father see and understand the cultural challenges of your children in U.S. school?

2- Did/do your child/children face any kind of culture/identity issues at their school?

3- How did you respond to those issues?

4- What navigational tools or cultural resources do you call on when talking with your children?

5- What has been the effect on your child’s identity of his or her experiences in their current school setting?

6- How do children’s school environment affect their identity development?

7- How do you support your child or children in maintaining home identity/culture and adapting to schools in U.S.?

8- Do you participate in your child education? If so, in what ways?

9- Do you find participating in the ways that you do helpful?

10- How do you communicate with the school?

11- In what ways would you like to be involved with your child’s education?
APPENDIX H: IRB PROTOCOL NARRATIVE

This qualitative research study examines how fathers understand and respond to the challenges that their children face in schools. The study also, seeks to provide a clear understanding of how culture and identity influence Libyan emergent bilingual students. In addition, the study explores the role of Libyan fathers in their children’s education how language instruction leads to higher level of language proficiency. I have selected this topic due to my own journey as a Libyan father with children attending school in United State. I live in Metro Detroit; our suburban community is considered diverse but there are not many Middle Eastern students. My two oldest daughters were 12 and 9 years old, when we moved here and although, English proficient they struggle to fit in school. The following two examples will illustrate why this topic is important to me, I will share two experiences. My daughter goes to Stevenson high school in Macomb, Michigan. When the New Zealand shooting attack occurred in 2019, my daughter went to school, and her teacher and peers were talking about the tragedy how and why it occurred. The discussion turned to terrorism and Islamophobia. My daughter told me that while the students were discussing, they turned to look at her. She said, “I was embarrassed and scared”. As a parent and father, I was confused as to what to do. I told her to ignore the looks and conversations and focus on her classes. Another example is when I talked with my second oldest daughter who goes to seventh grade and begin wearing Hijab, Hijab is an Arabic word meaning barrier or cover. In Islam, Hijab is symbolic for the principle of modesty and includes behavior as well as dress for females. Hijab refers to the complete covering of everything except the hands, face and feet in long. A woman who wears hijab is called Muhaajaba. My daughter refused to wear Hijab and said “Dad all the students will laugh at me, ignore me and will not play with me anymore.
APPENDIX I: CHECKLIST TO MITIGATE COVID 19 RISK

☐ Do you have any symptoms of COVID-19, including recently developed cough, fever, difficulty breathing, changes in smell or taste or fatigue?

☐ Have you been in close contact with anyone known or suspected to have COVID-19 in the last 14 days?

☐ Have been instructed to self-quarantine or self-isolated by health care provider or public health system within the last 14 days?

☐ Are you awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test?
APPENDIX J: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION COVID-19 SHEET

Title of Study: Libyan Students’ Learning and Culture; Issues and Challenges from Parents’ Perspectives

Principal Investigator (PI): [S salah H rhor]
[ College of Education]
[ 6162649652]

COVID-19 Information from the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention):

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus than can spread from person to person.
- The virus that causes COVID-19 is new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world.
- COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness.

- How COVID-19 is spread:
COVID-19 spreads when an infected person breathes out droplets and very small particles that contain the virus. These droplets and particles can be breathed in by other people or land on their eyes, noses, or mouths. In some circumstances, these droplets and particles may contaminate surfaces they touch. People who are closer than 6 feet from the infected person are most likely to get infected.

COVID-19 is spread in three main ways:

- Breathing in air when close to an infected person who is exhaling small droplets and particles that contain the virus.
- Having these small droplets and particles that contain virus land on the eyes, nose, or mouth, especially through splashes and sprays like a cough or sneeze.
- Touching eyes, nose, or mouth with hands that have the virus on them.

