



January 2014

Understanding Somali Women Refugee Students' Lives And Program Decisions At Two-Year Colleges: A Narrative Approach

Mary Fontes

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.und.edu/theses>

Recommended Citation

Fontes, Mary, "Understanding Somali Women Refugee Students' Lives And Program Decisions At Two-Year Colleges: A Narrative Approach" (2014). *Theses and Dissertations*. 1651.
<https://commons.und.edu/theses/1651>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations, and Senior Projects at UND Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of UND Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact zeinebyousif@library.und.edu.

UNDERSTANDING SOMALI WOMEN REFUGEE STUDENTS'
LIVES AND PROGRAM DECISIONS AT TWO-YEAR
COLLEGES: A NARRATIVE APPROACH

by

Mary Louise Fontes
Bachelor of Science, University of North Dakota, 1986
Master of Art, University of North Dakota, 1988

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

of the

University of North Dakota

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

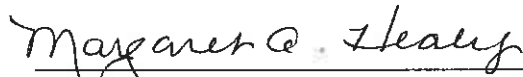
Grand Forks, North Dakota

December


2014

Copyright 2014 Mary Louise Fontes


This dissertation, submitted by Mary Louise Fontes in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.



Dr. Margaret A. Healy, Chair




Dr. Marcus Weaver-Hightower



Dr. Cindy Juntunen




Dr. Deborah Worley



Dr. Anne Walker

This dissertation is being submitted by the appointed advisory committee as having met all of the requirements of the School of Graduate Studies at the University of North Dakota and is hereby approved.



Wayne Swisher
Dean of the School of Graduate Studies



Date

PERMISSION

Title Understanding Somali Women Refugee Students' Lives and Program
 Decisions at Two-Year Colleges: A Narrative Approach

Department Educational Leadership

Degree Doctor of Philosophy

In presenting this dissertation in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a graduate degree from the University of North Dakota, I agree that the library of this University shall make it freely available for inspection. I further agree that permission for extensive copying for scholarly purposes may be granted by the professor who supervised my dissertation work or, in her absence, by the Chairperson of the department or the dean of the School of Graduate Studies. It is understood that any copying or publication or other use of this dissertation or part thereof for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission. It is also understood that due recognition shall be given to me and to the University of North Dakota in any scholarly use which may be made of any material in my dissertation.

Mary Louise Fontes
November 17, 2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ix
ABSTRACT.....	xi
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Purpose of the Study	1
What Prompted Me to Pursue this Study	2
Professional Interest.....	3
Personal Interest.....	4
Happenstance	5
Previous Research.....	10
Conceptual Framework.....	12
Career, Motivation, and Work Theory —Parsons, Maslow, and Blustein.....	12
Definitions.....	17
Limitations	20
Organization of the Study	21
II. LITERATURE REVIEW	23
Background Information.....	23
Demographic.....	23
Historical.....	26

Cultural	27
Review of the Literature	31
Research About Refugees/Immigrants	33
Literature About Immigrant Students	36
Literature About African Immigrant Students	43
III. METHODOLOGY	48
Pilot Study Summary	49
Rationale for Narrative Inquiry.....	50
Site Selection — Research Locations.....	53
Participants.....	54
Recruitment and Selection	55
Research Approval Process.....	57
Interview Process	58
Connecting with Gatekeepers	60
Initial Meeting.....	60
Informed Consent Process	61
The Interviews	62
Follow-up.....	63
Data Collection, Analysis, and Theme Development.....	64
Coding and Theme Development	66
Analysis of Outcomes—Validation and Evaluation	69
Validity	70
Researcher Subjectivity	72

	Ethical Concerns	73
	Risks and Benefits.....	74
IV.	INTERVIEW NARRATIVES.....	75
	Background Information.....	75
	Narratives	75
	Pilot Participant: Zenab.....	75
	Participant I: Shalambood.....	78
	Participant II: Nimo	80
	Participant III: Sabrina.....	81
	Participant IV: Sagal	86
	Participant V: Zaytun	87
	Participant VI: Sabrina II	90
	Participant VII: Shamqali	91
	Summary.....	94
V.	RESULTS	95
	Theme Development.....	95
	Theme Development Process.....	96
	Themes	96
	Theme One: Family is Central and Supportive.....	96
	Theme Two: Life Was and Is Difficult.....	100
	Theme Three: Lack of English Language Skills is a Significant Barrier.....	107
	Theme Four: Education is Essential for Improving Their Lives	109

Theme Five: Helping Others is Important	111
Theme Six: Educational Support Assistance is Helpful	114
Theme Seven: Cultural Influences Have an Impact	117
Research Analyses	121
Theme One Analysis – Family is Central and Supportive.....	121
Theme Two Analysis – Life Was and Is Difficult.....	124
Theme Three Analysis – Lack of English Language Skills is a Significant Barrier	127
Theme Four Analysis – Education is Essential for Improving Their Lives	129
Theme Five Analysis – Helping Others is Important	131
Theme Six Analysis – Educational Support Assistance is Helpful.....	133
Theme Seven Analysis – Cultural Influences Have an Impact.....	135
Analyses Summary	140
Observations	140
VI. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS	145
Recommendations.....	145
Recommendations for Immigrant Student Supportive Services	147
Recommendations for Future Study	154
Conclusions.....	156
APPENDICES	157
REFERENCES	168

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express a sincere “Thank You” to my advisor, Dr. Margaret Healy, who did not give up on me as I moved through my dissertation journey. You knew exactly when to push me and when to hold back. I appreciated the time you spent with me and will remember our discussions fondly.

I also wish to express my thanks to my dissertation committee members and my editor, Dr. Marcus Weaver-Hightower, Dr. Cindy Juntunen, Dr. Deborah Worley, Dr. Anne Walker, and Dr. Sherry Lindquist. Your guidance was extremely helpful and insightful.

There are many people at my place of employment who helped me on my journey, too many to name here. Every time they asked me about where I was at in the process, or told me to get on with it, their inquiries, gentle nudges, and not so gentle nudges, helped move me forward.

I also want to thank my husband and children—Mat, Brandon, and Jessica. You all have been extremely patient through this journey. Many sacrifices were made to complete this milestone. Thank you for your understanding.

I want to particularly thank my mother, Betty Martian, who has always given of herself so I could have a better, peaceful, and educated life. You were my first caring and compassionate teacher. I will be indebted to you forever.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the women who agreed to participate in this study. Without your stories this research would not have been possible. Your strong, courageous spirits will not be forgotten.

To my mother, Betty Martian, who provided me with the foundation for understanding the value of education and hard work. I am forever grateful.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to explore Somali women refugee students' lives and to identify what factors influenced their program decisions at two-year colleges in the Midwest. Refugees have been admitted to the United States (U. S.) as early as 1948 under the Displaced Persons Act. Some states have experienced a greater influx of refugees than others. Employment and economic self-sufficiency are emphasized as quickly as possible after arrival in the United States. Some foreign-born individuals, who aren't prepared for employment, pursue education. Somali women refugees who pursue education may be doing so unprepared or counter to cultural norms (Ward, 2008). What factors influence these Somali women refugee students' lives and program decisions? Eight participants were interviewed. The women shared their life stories through a semi-structured interview approach. Seven themes emerged from the data that described what factors influenced their lives and programs decisions: 1) family is central and supportive, 2) life was and is difficult, 3) lack of English language skills is a significant barrier, 4) education is essential for improving their lives, 5) helping others is important, 6) educational supportive assistance is helpful, and 7) cultural influences have an impact. This study was an attempt to gain insight into the lives of Somali women immigrant students enrolled at two-year colleges in the Midwest. Through the student narratives, those who work in higher education may learn how to support Somali women refugee

students throughout their educational experiences and in the identification of program choices.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study was an exploration of Somali women refugee students' lives and what factors influenced their program decisions at two-year postsecondary colleges in the Midwest. Seven participants from two different sites and a pilot participant were identified to interview. Following a Narrative Inquiry approach, interviews were conducted with each participant and data were analyzed for stories and developing themes or patterns of meaning. Patterns of meaning in narrative form were identified according to what Creswell (2007) referred to as "... 'epiphanies' or turning points" that the subject relayed (p. 57). In this study, I highlighted the voices that emerged from the interview transcripts to help identify what factors influence Somali women refugee students' lives and program decisions.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to explore Somali women refugee students' lives and uncover what factors influenced their program decisions. Understanding the factors that affect Somali women refugee students' lives and program decisions may aid higher education personnel in assisting and supporting these new immigrants throughout their educational experiences and in the identification of their program choices. A significant component of studying these students in this process was to identify what research had

already been conducted in order to identify gaps in the literature for opportunities of inquiry.

The research conducted as identified in Chapter II pointed to certain factors that impacted immigrants, including factors that influenced their career choices and aspirations. My inquiry into discovering what factors influence Somali women refugee student's lives and program decisions through the narrative approach is just one area to be explored with this untapped population and was the focus of this study.

Creswell (2012) identified three important factors when choosing between a qualitative or quantitative approach, those being: 1) the approach should link to the researcher's personal experience and training, 2) the approach should match the research problem, and 3) the approach should complement the research report audience. In this chapter I explain the manner in which I chose this method of inquiry through my professional, personal, and previous research experiences and training in the *What Prompted Me to Pursue this Study* section. I cover the conceptual framework, definitions, and limitations that helped guide the research process, and I also explain briefly in this chapter but more extensively through the *Review of the Literature* in Chapter II and *Rationale for Narrative Inquiry* in Chapter III, how the approach matched the research problem, and how it complemented the research report audience.

What Prompted Me to Pursue This Study

Over the span of my lifetime, I have had professional, personal, chance, and previous research experiences that have led me to follow this research track. I have always had an inquisitive nature and compassion for individuals who have faced adversity and have overcome it to persevere along their life journeys. I have had the

opportunity to connect with and help many students along their paths in life through the postsecondary education setting. I have seen how the opportunities to share their stories and successes have been helpful to them.

Professional Interest

Working at a two-year institution in Minnesota for over 25 years, I have observed the trend of foreign-born students from Africa entering postsecondary education. The influx began several years ago, specifically in 2006, at the institution where I am employed. Foreign-born prospective students from the more metropolitan areas of Minnesota were travelling to the more rural areas of the state to apply and attend two-year institutions en masse. One staff member recalled that the students who came to the college one summer drove in vans, full of prospective immigrant students, to the large registration sessions to become enrolled. The students were not able to gain access to certain technical programs of study at the two-year institutions in the metropolitan areas of the state where they came from as there were long waiting lists for the programs they wanted to pursue. Some of those prospective students completed and submitted the required paperwork on-the-spot to be admitted to the institution and registered in courses that same day. The thirst for education appeared to be urgent with this new group of students entering the two-year setting. A few questions surfaced watching these students move through the process. Does gender factor into differing outlooks of life options and the future? Do home country past experiences affect outlook of life options and the future? I was particularly interested in what was happening in their lives to spur this fevered quest for education and the factors that led them to their program decisions.

Being assigned the duty of international advisor or Designated School Official (DSO), I have had the opportunity to meet and work with students from foreign countries pursuing their educational interests in the U. S., but the new immigrant population was a new population entering our college. For the purpose of this research, these *new immigrants* have been defined as the group of permanent residents, refugees, asylees, or temporary protected status students who came to live in Minnesota. With my limited knowledge and understanding of Somali women refugee student lives and issues, I believed that researching this population would assist postsecondary education personnel in understanding and serving their needs.

As a former college counselor who has administered career assessments to thousands of students over a period of sixteen years, I was also interested to see what factors influenced their program or career decisions. Do objective assessment methods provide guidance in working with this population or are other methods warranted? Would any patterns emerge from the interview data to help identify areas to be cognizant of when working with this population? The research topic of exploring Somali women refugee student career decisions as manifested through program choices is of interest to me professionally.

Personal Interest

Wanting to understand how individuals survive and thrive after experiencing extraordinary circumstances also was of interest to me. My quest for understanding may have come from my own story of leaving an unfortunate and abusive life situation, which has provided a foundation for an empathetic lens in researching Somali women refugees and their struggles. Refugees who enter the U. S. by definition are "...unable or unwilling

to return to that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution” (Department of Homeland Security, 2009, ¶ 1). I recognized that the stories Somali women refugees share regarding their lives could be filled with horrific details, and that my life experiences pale in comparison, but the shock of being uprooted and the need to establish new lives in unfamiliar territory would be common threads that could prove to be helpful in understanding their lives and program decisions. I also acknowledged that my lens had to be checked prior to and periodically throughout the process to make sure I was remaining as objective as possible and the stories of the participants were being revealed.

I also cannot ignore my personal roots of being raised in a Catholic household of fourteen brothers and sisters and twelve years of a Catholic school education in which service, prayer, and giving of time and talent to others was constantly ingrained into my persona. My life resulted in a quest for helping others and service to others which ultimately culminated in acquiring a master’s degree in the field of counseling and guidance. Assisting others to overcome adversity and move on to new futures has been a focus of my work as a counselor at a two-year institution, and through this research I have identified ways to connect with and support this population.

Happenstance

Happenstance, chance, or being in the right place at the right time helps with researching certain topics. The Midwest, in particular Minnesota, is an optimal location for researching Somali women refugee students because Minnesota has experienced a great influx of refugees within its borders. Legislation has guided the behaviors of refugees, encouraging them to seek employment as soon as possible after arrival, and

Minnesota has many educational institutions—in particular two-year institutions—which assist in the education of individuals for employment.

Refugee influx—Minnesota. Minnesota experienced a large influx of refugee arrivals within its borders from 2004-2006—second in the nation next to California (Jefferys, 2007, p. 3). According to the Minnesota Historical Society’s (2012) website, the Somali population in 2010 was estimated to be over 60,000, making Minnesota home to the largest Somali community in the nation.

In a recent research paper, Hammond (2014) also reiterated the fact of significant numbers of Somali refugees relocating to Minnesota, “...as many as 500,000 Somali refugees live in what might be termed the ‘far’ diaspora, with large concentrations in the United States (the largest communities being in Minneapolis MN, Columbus OH, Atlanta GA, and Washington DC)...” (p. 13). Fergusson (2013) also referenced, “Between 75,000 and 100,000 Somalis live in Minneapolis and St. Paul, comfortably the largest concentration in the States” (p. 292).

Refugees and the workforce. In the Office of Refugee Resettlement Report to Congress FY07, the author highlighted that:

Economic self-sufficiency is as important to refugees as adapting to their new homeland’s social rhythms. Towards that end, the Refugee Act of 1980 and the Refugee Assistance Amendments enacted in 1982 and 1986 stress the achievement of employment and economic self-sufficiency by refugees as soon as possible after their arrival in the United States. This involves a balance among three elements: (1) the employment potential of refugees, including their education, skills, English language competence,

and health; (2) their needs for financial resources, food, housing, or childcare; and (3) the economic environment in which they settle, including the availability of jobs, housing, and other local resources.

(USDHHS, 2008, p. 68)

Due to the fact that refugees, their spouses, and children are authorized to work in the U.S. upon securing the proper approval, plus the directives in the Refugee Act of 1980 and subsequent amendments of 1982 and 1986, the need to become self-sufficient is evident (Jeffreys, 2007).

Many refugees enter the U. S. without the skills necessary to enter the workforce. In 2006 the refugee unemployment rate was 8.7% and in 2007 11.2%—an increase in unemployment of 2.5% in just one year (U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2008, p. 74). The overall U. S. unemployment rate for 2007 was 4.6% and for refugees was 11.2%—a disparity of 6.6%.

According to the FY2007 national sample survey of refugees, the *Reason not looking for Work for Refugees for 16 years and over*, the refugees stated “attending school” accounted for the largest portion of responses (39.6%) with a median age of 17 years, “poor health” being the second highest response at 26.2% with a median age of 54, and “childcare/family responsibilities” being the third highest response at 19.7% with a median age of 31 (USDHHS, 2008, p. 77-78). According to the most recent survey of refugees, refugees are stating that they are not in the workforce due to attending school, poor health, or childcare/family responsibilities. If refugees are reporting that they are “attending school” instead of entering the workforce, besides secondary educational

institutions and adult basic education programs, two-year postsecondary institutions are choice options for refugees seeking out education for employment opportunities.

Two-year institutions in Minnesota. Minnesota is also a perfect location—the right place—for studying Somali women refugee students seeking out educational opportunities, as the state is rich with higher education institutions, in particular, two-year institutions which help individuals move down the road to employment in a relatively short period of time. Kim and Diaz (2013) stated that “Community colleges have been the primary resources to respond to diverse needs and create opportunities in communities and regions they serve” (p. 97).

Prior to this study, it was my observation that new immigrant students were seeking out education as a means to enter the workforce. The gateway to enter the workforce has been touted to be through the two-year postsecondary system. Vaughan’s description of community colleges (as cited at the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) website, 2010) indicated that:

Community colleges are centers of educational opportunity. They are an American invention that put publicly funded higher education at close-to-home facilities... they have been inclusive institutions that welcome all who desire to learn, regardless of wealth, heritage, or previous academic experience. (American Association of Community Colleges, 2010, ¶ 1)

Students attend community colleges for a variety of reasons. In 2006, the top reasons cited for attending community colleges were: 1) Community colleges provided a quality education at a lower cost, 2) Students could easily transfer to a four-year college or university, 3) Intensive English programs allowed flexible or no Test Of English as a

Foreign Language (TOEFL) requirements for admission, 4) Community colleges provided student support services and a personalized learning environment, 5) Community colleges offered a wide variety of programs, 6) Community colleges offered state-of-the-art technology, and 7) Community colleges provided hands-on access to U.S. culture (American Association of Community Colleges, 2008). As previously stated, I have observed students entering two-year colleges in order to complete workforce-based programs in the shortest period of time. There have been many other reasons cited such as lower cost, ease of transfer, English preparation assistance, state-of-the-art technology, supportive services, and a personalized learning environment as to why students choose community colleges.

Other authors have cited rationale for community colleges being ideal places for immigrant students to attend tying back to the mission of community colleges to serve all who enter (AACC, 2010). Seidman (1995) stated that community colleges are viewed by immigrants as perfect places to obtain training or improve their skill sets for job opportunities, learn English, or prepare for the university setting. Wisell and Champanier (2010) also affirmed that two-year institutions have been helpful in providing economic and educational opportunities for immigrants. Teranishi, Suarez-Orozco, and Suarez-Orozco (2011) stated that, "...community colleges are well suited to meet the educational needs of immigrants who want to obtain an affordable postsecondary education, learn English-language skills, and prepare for the labor force" (p. 153).

Kim and Diaz (2013) call on community colleges to "...understand the crucial role they play in educating the immigrant population" (p. 92). Nora (2008) also

challenges community colleges to not try every new learning or service fad that comes around but:

to assess whether or not what they are trying fulfills the promise made years ago. As the only means of access to higher education for many, community colleges must keep the promise of providing a legitimate entry point for all. Industries have had to reexamine missions to keep more in tune with the needs of their customers. Perhaps now is the time for two-year colleges to ask their consumers once again what vision they hold for community colleges (“A Blueprint for Priorities for Action for Community Colleges,” para. 5).

In Minnesota, two-year public institutions are in abundance to choose from with 25 two-year colleges in 47 communities (Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System, 2010). After completing requirements at a two-year institution, students are able to enter the workforce immediately or transfer to a four-year institution to further their education. Two-year institutions are the vehicles for immigrant students to gain the knowledge and skills to become employed and economically self-sufficient in a relatively short period of time. Students enter two-year institutions for many reasons. Are there common threads in understanding Somali women refugee students’ lives, the reasons they attend college, and what factors influence their program decisions?

Previous Research

During a research project in an advanced qualitative research methods course, it became apparent to me that there was a population of students who had not been studied. The research I conducted under a pilot project titled, *Perceptions of “At-Risk” Students at*

a Two-Year Institution initially began with targeting and interviewing “at-risk” students at a two-year institution in the Midwest. After interviewing the first participant, a male immigrant student who was originally from Africa, I was surprised by the story of his journey to the United States and his quest for education. Within the large group of “at-risk” students, a subgroup of male immigrant students who were originally from Africa was identified to interview, maintaining a homogenous sample within the larger pool of possible participants.

The main themes that emerged from the interviews which explored “at-risk” participant perceptions were: supportive assistance, financial difficulties, college as a positive experience, strong family ties, and cultural differences. Besides the themes that emerged, I determined that more research would be beneficial to learn more about immigrant student populations, in particular, to conduct research on the immigrant student population at two-year institutions not focusing solely on the “at risk” student population within the group; to conduct research with the immigrant student population at two-year institutions and compare experiences of immigrant students who attend rural institutions to experiences of those who attend urban institutions; and to utilize the information gleaned from the research to assist immigrant students in the navigation through the education system and provide supportive assistance while enrolled.

Even though the main focus of the research was to identify perceptions of the participants who were enrolled at the selected site, I found the participants’ stories of their journeys to the United States and the adversity that they had overcome to be extraordinary. The life stories were rich with hope and vibrancy—full of life and future-

oriented—not dwelling on the time they spent in their war-torn home countries. Would I find similar themes regarding life experiences with the new population of study?

Conceptual Framework

In studying Somali women refugee students' lives and program decisions, an explanation of what prompted me to pursue this study, which included professional, personal, chance opportunities, and previous research experiences was outlined in the previous section. In order to frame this research, certain theories were identified to provide a foundation for this study, specifically the work of Parsons, Maslow, and Blustein.

Career, Motivation, and Work Theory—Parsons, Maslow, and Blustein

In examining what factors influenced program or career decisions of women immigrants, identifying and incorporating career development, motivation, and work literature was helpful in framing the research to understanding the lives of the women refugee students and how work or career decisions were made. In identifying a career development theory to use as a conceptual framework with immigrant students, it was best to begin with the work of Frank Parsons who was credited as being the founder of career counseling or vocational psychology (Pope & Sveinsdottir, 2005).

Parsons. Parsons (1909) outlined the factors involved in the wise choice of a vocation for men and women, those factors outlined were:

- 1) a clear understanding of yourself, your aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambitions, resources, limitations, and their causes; 2) a knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages,

compensation, opportunities, and prospects in different lines of work;

3) true reasoning on the relations of these two groups of facts. (p. 5)

Parsons (1909) continued to impress in his writing that young people needed counsel from a vocational counselor to carefully and systematically make the, "...greatest decision of his [or her] life" (p. 5). Parsons also outlined the "Method of the Vocational Counselor" which was the tool to be used by the vocational professional assisting the client. The vocational tool included the following headings: I) Personal Data, II) Self-Analysis, III) The Person's own Choice and Decision, IV) Counselor's Analysis, V) Outlook on the Vocational Field, VI) Induction and Advice, and VII) General Helpfulness in Fitting into the Chosen Work (p. 45-46). Parsons believed in simple truths when choosing vocations. These truths were:

1. It is better to choose a vocation than merely to "hunt for a job."
2. No one should choose a vocation without careful self-analysis, thorough, honest, and under guidance.
3. The youth should have a large survey of the field of vocations, and not simply drop into the convenient or accidental position.
4. Expert advice, or the advice of men who have made a careful study of men and of vocations and of the conditions of success, must be better and safer for a young man than the absence of it.
5. *Putting it down* on paper seems to be a simple matter, but it is one of supreme importance in this study. (p. vi-vii)

Hartung and Blustein (2002) explained Parsons' (1909) three-part model in basic terms as, "...know thyself, know the world-of-work, and rationally connect these two groups of

knowledge” (p. 42). Parsons’ (1909) model of career decision-making was viewed as simplistic but also as one that revealed great wisdom (Hartung & Blustein, 2002).

Reviewing Parsons’ (1909) model is important to this research with immigrant students, as his model was used according to Zytowski (2001) and Hartung and Blustein (2002) to assist foreign immigrants and other marginalized populations to meet the needs of industry and to meet the needs of those who struggle the most with career development. Hartung and Blustein (2002) highlighted how:

One of the critical lessons of Parsons’s work is that the needs of the poor and recent immigrants are central in attaining a more just society. In returning to the past, we argue that counselors can once again be inspired to give back to their communities by helping all citizens find satisfaction in their lives. (p. 45)

Bikos, Dykhouse, Boutin, Gowen, and Rodney (2013) stated in a recent summary of career development and workplace experiences of immigrants that “...Stebleton and Eggerth charged counseling professionals to continue to practice within the principles of social justice and multiculturalism that Parsons established in the 1900s” (p. 298).

In the construction of the semi-structured questions for the interviews with the Somali women refugee student participants, questions were included with Parsons’s (1909) model in mind in order to get a sense of knowledge of self, knowledge of the world-of-work, and the relationship between the two.

Maslow. Maslow (1943) introduced his theory of motivation, which outlined human needs in a hierarchical manner—physiological needs, safety needs, love needs, esteem needs, and the need for self-actualization. Maslow (1943, 1954) theorized that

human needs were arranged in an ascending hierarchy, meaning that the basic physiological or survival needs had to be met before safety needs, safety needs had to be met before love needs, and so on. The needs at the previous level on the hierarchy were explained as needing to be met before movement to the next level was possible, but Maslow (1943) outlined some exceptions in the hierarchy. Some of the exceptions Maslow (1943) identified were:

There are some people in whom, for instance, self-esteem seems to be more important than love... There are other, apparently innately creative people in whom the drive to creativeness seems to be more important than any other counter-determinant... In certain people the level of aspiration may be permanently deadened or lowered... The so-called 'psychopathic personality' is another example of permanent loss of the love needs.