DELTA Variant:

- The Delta variant is more contagious: The Delta variant is highly contagious, more than 2x as contagious as previous variants.
- Some data suggest the Delta variant might cause more severe illness than previous variants in unvaccinated people.
- Unvaccinated people remain the greatest concern: The greatest risk of transmission is among unvaccinated people who are much more likely to get infected, and therefore transmit the virus. Fully vaccinated people get COVID-19 (known as breakthrough infections) less often than unvaccinated people. People infected with the Delta variant, including fully vaccinated people with symptomatic breakthrough infections, can transmit the virus to others. CDC is continuing to assess data on whether fully vaccinated people with asymptomatic breakthrough infections can transmit the virus.
- Fully vaccinated people with Delta variant breakthrough infections can spread the virus to others. However, vaccinated people appear to spread the virus for a
**shorter time:** For prior variants, lower amounts of viral genetic material were found in samples taken from fully vaccinated people who had breakthrough infections than from unvaccinated people with COVID-19. For people infected with the Delta variant, similar amounts of viral genetic material have been found among both unvaccinated and fully vaccinated people. However, like prior variants, the amount of viral genetic material may go down faster in fully vaccinated people when compared to unvaccinated people. This means fully vaccinated people will likely spread the virus for less time than unvaccinated people.

- **Protect yourself and others from COVID-19:**
  - The best way to protect illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.
  - **Get Vaccinated:**
    - There are approved and authorized vaccines to protect against COVID-19.
  - **Wear a Mask:**
    - If you are not fully vaccinated and aged 2 or older, you should wear a mask in indoor public places.
    - People who have a condition or are taking medications that weaken their immune system may NOT be protected even if they are fully vaccinated. They should continue to take all precautions recommended for unvaccinated people, including wearing a well-fitted mask, until advised otherwise by their healthcare provider.
  - **Social Distancing:**
    - Inside your home:
      - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
      - If possible, maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and other household members.
    - Outside your home: Put 6 feet of distance between yourself and people who don’t live in your household.
      - Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus.
      - **Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths) from other people.**
      - Keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.
  - **Wash your hands often:**
    - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
    - If soap and water are not readily available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
    - Wash your hands especially:
      - Before eating or preparing food
      - Before touching your face
      - After using the restroom
      - After leaving a public place
      - After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
      - After handling your mask
      - After changing a diaper
      - After caring for someone who is sick
- After touching animals or pets
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Clean and disinfect:
  - Clean high touch surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
  - If someone is sick or has tested positive for COVID-19, disinfect frequently touched surfaces.

- **Prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick:**
  - Stay home except to get medical care
    - Stay home. Most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and can recover at home without medical care. Do not leave your home, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.
      - Take care of yourself. Get rest and stay hydrated. Take over-the-counter medicines, such as acetaminophen, to help you feel better.
      - Stay in touch with your doctor. Call before you get medical care. Be sure to get care if you have trouble breathing, or have any other emergency warning signs, or if you think it is an emergency.
      - Avoid public transportation, ridesharing, or taxis.
  - Separate yourself from other people and pets in your home.

- **Your risk for severe illness:**
  - Severe illness means that a person with COVID-19 may need: hospitalization, intensive care, a ventilator to help them breathe or they may even die.
  - People at increased risk, and those who live or visit with them, need to take precautions to protect themselves from getting COVID-19.
  - The CDC lists the following medical conditions in Adults that could make you more likely to become severely ill.
    - Cancer: Having cancer **can make you more likely** to get severely ill from COVID-19. Treatments for many types of cancer can weaken your body's ability to fight off disease. At this time, based on available studies, having a history of cancer may increase your risk.
    - Chronic kidney disease: Having chronic kidney disease of any stage **can make you more likely** to get severely ill from COVID-19.
    - Chronic lung diseases: Having lung disease including COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), asthma (moderate-to-severe), interstitial lung disease, cystic fibrosis, and pulmonary hypertension **can make you more likely** to get severely ill from COVID-19.
    - Dementia or other neurological conditions: Having neurological conditions, such as dementia, **can make you more likely** to get severely ill from COVID-19.
- Diabetes (type 1 or type 2): Having either type 1 or type 2 diabetes can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
- Down syndrome: Having Down syndrome can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
- Heart conditions: Having heart conditions such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathies, and possibly high blood pressure (hypertension) can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
- HIV infection: Having HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system): Having a weakened immune system can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19. Many conditions and treatments can cause a person to be immunocompromised or have a weakened immune system. Primary immunodeficiency is caused by genetic defects that can be inherited. Prolonged use of corticosteroids or other immune weakening medicines can lead to secondary or acquired immunodeficiency.
- Liver disease: Having chronic liver disease, such as alcohol-related liver disease, nonalcoholic fatty liver disease, and especially cirrhosis, or scarring of the liver, can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
- Overweight and obesity: Overweight (defined as a body mass index (BMI) > 25 kg/m² but < 30 kg/m²), obesity (BMI ≥30 kg/m² but < 40 kg/m²), or severe obesity (BMI of ≥40 kg/m²), can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19. The risk of severe COVID-19 illness increases sharply with elevated BMI.
- Pregnancy: Pregnant and recently pregnant people (for at least 42 days following end of pregnancy) are more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19 compared with non-pregnant people.
- Sickle cell disease or thalassemia: Having hemoglobin blood disorders like sickle cell disease (SCD) or thalassemia can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
- Smoking, current or former: Being a current or former cigarette smoker can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19. If you currently smoke, quit. If you used to smoke, don’t start again. If you’ve never smoked, don’t start.
- Solid organ or blood stem cell transplant: Having had a solid organ or blood stem cell transplant, which includes bone marrow transplants, can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
- Stroke or cerebrovascular disease, which affects blood flow to the brain: Having cerebrovascular disease, such as having a stroke, can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
- Substance use disorders: Having a substance use disorder (such as alcohol, opioid, or cocaine use disorder) can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
Study Visit(s):
Whenever possible, the study visit(s) will be conducted remotely by phone call or video conference. However, some study visits may require an in-person visit. If you decide to take part in the study, you will be asked to take the following COVID-19 precautionary measures for each in-person study visit.

- **At Home Temperature Check:**
  - Please check your temperature at home before leaving to come to the study visit. If you have a fever, please let the research team know and your study visit will be rescheduled. The study visit will be postponed until you are symptom-free for 14 days.
  - Please limit the number of companions attending the study visit with you. Please ask each companion to check their temperature at home before leaving to come to the study visit with you. If the companion has a fever, they should not accompany you to the study visit.

- **WSU Guest Campus Screener:**
  - All visitors including research participants must complete the WSU Guest Campus Screener on the day of the on-site visit and prior to arriving on campus to be permitted on campus.
    - Please use this link to access the screener: [https://forms.wayne.edu/guest-screening](https://forms.wayne.edu/guest-screening)
    - An example of the WSU Guest Campus Screener is attached as addendum to this form.
  - Research participants who will be coming on WSU campus for a study visit must indicate that they are a research participant on the Guest Campus Screener.
  - You may ask the research staff to assist you with the completing the Guest Campus Screener.

- **Face Mask:**
  - Please wear a face mask to the study visit.
  - If needed, a face mask will be provided to you when you arrive at the research site.

- **Upon Arrival at the Study Site:**
  - Once you arrive at the study site, we will:
    - Take your temperature to make sure you do not have a fever.
    - Ask you a number of questions about your health, including if you have experienced COVID-19 symptoms:
      - A new fever (100.4 F or higher) or a sense of having a fever?
      - A new cough that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
      - New shortness of breath that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
      - A new sore throat that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
      - New muscle aches that you cannot attribute to another health condition or that may have been caused by a specific activity, such as physical exercise?
- New respiratory symptoms, such as sore throat, runny nose/nasal congestion or sneezing, that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- New chills or repeated shaking with chills that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- New loss of taste or smell that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- New headache that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- New gastrointestinal symptoms, such as nausea, diarrhea or vomiting that you cannot attribute to another health condition?

If you have any COVID-19 symptoms you will not be able to complete the study visit that day and we will request that you contact your healthcare provider, as soon as possible.

By taking part in-person study visits, you may be at increased risk of contracting COVID-19, especially if you are unvaccinated, even when all the precautionary measures, such as wearing masks, handwashing, and social distancing, are taken by yourself, your companions and the research team.