(p. 386)

Maslow's theory of motivation (1943, 1954, 1969) was identified as a frame for understanding the lives and choices of Somali women refugee students. I anticipated that the contextual factors in the students' lives would impact the decisions that they made and would be driven by the hierarchy that Maslow established through his work.

Blustein. Stebleton (2007) and other researchers highlighted in their work that viewing *career* or *work* from a more holistic perspective including frameworks that emphasize context can heighten awareness of African immigrants and their lives (Blustein, 2006; Bujold, 2004; Diemer & Blustein, 2006; Richardson, 1993). Blustein, Kenna, Gill, and DeVoy (2008) emphasized how "Work is a central part of real life, a primary factor in the overall well-being of individuals, and a key to understanding human

behavior,” and how career counselors need to understand the work experience of all individuals, “...not simply those who have choice and volition in their selection of jobs and career paths” (p. 295).

Blustein (2006) introduced the Psychology of Working framework and described the three sets of human needs that could be fulfilled by working: *working as a means for survival and power*, *working as a means of social connection*, and *working as a means for self-determination*. The three central functions were explained as key in grasping the complexity of how working operates in the human experience (Blustein, 2006).

Working as a means for survival and power was described as how working served the purpose of providing for basic human needs such as food, shelter, and safety similar to Maslow’s (1968) theory of human motivation and in turn providing access to material and social resources that increased power (Blustein, 2006). Blustein also theorized that the need for acquiring power (i.e., social, economical, and psychological power) was closely coupled to survival needs.

Blustein, Kenna, Gill, and DeVoy (2008) stated that, “...work provides a venue for connecting to others in one’s social and cultural environment,” which was one of the three sets of human needs initially identified by Blustein (p. 298). Similar to this concept was Maslow’s (1969) self-transcendence level in his hierarchy of needs, which he added as a level above self-actualization. Maslow (1969) described self-transcendence as the level in which a person furthers a cause beyond the self and experiences the union beyond self through a peak experience which could involve service to others, support for a cause such as social justice or an ideal such as truth, or a yearning to be one with

something transcendent or divine. The social connection or service to others ideas are what tie the two concepts together, recognizing needs beyond self as human needs.

Blustein (2006) outlined the third component of his work perspective—*work as a means of self-determination*—in which workers discover ways to maintain energy and motivation when faced with occupations that may be viewed as mundane, upsetting, or even humiliating. Many marginalized groups do not have the choice or privilege to select careers that are linked to their interests or as expressions of self (Peterson & Gonzales, 2005). Blustein, Kenna, Gill, and DeVoy (2008) presented the “...psychology-of-working perspective as an alternative to traditional career development theories, which have primarily explored the lives of those with choice and volition in their working lives” (p. 294). Blustein’s (2006) Psychology of Working perspective has been identified as a method of working with marginalized groups, such as immigrants and women.

I chose Blustein’s Psychology of Working theoretical framework as the lens to view my research as it was seen as the alternative career or work theory to utilize when working with marginalized populations, which is counter to the large array of career development theories that have been developed for those who have choice in their working lives. In my research with Somali women refugee students, I believed that I would find themes that would align with the tenets of Blustein’s Psychology of Working framework.

Definitions

I used the following definitions, as identified by the Department of Homeland Security (2009), to identify key groups of individuals who were potential participants in

this research, those being: refugees, asylees, temporary protected status individuals, and permanent residents.

Refugee: Any person who is outside his or her country of nationality who is unable or unwilling to return to that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution. Persecution or the fear thereof must be based on the alien's race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. (DHS, 2009, ¶ 1)

Asylee: An alien in the United States or at a port of entry who is found to be unable or unwilling to return to his or her country of nationality, or to seek the protection of that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution. Persecution or the fear thereof must be based on the alien's race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. (DHS, 2009, ¶ 8)

Temporary protected status (TPS): Under a provision of the Immigration Act of 1990, the Attorney General may designate nationals of a foreign state to be eligible for TPS with a finding that conditions in that country pose a danger to personal safety due to ongoing armed conflict or an environmental disaster. (DHS, 2009, ¶ 1)

Permanent resident: An alien admitted to the United States as a lawful permanent resident. Permanent residents are also commonly referred to as immigrants; however, the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) broadly defines an immigrant as any alien in the United States, except one legally admitted under specific nonimmigrant categories (INA section 101(a)(15)). (DHS, 2009, ¶ 10)

For this research, I also used operational definitions that were developed or used from previous researchers to identify the participant pool and concepts being explored. In order to address the issue of obtaining a representative sample of Somali women refugee students, defining the population to be studied is important (Birman, 2006). The following is a list of terms that were used in this research: foreign-born, new immigrant, new immigrant candidate, new immigrant participant, program decision, and work.

Foreign-born: An individual who was born somewhere other than in the U. S. or its territories and is now living in the U.S.

New immigrant: A foreign-born individual who is classified as either a refugee, asylee, temporary protected status individual, or a permanent resident.

New immigrant candidate: An identified woman new immigrant originally from Africa, in particular Somalia, 18 years of age or older, who was enrolled at a two-year public postsecondary institution in Minnesota.

New immigrant participant: A woman new immigrant originally from Africa, in particular *Somalia*, 18 years of age or older, who was *enrolled* at a two-year public postsecondary institution in Minnesota and had completed interviews with the researcher. In this study also referred to as a Somali women refugee student participant.

Program decision: The program choice as identified by the Somali woman refugee student participant. Also referred to and interchanged with career choice or work choice. The rationale for interchanging the terms *career* or *work* choice with program decision is that students may use the terms interchangeably at two-

year colleges, as technical programs may be seen as terminal degrees for direct placement into the workforce.

Work: *Work as* defined in this study follows the definition from Blustein (2006). He proposes a definition that is constructed around three core functions, 1) working as a means for survival and power, 2) working as a means for social connection, and 3) working as a means of self-determination (Blustein, 2006). He also includes, "...the full gamut of working experiences, ranging from people with volition in their lives to those who work in any task simply to survive for another day" (p. 21). *Work* was also determined to be synonymous to *career* or *program choice* in this study.

Limitations

The following limitations were identified in this study:

1. I did not speak the native languages of the participants.
2. I was not able to spend a significant amount of time interacting with the participants prior to the interviews. Warfa et al. (2012) cited the importance of becoming actively engaged in the community of study to minimize suspicion, increase levels of trust, and enrich knowledge capture. Roy and Roxas (2011) also stated in their research that the two years of spending time in the community where they studied helped them develop comfortable relationships, to the extent that they were invited to family and community events. Contradictory to backyard research concerns raised by Glesne (2006) regarding studying groups where you are familiar, it may have been helpful to interact with this participant pool prior to the interviews.

3. The native language of the participants was not English and at times they were hard to understand. Some information may have been misinterpreted.
4. I did not live in the communities of the participants which contributed to the span of time it took to complete the interviews.
5. Similar to Guerrero and Singh (2013), I found that my results might not be transferable, as the group of participants was unique and the context was unique.
6. Similar to Warfa et al. (2012), due to "...the lack of reliable, readily available population registers of Somali refugees, a convenience sample was used" (p. 3).
7. Similar to Connelly and Clandinin (1990), a possible limitation of this study could be that, "...the narrative unduly stresses the individual over the social context" (p. 2).
8. I may have been interviewing participants during their program or career decision-making phase. Their program or career choices may not have been solidified.

Organization of the Study

In the first chapter, I have presented the purpose of the study, an overview of what prompted me to conduct this research, the conceptual framework, definitions, and the limitations. I set the stage for the research that I conducted.

In Chapter II, I describe background information on Africa, Somalia, and Somali refugees, including demographic, historical, and cultural material; and a review of the

literature, including research about refugees/immigrants, immigrant students, and African immigrant students.

In Chapter III, I explain the methodology used in this study. I provide a summary of the pilot study, explain the rationale for narrative inquiry, describe how the research sites were selected, and how participants were recruited and selected, including rationale for selection. I also explain the research approval process, the interview process, data collection, analysis, and theme development, and end with a section that covers validity, researcher subjectivity, ethical concerns, and risks and benefits.

In Chapter IV, I include general background information and summaries of the interview narratives from the eight research participants: Zenab, Shalambood, Sabrina, Sagal, Zaytun, Sabrina II, and Shamqali.

In Chapter V, I describe the theme development process and the narrative themes that emerged from the research. The themes that emerged from the interviews were:

- 1) Family is central and supportive,
- 2) Life was and is difficult,
- 3) Lack of English language skills is a significant barrier,
- 4) Education is essential for improving their lives,
- 5) Helping others is important,
- 6) Educational supportive assistance is helpful, and
- 7) Cultural influences have an impact.

I conclude the chapter with analyses of the themes and a summary.

In Chapter VI, I finish the discussion with recommendations, including recommendations for immigrant student supportive services and recommendations for future study, and end with concluding thoughts.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Besides the professional, personal, chance, and previous research experiences that have driven my interest toward this research topic, there is a need for more refugee or immigrant research, in particular more research regarding African immigrant students (Bennett & Lutz, 2009; Stebleton, 2004, 2007, 2010, 2012; Sutherland, 2011). Along with the identification of the need for research in this particular area, identifying what method of research matches the research problem is important (Creswell, 2012). In order to be more cognizant of life influencers and identify the gaps in literature, an examination of background information of Africa, in particular, Somalia, including cultural influencers, and a review of the literature was completed to help comprehend the lives of Somali women refugee students and their program choices.

Background Information

Providing demographic, historical, and cultural information regarding Africa, Somalia and refugees from Somalia is necessary to set the stage in order to understand the context of the women I interviewed, what kind of experiences they had encountered, and how their experiences have impacted their lives.

Demographic

Somalia is located on the east coast of Africa and as described by Harper (2012), “Its shape resembles the horn of a rhinoceros; it is sharp and aggressive, forming the

outer part of the Horn of Africa” (p. 14). The country has been described as, “...harsh, arid scrubland, dotted with camels and other hardy animals...” with an estimate of 60 to 70 percent of the population being nomads (Harper, 2012, p. 16). The nomads herd camels which are viewed as “the traditional prestige wealth,” and also sheep, goats, and cattle (Lewis, 2008). Most of the other residents farm with a few in the coastal areas who fish or who are manual laborers in construction, gold or silver working, shoemaking, leatherworking, or weaving (Lewis, 2008). Main exports from Somalia were reported as livestock, bananas, hides, and fish (United Nations, 2012).

In a country profile from the United Nations (2012), Somalia’s total population was recorded as 9.8 million people. In the same profile, life expectancy for females was reported as 53.4 years and 50.1 for males, and that 76.8% of the male adult population participated in the workforce whereas only 37.7 % of the adult female population participated in the workforce. These statistics highlighted gender disparities between Somali women and men in life expectancy and participation in the workforce—Somali women were identified as living longer than Somali men and Somali men were identified as participating in the workforce twice as much as Somali women.

DeRusha (2011) stated that “Over the past 25 years, the United States has admitted about 84,000 Somali refugees. Close to 40 percent live in Minnesota” (para. 15). The number of refugees whose home country is Somalia is actually higher but due to secondary or tertiary displacement—Somali refugees being displaced to other countries prior to coming to the U. S.—that displacement has altered the true number. According to Arrive Ministries (2014), “Minnesota has the largest number of Somalis in the U.S.—

estimated to be around 77,000.” Minnesota has been able to provide a refuge for those who are seeking a life free from fear of death, destruction, and persecution.

Somali refugees who have relocated to Minnesota have experienced both benefits and challenges. DeRusha (2011) indicated that Minnesota has had very active agencies such as World Relief Minnesota, Lutheran Social Services, and Catholic Charities who agreed to help settle refugees, providing services such as securing housing and health care, and locating services that assist with learning the English language. Besides a good economy, low unemployment, and reuniting with family members, Somalis have navigated toward Minnesota due to the recognized community of Somali restaurants, businesses, and shops (Arrive Ministries, 2014). Transition to life in the United States has also posed some challenges for Somali refugees. Even though many Somali refugees reported traumatic life events that involved escaping their war-torn country with no food, clothes, or money, helplessly standing by as family members were killed in front of them, and watching the elderly and children die on the path to refugee camps, they did not expect to experience major challenges in the United States (UNHCR, 2002).

Somali refugees in Minnesota have reported challenges such as: separation from family and friends, English language competence, acclimating to the weather, and harassment or racism. In a study conducted on immigrants in Minnesota, Mattessich (2000) reported that Somali refugees indicated the most stress associated with being separated from family and friends and English language competence. Somali immigrants were also the least likely immigrant group, “...to share an affection for winter (Mattessich, 2000, p. 4). Espinoza (2010) reported that Somali refugees have struggled in communities where they have faced harassment and racism. She stated that some

refugees endured disparaging comments regarding their dress, speech, and smell from members in the community. She further reported what a Somali refugee disclosed to her, “They always make fun of us and they say, 'Go back to your countries,' and, 'You guys stink,' and, 'This is our country, and we don't need black people,' so it's every single day,"... "It's not several times, it's all the time" (para. 9). Even though Somali refugees have experienced benefits in transitioning to Minnesota, many Somali refugees have experienced and reported challenges as well.

Historical

Hammond (2014) outlined the history, trends, and issues of Somali in her paper prepared for the High Level Panel on Somali Refugees. She pointed out how Somalia was seen as a country that had experienced continual violence and displacement of residents since the state collapsed in 1991 when President Siad Barre’s regime ended (Hammond, 2014). She further stated that Somalis were displaced and fled to countries inside Africa such as Kenya, Ethiopia, Yemen, Djibouti, Uganda, and outside Africa to the United States, Canada, and Europe. In the United States the largest concentration of Somali refugees were living in Minneapolis, Minnesota; Columbus, Ohio; Atlanta, Georgia; and Washington D.C. (Hammond, 2014). Warfa, et al. (2012) stated that:

Somalis are amongst the largest groups of refugees who have come to live in Europe and North America since the start of the Somali civil war. The Somali nation officially became a nation without a government in 1991, a stateless nation in which mass violence, bloodshed, and human rights abuses were occurring on a daily basis. (p.2)

Nilsson, Barazanji, Heintzelman, Siddiqi, and Shilla (2012) stated that Somalia has not had a central government and has experienced civil war since the 1980s. They also stated that due to the conflict and oppression, approximately 42 million people were displaced worldwide. Further, they stated that thousands of Somalis fled to overcrowded refugee camps in 2011 due to the worst drought in 60 years in the Greater Horn of Africa, which made Somali refugees the third largest group under the responsibility of the United Nations. Of that group of Somalis, approximately 70,000 reside in the United States (United Nations High Commission for Refugees, 2009). Information reported in a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Somalia Briefing Sheet (2010) detailed that Somalia ranked third highest in the number of refugees in the world with 600,484 refugees.

Cultural

Besides identifying the demographic and historical information regarding Somalia, understanding the culture is also critical in studying women Somali students. Researching Somali people and their traditions may provide a window into Somali women's lives and experiences. A number of important aspects of African culture are highlighted.

Kinship. Young (2003) described how family and the collective whole is a strong link through what is termed *kinship* in African society. *Kinship* refers to a traditional value in which communal interests, mutual aid, and care giving are essential. Young (2003) further explained that in the *kinship* lineage, it extends laterally and vertically from the dead to the unborn. *Kinship* and other values that have defined the identity of Somali immigrants may not be supported in U. S. culture, and the immigrants may find

themselves confronted with making choices that are counter to their cultural norms (Young, 2003). Stebleton (2007) also reinforced the importance of family in African culture. He stated that:

Many African immigrant students will experience conflicting messages from their African culture and the newly encountered Western, Eurocentric culture. There is a profound difference between the two worldviews in the emphasis and value placed on the collective good versus that of the individual. The meaning of personhood in African societies is centered within the family and community—not in the individual, as is true in most Western cultures. Therefore, in African societies, the concept of a career is relational and socially embedded with the focus on the other. In most African societies, it is the community that helps shape and define the person. (Stebleton, 2007, p. 295)

Along with family in African culture there are certain traditions regarding marriage that are noted in Somali culture.

Marriage. Lewis (2008) stated, “The Somalis are traditionally polygynous, marrying, according to the Islamic code, a maximum of four wives at any one time” (p. 11). Lewis (2008) also stated that, “...although Islam enjoins them to treat their wives equally, men tend to favour the youngest and most physically attractive marriage partner, there is much jealousy and friction among co-wives and their children” (p. 12). Marriages were typically arranged and exchange of payments from the groom’s family, which included livestock, or other items such as horses, guns and money and then a return gift or gifts from the wife’s family were given. Another Islamic element in marriage is the

witnessed contract, which the husband, "...undertakes to pay his wife jewellery of an agreed value in cash or kind. Despite its religious significance, this is often only actually paid on divorce, and so acts as a divorce surety for the wife—although its material value may be slight" (Lewis, 2008, p. 14).

Being Muslim. Besides marriage traditions, due to Arabian trading connections, "...Somalis were converted to Islam at an early date and remain staunch Muslims" (Lewis, 2008, p. 2-3). In contrast, McGown (2003) stated that even though Somalis are Muslim, "...they had a reputation as lackadaisical practitioners, they are proud of their heritage and their connection, in folklore, to Arabs, and to the prophet Mohammed himself" (p. 13). Somalis who were faced with living in the West as Muslims redefined their practice of Islam. McGown (2003) stated that the Somali women began reading the Qur'an and gathered to discuss how they could apply the teachings in their lives without blindly following Islamic leaders.

Female circumcision. A physical marker of African tradition that has gained quite a bit of attention and outrage among many circles is female circumcision also known as female genital mutilation (FGM) or infibulation (Johnsdotter, 2012; Korn, 2004; Lunde, & Sagbakken, 2014; Magied, 2013; Mulongo, McAndrew, & Hollins, 2014; Reig Alcaraz, Siles González, & Solano Ruiz, 2014). Being circumcised "...within the Somali social context, it was the very definition of both a good Muslim and a woman" (McGown, 2003, p. 14). McGown (2003) further stated that after many Somali women began reading the Qu'ran and found that Islam did not mandate circumcision, they began to discontinue the practice. McGown (2003) reported on the extraordinary strength of Somali women in spite of the turmoil of civil war. She began with a summary

of how the violence in Somalia had touched everyone and how Somalis were "...forced to build new lives in new countries, absorb new cultures and learn new languages while trying not to lose what was important to them in the process...their own and their children's sense of identity and of self" (McGown, 2003, p. 13). McGown (2003) also explained how the Somali women found that they now had to now be responsible for "...putting bread on the table and trying to keep the family conscious of being both Somali and Muslim" (McGown, 2003, p. 13) which was a redefinition of social roles.

Hijab. Another physical marker of being a Muslim woman is wearing the *hijab*. The *hijab*, also known as a veil or headscarf, covers most of the woman's upper body including the chest, neck, ears and head (Droogsma, 2007). Besides being a religious affiliation marker, Droogsma (2007) found that the hijab served several functions for American Muslim women, those being, "...defining Muslim identity, acting as a behavior check, resisting sexual exploitation/objectification, preserving intimate relationships, and providing a source of freedom" (p. 311). Even though the traditions of African culture toward women are viewed as oppressive by Western society (Cloud, 2004), Droogsma (2007) found that the women she studied felt the tradition of wearing the *hijab* served multiple and empowering functions in their lives. McGown (2003) also noted that Somali women in the West began wearing the *hijab*, some for the first time, "...for religious purposes rather than for beauty or custom" (p. 14).

African traditions are perceived differently depending on the audience and in some cases dependent on the setting or perceived benefit. For example, when negative discourse in the U. S. revolves around the oppression of women in other countries:

The rhetoric disregards women's oppression in the United States, however, which takes the form of ideological constructions of a domesticated womanhood and economic disparity between men and women. The condemnation on the part of U.S. leaders of women's oppression only in those countries that are the targets of nation building is thus somewhat hypocritical. In a visual rhetoric of abjection, only another society's women are visible as the oppressed. (Cloud, 2004, p. 289)

As described in the quote above, it was important that I recognized cultural differences as differences and not attach judgment to the differences in this research. Identifying African, or in particular, Somali demographics, history, and traditions assisted me in understanding the background of the audience studied.

Review of the Literature

According to Fouad (2001), Halibi (2005), Kamya (1997), Kim and Diaz (2013), Kreitzer (2002), Nilsson, Barazanji, Heintzelman, Siddiqi, and Shilla (2012), Pavlish (2007), Stebleton (2004, 2007, 2010, 2012), Sutherland (2011), and Teranishi, Suarez-Orozco, and Suarez-Orozco (2011) research with refugee or immigrant populations is limited. Kim and Diaz (2013) stated that, "Immigrant-origin students are the fastest-growing segment of the U. S. population and will transform the educational and labor landscapes in the coming decades" (p. 45). It is important to understand issues related to immigrant students, as it is not only vitally important to understand and meet the needs of the students, but it is also vitally important to the future of the country. Nguyen (2008) stated that:

U.S. corporations are facing dual crises with an aging workforce and a shrinking pool of younger talent. The current workforce consists primarily of baby boomers who are beginning to reach retirement age, and prospects for replacing the exiting workers do not look promising. Some corporations are turning to immigrants to alleviate these problems. While there are benefits of having immigrants in the workforce, issues related cultural and value differences also exist. Therefore, corporations must develop strategies to effectively utilize and retain immigrants in order to remain competitive. (p. 175)

Identifying the needs of immigrant workers will not only assist corporations who demand qualified workers but educational institutions who need to prepare the workforce.

According to Gray and Vernez (1996) immigrants have been accessing postsecondary education, but support for them has not been recognized as a necessity or often has been unplanned. Other researchers have studied immigrant populations as it pertains to postsecondary education and the influencers on career aspirations and career development such as parental pressure, racial prejudice, and cultural values (Lee, 1994; Leong & Gim-Chung, 1995; Sodowsky, 1991; Sodowsky, Kwan, & Pannu, 1995). More recently researchers explored immigrant inquiries as it pertained to postsecondary education, especially as it related to career aspirations (Corey, 2000; Kanya, 1997; Louie, 2001; Roysircar, Carey, & Koroma, 2010; Stebleton, 2010). Research specifically connected to identifying what factors influence African new immigrant postsecondary students' lives and career aspirations is sparse (Kim & Diaz, 2013; Stebleton, 2004, 2007, 2010, 2012).

Kim and Diaz (2013) stated that, "...only limited knowledge is available about the success of immigrant students in community colleges because of a lack of available institutional, state, and national data on these students' educational experiences and outcomes" (p. 97). They further stated that "Overall, literature points to generational status, environmental factors, perceived prejudice, acculturation, and parental influence as being associated with students' career choices and aspirations," (p. 72) and that more research is needed to investigate other factors impacting immigrant student college persistence across varied immigrant subgroups and different college settings. Stebleton (2007) also asserted the need for more immigrant student research, "...further research using discovery-based career development approaches should be conducted with immigrant groups to learn more about their experiences related to work-life roles and decision making" (p. 307).

Even though the literature is limited (Fouad, 2001; Halibi, 2005; Kanya, 1997; Kim & Diaz, 2013; Kreitzer, 2002; Nilsson, Barazanji, Heintzelman, Siddiqi, & Shilla, 2012; Pavlish, 2007; Stebleton, 2004, 2007, 2010, 2012; Sutherland, 2011), it was important to identify the gaps in the literature to research a topic where research is warranted. The research conducted as identified in this section points to certain factors that impact immigrants, including factors that influence career choice and aspiration. Interviewing Somali women refugee students about their lives and program decisions is an area of study that has not been heavily researched.

Research About Refugees/Immigrants

In a recent study Nilsson, Barazanji, Heintzelman, Siddiqi, and Shilla (2012) shared stories and uncovered five themes with Somali women refugees regarding their

children's adjustment. The stories with the women revealed themes of *cultural comparisons*, *concerns about children*, *parent's loss of disciplinary authority*, *available support*, and *the future*.

Cultural comparisons "...was defined as participants' reflections of differences between Somali and U. S. culture" (p. 244). The women spoke about how different the food, climate, children's activities, and gender roles were, with one participant recalling how she did not have to worry about her children when they played outside in Somalia but now have to watch them closely in the U. S. The *concerns about children* theme was further divided into two subcategories: *premigration trauma* and *loss of respect*. *Premigration trauma* was defined as the concerns that participants' vocalized regarding the dead people and other traumatic sights the children experienced as they left their country. *Loss of respect* was described as the lack of respect that their children displayed toward their immediate family, elders, and teachers.

The *parents' loss of disciplinary authority* theme was described as the loss that parents felt due to the traditional disciplinary methods practiced in Somalia were not acceptable in the U. S. Participants expressed fear of losing their children through the use of the customary approaches to discipline. The *available support* theme was a reflection of the participants' feelings that they did not receive support from resources and services within the U. S. but received support within their Somali community. *The future* theme was defined as the hopes and fears that the participants relayed during their interviews regarding their children's futures. The participants primarily articulated great hope for the future through education.

The results provided a format to identify challenges and stressors in the lives of Somali refugees in order to provide insight for those who assist the population in a culturally sensitive manner. *The future* theme was described as how important education was in their children's futures and also an expressed interest in having their children go back to Somalia educated when it's safe to return. This theme was similar to the stories of the male immigrants in my previous research described in Chapter I in that their stories were future-oriented and positive.

The stories that the immigrant participants shared in my previous study were dissimilar to the stories that Pavlish (2007) uncovered through research with refugees from Africa. He found prevalent themes in refugee's lives: leaving the good life behind (home country), worrying about their daughters, feeling ambivalent about marriage, lack of hope, having no peace in the heart, and fearing the future. Women shared stories that they were fearful of not being able to provide food for their children, worried for their daughters who were pressured for sex and exploited by older men, and the lack of hope from losing children, husbands or family members in the war (Pavlish, 2007).

Pavlish's themes within his research were different than the hopeful and positive tenor of the results found in my previous study with immigrant students. My research was narrowed to male immigrant participants who had transitioned into communities in the United States, in particular the Midwest, and were enrolled in an educational setting, while Pavlish's participants were women situated in African refugee camps. Were there differences based on the setting of where the participants were living and the gender of the participants?

Other research found highlighted aspects of African immigrants' lives. Kusow (2006) discovered through his research with Somali immigrants, "...that black immigrants tend to identify more by culture and/or nationality than of skin colour" (p. 546), which supported previous research conducted with black immigrants (Landale & Oropesa 2002; Waters 1999). Kusow (2006) also found that for Somali immigrants, "... blackness does not provide a meaningful category for social understanding" (p. 548) and that future comparative research was needed between first- and second-generation immigrants to see if experiences changed. This was one study in which the researchers peered into the lives of Somali immigrants.

Literature About Immigrant Students

Teranishi, Suarez-Orozco, and Suarez-Orozco (2011) found that immigrant students attend community colleges more frequently than other postsecondary institutions and have certain needs that must be addressed for success: immigrant students are not academically prepared and need remedial coursework; immigrant students have language-related barriers and need additional English language instruction; immigrant students have great financial need but lack the knowledge of how to apply for financial aid or do not know that they are eligible to apply due to immigrant status; immigrant students need access to high-wage, high-demand programs to break the cycle of low wage employment and need guidance in selection of programs; and immigrant students need to access programs that help them explore and identify programs of study that meet their objectives. Teranishi, Suarez-Orozco, and Suarez-Orozco (2011) summarized the needs of immigrant students that reinforce the challenges that higher education

institutions, in particular community colleges, must address to provide equitable access and success opportunities.

Through a much narrower review of the literature focusing on research pertaining to African immigrant students' lives and program decisions, what was found was even more limited. Kim and Diaz (2013) reviewed the literature concerning the collegiate experience of immigrant students and found that "... research literature on immigrant students' career aspirations and development has been scant—the majority of past studies have focused on adolescents, adult immigrants, or Asian ethnic groups" (p. 73).

Literature about adolescent immigrants. The literature about adolescent immigrants found provided a foundation for insight into immigrant lives and identities, performance practices, and recommendations for culturally responsive teaching and counseling (Bal & Perzigian, 2013; Bang, 2011a, 2011b; Bitew & Ferguson, 2010; Exposito & Favela, 2003; Forman, 2001; Lam, 2013; McBrien, 2003; Nieto, 1994; Oikonomidou, 2010; Stewart, 2013a; Stratton et al., 2009; Szu-Yin, 2009; Tatar, 2012; Turney & Kao, 2009; Villegas & Lucas, 2007).

Stewart (2013a) studied four adolescent immigrant students to identify the forms and purposes of out-of-school literacies, and to determine if the practices demonstrate the cultural, social, and linguistic resources. First, she found that the students used Facebook 1) as a vehicle of communication with family back home, 2) to express their cultural identities, and 3) to brush up on the English language. Second, she discovered that students worked jobs up to 40 hours per week which provided an income and the opportunity to practice their English speaking skills. Third, she observed that each student remained connected to some form of Spanish media. Stewart (2013a)

recommended that schools not impose a monomodel view of immigrant student education. She recommended that teachers embrace social media sites to enhance engagement and pair English-speaking students with English learners to encourage language across the classroom.

Oikonomidou (2010) studied seven high school students from Somalia to identify students' experiences with the curriculum and the teachers. She found through in-vivo coding three main categories: the students' relationship to instructional material, their views of favorite teacher characteristics, and imaginary projections if they were the teacher. Specifically, she uncovered that the students believed in their host country's schooling process, they offered awareness into what school would look like with better connections with teachers and the curriculum, and envisioned what spaces for imaginary discussion would be created for students who needed more attention and be offered those services in an engaging environment.

Lam (2013) surveyed 262 immigrant adolescent students and interviewed 36 students to identify how they use digital media to foster diverse groups of social language and informational resources. She found:

...they used multiple languages in their online activities as they accessed information and managed diverse sets of interpersonal relationships across geographic boundaries...that most students obtained news from both U. S. web sites and web sites based in their native countries or other parts of the world...[and] learned how the youth cultivate and leverage their online networks for learning. (p. 63)

Many of the lessons learned or recommendations for practice could easily be transferred, modified, or applied to a postsecondary immigrant student population.

Research about adult immigrants. The adult immigrant research that had been conducted focused on the following areas: motivation to succeed (Bennett & Lutz, 2009; Kao, 2004, Gibson & Ogbu, 1991); socioeconomic status (Baum & Flores, 2011; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2009; Lew, 2006; Louie, 2004); limited English language proficiency (Callahan, 2005; Nunez & Sparks, 2012; Terrazas, 2009; Waldorf, Beckhusen, Florax, & deGraaff, 2010); parental expectations and involvement (Auerbach, (2006); Fuligni & Witkow, 2004; Louie, 2001, 2004); and financial aid (McDonough & Calderone, 2006; Ranallo, 2013; Vargjkas, 2004; Venegas, 2006; Zarate & Pachon, 2006).

Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2009) discussed in their article how the Obama administration was to address the challenge of meeting the educational needs of immigrant families in the United States. They provided an overview of the previous agendas and policies in which the economic and educational needs of immigrant families were unmet and provided three principles help guide effective and humane policy recommendations for immigrant families. The three guiding principles they identified were:

- 1) Innovation and Creativity Are the Keys to Economic Growth and Prosperity
- 2) Diversity Is an Asset in the Era of Global Interdependence
- 3) The Twenty-First Century Will Require More Education Than Ever Before

Along with the guiding principles, they offered bold recommendations for the Obama administration to employ:

...orchestrate a national conversation to both normalize the overheated immigration debate and build the consensus required to align our immigration objectives...work with Congress to pass federal legislation making higher education more accessible for more than 360,000 undocumented students who have recently graduated from U. S. high schools...work to make preschool academic enrichment programs financially accessible to all immigrant families...invest in a twenty-first-century school infrastructure...prod schools of education and school districts to develop high-quality, research-based training programs in immigration and education, second-language acquisition, classroom and homework modifications for immigrant students, and cultural training...support the development of community-based, youth-focused organizations specially designed to serve the academic and social needs of immigrant-origin students. (p. 333-337)

The authors place a high stakes challenge to the leaders of the nation to handle immigrant issues seriously and expeditiously.

Auerbach (2006) explored through ethnography, the constraints and possibilities of the support role of immigrant parents. She found that parents provided moral support in the form of encouragement, verbal appeal, cultural narrative advice and teaching, and small actions behind-the-scenes. Due to the parent's lack of social capital, the researcher witnessed immigrant parents drawing upon moral capital to give to their college-going

student. Moral capital was seen as the greatest contribution given to their child and was closely tied to parenting. Auerbach (2006) recommended that educators should recognize and honor the ways the immigrant parents are involved in educating their children and engage them in the college planning process.

The articles referenced in this section provide guides that include positive actionable approaches in supporting adult immigrants.

Research about Asian ethnic groups. The Asian ethnic group research that I discovered through this inquiry provided information on parental influence and the effect on students' program decisions and ambitions (Corey, 2000; Louie, 2001; Roysircar, Carey, & Koroma, 2010). Louie (2001) interviewed 68 Asian immigrant undergraduate students to examine "...how social class influenced Chinese immigrant parents' expectations, strategies, and investment in their children's education" (p. 438). She found that Chinese parents expected both sons and daughters to go to college and encouraged their children to study harder than parents from other racial/ethnic groups. For middle-class immigrant parents, the choice of school was the most important option and they often sent their children to private or well-funded public schools. The middle-class immigrant parents also adopted the behaviors of monitoring their child's free time, assigned supplementary homework, and tutored in math and science. Urban Chinese parents drew upon their ethnic networks to compensate for any disadvantages but limited their involvement in their child's education. The researcher recommended future research with a greater number of parental interviews.

Roysircar, Carey, and Koroma (2010) examined Asian Indian student college major preferences. They found that both early first-generation and late first-generation

students were similar in that they had significantly greater preferences for science and math majors when compared to second-generation students. The researchers noted that parents who were not in science occupations strongly encouraged science majors for their children. Roysircar, Carey, and Koroma (2010) “confirmed that Asian Indian immigrants’ contextual factors are related to their preference for college majors, specifically their generation status, acculturation, perception of prejudice, and parental influence” (p. 338). The researchers stated “The overall findings were that the average Asian Indian college student and parents prefer science and math fields, with the second-generation preferring nonscience options but being influenced by their parents toward science and math” (Roysircar, Carey, & Koroma, 2010). Are family members or parents powerful influencers in the lives of African immigrant students’ program choices?

Inman, Howard, and Beaumont (2007) interviewed 16 immigrant Asian Indian mothers and fathers regarding the influence of immigration on retention of ethnic identity. They found that ethnic identity retention was influenced by cultural celebration and activity engagement. The challenges that the researchers identified in the retention of ethnic identity were the barriers or environmental obstacles in American society that prevented the support of traditional Indian practices. Would the findings be similar with an African or Somali immigrant population?

This section was a brief glimpse into research about Asian ethnic groups, in particular parental influence and the effect on students’ program decisions and ambitions, and influencers of ethnic identity. Kim and Diaz (2013) stated that the results of the Asian ethnic research confirmed the results of other research that has been conducted that propose “parents and family are one of the most powerful influences on vocational

behavior and career development” (Brown, 2004; Inman, Howard, Beaumant, & Walker, 2007; Sodowsky, 1991; Whiston & Keller, 2004).

Literature About African Immigrant Students

When compared to the already limited research on immigrants, the literature regarding African immigrant students is extremely scarce. A few researchers have taken on this area to study (Bennett & Lutz, 2009; Stebleton, 2004, 2007, 2010, 2012; Sutherland, 2011) and their findings are insightful when looking into this narrow field. Some authors have touched on unique influencers of African immigrant students.

African immigrant college attendance was a topic of research studied by Bennett and Lutz (2009). Bennett and Lutz (2009) explored data from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) to determine if there were differences in college attendance among immigrant Blacks, native Blacks, and Whites. They found that:

Overall and within levels of all predictor variables, the college enrollment rates of immigrant blacks are higher than those for native blacks and sometimes higher than those for whites. Immigrant black women, for example, have the highest enrollment rates of any race-gender group, and immigrant black men have higher rates of entry than native black men.

Private schooling yields large dividends in terms of college enrollment rates for all groups, particularly for immigrant and native blacks. (Bennett & Lutz, 2009, p. 77)

They also found that both immigrant Blacks and native Blacks attended two-year colleges at a higher rate than whites (Bennett & Lutz, 2009). These findings provided insight into the college attendance patterns of Somali women refugee students.

Stebleton (2007) has written about and identified unique needs and issues of African immigrant students as compared to other immigrant students. The influencers and issues he referenced were:

a) the impact of colonialism, slavery, and identity, including racism and discrimination; b) the influence of contextual factors that promote an ongoing state of living in uncertainty; and c) the experience of negotiating the conflicting messages between the African and Eurocentric, Western worldviews. (p. 292)

He stated that many of the stressors that African immigrant college students experience can be managed with assistance from career development professionals (Stebleton, 2007).

Besides Stebleton (2007) discussing the need for incorporating external contextual factors in guidance and decision-making of new immigrant African students, Watson and Stead (2002) also promoted a framework that would include environmental factors because Western career development theories placed significant emphasis on individuals rather than communities ignoring African traditions of community and family. Kanya (1997) also advocated for "...increased understanding of the complexity of the cross-cultural transition and acculturation for African immigrants" (p. 163) by exploring their political, economic, and cultural experiences.

Regarding the experience of negotiating the conflicting messages between the African and Eurocentric, Western worldviews, Stebleton (2007) stated that:

Many African immigrant students will experience conflicting messages from their African culture and the newly encountered Western Eurocentric culture. There is

a profound difference between the two worldviews in the emphasis and value placed on the collective good versus that of the individual. The meaning of personhood in African societies is centered within the family and community—not in the individual, as is true in most Western cultures. Therefore, in African societies, the concept of a career is relational and socially embedded, with the focus on the other. (p. 295)

Young (2003) also expressed how African immigrants may experience tension due to the contradictory worldviews between African values and Western or Eurocentric values.

She stated that:

African values have universality but may appear at cross purposes with contemporary values that focus on individual desires,...little time for considering alternatives or responding to needs of others, pursuit of wealth or tokens of wealth to demonstrate achievement...Marginalized groups and those moving to the US to establish new lives, whose backgrounds offer a different perspective, find themselves confronted with choices that are non-supportive of values that defined their identity. (p. 173-174)

Young (2003) challenged those who were tasked, "...to facilitate processes that help restore equilibrium in the lives of those struggling to adapt to the world as we now know it" (p. 174).

Stebleton (2004, 2010, 2012) interviewed African immigrant adult students who were attending a university in the Midwest. Stebleton's (2004, 2010, 2012) focus of research was to identify the meaning of work that African immigrant students held. Stebleton (2004, 2010, 2012) found three main themes that emerged from his data

analysis of the interviews with the African immigrant students. They were: meaning of work shaped by contextual factors, connecting to family and community, and evolving identities.

The first theme *meaning of work shaped by contextual factors* was divided into two subthemes—*living with civil unrest and uncertainty*, and *being influenced by cultural factors*. The theme and subthemes developed described how the students' meanings of work were shaped by events such as war, poverty, gender barriers, violence, and family and cultural influencers. The second theme *connecting to family and community* consisted of two subthemes—*fulfilling family obligations*, and *working in service to others*. The theme and subthemes developed signified that the subjects assigned a great amount of importance to family and the community in terms of work choices so much so that they would take on the responsibility of financially supporting their family inside the United States and abroad. The participants also spoke about how they were part of an extended community and were inclined to give back to the community through the occupation they chose to pursue. The third theme found, *evolving identities*, was divided into two subthemes—*adopting an emerging student identity*, and *adjusting to new work roles*. The participants expressed how they had become more comfortable adjusting to their new roles as students and workers, but it was very challenging. They also added how difficult it was in juggling multiple responsibilities and how they, "...changed during their experiences as college students; their identities evolved over times in terms of their work roles" (p. 60).

Understanding Somali women refugee students' beliefs and issues may assist those who work with them in a positive and proactive manner. Stebleton (2010) identified

six practical recommendations for career development professionals to employ who work with the student population studied, those being: 1) career counselors need to explore contextual factors with African immigrant students as appropriate; 2) career counselors need to assist African immigrant students in navigating academic and worksite systems; 3) career counselors need to use new assessment tools and approaches with African immigrant students; 4) “Career counselors can help new immigrants learn to recognize chance events and turn them into positive work and educational opportunities” (p. 67); 5) career counselors need to tune into exploring aspects of *work* instead of *career* with African immigrant students as the concept of *career* or occupation is a Western concept which focuses on the individual and not the family or community; and 6) career counselors need to learn more about African culture through professional development opportunities. Stebleton (2010) conducted research to explore the meaning of work with African immigrant students pursuing four-year degrees. In summary, Stebleton (2004) found three main themes and six subthemes emerge from his interviews and six practical applications for career counselors to better assist African immigrant students.

In this study I interviewed eight Somali women refugee students attending two-year institutions in the Midwest. Would the research identified here in this section on African immigrant students provide insight into the lives of the students or factors that impact their program choices? Analyses of the themes that were discovered from this study are found in Chapter V.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Patton (2002) stated that “A well-conceived strategy...provides a framework for decision making and action” (p. 39). In this study I thoughtfully considered my topic of interest, consulted with my committee, received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and followed the path I established when conducting the research.

I have already described in Chapter I the purpose of the study, an overview of what prompted me to conduct this research, the conceptual frameworks that were utilized, the definitions, the limitations, and the organization of the study. In Chapter II I covered background information on Africa and Somalia and I completed a review of the literature.

In this chapter I explain the methods used in this study, including a description of the pilot study, rationale for narrative inquiry, site selection, participant recruitment and selection, the research approval process, the interview process, and data collection, analysis, and theme development. I conclude the chapter with a section on analysis of outcomes—validation and evaluation, including validity, researcher subjectivity, ethical concerns, and risks and benefits. In this study, I interviewed Somali women refugee students in order to understand their lives and identify what factors influenced their program decisions. Through the methods explained in this section, I gathered input from the participants in order to gain insight, understanding, and identify areas for service assistance.

Pilot Study Summary

I conducted a pilot study as part of this research to determine if any alteration in the acquisition of participants or interview process was necessary. Maxwell (2013) recommended to pilot-test to identify if changes were needed to the protocol or questions. After receiving approval to conduct my study, a research protocol was followed to identify a Somali women refugee participant through a gatekeeper and to carry out the interviews. After the three interviews were conducted, the pilot participant explained how she felt about the interview process and was given the opportunity to provide feedback for improvement. After the interviews were completed, the pilot participant was sent the transcripts of the interviews for review and validation – a form of member-checking. The pilot interviews provided me the opportunity of a trial run through the interview process and questions. It also allowed me to ask the pilot participant questions about the process and if any changes were warranted. The participant recommended no changes to the process or questions and appreciated being able to share her story.

One research concern I noted during the pilot interview process was the difficulty in scheduling and completing the interviews. Once the participant was identified and forwarded to me, after she agreed to participate, she ended up leaving the area for the summer, and it was decided that I wait to complete the interviews until she returned, being respectful of her calendar. I made a determination at that point to not seek out another participant and wait until she returned, which ultimately delayed the study. The pilot participant expressed her gratitude in being able to share her story through the interviews and was grateful I waited for her to return to the area. During the interview

process, there were a number of occasions where I had to adjust the interview time or reschedule the interview entirely due to her busy and ever-changing schedule.

Rationale for Narrative Inquiry

The decision to use the narrative approach in this study was guided by research found regarding qualitative approaches employed when interviewing women or other marginalized populations. Narrative research or inquiry is defined as a method of research, "...in which researchers describe the lives of individuals, collect and tell stories about these individuals' lives, and write narratives about their experiences" (Creswell, 2012, p. 22). Exploring life histories or narratives can, "...illustrate the uniqueness, dilemmas, and complexities of a person in such a way that it causes readers to reflect upon themselves and to bring their own situations and questions to the story" (Glesne, 2011, p. 20). Creswell (2007) recommended the narrative approach when one is exploring the life of an individual and is the best approach when individuals are telling stories of their individual experiences.

In considering women in the participant pool, I viewed the narrative approach as an appropriate approach. Reinharz and Chase (2003) remarked how interviewing women could be an extraordinary experience as some women for the first time are able to share their stories in their own words and may not have had a voice prior to the interview due to factors such as religion, culture, or family. Through feminist narrative inquiry, I was able to consider the gender-specific participant audience.

According to Creswell (2007), narrative inquiry focuses on exploring the lives of individuals and is best suited for those who need to tell their stories. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) identified the narrative as a way to study the experiences of humans

who, "...are storytelling organisms... and lead storied lives" (p. 2). Recognizing that the women refugee participants were originally from Somalia, a country known for its rich oral tradition and referred to as "...a nation of poets" (Elmi, 2010, p. 109), the narrative method of inquiry also fit the audience.

Blustein (2006) primarily used personal narratives in his work to explain the experience of working. He recommended that, "...scholars of the psychology of working can explore new domains of inquiry by talking with and interviewing workers and potential workers" (p. 232). Besides Halabi (2005), Kreitzer (2002), Nilsson, Barazanji, Heintzelman, Siddiqi, and Shilla (2012), Onchwari, Onchwari, and Keengwe (2008), Pavlish (2007), and Sutherland (2011) asserting the need for more qualitative research with refugee or immigrant populations, McMahon and Watson (2008, 2012) challenged career counselors to apply theory in practice and assist "...clients to tell their career stories" (p. 280). They further stated that:

Inherent to constructionism is the recognition that individuals are active agents in the production of their careers. This fundamental theoretical underpinning has witnessed the client-counselor relationship becoming a more collaborative process, with the client taking a more active role in the process and the counselor facilitating narrative, storytelling, and discursive processes. (p. 280)

I determined that the narrative approach was the best research inquiry method for this participant pool as I was interested to hear, through their own voices, the lives or stories of the Somali women refugee students and hear about their choices of *work* as identified

by their career or program choice as defined in the *Definition of Terms* section in Chapter I.

Women and people of color who have been marginalized historically have not had an opportunity to share their stories or perspectives (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Minnesota Humanities Center, 2014). Through the narrative approach, people who have been marginalized have an opportunity to tell their own story in their own words, and in some cases, for the first time.

The Minnesota Humanities Center (2014) recognized the need to document stories or narratives that have not been told before or have been “absent.” They initiated an educational project to help increase engagement through the use of absent narratives and have continued to develop their library of absent narratives. The Center encourages people to challenge themselves by learning about absent narratives, “Minnesota is home to many rich, complimentary, and sometimes contradictory narratives. All these accounts attempt to make meaning of this place, its residents, and its histories. The narratives...are intended to expand...knowledge, understanding, and empathy for the people who live here” (Minnesota Humanities Center, 2014, para. 1). The need to gather narratives of those who have been forgotten or “absent” is imminent.

Another important factor that was considered in this study was the identification of the method of research that matched the research problem (Creswell, 2012). The studies cited in the *Review of the Literature* section employed both qualitative and quantitative methods, but as discussed in this section, the use of the narrative approach is best suited for the research audience (Somali women refugee students) and the area of inquiry (Somali women refugee students’ lives and program decisions). My inquiry into

discovering what factors influence Somali women refugee student's lives and program decisions through the narrative approach is just one area to be explored with this untapped population and was the focus of this study.

Site Selection—Research Locations

To select sites for this research, I considered a number of factors: geographical area, research subject availability, and site and research participant willingness. I connected with colleagues within the Minnesota postsecondary education system to request and receive permission to interview participants at their institutions. I decided to keep travel within Minnesota due to availability of Somali women refugee students and due to my own travel constraints.

The sites, Metro Community and Technical College (MCTC) and Near Metro Community and Technical College (NMCTC), were selected as the two-year colleges where I conducted my research. I selected the two institutions as they resided in communities which were identified as “Preferred Communities” by the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement and have been awarded federal dollars to support refugee integration. (U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2010, ¶ 7-8). The opportunity of locating participants who fit the participant criteria was considered to be more likely in a “Preferred Community.”

I also chose those sites as I had two-year college contacts who helped me navigate through the local site research approval process and locate interested and willing participants for referral to the project within their institutions. Glesne (2006) commented that “...backyard research can create ethical and political dilemmas” (p. 32). Glesne

(2006) further stated that, "...you are likely to learn more about doing qualitative research and about a new topic if you create a project that takes you to strangers or people you don't know well" (p. 33). I conducted research at sites where I did not know the subjects in order to keep backyard research concerns to a minimum. Seidman (2006) also cautioned against interviewing your own students or acquaintances, stating "...the easier the access, the more complicated the interview" (p. 40). Even though gaining access to institutions where I did not work or was acquainted with was more challenging, the benefits of reaching out to other institutions where I was not known outweighed the costs of conducting backyard research in this study.

Participants

Locating research participants for this study was somewhat challenging as the Integrated Student Reporting System (ISRS), the student data system used by the Minnesota State College and University (MnSCU) system, does not accurately reflect the permanent residents, refugees, asylees, and temporary protected status students, as students self-identify status when they complete the application for admissions and no documentation is required to verify status. Warfa et al. (2012) also encountered issues in identifying Somali refugees for their research and used convenience sampling due to "...the lack of reliable, readily available population registers of Somali refugees..." (p. 3). Birman (2006) also referenced challenges in identifying refugee and immigrant populations for research due to the fact that most communities or institutions lack in tracking immigrant status, and in some cases are prohibited from asking immigrant status.

A report could not be run to identify participants by site, so I relied on participant leads from college gatekeepers. Creswell (2012) recommended using gatekeepers as a

way to respect the research site and to minimize disruption. I incorporated the use of gatekeepers in my study to gain access to the participants in a respectful manner but also to diminish disturbance to the institution. I spoke with the gatekeepers individually and informed them of the participant pool characteristics: women originally from Africa, in particular Somalia, who were enrolled at the two-year public post-secondary institution in Minnesota, 18 years of age or older, and classified as either a permanent resident, refugee, asylee, or temporary protected status individual. In consultation with my dissertation committee members during my proposal meeting, it was decided that I interview a minimum of six Somali women refugee students from two different research sites.