If you are interested in participating in this research, you will be pre-consented using the detailed study-specific consent form during an in-person study visit.
APPENDIX K: PARTICIPANTS INFORMATION SHEET

COVID-19 Information

Title of Study: Libyan Students’ Learning and Culture; Issues and Challenges from Parents’ Perspectives

Principal Investigator (PI): [S salah H rhor]  
[College of Education]  
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- The virus that causes COVID-19 is new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world.
- COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness.

- **How COVID-19 is spread:**  
  COVID-19 spreads when an infected person breathes out droplets and very small particles that contain the virus. These droplets and particles can be breathed in by other people or land on their eyes, noses, or mouths. In some circumstances, these droplets and particles may contaminate surfaces they touch. People who are closer than 6 feet from the infected person are most likely to get infected.

  COVID-19 is spread in three main ways:

  - Breathing in air when close to an infected person who is exhaling small droplets and particles that contain the virus.
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  - Touching eyes, nose, or mouth with hands that have the virus on them.

**DELTA Variant:**

- **The Delta variant is more contagious:** The Delta variant is highly contagious, more than 2x as contagious as previous variants.
- **Some data suggest the Delta variant might cause more severe illness than previous variants in unvaccinated people.**
- **Unvaccinated people remain the greatest concern:** The greatest risk of transmission is among unvaccinated people who are much more likely to get infected, and therefore transmit the virus. Fully vaccinated people get COVID-19 (known as breakthrough infections) less often than unvaccinated people. People infected with the Delta variant, including fully vaccinated people with symptomatic breakthrough infections, can transmit the virus to others. CDC is continuing to assess data on whether fully vaccinated people with asymptomatic breakthrough infections can transmit the virus.
Fully vaccinated people with Delta variant breakthrough infections can spread the virus to others. However, vaccinated people appear to spread the virus for a shorter time: For prior variants, lower amounts of viral genetic material were found in samples taken from fully vaccinated people who had breakthrough infections than from unvaccinated people with COVID-19. For people infected with the Delta variant, similar amounts of viral genetic material have been found among both unvaccinated and fully vaccinated people. However, like prior variants, the amount of viral genetic material may go down faster in fully vaccinated people when compared to unvaccinated people. This means fully vaccinated people will likely spread the virus for less time than unvaccinated people.

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  - If you are not fully vaccinated and aged 2 or older, you should wear a mask in indoor public places.
  - People who have a condition or are taking medications that weaken their immune system may NOT be protected even if they are fully vaccinated. They should continue to take all precautions recommended for unvaccinated people, including wearing a well-fitted mask, until advised otherwise by their healthcare provider.
- Social Distancing:
  - Inside your home:
    - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
    - If possible, maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and other household members.
  - Outside your home: Put 6 feet of distance between yourself and people who don’t live in your household.
    - Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus.
    - **Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths) from other people.**
    - Keeping distance from others is especially important for **people who are at higher risk of getting very sick**.
- Wash your hands often:
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
  - If soap and water are not readily available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
  - Wash your hands especially:
    - Before eating or preparing food
    - Before touching your face
    - After using the restroom
    - After leaving a public place
    - After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
    - After handling your mask
After changing a diaper
- After caring for someone who is sick
- After touching animals or pets
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Clean and disinfect:
  - Clean high touch surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
  - If someone is sick or has tested positive for COVID-19, disinfect frequently touched surfaces.

- Prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick:
  - Stay home except to get medical care
    - Stay home. Most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and can recover at home without medical care. Do not leave your home, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.
      - Take care of yourself. Get rest and stay hydrated. Take over-the-counter medicines, such as acetaminophen, to help you feel better.
      - Stay in touch with your doctor. Call before you get medical care. Be sure to get care if you have trouble breathing, or have any other emergency warning signs, or if you think it is an emergency.
      - Avoid public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
  - Separate yourself from other people and pets in your home.