Recruitment and Selection

To identify the population of study in this research, operational definitions were developed and are outlined in Chapter I - *Definitions* section. Definitions from the Department of Homeland Security (2009) that described *permanent resident*, *refugee*, *asylee*, or *temporary protected status* were also included in Chapter I. The operational definitions that were developed were: *foreign-born*, *new immigrant*, *new immigrant candidate*, and *new immigrant participant*. A *new immigrant candidate* was defined as an identified woman originally from Africa, in particular Somalia, who was enrolled at a two-year public postsecondary institution in Minnesota. The participants also had to be 18 years of age or older and be classified either as a permanent resident, a refugee, an asylee, or temporary protected status.

To recruit candidates, I connected with the identified gatekeepers who solicited candidates for the research who fit the participant definition. I contacted the Somali

women refugee candidates and scheduled meetings with those who were interested in finding out more about the study. I scheduled meetings at locations that were mutually agreed upon. All Somali women refugee student candidates chose to meet at the colleges where they were enrolled. I was in agreement with their interview location request, and the gatekeepers assisted in room access and usage at their respective institutions.

Rationale for selection. There were many decisions that I made in determining the candidate pool for this study. First, refugees, asylees, and temporary protected status individuals were selected to be interviewed because they could be self-identified according to their classification as defined by the DHS. Permanent residents were included in the participant pool due to the fact that refugees, asylees, and temporary protected status individuals may apply for permanent resident status after being in the U. S. for one year. Some refugees, asylees, and temporary protected status individuals may have been in the U. S. long enough to change status from their initial entry status to permanent resident. Refugees, asylees, individuals with temporary protected status, and permanent residents were identified as a population to study as the influx of the identified populations has been recorded through the years in Minnesota (Hammond, 2014; Minnesota Historical Society, 2012), and the individuals may share similar experiences as per status.

Second, students from Africa, in particular Somalia, were chosen because Minnesota has experienced a significant influx of Somalian refugees within its borders (Minnesota Historical Society, 2012), and maintaining a homogenous sample is advantageous by limiting the number of variables, which in this study was focusing on individuals from one country (Creswell, 2012; Glesne, 2011).

Third, students enrolled at two-year postsecondary institutions were selected due to the opportunity for participants to be pursuing programs leading to direct workforce placement. As discussed in Chapter I, two-year year institutions provided opportunities for students to gain employment knowledge and skills in a relatively short period of time, especially for those who may be attempting to comply with legislative language to encourage them to enter the workforce as soon as possible after entry in the U. S. (USDHHS, 2008). The participants who pursue such programs for employment would be prime candidates to discuss what led them to their program decisions or career paths.

Fourth, in order to minimize the number of variables to gain a more homogeneous sample, the sample population to be interviewed was limited to women. Women were targeted due to the unique situations they may find themselves in when they make program or career decisions and attend college, which may be counter to cultural norms (Elmi, 2010; Ferguson, 2013; Lewis, 2008; Pavlish, 2007).

Finally, I have had a significant number of years of experience working with colleges and colleagues in the MnSCU system, in particular the two-year system where the participant pool was enrolled. I also had relationships established with college and system contacts for assistance in moving forward with the research process.

Research Approval Process

I followed the necessary steps through the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to be permitted to conduct research. I submitted the University of North Dakota Human Subjects Review form in order to gain approval to conduct this research (University of North Dakota IRB Approval Notification - Appendix A). The process also included acquiring approval letters from the designated two-year institutions that were

involved in the study – Metro Community and Technical College and Near Metro Community and Technical College.

To gain access to prospective research participants at the identified sites, I connected with gatekeepers at the sites where subjects of interest were enrolled, and I followed the protocol of the institutions to be approved for research. The process included acquiring research approval letters from the designated two-year institution contacts who were authorized to approve the research—Near Metro Community and Technical College approval letter (Near Metro Site Approval Letter, Appendix B) and Metro Community and Technical College approval letter (Metro Site Approval Letter, Appendix C). Somali women refugee students, 18 years of age or older, originally from Somalia who were enrolled at one of the two-year institutions that were approved sites made up the pool of candidates to be interviewed.

Interview Process

The interviews were constructed to follow a semi-structured format including a set of a few pre-established questions. Questions used in the interviews included, but were not limited to, the interview questions that were developed for this study (Fontes-Interview Protocol – Appendix D).

I purposefully included open-ended questions to elicit conversation between interviewer and interviewee. Reinharz & Chase (2003) suggested that there was a “...more spontaneous exchange...” when open-ended interviewing was used, and they further stated that even though the interview isn’t considered a “...remarkable activity, it may turn out to be an extraordinary experience for some women interviewees” (p. 77). This “extraordinary experience” that Reinharz and Chase (2003) spoke of could happen

as a result of some women being silenced due to culture, family, and religion, among other factors and the opportunity to share, in their own words, may be something new and uplifting. Reinharz and Chase (2003) provided information to assist in interviewing women that informed and cautioned the interviewer. They shared that through the interviewing process some women may experience the exchange as one that is positive and inspirational, but others may experience trauma or distress, as it may unearth or trigger painful experiences. In order to address the possibility of a distressful or negative experience during the interview process, I provided local resources for assistance for participants to call in case they needed help on the informed consent form.

This study was limited to women refugee students from Somalia. I noted that gender and ethnicity might affect the interviews per information discovered regarding interviewing women and people of different ethnicities. Dunbar, Jr., Rodriguez, and Parker (2003) reminded researchers who deal with individuals of color to adhere to research practices that respect and uncover the participant's world that can help reveal experiences from diverse populations. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) stated that:

Narrative inquiry can advance a social change agenda... Collective stories can form the basis of a social movement. Telling the stories of marginalized people can help to create a public space requiring others to hear what they do not want to hear. (p. 642)

Patton (2002) asserted that "...embedded messages about what and who is important..." are in the conceptual frameworks we choose, and that feminist inquiry provides methods that emphasize change-oriented, collaborative, empowering, and participatory inquiry (p. 130). Other researchers asserted the need for qualitative research with refugee or

immigrant populations (Halabi, 2005; Kreitzer, 2002; Nilsson, Barazanji, Heintzelman, Siddiqi, & Shilla, 2012; Onchwari et al., 2008; Pavlish, 2007; and Sutherland, 2011), which was the type of inquiry used in this study with the Somali women refugee student participants. Through this narrative inquiry interview structure, I was hopeful that the Somali women refugee student voices could be identified and heard.

Connecting With Gatekeepers

I connected with identified gatekeepers at each site where subjects of interest were enrolled to secure possible leads for participation in the study. After the gatekeepers identified possible participants for the study, they then sought consent from the Somali women refugee students to share their contact information with me prior to forwarding their contact information to me. I then worked with the participant leads to secure my participant pool. I contacted the identified candidates and scheduled meeting dates and times with those who agreed to be participants in order to inform them of the research participation details. The gatekeepers also introduced me to other site members to discuss my research opportunity, who in turn provided the gatekeepers with possible candidate names for follow-up.

Initial Meeting

I invited the subjects who agreed to be interviewed to meet in a setting that was mutually agreed upon by both participant and me. The participants requested that interviews be conducted in rooms at their respective campuses. The room arrangements were coordinated by the gatekeepers at the sites.

The interview protocol and list of questions that were used in my study are attached (Fontes-Interview Protocol, Appendix D). A \$5.00 gift card was offered to those

who were interviewed—one card per interview at the close of the interview. After consulting with my dissertation committee and information received through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (2011), the amount of the gift card was set at \$5.00 so as to not put undue pressure on the research population to participate—a thoughtful and necessary consideration so as to not take advantage of an already marginalized population (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative, 2011).

Informed Consent Process

In my first meeting with the candidates, I confirmed that the participants met the criteria established: a) woman, b) refugee, asylee, temporary protected status individual, or permanent resident, c) over 18 years of age, and d) African country of origin was Somalia, and then proceeded to the informed consent process. I provided the candidates with the informed consent form at the interview meeting after they were verified as meeting the candidate criteria. I developed the consent forms with the subject reading level in mind, which was the 8th grade reading level as recommended by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative materials (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative, 2011). The signed consent forms were obtained from the candidates who agreed to be interviewed (Fontes-Informed Consent – Appendix E). Prior to each candidate signing the consent form, I read the informed consent form to each subject and answered questions that arose. I reinforced through the informed consent process that their participation in the study was voluntary and that whether they chose to participate or not would not affect their current or future relationships with the University of North Dakota or their institution of enrollment. Each participant signed an informed consent

form and a copy of the informed consent was provided to the participant. Candidates selected pseudonyms to be used throughout the interviews to protect confidentiality.

The Interviews

In my research proposal, I had indicated that each participant would take part in three interviews, following *The Three-Interview Series* approach recommended by Seidman (2006). What actually happened during the research process was that I conducted three interviews with six participants, three interviews with a pilot participant, and two interviews with one participant. Even though I phoned Participant Two—Nimo—on numerous occasions for a final interview, we were unable to schedule the last interview.

The interviews ranged from 15 minutes to 65 minutes in length. The interviews were conducted over a period of time between May 2012 and November 2013. In each interview, I asked the participants questions about different segments of their lives. The first interview focused on experiences in their home country. The second interview focused on the transition to the U. S., experiences in the U. S., and preparing for college. The third interview focused on their college experiences, the meaning of their choices, and the future.

Seidman (2006) explained the three-interview series method, which I patterned my interview approach after, in his book, *Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education and the Social Sciences*. He stated that the three-series approach allows the researcher to understand the meaning behind behaviors as the conversation is situated in the context of the participants' lives and the lives of those who are around them (Seidman, 2006). I also included semi-structured questions in order to

gather information about each participant regarding their knowledge of self, knowledge of the world of work or careers, and the relationship between the two, according to the framework established by Parsons (1909).

As the participants answered the questions that were being asked, I made a checkmark by the information provided on the interview protocol sheet. After the participant completed answering a question but not all areas of the question were answered, I would circle back to question for clarification or for additional information that was not covered. I asked open-ended questions to gain rapport and elicit responses to understand the participants' lives and to identify factors that led to program decisions and the meaning behind those decisions. The interviews progressed well with the set of questions but follow-up questions, to clarify data or explain something in more detail were also warranted at times.

The interviews took place on separate days in order to allow down time between sessions, to allow time to absorb the significant amount of information obtained in each interview, and to develop any follow-up questions for the next interview. In the time between the each participant interview, I reviewed the voice recordings prior to the next interview and denoted any points that needed clarification or questions that were not answered. From that information gathered, I was able to determine my course of action prior to the next interview.

Follow-up

After all interviews were completed, I collected an email address or U. S. postal mailing address from each participant in order to send their respective transcripts to the participant for review and follow-up. When I received the transcripts from the participant

interviews, I sent the transcribed interviews to the participants using their preferred mailing method. I asked the participants to send me any comments, additions, or corrections to the transcripts. Only one of the participants submitted any comments, and she recommended that no changes to protocol or questions were warranted.

Data Collection, Analysis, and Theme Development

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) stated that in any narrative inquiry, "...interpretive authority and 'hearing' the story that is being told are the issues that must be addressed" (p. 642). In this section, I explain how I collected and analyzed the data to hear the participant stories.

There were a total of seven *new immigrant participants* and a pilot *new immigrant participant* who completed interviews. Seven of the eight participants completed three interviews and one completed two interviews. At one site there was a *new immigrant candidate* who completed two interviews, but not the third interview, and a *new immigrant candidate* who signed the informed consent form but secured full-time employment and was unable to complete any of the interviews. The data from the *new immigrant participants* who were interviewed were included in the results of this study.

The interviews were digitally recorded in order for transcription of the conversations to occur. Minimal notes were taken during the interviews. The digital recordings were transcribed by a paid transcriptionist and transcription service, and then examined using qualitative techniques (Creswell, 2007; Seidman, 2006). The voice recordings and transcripts have been kept in a locked fire-proof cabinet at my home (separate from the consent forms) and will be kept for minimum of three years after data analysis, or for a period of time sufficient to meet federal, state, and local regulations, and

organizational policies and procedures. All voice recordings and transcripts will be destroyed by me after three years from the ending date of this study.

I interviewed Somali women refugee students in order to understand their lives and identify factors that influenced their program decisions and verify if any patterns or themes existed through qualitative analysis. The transcribed notes from the interviews were emailed or mailed through the U. S. postal service to participants for verification of content to enhance validity of results. Method of delivery to verify content was determined by each participant. The potential validity of the results was reliant upon using the procedures of qualitative inquiry to analyze the transcribed interview notes. Creswell (2007) stated that narrative researchers situate stories by collecting information about the individual's personal experiences, time and place, and his or her culture. As part of this study, I wrote short summaries of each participant's narrative to help situate their story covered in Chapter IV, and I also ascertained background information on Somalia and research with immigrant populations in Chapter II to situate the participants' stories.

Qualitative methods were used in analyzing the data from this study. According to Creswell (2007), data are analyzed for stories, restorying stories using a chronology, and developing themes or patterns of meaning. Patterns of meaning in narrative form were identified through certain events, processes or what Creswell (2007) refers to as "... 'epiphanies' or turning points" that the subject relays (p. 57). In this study, I highlighted the voices that emerged from the interview transcripts through the coding and theme development process leading to the development of themes.

Coding and Theme Development

Seidman (2006) defined the process of coding as “The process of noting what is interesting, labeling it, and putting it into appropriate files” (p. 125)—a process that I followed in this narrative analysis process. Using the verified transcripts from the interviews, I identified narrative segments or meaningful units on a first read through the transcripts. I read through each transcribed interview two more times to make sure I did not miss any meaningful units. In order to ensure the meaningful units were identified surrounding the inquiry into program decision, the transcripts were reviewed once again, focusing on any factors influencing program decisions and the meaning behind those decisions. Additional meaningful units were added to the existing list of meaningful units.

Next, the meaningful units were typed up and entered on a spreadsheet by participant and by interview. I identified a total of 1063 meaningful units from all of the transcripts with 493 recorded from the first interviews, 316 from the second interviews, and 254 from the thirds interviews. I found 168 meaningful units from Pilot Participant – Zenab, 144 meaningful units from Participant One - Shalambood, 112 from Participant Two - Nimo, 172 from Participant Three – Sabrina, 93 from Participant Four – Sagal, 141 from Participant Five – Zaytun, 96 from Participant Six – Sabrina II, and 137 from Participant Seven – Shamqali (Meaningful Units by Participant and Interview, Appendix F).

I subsequently printed a copy of each participant’s meaningful units from the spreadsheet and cut each meaningful unit from each sheet. I read through the meaningful units one by one and then grouped them with other similar meaningful units by interview.

The process involved quite a bit of moving the slips of paper into groups where they best fit. I completed that process for each participant interview. I then color-coded the meaningful units that were similar on the spreadsheet to visually identify the patterns emerging across all interviews for each participant. Next, I began the open coding process, or what Creswell (2007) described as, "...coding the data for its major categories of information" (p. 64).

After the meaningful units were grouped and color-coded by participant, preliminary labels or themes were assigned to describe the groupings that emerged. An example of the coding process implemented in this study is outlined below using data from interviews with Participant III: Sabrina.

1) Meaningful units were highlighted from her transcripts with like units or codes being grouped together:

- A lot of fighting back home – a lot of gunshots, a lot of fighting
- Example of violence: "Yeah, it's normal. People go to the store. 'I want this.' If the person doesn't give them what they want, they just shoot the person who sell in the store and take it. So there was no police, no government
- Thinking of the violence: To me right now it's scary, but at that time to me it was okay because that's all I had known. Like I thought that was normal
- No refrigerator
- Her house was made of sticks and clay
- They got beat at home if they got beat or fought someone

- Lost her family
- Fighting happened at the market
- People would fight over everything
- They would kill the family of the person who killed someone in their family
- A lot of fighting at the market – A lot of dead bodies, they dodged a lot of bullets

2) Preliminary theme or label assigned to the grouping of meaningful units:

- Violent, dangerous, or difficult living conditions

Another example of the coding process used in this study is outlined below using data from interviews with Participant V: Zaytun.

1) Meaningful units were highlighted from her transcripts with the like units or codes being grouped together:

- One community, one big family
- Mother died
- Grandmother was second mother to them
- One of her uncles sponsored them to come to the U. S.
- All came to America with her grandmother
- Her brother would send money to them to buy food
- Her grandmother raised her
- She found a guy
- She got married

- She sponsored her husband to the U. S.
 - Focus on son, focus on kids at home
- 2) Preliminary theme or label assigned to the grouping of meaningful units:
- Family – Central

I then developed another chart with the preliminary themes identified by participant. I highlighted the themes that were similar across each participant with the same color. After extensive review of each similarly-colored group and preliminary theme assigned, I determined the phrase that best described the overall theme that emerged from that grouping. After a significant amount of time was spent reviewing the data and grouping the meaningful units, themes were identified which described what factors influenced Somali women immigrant students' lives and program decisions. The themes identified through this process are explained in detail in Chapter V. Finally, I compared the themes that emerged to the conceptual frameworks of Maslow and Blustein and reported my observations in the *Analyses Summary* in Chapter V.

Analysis of Outcomes—Validation and Evaluation

Maxwell (2005) stated that "...qualitative research is an ongoing process that involves 'tacking' back and forth between the different components of the design, assessing the implications of goals, theories, research questions, methods, and validity threats for one another" (p. 3). Through this study, I highlighted how unique each Somali woman refugee student's story was and how, in some instances, similar through the establishment of themes. By examining the data for patterns of meaning, I searched for common threads that tied the stories together. In organizing the study and analyzing the

data, I addressed concerns of validity, researcher subjectivity, ethical concerns, and risks and benefits.

Validity

The validity of the results in this study was reliant upon using the procedures of qualitative inquiry, which were to: 1) interact and get to know the participants through several planned interviews, 2) review and analyze the transcribed interview notes to identify stories, narrative segments or codes, and themes (patterns of meaning) and writing rich descriptions of their experiences, and 3) share participant transcripts with each participant to ensure their ideas were represented—a form of member checking (Glesne, 2011).

Participant interaction. Seidman (2006) asserted that the three-series interview structure enhanced the achievement of validity as the interviews positioned the subjects' comments in context and the researcher was able to check meaning of previous comments made at subsequent interviews—a form of internal consistency. Glesne (2011) also recommended spending extended time with participants to learn their culture, develop trust, and check out hunches. In this study I connected with the participants after receiving their contact information from the gatekeepers, initiating the relationship that extended through three interviews in order to get to know the participants and gain trust in order to highlight and honor their stories through the interviews.

Rich descriptions of data. In order to gather rich descriptions of the participants' stories, I digitally recorded the interviews and had the recordings transcribed verbatim. I reviewed the transcripts several times and then analyzed the transcribed interviews for stories, codes, and themes. I then took the data from each transcribed interview and wrote

a summary of each participant from earliest memory to present. An excerpt from Participant III: Sabrina's narrative is revealed here:

Sabrina stated she has over 60 siblings because her dad had many wives—four at a time. Sabrina remembered the fighting and killing in her home country and thinking it was normal because that was all she had seen her whole life. Sabrina stated what she remembered about her father was that he was a truck driver, and he would rotate staying with each of his wives. Sabrina remembered her mother being a very sweet, loving, selfless person who she did not see eat any food, “I never seen her eat food because we didn't have so much food so I never actually seen her sitting down and eating something.” When she was young and in her home country, she stated that her “...parents didn't think girls should go to school.” It cost money to go to school. Her mother sewed clothes, mats, and carpet to help bring in some money. Sabrina said she liked sweeping the yard, but her oldest sister would make her wash the dishes, which she didn't like. Her older brother would protect her if her older sister would be mean to her. Sabrina explained that: ...my elder brother used to like... he used to love me so when my older sister would say something to me, they had to fight, so he used to like defend me and she would always make sure I got something to do.

The interview narratives from all participants are found in Chapter IV. In this study I used qualitative techniques to describe the participants' lives and program

choices through the use of rich data descriptions. I also used qualitative methods to distill the rich data to elements in common or themes among the participants.

Member checking. Similar to what Roy and Roxas (2011) used in their interviews as a form of member checking, I listened to the previous interviews before meeting with the participants a second and third time to verify my understanding of what they had conveyed in the previous interviews and noted any areas for clarification in subsequent interviews. I emailed the transcribed interviews to each participant for verification of content - another form of member checking. I did not have any participant contact me to clarify or edit the transcripts except for one who recommended no changes to the protocol or questions. I also will send the themes and interpretations to the participants for verification prior to publishing.

Researcher Subjectivity

I conducted research at sites where I am not employed in order to keep backyard research concerns to a minimum. As a researcher, I acknowledged that I would come to the table with my own beliefs, values, and experiences and understood how they might impact the process. I recognized that I am a positive-oriented person and that I have a bias to see strengths. I had to check against that bias during the study. I also understood that I could become engaged in the process and was mindful of my own thoughts and feelings throughout the process in order to recognize and minimize subjectivity. In this particular study, I also realized that interviewing women, and further, women of color might present some special research dynamics that I was mindful of as outlined previously by Denzin and Lincoln (2005), Dunbar, Jr., Rodriguez, and Parker (2003), and Reinharz and Chase (2003).

Ethical Concerns

I addressed the ethical concerns of privacy, consent, and confidentiality by following the guidance of Glesne (2011) and Seidman, (2006). In order to address privacy concerns, the subjects who agreed to be interviewed were invited to meet in settings that were mutually agreed upon by both parties. To address the ethical concern of informed consent, I developed the informed consent form at an age that was appropriate for the audience—8th grade level, the informed consent form was approved by the UND IRB, I read the informed consent to all participants at the initial meeting, and the participants were afforded whatever time they needed to ask any questions prior to signing the form. After the informed consent forms were signed, I provided participants with signed copies. In order to protect confidentiality, participants selected pseudonyms for themselves, and those pseudonyms were used throughout the interviews. Participants also selected the method of delivery to receive the transcribed interviews for member checking, either through email, through the U. S. postal service, or through a third party as identified by the participant in order to protect confidentiality. Seven participants selected email as that method of delivery, and one selected U. S. postal service.

Other means that I applied to protect confidentiality of the participants involved the maintenance of research data. The voice recordings and transcripts have been and will continue to be kept in a locked fire-proof cabinet at my home, separate from the consent forms, for a minimum of three years after data analysis is complete, or for a period of time sufficient to meet federal, state, and local regulations, and organizational policies and procedures. All voice recordings, transcripts, and other documents collected will be destroyed by me after three years from the ending date of the study.

Risks and Benefits

As outlined on the Informed Consent form (Fontes-Informed Consent, Appendix E), I anticipated no financial or physical risks to anyone who was interviewed for this research. The risks in this study were deemed as not being in excess of “minimal risk.”

Besides the nominal \$5 gift card for each completed interview, benefits to the subjects of this research were that they were able to verbalize their feelings relative to their lives, their program decisions, and other relevant experiences. Others who may benefit from the results of this study would be career counselors, other educational professionals who serve students at two-year institutions, and other personnel who are in positions to make decisions about activities and services offered at educational institutions. Colleges may gain insight into services, programs, and policies that may need revisions in order to serve students better.

CHAPTER IV
INTERVIEW NARRATIVES

Background Information

In my previous research with new immigrants, I was amazed by the participants' life stories—the adversity that they had overcome, their perseverance, and their positive outlook of the future. In this study of Somali women refugee students, the stories that they share reveal details of their past difficult living conditions and circumstances in their home country, their present situations and experiences in attending college, and what they envision for the future. The following narratives are a summation of the interviews that were held with each participant. The short life narratives are snapshots into their lives, and as presented here are but a glimpse into the lives of some strong, courageous women.

Narratives

Pilot Participant: Zenab

Zenab grew up in Somalia with her nine brothers and sisters. Her father was a soldier and her mother was a midwife. Her best memories were of going to school and learning the Qur'an. Zenab did not see her father often as he had other wives. Zenab stated that men could have up to four wives at a time in her country. Her mother at times had to be gone for many days to help deliver babies, so she entrusted Zenab to be the responsible one (even though she wasn't the oldest) to give money to in order to keep the household running and feed the family while she was gone. She specifically remembered

when her mother was going to give birth to her youngest sister, her father was nowhere around and they had no money to pay for the services of a midwife. She ended up going door to door until someone agreed to help her deliver the baby knowing they could not pay anyone to help them.

Her mother moved their family to a refugee camp in Kenya when the fighting started to grow in intensity in Somalia. Life was difficult in the refugee camp. Zenab stated, "...there were a lot of robberies... people could grab you and they had knives." When they were in the refugee camp, not all of her brothers and sisters could go to school because her mother could not afford it. Her father intervened and brought them back from the refugee camp to live with him in Somalia. Her father was killed in front of their house by people he knew when he was running for the government. At the time of his death, he had divorced all of his other wives and was only married to Zenab's mother. After her father died, her mother opened up a coffee shop on one side of their home to help bring in some needed income. The family helped support the business. As a result of her father being killed and her mother's fear of safety for the boys in the family, her mother looked to her uncle to sponsor the family to come to the United States (U. S.). Not all family members could go, but Zenab was selected to go to the U. S. with her aunt, a sister, and a brother to find a better life.

Zenab described how excited she was when she first came to the U. S. but became disillusioned because life was very difficult. When they came to the U. S., they were living in assisted housing, receiving food stamps, struggling with the English language, going to school day and night, and struggling to finding employment. She spoke about how she would go to school during the day, then on to English as a Second Language

(ESL) courses through adult basic education center at night, also squeezing in a few hours of work at a department store. When Zenab was working, she would send money back to her family in Somalia as it was expected in her culture. She eventually moved out of her aunt's home and in with her older sister. One day she decided to move to Nebraska, with no notice to her sister, to get a better job working in a meat factory. Zenab stated her sister was very angry with her for leaving. She stated that there were many Somali workers at the factory, and when they found out she could speak and understand English better than the others, they asked her to help interpret information or directions for the other Somali workers as needed. The work was very hard in the factory, and after a couple of years, she decided to move back to Minnesota. Zenab pursued and received her GED and then applied for college. Zenab went to college and held down a couple of part-time jobs while in college in order to cover expenses.

Zenab met a nice man, and with a blessing from her uncles, they were married. They were later blessed with two baby girls but were unhappy, as her husband was only able to spend a few weekends with the family due to his job. Her husband worked as a cab driver in Chicago, and when he moved back to the area, he went back to school for nursing. Zenab stated that they both chose nursing because they, "...just want[ed] to have education to support [their] kids and [their life]." Zenab stated that her whole family was supportive of her going back to school. She ended the interview by reiterating how important her family was to her, how pursuing college was the right thing to do, and how supportive her family was in her educational pursuits.

Participant I: Shalambood

Shalambood grew up in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, the daughter of a leather factory owner who made shoes for government soldiers. Her mother stayed at home, took care of the children, and the household. Her father only married one wife—her mother—which she stated was not the norm in her country. She witnessed a frightening, bloody shark attack when she was young. Her father had her go through formal swimming lessons after that event. She loved swimming in the Indian Ocean and remembered fondly the times she would play at the beach with her friends. When the civil war broke out, some men came to their house and took her father to jail and fatally shot her uncle and two brothers. The rest of her family piled into a vehicle and fled to Kenya. They lived in a refugee camp for ten years. She met her husband in the refugee camp and had a son. Her husband died of malaria while in the camp. The refugee camp was very dangerous as they had to forego sleep many nights because others in the camp would steal things from them, or they would fear others would take their young girls and rape them.

She came to the United States in 2000. When she came to the U. S. she said, “Now we are heaven... No more crime. No more problem.” She was so excited when she first came, but reality hit when she had difficulty in adjusting to the climate, food, English language, living conditions, and lack of job availability. She initially worked as a housekeeper and an airline customer service representative. The housekeeping position was very difficult for her because she had to keep up a very fast pace to get the rooms clean within a certain amount of time. She thoroughly enjoyed the airline customer service representative position as she could be her extremely positive and pleasant self,

and she got to wear a uniform that made her feel important. Even though she loved her airline customer service representative job, she made a decision to sacrifice her needs and move closer to her family for the sake of her son. She moved to the Midwest with her son to be close to family and worked in a variety of factory jobs, including working for a poultry factory and a vacuum manufacturing factory. Besides the long commutes to work, she endured very long, hard days at the factory jobs. She said that the jobs were so hard that she thought, "...my happiness is gone... when I come to America and I see the life, the way you cannot speak English, looking for how you survive, you and your babies. I stopped for that talking and laughing and all that things." In the midst of work life being very hard, the highlight at the factory job was when she was asked to interpret the safety guidelines and directions to the Somali workers.

Shalambood decided that the extremely hard factory work was not the life she wanted, as she stated, "Hey, this is no life. You have to go back to school." She spoke to someone at the Workforce Center, and she helped her go to work for Lutheran Social Services as a translator and when that job ended get into college. She found work taking care of elderly women for a few hours a week and time for school. From the time she was young, Shalambood knew she wanted to be a teacher, in particular, a history teacher. She actually was a teacher for a very short period of time in Kenya, but she wasn't able to answer questions from the students. She thought of becoming a teacher from a great experience with a chemistry teacher she had in the past. She liked how the teacher was active and respected the children—she wanted to be like her and teach a subject she loved. She stated she liked to help people in her jobs whether it was pushing wheelchairs for the airlines, teaching children, or helping elderly women.

Recently she connected on Facebook with a former acquaintance who wanted to marry her. He is married now, but he still wanted to connect with her and make her one of his wives. Shalambood stated her son was very angry and jealous about the man, and she was very apprehensive about moving forward. She also stated that she would not go back to her home country because they are still fighting and killing people. She is also afraid of what her former acquaintance's other wife may do to her if she were to show up.

Participant II: Nimo

Nimo and her family were from Somalia. She stated her father worked outside the home, and her mother stayed home and took care of the children. Her father tutored in Arabic language. Nimo stated women could not go to a job, "The home is the mother," "They stay home to help children," and "The culture – the woman stay home; the husband for job." She learned how to cook and clean and particularly liked fixing sambusa—a Somali stuffed pastry. She also remembered that Ramadan was very special. She stated her family all came together especially to eat. She remembered her grandparents would come for holidays and they would tell their family history. When the civil war broke out, they went to Kenya. Nimo stated she considered their family in the middle—not rich. When they lived in Kenya, her brother who lived in America sent them money to live on until he was able to sponsor them to come to the United States (U. S.).

Nimo came to the U. S. in 2006 with twelve family members. It was very confusing coming to the U. S. She mentioned what she remembered was that the weather was very different from her home country, and she did not usually wear shoes or jackets, but she had to now. She also stated that understanding the English language was very hard. She said at times she wanted to go back to her home country because it was very

hard to adjust. She stated she worked at some difficult jobs, those being janitorial work and meat factory work. She stated that the hard work she endured was not life. She further stated that, “If you go to school, you understand something, then life is easier. Life is easier with school.” Her family encouraged her to stop her job and go to school. Nimo stated she is going into nursing to help her family and her country.

Participant III: Sabrina

Sabrina stated she has over 60 siblings because her dad had many wives—four at a time. Sabrina remembered the fighting and killing in her home country and thinking it was normal because that was all she had seen her whole life. Sabrina said what she remembered about her father was that he was a truck driver, and he would rotate staying with each of his wives. Sabrina remembered her mother being a very sweet, loving, selfless person who she did not see eat any food, “I never seen her eat food because we didn’t have so much food so I never actually seen her sitting down and eating something.” When she was young and in her home country, she stated that her “...parents didn’t think girls should go to school.” It cost money to go to school. Her mother sewed clothes, mats, and carpet to help bring in some money.

Sabrina said she liked sweeping the yard, but her oldest sister would make her wash the dishes, which she didn’t like. Her older brother would protect her if her older sister would be mean to her. Sabrina explained that:

...my elder brother used to like... he used to love me so when my older sister would say something to me, they had to fight, so he used to like defend me and she would always make sure I got something to do.

When she found her family again through Facebook, she expressed being very sad to discover her oldest brother had died, her oldest sister was still alive, and that her mother “...was like mentally ill and stuff” as she had seen children killed in front of her. She also found her dad, and he is still alive and continues to have babies.

Her parents used to tell her that, “Well, in my family, my dad and my mom actually used to say I was the smart one in the family” and “...when my mom would want somebody to pick something up for her from the house or somewhere else she would send me, even though my elder brother and sisters were there.” Sabrina would be the one who would go to the market to pick up things for her mother. The market was where the fighting usually took place though. She remembered people being loud and arguing over the price of things in the market. She also remembered that young boys with guns would argue over the price of things and even shoot, kill, and take what they wanted. Sabrina stated that after someone would get shot, the other family would go and kill the other family, mostly the men and boys in the family. She remembered times when they would hear gunshots they would lie down until it was over because the bullets would come through the walls in their house.

Sabrina recalled that everybody loved her mother. Even if it did not look like they had enough food to feed their family, her mother made the food stretch to feed many other people who needed food. Her father would always keep four wives, and if any of them caused trouble, he would divorce that wife and marry a younger wife—always younger. Her mother took her and her sisters and brothers to the other weddings of her father and his new wives. Her mother would help cook and dress the new wife for the wedding. Sabrina said her mother did not have a problem with going to the weddings, but

her older sister did, and sometimes her older sister refused to go with them. She also stated that sometimes the other wives would spit in her mother's face, which made her very sad. Sabrina said her mother never reacted and was always gentle and kind. Sabrina stated that her dad never divorced her mother because her mother never created trouble and was always gentle and kind.

Besides getting things from the market, Sabrina would get water for her mother and clean the house. Sabrina stated she would go to her mother at times and just sit with her, "...sometimes if I see my mom sitting somewhere thinking, I would just go to her – and just sit next to her." Sabrina stated, "So I think that's one of the things she liked about me," and she remembered her mother would say, "She's the nice one" referring to when Sabrina would come and sit with her.

Sabrina thought she would get married when she was little because "...that's what all grownups did..." Sabrina remembered Ramadan being very special, and they would get new clothes to wear. One day Sabrina and her uncle went to the market even after her father told them not to go there that day. When they got there, a lot of the places were closed and the fighting was really intense. They were able to make it home, but everyone at her home had fled. She remembered that one of their neighbors saw them standing there crying, and he told them to go with them. She remembered that he had to drag her away kicking and screaming until he told her that where they were going was where her family would be, so she went with them somewhat willingly. Unfortunately, when they reached the refugee camp, her family was not there. Her neighbors took her and her uncle to a South African refugee camp, and she lived there until she came over to the U. S. The neighbors did not keep her, so she lived in the refugee camp as an orphan. Many times

different families in the camp would take her in, but they did not treat her like their own children or they did not have children and did not know how to deal with her. She remembered that she enjoyed going to school, and she did very well in school. She also liked school because she would get fed. She stated she dreaded the weekends because she would go hungry, “No school. That means no food.” Many times, so she could get food or money for food, she would work different small jobs for people like washing dishes or cleaning yards. Some people paid her and some did not.

Sabrina expressed that she was so excited when she first came to the United States. Initially she was supposed to stay with a cousin, but her cousin could not take her in, so she went to work and started living with some other girls her age. She became sick, and when she went to apply for health benefits, social services discovered she was supposed to be in foster care. Sabrina stated she had been living and working on her own as long as she could remember, plus her experiences with other foster families in South Africa were very bad that she did not want to go into foster care. They placed her with a family, and after she got to know them, she warmed up to being in a foster family who cared for her, took her on family vacations, and helped her with her school work. Sabrina stated her foster family helped her with many things and continues to help her with getting through college.

Sabrina stated when she began high school they tested her, and she tested into taking regular classes instead of the ESL classes. She said it was really hard, but she loved her literature classes. She stated she graduated, and she was encouraged by many people, especially her foster father, to go on to college. She stated she started college

right away that fall and is going into nursing. She stated she has always wanted to go into something with medicine her whole life. She stated:

Because considering my back...my home country – There isn't a lot of doctors. People will just rot to death so I was thinking I would do something to do with medicine. Maybe in the future if I go back there I can help people.

Sabrina sees herself as completing her two-year nursing degree then going on to four-year nursing and then on to medical school. She stated she would need to work as she went through her schooling. Sabrina stated that since girls did not go to school, her parents would have wanted her to make a family or:

...I don't think they had, they had any dreams like that for me because in this place we lived all...I think all they kind of hoped for is us to live, you know? '...to be alive until we were 20 or something like that but the kind of place we lived in it was always... it was dangerous, somebody might die and if they make hopes for some, for one kid and that kid dies you know, then they don't want to take their hopes up.

Sabrina wants to make her parents proud by completing her program and doing well.

Sabrina shared a dream she had of a big house and her family. Sabrina stated that she dreamed that she would buy a big house:

Yeah, well I left my family a long time ago so I... when I always have a dream it would be this nice big house with a big backyard with all my siblings, all my family, you know? I just, I lived in a house with my foster

parents and I kind of loved it and I want something like that for myself.

Maybe for my family that I will make in the future.

Sabrina further stated that:

...I always dream of that nice house, that's the place that I go every time that I have problems, you know, when I'm going through school having problems in school I just picture that nice house and I think that just gets easy.

Participant IV: Sagal

Sagal lived in Somalia with her seven brothers and sisters. Sagal was the youngest in her family. Her uncle and aunt died from fatal gunshot wounds in the war. She stated that, "That people just die for nothing, like... in the street." She also remembered times in her home country when there was no fighting—when it was peaceful and they would go to the ocean and play. Her parents did not have to worry about them because it was safe back then.

Her family moved to Kenya as refugees. In the refugee camp in Kenya, Sagal remembers that there were bullies there, and it was not safe in the camp. Her mother would sell vegetables and her father worked. She always wanted to go to school or dugsi, which was where she studied the Qur'an. Sagal said she remembers positive things like the Somali air, playing games with the other children, and the food. She remembered that they would make their own toys out of sticks and pieces of rug because they did not have toys like kids in America. Sagal enjoyed and did well in her religious studies, and she thought when she grew up she would support her family.

Her sister went to the U. S., sent money to them to live, and then eventually sponsored her family to come to the U. S. Sagal went to high school and then moved out when she turned eighteen. Sagal stated that they came to America to have more opportunity, a "...more better life..." Sagal remembered that it was very hard going to school because the language was very difficult. Sagal said she was in school with other immigrants, and the teachers were really nice. She stated that her English teacher would have two dictionaries, one in Somali and one in English, to help her understand words.

When they came to the U. S., her mom went to work at a meat factory far away from the family, and her father worked as a truck driver. Sagal stated that she was focusing on education because it would lead to a better job. She stated, "...other people, like, who doesn't have education – all they have to do, like...they have to accept every work...If it's cleaning, you have to accept it because you don't have education."

Sagal stated she was going into nursing:

Because nursing, I see that – it will – it will help me in my, like – back home, we don't have much of a nurse. So I'm thinking of it in the future. I may go back to my country. And help those people who needs help.

Sagal stated that "...I really like nurse because it's like they're helping people and I want to help people" and "Helping other people is very nice."

Participant V: Zaytun

Zaytun stated in her home country it was like one big family, "...it was like one community. It's one culture, one religion. It's everything. It's just one big family." Zaytun stated she has four siblings. Her mother worked for the government. She does not remember much of her father as he was not really part of her family, but he did provide

monetarily for them, and what she does remember is that he was very strict. When the civil war broke out, they left everything behind and went to Kenya. All she remembers is running away. Her mother died of typhoid in Kenya and her grandmother raised her. She stated her father died in the war. They could not afford to go to school, but she would help her grandmother cook food and take care of the house. They would share their food with many people who would come to their house to eat. She said she was the one designated by her grandmother to give out the food. She remembered it being a very hard job because many times she would give her own food to the people who came to eat. Her grandmother would hide food for her so she could eat because she knew Zaytun would give all of the food away.

Zaytun spoke of her legendary grandfather who everyone loved because he was very generous. He used to be a driver with the army and then drove a water truck. Zaytun said:

...everybody loved him. Everybody, everybody that talks about him, still that they cry and it's like he was human and half. Like he would...

Everybody was like... Like to his eyes, everybody was saying whether it's rich or poor or... He didn't have any difference so he had only one vision.

We all human being and we need to help each other so it was very nice.

Zaytun stated she is like her grandfather:

He used to help people. Even when he needs, he will always be the last person and that's what I do. I am the last. I always put the other people first... Sometimes I even forget about myself and it's something that I need to... I can't change, but I wanted to change but I can't because it's in me.

She was able to go to school for a month because that is what her father could afford, but one of the teachers let her keep on coming for free because she was a good student. They came to the U. S. when one of her uncles sponsored her family. They had to leave her cousin, her other grandmother, and her grandmother's sister behind. It was very painful leaving family members behind and it was stressful getting acclimated to a new country. It was a very different culture to get used to in the U. S.—she and her brother got sick off of the food, “So we didn't eat for almost a month.” She stated that people in her home country told them that, “...if you just go the money is going to be everywhere.” She said that money was not everywhere, there were cockroaches in the home where they were living, and the weather was cold—they were very disheartened. Zaytun stated what helped her through the tough times was school.

She said she always wanted to be an educated person. She stated that her family always supported her and told her, “...whatever you do, you will do your best of it.” Zaytun stated the reason they came to the U.S. was, “...to get a better life and education and you know, start all over again.” She was more mature than the kids in high school, so she went to get her GED. She then met a man and was travelling between Canada and the U. S. to be with him. They moved to the U. S. and she started college. Zaytun stated that English was twice as hard for her because it is her second language. What helps is that her husband is very supportive in her attending college and is a good provider.

Zaytun stated she is attending college in the early childhood program for now as a short term goal. She stated she eventually wants to go on to the university. She stated she wants to go into early childhood education because:

I want to help in early age so that they can be independent and you know, be confident and then they can, if we teach them at a young age and they can be people that can read or you know, write and become successful in academic, academically.

Zaytun stated she wanted to pursue education because:

... so I just want to be a role model for them, you know. That's the reason. Education is very important to me. When you don't have education you don't know a lot. So when you have education you're open-minded, you know, and you can help other people...

Zaytun stated that in the future she wants to help the community through her work. She said she already has a head start through her part-time work as a parent guide at a childcare facility.

Participant VI: Sabrina II

Her family moved from Somalia to Kenya during the war. She stated they grew up in Kenya and went to school there. Since they did not have a means of transportation, they had to walk to school, and it would take 40 – 50 minutes. Sabrina II stated that some days wild dogs would chase them and they would have to hide. Some days they would get late and the teachers would physically punish them. Sabrina II stated that it was dangerous walking to school not only because of the wild dogs but because humans would put poison in your nose and kidnap you—one of her friends was kidnapped walking home from school—something that still haunts her today.

She stated she really liked math because of the teacher. Sabrina II stated her dad was a teacher of the Arabic language, and her mother stayed at home cooking and

cleaning. Her parents wanted her to "...work hard, [and be] a person that never quits on education and always improves..." Sabrina II stated she wanted to be a doctor or nurse, "...I've always wanted to help the sick people because there are so many sick people that live in Africa and they need help."

Sabrina II stated they came to the U. S. sponsored by one of her brothers for a better life, an education, and a safe place. Sabrina II stated it was so different in the U. S.—the food, clothes, school, and transportation—and was so hard to adjust. Her dad started working for a retail store and her mom at a daycare. Sabrina II said that she got a lot of support from her teachers in high school to go to college, "Teachers really like they tell you a lot of stuff about college and how life is without college. You'll not survive." Her high school counselor also told her that, "...without college, you won't make it – life won't be easy."

She said that she always wanted to do something in the health field. At first she thought of being a doctor or a nurse, but she decided to go into dental hygiene because everybody needs dental care and she wants to, "...go back to my country and help them, too." Her mother and father were very proud of her going to college. Sabrina II stated it was important for her to go into dental hygiene because it's, "...a health program where you help people...make them feel good, make them have a better health...dental hygiene is a good program that can help most of the people back in my country where they really need it."

Participant VII: Shamqali

Shamqali went to an all-girls school even though all of her brothers and sisters went to mixed gender schools. She stated her mother also sent her to madrasa in the

afternoon to study Islam. Shamqali stated she would tell her mother that she hated her because she pushed her and sent her to two schools. She said she gives thanks to her mother now because she knows a lot of different things but didn't understand why she pushed her so hard back then.

Even though her family had a maid, the kids did chores for the household including the boys. Her dad had passed away when she was two from lung cancer, and her mother took care of the children on her own. Shamqali stated they had money through real estate their father had owned, and their mother ran a store in front of their home that sold food staples. Her mother made sure that all of her brothers and sisters had gone through high school and on to college.

She stated that it was difficult for her mother to raise her brothers and sisters by herself. Her sister who was educated and worked as a consultant helped her mother with the finances. Shamqali remembered a moment when her mother beat her brother so badly for smoking that she and her other brothers and sisters cried so hard that some of them threw up. Shamqali enjoyed music and arts and crafts at school. When she was young, Shamqali told her uncle she wanted to be an airline pilot, which made her uncle very angry. She really wanted to be a doctor or a nurse, but she wanted to see how agitated he and others got when she told them she wanted to be a pilot. Shamqali stated she liked being independent but others in her family reminded her of how things were.

After high school Shamqali's sister told her:

If mom choose anyone for you, that's who you going to marry. You're not going to have your own opinion. Put that in your head. I know you're opinionated but put that in your head right now. It's good for you... Those

are the rules and we all follow them. Today if mom brings someone for me, I'll marry that person. It's the rules. You put it in your head. The earlier, the better for you.

She stated that her family told her that she should not be a nurse or doctor because women need to be there for the family and that she may be called during the night to go to work and she wouldn't be there for the family when they woke up in the morning. Shamqali is pursuing practical nursing, and what her family said to her has not changed her mind.

Shamqali stated she worked for a nonprofit agency after high school and traveled to the U. S. for training. Shamqali stated she met her husband when she was in the U. S. for training. Her husband is a truck driver and someone she thought her mother would not approve of for her to marry. Her mother did give her blessing but did not think it was a good match at first. Shamqali stated it was very difficult when she first came to the U. S. to live because of the language barrier, the transportation, the weather, and culture shock. She described how differently they treat grown-ups in Africa versus the U. S. If there was a younger person riding on a bus and an older person would get on, in Africa the younger person would give up his or her seat for the older person. Shamqali stated that something else that is different is that they do not look people in the eye back in Africa because it is seen as a sign of respect. She stated she had to get used to looking people in the eye when she went to job interviews.

When she came to the U. S. to be with her husband, she volunteered at a mosque so she was not so bored and going out of her mind. When she finally received her work

authorization, she obtained a job at a bank counting money and then for the University of Minnesota conducting computer training.

She stated when she decided to go back to school, she chose nursing over computers because she was interested in the field, she would be able to use her nurturing skills, the job opportunities and availability of jobs are favorable, and she was expected, as the youngest child, to take care of her mother. Her family was very supportive of her going to school. Her sister in Africa even said that Shamqali should let her raise her child while she went to college. Shamqali said she could not imagine being without her child. Shamqali stated she likes and does well in math and writing. She stated she is going to finish her prerequisites for practical nursing, then get into and complete the practical nursing program, then onto liberal arts, and then go on for a bachelor's degree in nursing. Shamqali stated she misses her homeland, especially the call to prayer – it calls people home to eat and pray. Family revolves around eating and praying in her home country, and she wants to be part of that again when the fighting subsides.

Summary

In this chapter, I provided narrative summaries of the seven participants and one pilot participant who were interviewed. I attempted to capture the most poignant details of each participant's story that was relayed to me through her interviews, recognizing that a summary of a person's life is a mere snapshot into that person's world.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

Theme Development

In order to identify the themes from the participant interviews, I followed a qualitative analysis process. According to Creswell (2007), narrative inquiry focuses on exploring the lives of individuals and is best suited for those who need to tell their stories. Exploring life histories or narratives can, "...illustrate the uniqueness, dilemmas, and complexities of a person in such a way that it causes readers to reflect upon themselves and to bring their own situations and questions to the story" (Glesne, 2011, p. 20). Reinharz & Chase (2003) cautioned, "...that although all women's experiences are gendered, no two women's experiences are identical" (p. 73).

The themes identified in this chapter were found as a result of hearing and listening to the Somali women refugee students' stories and identifying the similar messages, recognizing that each person's experience and life is uniquely different. In this chapter, I will describe briefly how I arrived at the themes that emerged from this study (a detailed explanation of the theme development process is found in Chapter III), outline each of the themes with evidence from the participant stories, and provide an analyses summary of the research.

Theme Development Process

I followed the theme development process as explained by Seidman (2006) when developing the themes that surfaced from the data gathered in this study. I read through the transcripts, marked what was of interest or meaningful, grouped the marked passages that were similar, and then studied the groupings to find thematic connections. This simplified explanation of the process is not a reflection of the amount of time that was spent in reviewing the transcripts, marking the meaningful units, grouping the meaningful units, and then studying the groupings for themes that emerged. The process of developing themes was very thoughtful and time-consuming. A more detailed account of the theme development process is found in Chapter III.

Themes

I uncovered the following themes as a result of the qualitative analysis process in the exploration of what factors influence Somali women refugee students' lives and program decisions. The themes discovered were: 1) family is central and supportive, 2) life was and is difficult, 3) lack of English language skills is a significant barrier, 4) education is essential for improving their lives, 5) helping others is important, 6) educational supportive assistance is helpful, and 7) cultural influences have an impact.

Theme One: Family is Central and Supportive

This theme was found among all eight participants. In this theme, "family" encompassed immediate family members and extended family members including grandparents, cousins, uncles, aunts, and foster parents. Family was considered central in their lives in that family members took care of each other, not only through daily care-

giving activities but also through life guidance and financial support. Family was the key in always being there to support and to be supported.

Evidence of this theme was found through the conversations of the participants. The participants spoke about how they lived in close quarters with their families, whether it was in their home country, a refugee camp, or the U. S.

Zenab spoke of how in her home country her family was everything to her—how they all lived together in small living quarters, how they all helped out with certain tasks in the home, how they started up a small business together to survive, and how they would all chip in to help each other out when they needed to buy something. She explained how her uncle who lived in the United States stepped in after her father was killed to sponsor the family to come to America.

Shalambood relayed how when her family ended up in a refugee camp in Kenya, her cousin who had a lot of money helped them out financially. She also stated how her family helped her start up a small business in the refugee camp cooking and selling sambusa and other Somali favorites, “My momma she helped me, too, and other two sisters, all of us.” After Shalambood had been in the U. S. for a time and she was laid off from employment, her cousin was there to help her and sent her son to live with her in the Midwest.