- Your risk for severe illness:
  - Severe illness means that a person with COVID-19 may need: hospitalization, intensive care, a ventilator to help them breathe or they may even die.
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  - The CDC lists the following medical conditions in Adults that could make you more likely to become severely ill.
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    - Chronic lung diseases: Having lung disease including COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), asthma (moderate-to-severe), interstitial lung disease, cystic fibrosis, and pulmonary hypertension can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
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- Diabetes (type 1 or type 2): Having either type 1 or type 2 diabetes can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
- Down syndrome: Having Down syndrome can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
- Heart conditions: Having heart conditions such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathies, and possibly high blood pressure (hypertension) can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
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- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system): Having a weakened immune system can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19. Many conditions and treatments can cause a person to be immunocompromised or have a weakened immune system. Primary immunodeficiency is caused by genetic defects that can be inherited. Prolonged use of corticosteroids or other immune weakening medicines can lead to secondary or acquired immunodeficiency.
- Liver disease: Having chronic liver disease, such as alcohol-related liver disease, nonalcoholic fatty liver disease, and especially cirrhosis, or scarring of the liver, can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
- Overweight and obesity: Overweight (defined as a body mass index (BMI) > 25 kg/m² but < 30 kg/m²), obesity (BMI ≥30 kg/m² but < 40 kg/m²), or severe obesity (BMI of ≥40 kg/m²), can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19. The risk of severe COVID-19 illness increases sharply with elevated BMI.
- Pregnancy: Pregnant and recently pregnant people (for at least 42 days following end of pregnancy) are more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19 compared with non-pregnant people.
- Sickle cell disease or thalassemia: Having hemoglobin blood disorders like sickle cell disease (SCD) or thalassemia can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
- Smoking, current or former: Being a current or former cigarette smoker can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19. If you currently smoke, quit. If you used to smoke, don’t start again. If you’ve never smoked, don’t start.
- Solid organ or blood stem cell transplant: Having had a solid organ or blood stem cell transplant, which includes bone marrow transplants, can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
- Stroke or cerebrovascular disease, which affects blood flow to the brain: Having cerebrovascular disease, such as having a stroke, can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
- Substance use disorders: Having a substance use disorder (such as alcohol, opioid, or cocaine use disorder) can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
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ABSTRACT

THE EXPERIENCES OF LIBYAN STUDENTS IN U.S. SCHOOLS: FATHERS' PERSPECTIVES ON ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

by

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Major: Curriculum and Instruction (Bilingual/Bicultural Education)

Degree: Doctor of Education

The goal of this study was to gain a better understanding of children's challenges in American schools from the perspective of their fathers. The research investigates how parents perceive and respond to the challenges that their children face in American schools. It also aims to provide a clear understanding of how Libyan emergent bilingual students are influenced by culture and identity. The first chapter discusses the importance of this research in understanding the difficulties that Libyan students face in American schools. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978) is explained in Chapter 2. The theoretical framework is based on Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, specifically his concept of social interaction. The method chosen for the qualitative phase of this research study is explained in detail in Chapter 3. An in-depth case study of Libyan fathers living in the Detroit Metropolitan Area is included in the study. The qualitative data is thoroughly examined in Chapter 4. Each theme is thoroughly explained. The three themes that emerged from the data analysis is described in Chapter 5. Three themes emerged from data analysis: identity development, a sense of school belonging, and navigational tools.
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

I am a dedicated educator with over 16 years of experience in the field of English as a Second Language, as well as a life-long learner who has pursued professional and academic advancement. At Almirgab University in Libya, I earned a bachelor's degree in teaching English as a second language. In 2008, the Libyan Ministry of Education awarded me a scholarship. I moved to Michigan with my family in 2008, and in 2011 I earned my Master of Education with a major in ESL from Grand Valley State University. After graduation, I returned to Libya to begin teaching English as a foreign language. After two years of experience, I returned to the United States to pursue a doctoral degree. In 2016, I began my EdD program at Wayne State University.

This dissertation is the last step in earning my Doctor of Education (Ed. D.) in Curriculum and Instruction (Bilingual/Bicultural Education) from Wayne State University. My work history has been diverse and extensive. For more than a decade, I taught foreign languages in Libya and the United States (refugee school). My time in Libya was fantastic. Every year, I taught English to hundreds of students. My teaching experience in the United States was rewarding and allowed me to advance professionally. Between 2017 and 2019, I taught online and in-person classes at Wayne State University. In Grand Rapids, Michigan, I also taught English to immigrants and refugees.