Shalambood stated her son called her and told her he wanted to stay close to his cousins because, “A lot of cousins here. I can play.” She ended up moving to the Midwest with her little sister to stay with her cousin until she was able to get her family situated. Shalambood stated that her family in the U. S. supports some of her family

members who are located in Ethiopia by sending money to them. They are waiting for immigration to open up again so they can send for them to come to the U. S.

Nimo remembered the times when her family—which included her family, her mother’s sister, her father’s sister, her grandmother, and grandfather—would all come together to eat and the grandparents would talk to them about the old days, show home videos, and everyone would listen and watch. She remembered they would eat sambusa—a traditional Somalian pastry stuffed with potatoes and meat that she particularly liked to make for her family. Her memories of family revolved around family coming together to hear about their past and share food. When Nimo’s family left Somalia and lived in Kenya, her brother sent money to the family so they could live. Her brother finally saved up enough money to sponsor her family to come to the U. S. and helped support them when they first arrived with housing, food, and finding jobs.

Sabrina provided information about her family, which was quite large. Her father had over 60 children, as he always would have four wives at a time—her mother alone had 14 children. All of her brothers and sisters lived together in one room. Her uncle, who was about her age, also lived with them because his dad (their grandfather) and his mother died. Sabrina recalls how loving her mother was, “...I remember we used to all sleep on her. Like she would lay down and then everybody like sleeps on the side so she was really nice... I loved her. I loved my dad, too. Since he was never home we all wanted to see him when he comes home. But my mom was like my favorite.”

Sabrina spoke about how when her family would look after each other. She stated that when they would go outside, “...nobody touch any of us because if somebody touch anybody then we all would go to that person and beat them up.” She further stated that

what was funny about that was, “So we used to look out for each other outside the house, but inside the house we would kill each other.”

Sabrina yearns for the family she lost and dreams one day of reuniting with them and living in a big house, “...I always have a dream it would be a nice big house with a big backyard with all of my siblings, all of my family...I always dream of that nice house, that’s the place that I go every time that I have problems... I just picture that nice house and I think that just gets easy.”

Sagal said that her sister came to the U. S. first and supported her family by sending them money to buy food and pay bills in the refugee camp. She stated that they were able to move out of the refugee camp to a better place with the financial support of her sister. She said that then her sister was able to sponsor her family to come to the U.S. Sagal further stated that what she wanted to do when she grew up was to be a very good person for her family and support them.

Zaytun said her aunt’s brother sponsored her, her aunt, and three of her siblings to come to the U. S. to get a better life and education and, “...start all over again.” Zaytun stated that her family always supported her and said to her, “...whatever you do, you will do your best of it.”

Zaytun shared information regarding how she balanced school and making time for her children, “...if I come from school I just focus on my kids and doing all that stuff...When I at school I finish everything there... Because when I come home I have to be with my kids. Put the hat, parent hat, you know, forget about the student role and I have to change.”

Sabrina II stated how her family was helpful and supportive when they first came to the U. S., “The minute we would come from school we would talk about homework and how our day was and everything. We all come together and talk about it and they’ll give you some ideas of what you should do or you should not do...”

Shamqali spoke about how her mother raised ten children as a single mom because her dad had died. She stated that her mom had no educational background and had to live off the savings from their dad. She also stated that her oldest sister helped her mom financially.

Shamqali stated how she rearranged her course schedule in college to make sure she could pick up her daughter from school to be able to keep connected with her, “When I come home I come home late and I ask her ‘How was school?’ ‘Fine.’ She won’t say much. But when I go at school, she will tell me ‘Oh, I did this. I did this and this and that happened.’ That’s the part I like about my life. That was one of the conditions I had to make when I was starting college.”

Theme Two: Life Was and Is Difficult

All of the participants spoke about the war and how it affected them. The women described their experiences living in conditions where gunshots and fighting happened often. They spoke of the difficulties of living in refugee camps and the difficult transition of living in the U. S. Some of them initially yearned to go back home because of being disillusioned by how they believed life was going to be different in the U. S., and in some circumstance they experienced difficult living conditions, difficulty in transitioning to the weather, food, and transportation system.

Life was difficult. The women spoke of the difficult and dangerous situations they experienced in their home country and sites of displacement.

Zenab described how life in Somalia had been very difficult and dangerous, “Over there, we come from a really poor country. Basically you would survive even for the day...It was never peaceful. People were killing each other.”

Shalambood spoke of when her family escaped to a refugee camp one night – when men with guns came and took her father away and shot and killed two of her brothers and her uncle. She stated:

...Yeah coming inside with the gun...And they take the backside...they hit me, my daddy, my uncle, everybody and we say, “What do you want?” And they say, “We looking for this guy,” That’s my daddy. “What happened?” “He have the deal with government,” because he make the shoes and all types of leather like this one. And say, “So what if he make? What happened?” “No, no, no, everybody belong to the government,” they have to kill. We cry. We cry and a lot of people come in and they make it separate my momma and all the girls and boys... They separated everybody... My sister and my brother are looking at my momma, “What happened? What happened?”... And my daddy say, “If you wanted me take me. Leave my family alone. “Alone! Alone!”... They take my daddy inside the car and my uncle he run out of the... Running after they shot him... and my two brothers... they run out... and they shot two brothers.

She further explained how they escaped in their jeep and traveled to Kenya:

...Everybody put inside the car our food, all the things we found, but in the middle of the road they stop us... We run and again they stop... They say, "Okay, I know you. I know this Jeep. Everybody knows this Jeep." And we say, "What can we do?" And the other people they come in the other cars coming behind the dark car and they talk. When they talk to each other they say, "This is kids and woman, leave it"... A couple of nights we sit, we leave, we sit, we leave... I said, "Momma, we're not surviving nothing. Give up"... because we saw the all the road is the blood... Old women, pregnant, old, lots and lots of bad things... And then we come in the Kenya... and see the sun and we sleep and say, "Oh, we safe." We safe because nobody after us.

Even though they escaped a dangerous situation in Somalia, Shalambood also revealed that life in the refugee camp was also dangerous. She stated that:

...sometimes when we sleep in the night the people they come inside the tent. They take the food or girl or something like that... And we fight one time... because if you don't fight you are gone... the middle of the night the boys come in because they don't have nothing. Maybe they rape the girls or – and take the food or the things. And the day we sleeping. Night we not sleep, we watch.

What Sabrina remembered about her home country was, "A lot of gunshots, a lot of fighting, but other than that it was nice." She stated:

I remember going to the market and I would see somebody... somebody just gets shot like somebody gets shot through the leg. There will be a dead body and nobody is going to be like freaking out like people are over here. So everybody sees it as normal...

She recalled that one time her dad was in a fight, and the other people came to their house and started shooting, "...the bullets would come through the wall and we all had to just lie down and wait for it to just finish."

Sabrina commented that due to her father's absence, her mother provided for the family, and she sewed clothes, mats, and carpet in order to make money. She also did not remember her mother eating food because they did not have much:

...I never actually seen her sitting down and eating something... Maybe she ate it when she was cooking. I'm not sure, but we didn't have that much so I don't know. Maybe she let us eat most of the food and not have any herself...

Sabrina recounted a difficult life-changing event. Her dad gave her and her uncle some money to go buy some candy, and they were told by her father not to go the market that day because there was a lot of fighting going on. They ended up going anyway, and they saw a lot of dead bodies as they dodged bullets and ran back home. By the time they got back to their home, no one was there. The neighbor saw them crying outside their home and ended up taking them to a refugee camp in South Africa where he thought they would be reconnected with their family, which was not the case. She was by herself in the refugee camp and then placed with many different families who would get extras for her and many times not share with her. Sabrina stated she would provide for herself by

working for people—sometimes she would get money, sometimes food, and then sometimes nothing. She liked going to school because she would get fed there, and she dreaded the weekends because she wasn't sure if she was going to get fed. She stated, "So I hated the weekends... No school. That means no food... So I used to love weekdays. I would love it so much on weekdays." Sabrina spoke about how jobs were not available in Africa, and many people just created their own jobs.

Sabrina stated that her parents wanted her to get married when she got older and:

...I don't think they had any dreams... for me because in place we lived all... I think all they kind of hoped for is us to live, you know... to be alive until we were 20 or something like that but the kind of place we lived in it was always... it was dangerous.

Sagal stated that what she remembered about her home country was the gun shooting. She said that her uncle and aunt died from gunshots and her dad decided to move their family to Kenya, "We were there. We were struggling. We didn't know anybody. We don't have much money." She also stated that, "...family has to watch kids... Well, anything can happen. Somebody would steal you – or – kill – kill you. Hurt you..."

Zaytun stated what she remembered, "...is just running away...just leave everything behind and we just left." She recalled how her mother died in the refugee camp, "...In Kenya I remember very well, uh, because, uh, my mom got sick... and then she died there."

Sabrina II spoke about how dangerous it was to walk to school because of the wild dogs and people who would kidnap children. She stated:

It was dark, no bus, no nothing and like I said those dogs chase you or sometimes some, okay, this is the weird part... Um, there are like some humans that are there, while you're walking in the dark they'll get poison and put it in your nose or... try to get you to steal you... Kidnap you...they will put you in their car and you leave forever. You will never see your parents. So that has happened to one of my friends.

Life is difficult. The women spoke about how after coming to the United States in spite of their excitement and hope to start a new life, they found that they continued to struggle and found life extremely difficult.

Zenab spoke about how difficult life was in the United States when she came:

Yeah. Still it's like when my two sisters and brothers came to the U.S.—I was 18 at that time. They used to live with me and I went to high school and then I went to look for another job to support them while they came to the U.S.A. I used to take care of their rent or whatever...So I dropped them at day camp, I got my high school done, and looked for another job. I worked two jobs over there and then I went to adult education to support my English or whatever. Then when they turned 18, they moved out...People have fun when they are little and have a teenage life and memories, but my teenage life was taking care of my brothers and sisters.

She also shared that she found a position in a physically taxing job at a meat factory to survive. The work was so exhausting and the working environment was very depressing, but she stayed there because she needed the money to live.

Shalambood described how she first felt when she came to America. She stated, “Now we are heaven. We are heaven... We’re in heaven. No more crime, no more problem.” The reality set in, and she continued to experience a difficult life, “But when I come Seattle no food, no house, nothing I come crazy... It’s a fight.” Shalambood stated that besides the long commutes to work, she endured very long, hard days at physical jobs. She stated she thought frequently, “What’s this life? What’s this life?... I was so, so bad when I coming home tired. I cannot cook anything...” Her family noticed how the hard jobs were affecting her. Her son and sister asked her, “What’s going on? Somebody bother you there?” Shalambood stated she told them, “No, too much trouble there. I cannot be happy when I come home.”

Nimo experienced being in the U. S. as difficult because things were different than in Africa, such as the need to wear jackets and shoes, and the need to be able to drive a car. She also mentioned how the food was different in the U. S. as compared to Africa in that the food was very fresh in Africa and there was always time to cook. Nimo stated when she came to the U. S., she worked in a meat factory, which was very, very hard physical work, and she could only handle that kind of work six months. She then took on two jobs—one in janitorial and the other in home health. She eventually dropped the janitorial work and then just worked the home health job and went to school.

Sabrina stated that when she first came to the U. S., she was supposed to go into foster care, but she ended up with her cousin. Her cousin could not have her live with her as she lived in Section Eight housing, so Sabrina applied for and accepted a cashier’s job and moved in with a few young women who were working and on their own.

Zaytun said when she first came to the U. S., she was excited, but everything was really different and not what she expected, "...because I was thinking everything is easy, then when I see everything I just shut down... I didn't want to learn anything. I was just so afraid like how you going to adapt..." She further stated, "I think my Africa is better than here where I could just do whatever I want..."

Shamqali remembered how difficult things were when she came to the U. S.:

Oh, I don't think I remember now, but it was hard. That I remember. It was really hard adjusting to this life and driving and from Point A to Point B and the winters, especially the winter. Waited for a bus for the winter. That was the horrible part, standing on the bus stop and I don't know anyone.

Theme Three: Lack of English Language Skills is a Significant Barrier

All eight of the women discussed how difficult life was because of their lack of English language skills. They conveyed instances in their lives regarding how not being able to communicate in English effectively presented barriers in being understood, and how that situation was very frustrating and depressing, and posed difficulties in finding employment.

Zenab explained how difficult understanding the English language was when they first arrived, and it continues to be difficult, but she is not giving up. She explained that even though English was her second language, she always tells herself that in order to go to school, she has to pass the classes, and if that means going to the library or tutor, she will do it.

Shalambood recalled the difficulty that her lack of English skills was a barrier to obtaining employment. She stated she spoke to someone who was hiring at the airlines, and she told him:

I need this job for the push the wheelchair because I cannot speak English and I told you my problem, the way I survive from that time up to now. I need this job, please, I beg you.

Shalambood stated that the jobs were so physically hard, coupled with her lack of English, that she thought:

...my happiness is gone... when I come to America and I see the life, the way you cannot speak English, looking for how you survive, you and your babies. I stopped for that talking and laughing and all that things.

Sabrina spoke about how she was better at reading English than speaking English due to the fact that many of the textbooks used in Africa were in English, but she did not know how to pronounce words, so reading was easier than speaking. Her foster parents would initially communicate with her by actually writing things down on paper and giving her the notes to read, and she eventually got better at speaking but struggled significantly.

Sagal stated that, "It was hard for me because I didn't know the language."

Sabrina II also mentioned how difficult things were because her lack of English skills:

When I came here everybody is speaking English, so it's very hard to understand them... I'd go home every day, read, do anything to learn English. Watch TV, watch cartoons and I finally did... And when you

don't speak English they make fun of you, "Oh, look, she doesn't speak English. Look what she's doing." That really did hurt me...

Shamqali spoke about how English was a barrier for her when she came to the U. S.:

And when I speak, I'm speaking English of course, but people would say, "What? Come again," and I got frustrated. I would go to a job interview and it would be like "What is that?" When you're trying to explain what you say it is hard for people to understand where you come from and what's your experience. When you keep explaining after a while you just say, "It was hard."

She further stated:

So it was hard, especially the language barrier. I was speaking English, but that was the hardest part. And thinking like oh, I know English, I can live here; I understand people and then bam! You don't know English. You do, but that's different English.

Theme Four: Education is Essential for Improving Their Lives

All eight participants identified education as being key or essential to a better life. The participants or their family members experienced jobs that were very physically taxing. They mentioned several times how through education, life would be better.

This theme also was identified as one of the factors that influenced program decisions, although not the program specifically. In order to carve out a better life for themselves and their families, the participants relayed emphatically the fact that they needed to get an education to move onward and upward.

Zenab stated:

What makes me to get education is like... I don't want to live with assisted Government. I just want to be a financial dependent. When you have kids, it's different. I just want to give a better life to my kids. That's what convinced me to go back to college.

and also:

My mom always said 'Go to school.'... My mom, she always liked school—she said always... My mom always said 'Forget about money and everything. Money comes and goes' she said 'Have education.' I tell my mom my husband graduated and she said 'It's your husband,' but there's no guarantee we're going to live the rest of our lives together. But she said 'You need to get your own education. Just go to school.'

In spite of her past in Somalia, early experiences in the U. S., and gender-related cultural influences, Zenab reiterated many times throughout the interviews how education would lead to a better life, not only for her but for her family.

Shalambood decided that the extremely hard factory work was not the life she wanted, and she said she came to the realization about her circumstances, "Hey, this is no life. You have to go back to school." She further explained that, "If you don't have education you cannot get the good job. You cannot get the respect even."

Nimo stated that the hard work she endured was not life. She further stated that, "If you go to school, you understand something, then life is easier. Life is easier with school." Her family encouraged her to stop her job and go to school.

Sagal stated that she was focusing on education because it would lead to a better job. She stated, "...other people, like, who doesn't have education – all they have to do, like...they have to accept every work...If it's cleaning, you have to accept it because you don't have education." She also stated that, "Everybody, like, always told me, 'Okay, you go to school. Yes. I wish I had the time you have.'"

Nimo explained how she had to go to school, "...because the work's not life. If you go to school, you understand something then life is easy."

Zaytun stated that:

All I wanted to do, it's like I want to be an educated person... Education is very important because I didn't have the opportunity, so every time I get opportunity I used to go for it.

Sabrina II also stated how important education was:

...Jobs are not that – like you can't stick with them. You might get tired, you might get fired, your family might move, so you move with them, but a degree will help you get any kind of a job, whatever you major in. So I said college is really important.

Shamqali explained how important education was to her:

I feel like I'm learning and at the same time I'm finding myself, my old self, like you knew this. You know these things. And I feel energized sometimes. I'm over the top about school right now.

Theme Five: Helping Others is Important

In this theme, helping others includes helping individuals and ultimately one day the home country family. Six of the eight participants spoke about how they selected their

program of study because they wanted to help others or use their nurturing skills. Five of the women spoke about how they were pursuing nursing, two were pursuing education, and one dental hygiene—all helping professions. Four of the women had higher aspirations than nursing but saw nursing as a stepping stone into the health professional world to move on and up to pursue medicine and become doctors. Six of the participants mentioned that one day after they received their training and after the fighting subsides, they would like to go back and help those in their home country.

This theme also was identified as one of the factors that influenced program decisions. The women stated that they chose their programs of choice in order to help others—all programs chosen were clustered in the health and human service field.

Zenab stated she dreamed that one day she would complete her education and ultimately change the world. She stated, “I don’t want to be only in nursing—I just want to be a midwife in the future. So if I’m able to, I want to take care of the patients. I’m a very kind person when someone is sick or even if—I’m really helpful and I’m very kind. I decided to be in nursing and change the world—help people...”

Shalambood stated that she liked to help old people, and others noticed that she was a very helpful person. She stated when she was taking care of some elderly women one of the women asked her if she could go home with her and told her she was good. Shalambood stated she wants to become a teacher, in particular a history teacher. She explained that she loves learning about history and pursues opportunities to research, read, and watch TV about historical topics. She mentioned that she was also influenced to become a teacher from a chemistry teacher she had who was very respectful of the

students and made sure everybody understood what they were learning—she wanted to be like her in those respects.

Nimo stated she was going into nursing to help her family and her country. She also mentioned that she wanted to pursue nursing, “I like for nursing for help the child... I want to help... if they’re sick or something sad...”

Sabrina remembered her mother teaching her how to help others by giving food to others even when she might not have had enough food to feed her own family. Regarding her program of choice, Sabrina stated she started college right away after completing high school in the U. S. and is going into nursing. She stated she has always wanted to go into something with medicine her whole life. She stated:

Because considering my back...my home country – There isn’t a lot of doctors. People will just rot to death so I was thinking I would do something to do with medicine. Maybe in the future if I go back there I can help people.

Sagal stated she was going into nursing:

Because nursing, I see that – it will – it will help me in my, like – back home, we don’t have much of a nurse. So I’m thinking of it in the future. I may go back to my country. And help those people who needs help.

Sagal stated that “...I really like nurse because it’s like they’re helping people and I want to help people” and “Helping other people is very nice.”

Sabrina II stated it was important for her to go into dental hygiene because it's: ...a health program where you help people...make them feel good, make them have a better health...dental hygiene is a good program that can help most of the people back in my country where they really need it.

Zaytun shared that she is entering the field of early childhood because:

I want to help in early age so that they can be independent and you know, be confident and then they can, if we teach them at a young age and they can be people that can read or you know, write and become successful...

She also stated that she wants to pursue education to be a role model for her kids and also to help other people, "Education is very important to me. When you don't have education you don't know a lot. So when you have education you're open-minded, you know, and you can help other people..."

Sabrina II spoke about wanting to be a doctor or nurse because she wanted to help people. She stated:

...I've always wanted to help the sick people in Nairobi and Kenya cause there are not that many doctors or hospitals there... I've always wanted to help the sick people because there are so many sick people that live in Africa and they need help.

Shamqali mentioned that she was taking up nursing to ultimately help her mother and use her nurturing skills.

Theme Six: Educational Supportive Assistance is Helpful

All eight participants identified individuals who supported and encouraged them in their educational pursuits. This theme is similar to the *education is essential for*

improving their lives theme but emerged as a strong theme on its own. The focus of this theme is the support others provided to the participants through positive comments to the participant when divulging the idea of attending college and/or actions supporting college attendance. This theme may also provide insight into what actions or services may be helpful in supporting women immigrant students.

Zenab explained how supportive her husband was of her attending college. She stated that she supported him when he went to college and now it was her turn. He even changed his schedule to work nights in order to be able to take care of the children while she took classes. She stated that they would not be able to continue these types of arrangements back in her home country because women and men were supposed to do certain things, and taking care of children was considered women's work.

Shalambood explained that her son was supportive in her education pursuits stating:

“Mom, please go back to school.” He see me. I talking for the doctor or some woman. He say, “This is not talk for the American people... Go back school.”

Nimo stated that her family was very supportive in attending college, “You have to stop job. You have to go to school.”

Sabrina described how her foster parents were supportive of her pursuing college: “Yeah all my foster parents were really supportive of me coming over here and they really helped me a lot. My foster-father took a big part in it, he wanted me to go to college, he wanted me to basically keep on going with my school. And obviously he had more experience than I did and he

helped me in that direction and he always asked me how well I'm doing, he has my student login, he checks my grades.

Sagal explained how supportive her family was when she decided to go to college:

Well, my family, they were happy. They were like "Okay, go for it." You know? So you decide it's very good to do it and you have a chance to do it, so. Don't lose your opportunity.

Zaytun stated how supportive her family, especially her husband, was when she told him she was going to go to college:

...they were very supportive, especially my husband is very supportive.

And it's like, "I'll help you as long as, you know, whatever I can." And he was babysitting with the kids when I had, you know, when I don't have a babysitter that day...

Sabrina II spoke about how her teachers in high school were very supportive of education:

Teachers really like they tell you a lot of stuff about college and how life is without college. You'll not survive. I mean some people do, but the majority of the people don't 'cause it's where you like... get your future life together.

Sabrina II also spoke about how her family was very proud and supportive of her going to college:

Oh my dad was like so proud of me and my mom, too, and my brother, too, that graduated from the Universty of Mankato. 'Cause he already

finished college. He knows everything about it. He is so excited for me.

‘Cause on my dad’s side, I’m like the oldest one and I’m the only one who’s started college right now.

Shamqali spoke about how her niece was very supportive of her in pursuing college:

And she helped me a lot. She has two kids. I help her, but I see only my side because she helps me a lot, like she picks my daughter in the morn-, evening. Most of the evenings I have late evenings in school, so she picks her up. And whenever she’s shopping, I give her my card and she will shop for me. We don’t have all of us to go out. I keep the... I’ll watch the kids. She will shop or she will watch the kids and I will shop.

Helpful, she’s very helpful.

Theme Seven: Cultural Influences Have an Impact

Six of the eight participants identified circumstances in which their culture has impacted their lives. They spoke about differences in gender roles, their Muslim faith, and how they try to negotiate within the differences in the United States.

This theme also was identified as one of the factors that influenced program decisions. All of the programs that the women chose were programs that have traditionally been sought out by women – nursing, teaching, and dental hygiene.

Zenab spoke about how men could be married to four wives at a time in Somalia and that some men in the United States still have more than one wife. She spoke about how there were definite gender roles within the family regarding wife and husband expectations. She stated that she and her husband would not be able to carry on in

Somalia as they do in the United States with the swapping of gender roles such as her husband watching their children so she might attend her college classes. Her family at times would call her and her husband “Americans” or “Christians” because they were conducting their lives differently than if they were living in Somalia. Zenab spoke of how different the culture was in Somalia, “...in my culture we believe that men have more power. Women stay at home. That’s the way we grew up in our culture—even right now that’s what it’s like... a woman has to stay home unless you have education and you have something to do in the cities.”

Zenab also mentioned when she got her first job at a retail store in the U. S., she had a hard time understanding the concept of price, which was typically set and non-negotiable, which was very different in Somalia, where everything was seen as negotiable.

Shalambood described how the boys and girls were supposed to play separately, but they did not always abide by the rules. She stated when she came home one time from playing by the ocean, “...when I come back home, my mama, she asking me, ‘I know... I know you hiding something.’ I say, ‘Mom, what I’m hiding?’ She say, ‘You play with the boys, right?’ and I say yes.” Shalambood stated that boys and girls were not supposed to play together unless there was an adult supervising the activity.

Shalambood explained that in her culture men can have more than one wife – no more than four wives at a time. A man from a long time ago found her on Facebook, and he has asked her to move to Kuwait and be his second wife. Her long lost love told her that he had been trying to find her, and even though his wife told him to forget her, that his family would be happy if he had her. Shalambood’s friends told her not to go because

the other wife would beat her. Shalambood told them she did not care if the other wife would beat her and stated, “If she fights with me I have to fight back.” Shalambood stated that even though the Muslim religion allowed men to marry four wives, her father only had one wife, which was counter to cultural influence. She remembered her father telling her it was silly to have more than one wife, and he never wanted more than one wife was because they loved each other and that was why he did not go looking for someone else. She remembered her father telling her, “If you get someone you love him or love you, then stay with that person. You don’t need...one bird flying everywhere is no good.”

Nimo stated that in Africa, women could not go to jobs as they were to take care of the children and the home—the home is the mother—and that was the culture. She also stated that if women wanted a job, nobody would say stop, but most people did not like to go outside the home for work. Nimo stated that her mother stayed home with the children and took care of the home, and her father worked as a tutor at the school.

Sabrina commented on her father’s absence due to the fact that he had always kept four wives at a time and with each marriage a younger wife. She remembered her mother would take them to her dad’s weddings. She stated she liked going because she would get to dress up and eat some food, but her oldest sister did not like them and never went to them. She said that her mother would help with the food and dress the new wife because it was part of the culture, and it was something that just happened over there. She also said that her mom did not have any problems with the other wives, but some of the wives would spit on her mom’s face, and her mom never did anything about it—she never spit back or yelled at them. Sabrina stated that her dad would divorce a wife and replace her if she started complaining about the other wives or started fighting with the

other wives. Sabrina commented on how she did not understand why her mom had to put up with the situation, saying, “But I guess that was the culture.”

Sabrina also mentioned that if children went to school, typically the boys were the ones selected to attend, “...actually my parents didn’t think girls should go to school... Boys used to go... and all the girls, including me, wanted to go...”

Zaytun spoke about how precious Ramadan was to her and her family in Africa. She remembered the food and how family gathered together to celebrate the special religious event. Her family would share what they had with others who did not have anything to eat. She further stated that she tries to send money to friends and family back in Africa during Ramadan.

Shamqali spoke about how her big sister gave her advice regarding how things were in their culture regarding marriage:

...If mom choose anyone for you, that’s who you going to marry. You’re not going to have your own opinion. Put that in your head. I know you are opinionated but put that in your head right now. It’s good for you.

Shamqali pointed out how she needed to change a cultural influence that impacted her:

Like if you, if I talk to someone like this it’s disrespectful, especially when you’re looking for a job or somebody in authority position. You don’t look at them in the eye...It’s like you are, um, like it’s disrespectful kind of... In the U.S. when I was getting to train I went for small trainings for interviews after I had a lot of disappointment. I had to go through trainings and job trainings at the Workforce... And they told me look in the eye.

When you're talking you look them in the eye and you say... Then they will understand and be like, 'Yep, she is serious. She means this.' But if you look down like you are lying or something... in the U.S. But back home it's disrespectful... you have to be submissive or something.

Shamqali also spoke about she also chose nursing because of a cultural responsibility:

So I just thought okay, maybe do nursing for, just for your mom, you take care of her, because I'm the last one... Like the last born always take care, takes care of the parents.

Research Analyses

The themes that emerged from hearing the stories of the women Somali refugee students were winnowed summaries of their similar experiences yet unique in that their own stories consisted of specific individual details and contextual factors. Stebleton (2007) and Young (2003) also researched African immigrants and discovered that in spite of their great diversity, they found unique needs and issues due to a shared history and philosophy. The following section is an analysis of the research conducted including each theme and how it is observed in the literature.

Theme One Analysis – Family is Central and Supportive

The theme *family is central and supportive* was found to be prevalent in research conducted by others who have studied immigrant populations (Chen, Gunderson, & Seror, 2005; Fuligni & Pederson, 2002; Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam, 1999; Fuligni & Witkow, 2004; Maramba, 2008; Ogbonnaya, 1994; Stebleton, 2004, Sutherland, 2011). Fuligni and Witkow (2004) found through their quantitative study that immigrant youth as

compared to U. S. born youth were more likely to support their families financially and more likely to live with them. Chen, Gunderson, and Seror (2005) not only found that family was supportive but also tied the support to student resilience. Maramba (2008) found through qualitative interviews with Filipina American students that family or parent influence was one of the themes that emerged and influenced their daily lives. Fuligni, Tseng, and Lam (1999) found through interviews with 800 Filipino, Mexican, Central and South American, and European students that the Latin American and Asian participants held stronger values and expectations than the students with European backgrounds regarding their duty to support, assist, and respect their families. In research conducted by Fuligni and Pederson (2002) with ethnically diverse populations, "...even in an American society and a developmental period characterized by autonomy and independence, Filipino and Latin American young adults retain their families' traditional emphasis on instrumental assistance and respect to parents and siblings" (p.864). Sutherland (2011) interviewed African immigrant males, and one of the findings referenced the importance of spheres of influence with familial ties and how that sphere of influence was an important factor in academic achievement.

Stebleton (2007) stated in his work that, "The meaning of personhood in African societies is centered within the family and community—not in the individual, as is true in most Western cultures" (p. 295). The view that is referred to as collectivism, or the person is seen as a community (Ogbannaya, 1994; Young, 2003), and is prevalent in African culture in which family is considered central. What Young (2003) describes as *kinship* in African society is a reflection of the theme *family is central and supportive* in the research I conducted. Young (2003) describes *kinship* as a strong system in African

culture where relationships extend both laterally, vertically and among the dead and unborn. There are expectations that those who are considered family are there to support and provide aid if needed.

In a study conducted on immigrants in Minnesota, Mattessich (2000) reported that Somali refugees indicated the most stress associated with being separated from family and friends which highlighted the importance and supportive nature of my observed family theme—*family is central and supportive*.

An interesting phenomenon that I did see in my research tied to this theme as did other researchers was the balancing act of keeping family central and maintaining educational responsibilities. Even though in my research I found that family was central and supportive, at times the students struggled to keep up with both. Kim and Diaz (2013) stated that “Familial obligations may also act as a double-edged sword in college adjustment, as immigrant students can feel a sense of duty to contribute financially to the family along with great pressure to succeed academically” (p. 62). Stebleton (2007) found that:

Many African immigrant students will experience conflicting messages from their African culture and the newly encountered Western, Eurocentric culture. There is a profound difference between the two worldviews in the emphasis and value placed on the collective good versus that of the individual. The meaning of personhood in African societies is centered within the family and community not in the individual, as is true in most Western cultures. Therefore, in African societies, the concept of a career is relational and socially embedded, with

the focus on the other. In most African societies, it is the community that helps to shape and define the person (p. 295).

Even though familial obligations of immigrant students could be seen as an academic impediment, it also has been cited as a source of academic motivation and contributor to well-being (Fuglini, 2006). Even though the research is limited with Somali women refugee students, the theme *family is central and supportive* was found to exist in other research with immigrant populations, African immigrants, and African immigrant students.

Theme Two Analysis – Life Was and Is Difficult

The theme *life was and is difficult* was also reported in other articles and research conducted on immigrant populations. The stories of survivors living in a country where civil war was happening around them, their family members being injured or killed, and living in refugee camps has been chronicled in many resources regarding the war in Somalia. After escaping the life-threatening dangers in their home country, many immigrants relayed experiences of being disillusioned after arrival to the U. S. and how hard the life was once they arrived and how they continue to struggle.

Herlinger's (2012) article highlighted how the theme *life was difficult* was also observed as many comments from the individuals interviewed resonated with my own research participants' stories. The road of death to Kenya that was described by Herlinger's participants was also described by some of my research participants. Difficult living conditions such as not having enough to eat were also cited by Herlinger (2012).

Korn (2004) also experienced and reported family deaths as a result of the civil war, which was similarly reported in my research:

And Somalia burst into war. TV showed militia—young men with weapons raging through the capital, shooting. We saw refugees, children with faces distorted by fear, and we saw corpses strewn along the roadsides. The news agencies described fighting between guerillas and the army, massacres and blood baths... A female cousin was caught by marauding rebels, tied to the fenders of two cars, and pulled to pieces. My favorite cousin Said and innumerable male family members were killed, the women raped, an aunt stoned (p. 147).

She also chronicled how blood feuds broke out:

In Somalia, blood feuds reign. Whenever men of one tribe are killed, survivors feel obliged to avenge their deaths by murdering as many members of the offending tribe as possible. Once all the men have been disposed of, it's the women's turn: If pregnant, they risk having their bellies slit to ensure that no child, especially no son, is born. The killing never stops (Korn, 2004, p. 148).

One of the themes that emerged from the research of Nilsson, Barazanji, Heintzelman, Siddiqi, & Shilla (2012) was similar to the *life was difficult* theme in my study. They discovered a theme titled *concerns about children*, which was further divided into two subcategories, one being, *premigration trauma*. *Premigration trauma* was explained as a concern that Somali parents expressed as a result of their children seeing and experiencing extensive death and destruction as they left their home country which was similar to my observed *life was difficult* theme (Nilson, Baranji, Heintzelman, Siddiqi, & Shilla, 2012).

Jaranson et al. (2004) found results from their study that was also observed through my participant interviews, as all but six of the 1134 the participants in Jaranson's study reported experiencing traumatic experiences, such as having a child die, starvation, injuries from torture, and family having to stay behind. Life continues to be hard through the other experiences as identified in the research, those being: *Has difficulty caring for monthly expenses, Has hard time understanding American life, Feels stress living in United States, Has thoughts of killing self, Has no good work opportunities in United States, and Has trouble sleeping* (Jaranson et al., 2004).

The United Nations Commission for Refugees (2002) reported similar *life was and is difficult* stories from refugees they interviewed as compared to my participants' accounts. They stated that even though many Somali refugees reported traumatic life events that involved escaping with no food, clothes, or money and watching loved ones being killed, they did not expect to experience major challenges in the United States which led to disillusionment.

McGown's article (2003) highlighted similar stories that were discovered through my research subject interviews regarding how *life was and is difficult* in that the women interviewed experienced the difficulty of being forced to build new lives in new countries, forced to assume the head of household, provide food for the family, and live off of whatever money was sent from family members abroad.

Another theme, *cultural comparisons*, that was observed in the research of Nilsson, Barazanji, Heintzelman, Siddiqi, and Shilla (2012), was similar to the theme *life is difficult* found in my study. They explained that the women in their study spoke about how different the food, climate, children's activities, and gender roles were, with one

participant recalling how she did not have to worry about her children when they played outside in Somalia but now have to watch them closely in the U. S.

The theme *life was and is difficult* that was discovered through my Somali immigrant women student interviews was reinforced through other stories and research found among the limited resources.

Theme Three Analysis – Lack of English Language Skills is a Significant Barrier

The theme *lack of English language skills is a significant barrier* was found to be observed in the literature. Teranishi, Suarez-Orozco, and Suarez-Orozco (2011) found that, "...immigrant students in community colleges have a wide range of language-related needs. In 2006, for example, approximately half of foreign-born adults age twenty-five or older had limited English proficiency" (p. 157) and the improvement of their English-language skills is a great need. Others have also found that English is a significant barrier for immigrants (Callahan, 2005; Jaranson et al., 2004; Mattessich, 2000, Nunez & Sparks, 2012; Terrazas, 2009; Waldorf, Beckhusen, Florax, & deGraaff, 2010; Ward, 2008).

Callahan (2005) found in her study with English learners that the participant population experienced low-level content curriculum in addition to limited exposure to higher education preparatory content. She recommended that in order to counteract the current pattern, "Educators will need to revisit allotments of time and course-taking patterns in an effort to integrate higher levels of language alongside academic content" (Callahan, 2005, p. 324). This finding reiterates that *lack of English language skills is a significant barrier* with English language learners and Callahan's recommendation may

serve as guidance to provide supportive assistance to the Somali women refugee student population.

Jaranson et al. (2004) found that all but six of the 1134 immigrants surveyed were subjected to traumatic experiences. Three of the traumatic experiences found, *Does not speak English easily*, *Does not read English easily*, and *Has problems learning English* correspond to the theme *lack of English language skills is a significant barrier* found in my research.

As previously cited in Chapter II, Mattessich (2000) found through a survey of Somali immigrants, the *English language barrier* was one of top causes of immigration-related stress. On a positive note, Mattessich (2000) also found that Somali immigrants were more likely than Hispanic, Hmong, or Russian immigrants to be taking English courses if they were not "...fully confident in their fluency" (p. 17).

Nunez and Sparks (2012) discovered information regarding the enrollment factors associated with students who come from Linguistic Minority (LM) – non-English speaking in the home—backgrounds. They found that LM students attended two-year colleges at higher rates than four-year colleges, LM students indicated that they were intending to transfer to four-year institutions, and LM students attended part-time. Nunez and Sparks (2012) reinforced through their research that lack of English language skills impacts immigrant students.

Waldorf, Beckhusen, Florax, and deGraaff (2010) studied immigrant English proficiency which they viewed as, "...an important indicator to assimilation." They stated that not speaking the language of the host country might place immigrants in a vulnerable position. Some of their observations were: "...language acquisition is higher for men than

for women, and higher for unmarried than for married immigrants;...the probability of speaking English is increasing with educational attainment levels...” (Waldorf, Beckhusen, Florax, & deGraaff, 2010, p. 48). They also observed that English speaking among immigrant groups varied across locations in the United States and that English language assistance must be directed to those who are “...at the highest risk of being marginalized” (Waldorf, Beckhusen, Florax, & deGraaff, 2010, p. 48). Lack of English skills was also observed to be a significant barrier to other immigrant populations studied.

Ward (2008) identified that the *lack of English language skills was a significant barrier* to Somali women attaining higher education levels, becoming employed, and being successful in society. In one of my interviews, Participant VII: Shamqali also relayed how *lack of English was a significant barrier* for her:

So it was hard, especially the language barrier... I was speaking English, but that was the hardest part. And thinking like oh, I know English, I can live here; I understand people and then bam! You don't know English.

[laughs] You do, but that's different English.

The theme *lack of English language skills is a significant barrier* was discovered through my Somali women refugee student interviews and was also observed through other research conducted.

Theme Four Analysis – Education is Essential for Improving Their Lives

The theme *education is essential for improving their lives* was also observed among other immigrant groups studied (Nilsson, Barazanji, Heintzelman, Siddiqi, & Shilla, 2012). One of the themes that emerged from the research of Nilsson, Barazanji, Heintzelman, Siddiqi, and Shilla (2012) was similar to the *education is essential for*

improving their lives theme. They discovered a theme titled *the future* among the participants, which was described as how important education was to their children's futures and how the participants expressed interest in having their children go back to Somalia educated when it was safe to return (Nilson, Baranji, Heintzleman, Siddiqi, & Shilla, 2012).

Herlinger (2012) also observed that education was central or key in order to do better in life—a theme that was recorded through my participant stories. Chen, Gunderson, and Seror (2005) also found among the East Asian immigrant students they studied that the participants valued education, which they tied to a strongly held cultural belief that was also tied to student resilience. Gibson and Ogbu (1991) observed immigrants using education as an upward mobility strategy rather relying on ethnic peers, which is similar to my finding *education is essential for improving their lives* in this study. Fuligni, Tseng, and Lam (1999) witnessed in their research with immigrant students that the immigrant students had stronger beliefs and aspirations toward the usefulness and significance of higher education than their native-born peers. The similar thread in this research as compared to my research was that education is valued and seen as essential.

Roy and Roxas (2011) found that families or caregivers valued education and supported family members who were in school by calling the school to ask how they were doing, creatively networking with teachers, tutors, volunteers and others who could assist their family members at school, or engaging in storytelling—a community practice—to educate their family members of the importance of education.

In my research, Participant V: Zaytun stated that the reason they came to the U.S. was, "...to get a better life and education and you know, start all over again," reinforcing the *education is essential for improving their lives* theme. Blustein's (2006) Psychology of Working framework provided an explanation for certain phenomena attached to the world of work. The theme *education is essential for improving their lives* emerged from the participant narratives and is linked to Blustein's (2006) framework. Blustein (2006) stated that working serves three main functions, 1) working as a means of survival and power, 2) working as a means of social connection, and 3) working as a means of self-determination. The participants in my research conveyed stories regarding the difficult jobs they had initially taken as a means of survival, but now are seeking education in order to move beyond survival. Blustein (2006) provided advice to colleges, in particular community colleges, as they were noted as critical agents for improving the lives of people through education for employment opportunities. He stated that colleges need to maintain supportive and relevant programs and provide training in a culturally affirming manner. The theme *education is essential for improving their lives* that was discovered through my Somali immigrant women student interviews was also observed and supported in the literature.

Theme Five Analysis – Helping Others is Important

The theme *helping others is important* was a theme identified that was also observed in the literature. Watson, Foxcroft, Horn, and Stead (1997) found through their research with Black South African students that they chose Social and Investigative (Holland codes) vocational careers that corresponded to Holland's (1966) codes. The students leaned toward occupations such as nurse, social worker, teacher, and lawyer.

Euvard (1996) observed through career need research with 638 students in South Africa, that the majority of students wanted to improve the future lives of Blacks by giving back to the community and to their country. Stebleton (2007) stated that, “African immigrant students may be compelled to select social or altruistic occupations that allow them to contribute to their families and communities” (p. 296).

Hammond (2014) reported on the phenomenon that, “...many diaspora Somalis have gone back to Somalia on reconnaissance trips, to check on family members and property, work in the new government or explore the possibilities of investing in the country” (p. 14). She also stated that most of these people have either permanent residence or citizenship in another country, and they have the financial resources to travel to the country (Hammond, 2014). Hammond (2014) also reported that what Somali women wanted to have happen at some point in time – going back to their home country to help the people there – is actually possible, as it has been happening through these reconnaissance trips. Hammond (2014) also stated that what could hamper Somalis from returning to their home country is the “... reality of violence, conflict and serious abuses of human rights” (p. 16).

Steering immigrant students toward helping professions has not been observed with all immigrant populations. It was found that parents influenced Asian Indian first-generation college students toward science majors (Roysicar, Carey, & Koroma, 2010), and Asian immigrant parents urged their children to pursue science and technical areas of study to gain prestige and socioeconomic mobility (Corey, 2000), and in another qualitative study (Louie, 2001), where it was found that Chinese immigrant parents expected their children to pursue technical programs.

What the theme *helping others is important* exemplifies is that many immigrants from Somalia are optimistic about making things better through helping others to the point of returning home when danger subsides to improve the lives of others in their home country. Mattessich (2000) found through a survey of Hispanic, Hmong, Russian, and Somali immigrants in Minnesota that the Somali immigrants were the most hopeful that they would return to their home country someday in the future. Besteman (1999) summed it up best when she stated, “Optimism requires one to believe that a new dream of the future can emerge from the nightmares of the past” (p. 238).

In my research, Participant III: Sabrina stated she always wanted to go into something with medicine her whole life. She stated:

Because considering my back...my home country – There isn’t a lot of doctors. People will just rot to death so I was thinking I would do something to do with medicine. Maybe in the future if I go back there I can help people.

The theme *helping others is important* that was discovered through my Somali immigrant women student interviews was observed and also was contradicted through other immigrant research conducted.

Theme Six Analysis – Educational Supportive Assistance is Helpful

The theme *educational supportive assistance is helpful* was found to be observed in the literature. I initially thought that women would not receive any educational supportive assistance from their families due to information that I had read and what I understood as the status of Somali women in their home country. Even in the interviews,

many of the participants reported that education was not supported for women. My assumption was not upheld through these interviews.

Even though Somali women may have not been supported to pursue educational pursuits in their home country, in the U. S., all of the women involved in this study expressed in detail how their families supported them in their educational pursuits. Participant IV: Sagal explained how supportive her family was when she decided to go to college:

Well, my family, they were happy. They were like “Okay, go for it.” You know? So you decide it’s very good to do it and you have a chance to do it, so. Don’t lose your opportunity.

In some cases their husbands or other family members took on the role of caregiver while she pursued her education, which was considered and stated to be counter to cultural norms.

One of the themes that emerged from the research of Nilsson, Barazanji, Heintzelman, Siddiqi, and Shilla (2012) was similar to the *educational supportive assistance is helpful* theme observed in my research. They discovered a theme titled *available support* among the participants, which was described as “...a sense of lack of support from U. S. resources and services available to them” but support from their own Somali community (Nilson, Baranji, Heintzelman, Siddiqi, & Shilla, 2012, p. 247). The participants expressed the need for supportive assistance with law enforcement, the school system, health insurance, and transportation which they felt was lacking but they could rely on their own community to provide that supportive assistance which was needed when pursuing education.

The theme *educational supportive assistance is helpful* that was discovered through my Somali immigrant women student interviews was observed through other immigrant research conducted even though initially I doubted that supportive assistance was going to be available or offered.

Theme Seven Analysis – Cultural Influences Have an Impact

The theme *cultural influences have an impact* was observed in the literature that was discovered regarding Somalian culture and immigrant populations. The women Somali participants conveyed how their culture had impacted their lives, which resonated with what was found in the literature (Korn, 2004; Nguyen, 2008; Stebleton, 2007; Ward, 2008; Warfa et al., 2012).

The women spoke of gender roles and how life was so different in Somalia than in the U. S., which was also chronicled in the memoirs of a sister Somali woman (Korn, 2004). Korn (2004) chronicled her experiences and what was considered the reality of being a woman in Somalian culture:

In Somalia, the relationship between the sexes is clearly defined. A man never does women's work. He takes care of camels, kills lions, and attacks enemy clans. His wife does everything else. Men take themselves seriously, and women treat them as if they are right to do so. Even as small children, girls learn to serve and respect their brothers, fathers, and uncles. A girl rises when a man enters because he might like that precise spot where she has been squatting. Men are always served the best meat, and women the leftovers. Men have their own sleeping quarters, while women and children share mats... In Somalia, men enjoy total freedom.

They go to town, travel, and maintain more than one wife in various places. A number have several families in many spots, live for months with the first wife and their children, then for a time with the second or third wife and the children he has had with them. If the first wife has borne many sons, the second wife has it hard. But at any time, a man can take a woman's children away. Then she is alone and has nothing. In Somalia, the world belongs to men. (p. 18-19)

In my study, in particular, the interview with Participant VII: Shamqali, she provided details regarding the gender role she was to take when it came to marriage and choosing a husband. She stated:

My big sister was giving me advice after I finished high school. She said, 'If mom choose anyone for you, that's who you going to marry. You're not going to have your own opinion. Put that in your head. I know you're opinionated but put that in your head right now. It's good for you.'

Korn's (2004) description of gender roles as she experienced them and how women were taught from a young age to be subordinate to men were also observed in my Somali women participant interviews.

Ward (2008) reported that, "Expectations of women's roles and the lack of value afforded to women's learning in some families and communities were a powerful determinant of access to learning" (p. 17). She further stated that the families of the women interviewed held very rigid views of men's and women's roles and that they were allowed to go to school if their family responsibilities didn't suffer. "Caring for children, and sometimes older or sick family members, were still regarded as the primary

responsibilities of women” (Warfa, 2008, p. 17). In my study, in particular, the interview with Participant VII: Shamqali, she provided details regarding her role as the last born, caring for her mother, and how it impacted her program choice. She stated:

So I just thought okay, maybe do nursing for, just for your mom, you take care of her, because I’m the last one. I don’t know if it’s traditional. I don’t know what it is. Like the last born always take care, takes care of the parents.

The research cited from Ward (2008), Warfa (2008), and interviews with my Somali women refugee participants, reiterated the observation that *cultural influences have an impact* on their lives and program decisions.

Ward (2008) also described two groups of women, the *learning negative* women, and the *learning pessimistic* women, who did not view education as possible due to gender-based demands or oppression, and cited interventions to assist them in the pursuit of education. Some of the interventions she cited for supporting these learners were:

1) befriending strategies to reach the women furthest away from learning, such as using role models and mentors for promoting education, 2) buddying arrangements and social activities that offer opportunities to develop relationships and improve English language skills, 3) using family mediators to navigate through the many community agency processes for support, and 4) providing childcare. These strategies also are great ideas to be incorporated as initiatives under the, *educational supportive assistance is helpful* theme, to help counteract cultural impediments in pursuing education. Ward (2008) reiterated the need to reach all immigrant women learners stating, if we fail to recognize

and respond accordingly, "...the most marginalized women remain outside organized learning" (p. 17).

Reinharz and Chase (2003) cautioned, "...that although all women's experiences are gendered, no two women's experiences are identical" (p. 73). This warning is important to note when reporting and analyzing gender-related experiences. Much of the information relayed in Chapter II regarding cultural experiences, in particular to the treatment and status of women, may disgust some people whereas some people may find the practices usual, customary, and normal. The participants in this study stated that many practices they were undertaking in the U. S. would not be able to continue in their home country. Some women were even accused of becoming "Americans" or "Christians."

Pilot Participant: Zenab stated:

In America, it's something that you get used to—that women vote and they drive a car and they can teach. Where I come from back home, if I go back home right now and I start going to school or go and work—they would think that I'm going crazy or I'm just acting like I'm going to be a Christian.

Other researchers and authors have reported how cultural influences impacted immigrants. Stebleton (2007) identified unique needs and issues of African immigrant students as compared to other immigrant students, those being: "a) the impact of colonialism, slavery, and identity, including racism and discrimination; b) the influence of contextual factors that promote an ongoing state of living in uncertainty; and c) the experience of negotiating the conflicting messages between the African and Eurocentric, Western worldviews" (p. 55). Stebleton (2007) studied African immigrant students in

order to explore their needs and provide suggestions how educational professionals might better serve them.

Nguyen (2008) also confirmed the existence and importance of understanding cultural and value differences among immigrants in the workforce and the need to develop strategies to retain the valued and necessary pool of employees. Warfa et al. (2012) also discussed similar observances regarding cultural influences, such as: practicing Islam and studying the Qur'an, and starting up small businesses to provide for family or community.

In Korn's (2004) memoir, she also spoke of the cultural tradition of *gudniin*, infibulation, or what is also known as female genital mutilation. The practice was reported as being performed to 98 percent of Somalian girls (Korn, 2004). This practice was not a topic of conversation discussed during this study, nor was there any unsolicited commentary from the participants regarding this cultural tradition.

The theme *cultural influences have an impact* that was discovered through my Somali immigrant women student interviews was observed through other immigrant research conducted.

In this chapter I briefly covered the process of theme development, described the themes that emerged from the participant interviews, and explained the analysis of the themes. I was able to illuminate the lives of Somali women refugee students through the stories that they shared.

Analyses Summary

In the preparatory phase of this inquiry, I specifically identified the work of Parsons, Maslow, and Blustein to frame my research. Parsons's (1909) work provided a framework in the construction of the semi-structured questions for the interview questions in order to get a sense of each participant's knowledge of self, knowledge of the world-of-work, and the relationship between the two. In my study, I found this simplified approach was easy to incorporate into the semi-structured questions, and I viewed his approach appropriate as Parsons's (1909) work initially dealt with assisting immigrant populations. The focus of my questions provided insight primarily into participant knowledge of self through the approach I took.

Maslow's (1943) and Blustein's (2006) work provided a base for conceptualizing the participant's lives and program decisions. I realized that conceptualizing their lives and program decisions around Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Blustein's Psychology of Working provided lenses for understanding Somali women refugee students. I anticipated that the contextual factors in the Somali women refugee students' lives would impact the decisions that they made and that their decisions would be driven by the hierarchy that Maslow established through his work. I also believed that I would find themes that would align with the tenets of Blustein's Psychology of Working framework.

Observations

I observed through the interviews with Somali women refugee students that their lives and program decisions may be driven by a variety of factors. First, the themes identified were a reflection of those contextual factors that were influencing their lives. I learned that family, education, and helping others were important factors influencing the

women's lives. I learned that they experienced difficult and dangerous situations in their home country and that they continue to persevere through the difficult life circumstances in which they find themselves in the United States. I learned that they believed education was a key factor in order to be in a position to support their families and their extended family abroad. I learned that they struggled and continue to struggle significantly with the English language, but they continue to forge forward. I was surprised that their family was extremely supportive of their educational pursuits even though they described how women were treated and how education was not encouraged for their gender in their home country. I also learned that some cultural influences continue to impact them in America, and they struggle to maintain what they believe is culturally meaningful or relevant in their lives.

Second, when asked why they chose their programs of study, participants stated they chose the programs they did as a way to help others or ultimately one day go back and help those in their home country who needed help. When asked why choosing the program that they chose was important to them, they reinforced the reason of an overarching need to help or nurture others. Besides helping or nurturing others, only one participant mentioned that she had chosen her program because she had also conducted research into her career field and that she knew it was an occupation that was a high wage-high demand field, leading her to long-term self-sufficiency.

The observation of the need to help or nurture others above self is similar to Maslow's (1969) concept of self-transcendence, which was described as a person who furthers a cause beyond the self and experiences the union beyond self through a peak experience, which could involve service to others. Also, this observation is similar to

Blustein's (2006) *working as a means of social connection* set of human needs that could be fulfilled by working. This observation was surprising to me as I anticipated in this research that Somali women refugee students would choose programs in a hierarchical manner according to Maslow's (1969a, 1969b) theory, starting with fulfilling the physiological needs first and so on, basically choosing programs to support physiological needs. It appeared in this study that the women were driven to their programs or work choices through a higher need beyond self and that they saw working as fulfilling a social need.

Third, prior to the women attending college, they described how they took on physically taxing jobs to make more money to help cover basic needs and the needs of "family" who lived inside or outside the United States. At some point in their lives, they decided that they could not keep up with that lifestyle and in order to have a better life, they needed to pursue education.

The need to survive was prevalent in the participants' early work lives. This theme resembled Maslow's (1969) first level in his hierarchy of needs – the need to fulfill the basic physiological needs. The women conveyed how they were struggling to meet their basic needs and knew that they needed to make a change. The women's frustration with living in the "need to survive" mode motivated them to move on to a better life or up the hierarchy of needs pyramid. The women's need to survive theme also was reflective of Blustein's (2006) *working as a means of survival and power* set of human needs that could be fulfilled by working. This observation was not surprising to me as I had anticipated that the women would choose programs or occupations in a hierarchical manner. In this scenario, it appeared that the women were driven to their programs or

work choices out of a need to meet the most basic needs; and to escape or escalate to the next level, a change was needed and education was warranted.

It appeared in this study that the women were elevated from a *working as a means of survival and power* mode to *working as a means of self-determination* (SDT) mode. Blustein (2006) stated that "...working provides people with access to power, initially by ensuring one's survival. As an individual becomes more entrenched in the labor market and develops more skills and access to the resources that are associated with marketable skills, the ability to survive is then transformed into social and economic power" (p. 85). He further stated that, "...investments in education would obviously yield greater levels of competence among workers" (p. 152). The women deciphered that education was the key to moving from survival, to social connection to self-determination.

Fourth, the result of the women choosing traditional female-oriented programs also could be attributed to a gendered response to program selection (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule (1986); Blustein, 2006). Blustein (2006) stated that "...women have faced considerable barriers in their educational preparation and in their ability to attain occupations that match their talents and interests" (p. 165). Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) stated that "The extreme sex-role stereotypes that the silent women accept reflect the powerlessness they have experienced" (p. 29). Even when the participants were asked directly what programs they were pursuing and why they made their decisions, all but one of the participants provided the response of helping others was important and did not provide any other explanation other than that was what they were supposed to do with their lives—they were basically "silent" on the matter. Had they not been given a chance to explore options outside the traditional female-

oriented occupations or encouraged toward any occupation at all? Their silence spoke volumes to me.

Fifth, when reviewing the transcripts and identified themes, it was apparent that the participants focused on their past experiences and present experiences more so than what was to happen in the future. I observed the participants not being able to provide much detail about future-related activities or events—part of the participants' narratives appeared to be absent. This phenomenon was also observed by Stebleton (2007).

Stebleton (2007) has written about and identified unique needs and issues of African immigrant students. One of the unique influencers that he referenced was the influence of contextual factors that promote an ongoing state of living in uncertainty. Stebleton (2007) stated that in African culture, time focuses on the past and present, not the future, whereas in Western culture, time is linear and future-oriented. He reminded professionals who work with African immigrants to become familiar with African culture in order to serve students better. The students I interviewed may have been responding to my inquiry in a manner relevant to their culture.

CHAPTER VI

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Recommendations

With the reported shortage of qualified workers coupled with the changing landscape in the United States, the need for an educated workforce for *all* is becoming more evident than ever (Nguyen, 2008). The statistics regarding the changing face of the United States has been reported by Passel and Cohn (2008). They stated that, “By 2050, the nation’s racial and ethnic mix will look quite different than it does now. Non-Hispanic whites, who made up 67% of the population in 2005, will be 47% in 2050” (Passel & Cohn, 2008, p. 1). They further stated that:

Of the 117 million people added to the population during this period due to the effect of new immigration, 67 million will be the immigrants themselves, 47 million will be their children and 3 million will be their grandchildren. The Center’s projections indicate that nearly one in five Americans (19%) will be foreign born in 2050, well above the 2005 level of 12%, and also surpassing the historic peaks for immigrants as a share of the U.S. population—14.8% in 1890 and 14.7% in 1910. (Passel & Cohn, 2008, p. 1)

Passel and Cohn (2008) also noted that most immigrants come into the U. S. as working adults. As a result of this statistic, one wonders how the country's policies may need to change to address government spending priorities and workforce needs.

To truly embrace the opportunities that are before us, we need to step back to identify and hold conversations with the populations that need to be present in the workforce. Nieto (1994) asserted that in order to change practices and policies one method may be to listen to the views of students regarding them. Educators must listen to the needs of the students who enter their facilities and adapt to what works in order to help engage students to persist and complete. Everyone who is part of the education process has a duty to assist all who want to pursue an education, complete the program they choose, and become members of the workforce ready to give back to their local community.

On my quest for understanding Somali women refugee students' lives and determining what drove them to their program decisions, I initially wanted to seek understanding, but I also was interested in finding ways to assist those who work with the population in a compassionate and caring manner. Besides achieving an overall awareness of their life circumstances, are there more engaging ways of assisting this population in making program decisions, and are there ways to connect with these students to improve persistence and completion? In this section I will discuss recommendations for immigrant student supportive services as discovered through this inquiry, recommendations for future study, and end with concluding thoughts.

Recommendations for Immigrant Student Supportive Services

Recommendations for improved service to Somali women refugee students were identified by hearing the participants' needs through their stories that were discovered as part of this study. The participants spoke of needing support in navigating the educational system. Improving the ability of Somali women refugee students to access the educational system and identifying what services would help them succeed is important to educational professionals and service providers who are there to serve them.

Financial. Even though financial assistance did not surface as an independent theme from this research, the participants discussed how they relied on others for financial support in the *family is central and supportive* theme discussion and analysis, how they struggled financially in the *life was and is difficult* theme discussion and analysis, and how loans were according to Participant VII: Shamqali, not allowed, "In Islamic teaching we don't take loans, especially on houses and all that". Teranishi, Suarez-Orozco, and Suarez-Orozco (2011) found that immigrant students attend community colleges more frequently than other postsecondary institutions and have certain needs that must be addressed for success. One of those needs mentioned was immigrant students have great financial need but lack the knowledge of how to apply for financial aid or do not know that they are eligible to apply due to immigrant status.

The need for financial assistance was evident through the participants' discussions and critical in order to access higher education and is recognized through the theme *educational supportive assistance is helpful*. Additional support services such as assistance in completing the financial aid process and finishing it in a timely manner was identified as a priority service. College financial aid staff members could make it a point

annually to review their promotional materials and website for ease of understanding the financial aid process, ease of completing the financial aid application, and ease of identifying scholarships and submitting scholarships. Due to the complicated and confusing nature of the financial aid process, staff members also could be mindful of providing an atmosphere in their department that is engaging, respectful, and one that encourages a free exchange of asking and answering questions so that students feel heard and understood. It is critical for institutions to take a proactive approach in assisting Somali women refugee students to identify the resources necessary to fund their education, which ultimately impacts access to education.

English skill assistance. *Lack of English language skills is a significant barrier* was a theme discovered through this inquiry. In order to address this barrier, suggestions for English language support have been identified: adopting federal and state policies to cover English as a Second Language (ESL) tuition and English remedial coursework above and beyond set limits (Teranishi, Suarez-Orozco, & Suarez-Orozco, 2011); offering additional English support services, which may include group or peer tutoring or supplemental instruction (Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2013; USDOE, 2013); providing an interpreter for Somali women refugee students who speaks the student's native language to assist in understanding the material presented; and promoting the use of a native language dictionary in combination with an English dictionary to assist in overcoming English language difficulties as was recommended by one of the participants (Participant IV: Sagal, 2013).

Additional services. *Educational supportive assistance is helpful* was a theme that emerged from the interviews. The focus of the theme not only described the support

others provided to the participants but also what actions or services may be helpful in supporting women immigrant students. Special support services such as those offered under a federal TRIO grant were identified as assisting students in accessing and succeeding in the college setting (Participant V: Zaytun, 2013). The additional support services that are part of such a program include, but are not limited to, academic tutoring, course selection guidance, financial aid guidance, scholarship search and submission assistance, education transition assistance, counseling services, cultural event exposure, and mentoring (USDOE, 2013). In order to provide these services, colleges would need to dedicate resources to compete for the federal grant or preserve the grant that they had acquired.

Social engagement activities. Additional supportive service activities that address engagement also stem from the theme *educational supportive assistance is helpful*. Besides offering supportive assistance in navigating through the educational system, social engagement activities were identified to help students persist, including opportunities to share their culture through cultural celebrations, student organizations, or a place to make connections. Kim (2009) found that family, and more importantly peers, especially those who were from their ethnic subculture or campus social networks, were essential in being able to thrive in the educational environment. Participant IV – Sagal stated she would appreciate a little community on campus of Somalian students to connect with to feel more comfortable. Participant III - Sabrina recommended a, "...place where students meet and we can help each other or we can just talk, you know? We don't have that... people just come here and go to classes, then leave ..." (Participant III: Sabrina, 2013).

Environment. A number of ideas surfaced during the interviews that could help Somali women refugee students feel welcomed on campus through environmental additions or alterations that speak to and respect family. Recognizing that *family is central and supportive* among this population, one may tap into altering the department or employee environment to include family-friendly welcoming strategies such as: employees displaying family photos in their offices, employees ensuring enough chairs are available in their offices or are nearby to accommodate all family members who attend meetings with the student, employees maintaining and providing up-to-date information on daycare services and daycare service funding, institutions offering daycare services either on-campus or near campus, employees having toys or coloring books available for student's children to keep themselves occupied when the student is attending appointments, and employees having consent of release forms readily available for students to have family members sign in order to allow them to have access to private information that may assist in the student's access and persistence.

Welcoming suggestions. Besides making the institution environment family-friendly, other suggestions for making the students feel welcomed on campus were identified—another application of the *educational supportive assistance is helpful* theme. Feeling welcomed involves building relationships. Payne, DeVol, Dreussi Smith (2006) stated that, “The key to achievement for students...is in creating relationships with them” (p. 145). Displaying pictures of Somali women refugee students in publications and on the website reinforces the concept that they are at the college and belong in the environment. Roy and Roxas (2011) cited how, “ELL teachers also offered their home phone numbers to students and spent time in the community beyond the school day” (p.

536) to build connections with students. Gathering input from Somali women refugee students regarding the institutional processes such as admissions, registration, and financial aid, to identify how the processes could be made easier to understand and easier to navigate is a way to make connections with them. Involving students in the process of identifying needs and services is one step in the overall relationship building process.

Needs assessment. Yet another application of the theme *educational supportive services is helpful* and warranted when identifying what services are needed. Another suggestion to build connections with Somali women refugee students is through administering a needs assessment survey when students enter the college in order to identify and individualize services that the students are eligible for, such as: tutoring services, supplemental instruction, on campus employment, or student leadership opportunities. Roy and Roxas (2011) recommended that, "...educators should spend time investigating students' strengths. One such strength that students possess is parents who are willing and hopeful about the advantages education can bring for their child... they needed explicit information about how to connect with and support their children's education" (p. 536). Asking students what their needs are and then following-up with referrals assist college staff members in attending to the needs of the students surveyed.

Build and maintain relationships. Another activity that would assist with building relationships originating from the *educational supportive assistance is helpful* theme, is assigning advisors to Somali women refugee students from the point of inquiry through graduation and making interactions during the term mandatory. The advisors assist with goal setting and academic course progression planning among other duties and responsibilities. As cited in the Center for Community College Student Engagement's

(2013) report, *academic goal setting and planning* was identified as a high-impact educational practice to increase student engagement. Klepfer and Hull (2012) found that “...two-year students who reported talking to an academic advisor either ‘sometimes’ or ‘often’ had significantly higher persistence rates than those who did not” (pp. 10-11).

They further stated that:

...the low [Socioeconomic Status] SES/achievement group makes the most gains in persistence when they report going to see an academic advisor in college. In fact, more likely to persist if they met with their academic advisor ‘often’ than students who ‘never’ met with their advisor. For two-year [Institution of Higher Education] IHE students that can increase their chances by 43 percent. (Klepfer & Hull, 2012, p. 11)

Academic advising has been identified as a strategy to make a difference in student persistence rates and a strategy that has been suggested here as a means to build relationships with Somali women refugee students.

Other strategies identified to assist in welcoming, preparing, and connecting with students include: creating robust orientation programs to introduce students to the expectations, resources available, and educational terms such as syllabus and email (Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2013); and offering professional development opportunities for employees to gain an understanding the population being served and what needs accompany them.

From a relatively simple welcoming idea of incorporating pictures of Somali women refugee students in the college’s publications and website to the careful and

thoughtful engagement practice of assigning advisors to Somali women refugee student advisees, many activities may be incorporated into the college support service fabric.

Other professional assistance. One of the themes from my research, *educational supportive assistance is helpful*, became evident as a strong theme on its own through the participants' voices. The women commented how others provided support to them when they revealed they were interested in attending college or how others supported their college attendance. The guidance and support that other professionals may provide to Somali women refugee students would help improve the students' chances of gaining access and success.

Recommendations for other professionals who work with immigrant students have been identified through my research conducted and related research identified. Teranishi, Suarez-Orozco, and Suarez-Orozco (2011) stated, "...immigrant students are best served by counselors who are trained to address the specific psychological needs associated with immigration itself" (p. 163). In addition, recognizing that familial obligations of immigrant students may make it difficult for them to focus solely on college, efforts could be employed to help immigrant students find balance between the need to provide support to their families and the need to satisfy the sense of obligation to complete their education (Fuligni, 2006).

Hartung and Blustein (2002) recommended interprofessional collaboration or partnering with others in the social service communities and education settings to help students make important career decisions and ultimately, more equitable and humane schools, work settings, and colleges. Valdivia and Flores (2012) specifically recommended from their work with immigrants that career counselors act as conduits in

the community by establishing relationships with the agencies that may assist the immigrant population, referring clients to English language resources in the community, and encouraging employers to host English language-building sessions.

Through this research and the research of Stebleton (2004), it was apparent that traditional methods of career guidance with African immigrant students must be altered to consider contextual factors. Blustein and Nourmair (1996) also recommended that when working with marginalized populations, counselors may find it useful to interject the person's experience and influence of the dominant culture, including the impact of contextual factors in his or her life.

Recommendations for Future Study

Teranishi, Suarez-Orozco, and Suarez-Orozco (2011) asserted that:

There is simply a dearth of research to inform a broad understanding of the experiences and outcomes of immigrant students in community colleges, including the demography of the immigrant student population and the array of unique challenges this population presents for individual campuses, states, and the nation's higher education priorities generally.

(p. 164)

With research involving immigrant populations being deemed scarce by researchers and studies including African immigrants are even less prevalent (Bennett & Lutz, 2009; Stebleton, 2004, 2007, 2010, 2012; Sutherland, 2011), research with this population is warranted. Studying Somali women students' lives and delving into what factors influenced their program decisions was just one small segment of research that was

conducted by my inquiry. There are many untapped areas to be researched with African immigrant student populations.

To expand on the limited research that has been conducted with student populations from Africa, future research opportunities are endless. I provide a few recommendations for future research with immigrant students from Africa below that have been stimulated through my inquiry:

- 1) Due to the difficulty in identifying Somali women refugee students, future research with African, or in particular, immigrant students from Somalia, could involve in-depth interviews and observations that would provide descriptions of the population of study and their lives. The research could extend to different educational settings for comparison or contrast.
- 2) Future research with immigrant students from Africa is warranted in the area of student access, persistence, and completion.
- 3) Research could be conducted to identify African immigrant student experiences in the educational setting in order to identify areas for improvement.
- 4) Future research could entail identifying the current practices of career counseling methods among career counselors in community colleges in order to identify any specific strategies that might address the needs of immigrant students from Africa.
- 5) Future research could be conducted with immigrant students from Africa to identify what types of intervention strategies addressed and met the needs of the population.

Conclusions

The themes that I found in interviewing Somali women refugee students enrolled in two-year institutions in the Midwest were: 1) family is central and supportive, 2) life was and is difficult, 3) lack of English language skills is a significant barrier, 4) education is essential for improving their lives, 5) helping others is important, 6) educational supportive assistance is helpful, and 7) cultural influences have an impact. A number of researchers witnessed similar observations, which were outlined in Chapter V.

The themes that emerged from this research provided insight into Somali women refugee student's lives and what factors influenced their program decisions. For the time spent with the participants, I discovered that their families were central in their lives and very supportive. I found that these brave women have overcome and continue to overcome many life difficulties, including struggling with the English language. I also discovered that they value education and that their families value education and see it as a way up and out of the difficult life circumstances they find themselves in. I found that they chose the programs they did as a way to help others or ultimately one day go back and help those in their home country who need help. I learned that not only did the women and their family members value education, but they were also very supportive in the women's college pursuits. Finally, I detected that the women continue to be impacted or influenced by their culture in the U. S. The themes that were uncovered from the Somali women refugee student interviews provided insight into their lives and program decisions and also insight into services that might provide assistance and support.

APPENDICES

Appendix A
University of North Dakota IRB Approval Notification

UNIVERSITY OF  NORTH DAKOTA

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
c/o RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT AND COMPLIANCE
DIVISION OF RESEARCH
TWAMLEY HALL ROOM 106
264 CENTENNIAL DRIVE STOP 7134
GRAND FORKS ND 58202-7134
(701) 777-4279
FAX (701) 777-6708

<http://und.edu/research/research-economic-development/institutional-review-board/>

February 23, 2012

Mary Fontes
1020 Walnut Street
Grand Forks, ND 58201

Dear Ms. Fontes:

We are pleased to inform you that your project titled, "Understanding Women African Refugee Education Decisions at Two-Year Institutions in the Midwest: A Narrative Approach" (IRB-201202-280) has been reviewed and approved by the University of North Dakota Institutional Review Board (IRB). The expiration date of this approval is February 16, 2013. Your project cannot continue beyond this date without an approved Research Project Review and Progress Report.

As principal investigator for a study involving human participants, you assume certain responsibilities to the University of North Dakota and the UND IRB. Specifically, an unanticipated problem or adverse event occurring in the course of the research project must be reported within 5 days to the IRB Chairperson or the IRB office by submitting an Unanticipated Problem/Adverse Event Form. Any changes to or departures from the Protocol or Consent Forms must receive IRB approval prior to being implemented (except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects or others.)

All Full Board and Expedited proposals must be reviewed at least once a year. Approximately ten months from your initial review date, you will receive a letter stating that approval of your project is about to expire. If a complete Research Project Review and Progress Report is not received as scheduled, your project will be terminated, and you must stop all research procedures, recruitment, enrollment, interventions, data collection, and data analysis. The IRB will not accept future research projects from you until research is current. In order to avoid a discontinuation of IRB approval and possible suspension of your research, the Research Project Review and Progress Report must be returned to the IRB office at least six weeks before the expiration date listed above. If your research, including data analysis, is completed before the expiration date, you must submit a Research Project Termination form to the IRB office so your file can be closed. The required forms are available on the IRB website.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me at (701) 777-4279 or e-mail michelle.bowles@research.und.edu.

Sincerely,



Michelle L. Bowles, M.P.A., CIP
IRB Coordinator

MLB/jle

Enclosures

REPORT OF ACTION: EXEMPT/EXPEDITED REVIEW
University of North Dakota Institutional Review Board

Date: 2/14/2012 Project Number: IRB-201202-280
Principal Investigator: Fontes, Mary L.
Department: Educational Leadership
Project Title: Understanding Women African Refugee Education Decisions at Two-Year Institutions in the Midwest: A Narrative Approach

The above referenced project was reviewed by a designated member for the University's Institutional Review Board on February 17, 2012 and the following action was taken:

- Project approved. **Expedited Review** Category No. 6 and 7
Next scheduled review must be before: February 16, 2013
 Copies of the attached consent form with the IRB approval stamp dated February 17, 2012 must be used in obtaining consent for this study.
- Project approved. **Exempt Review** Category No. _____
 This approval is valid until _____ as long as approved procedures are followed. No periodic review scheduled unless so stated in the Remarks Section.
 Copies of the attached consent form with the IRB approval stamp dated _____ must be used in obtaining consent for this study.
- Minor modifications required. The required corrections/additions must be submitted to RDC for review and approval. **This study may NOT be started UNTIL final IRB approval has been received.**
- Project approval **deferred. This study may not be started until final IRB approval has been received.** (See Remarks Section for further information.)
- Disapproved claim of exemption. This project requires Expedited or Full Board review. The Human Subjects Review Form must be filled out and submitted to the IRB for review.
- Proposed project is not human subject research and does not require IRB review.
 Not Research Not Human Subject

PLEASE NOTE: Requested revisions for student proposals MUST include adviser's signature. All revisions MUST be highlighted.

Education Requirements Completed. (Project cannot be started until IRB education requirements are met.)

cc: Dr. Margaret Healy

Jane AS Nelson 02/17/2012
Signature of Designated IRB Member Date
UND's Institutional Review Board

If the proposed project (clinical medical) is to be part of a research activity funded by a Federal Agency, a special assurance statement or a completed 310 Form may be required. Contact RDC to obtain the required documents.

(Revised 10/2006)

Appendix B
Near Metro Site Approval Letter



January 17, 2012

Mary L. Fontes
1020 Walnut Street
Grand Forks, ND 58201

Dear Ms. Fontes,

I am writing this letter indicating I _____
agreement to participate in your research study, *Understanding Women African Refugee Education Decisions at Two-Year Institutions in the Midwest*. The attached Institutional Review Board (IRB) materials outline the role of both parties, and for purposes of this letter constitutes our agreement.

Please note the college will provide consideration as indicated in the IRB materials, but there is no compensation or other costs supplied. You will be responsible for all project-related costs. Under this agreement you will not be able to delegate or transfer any part of this agreement, and each of us agrees to be responsible for any liability that may occur and shall not be responsible for the acts of either party.

The research you propose may require the college to provide private data that is protected by both FERPA and the MN Government Data Practices Act. For purposes of this study you will be considered a "school official" in compliance with FERPA and the MN Government Data Practices Act. It is understood that you will similarly comply with both acts in the publication and dissemination of your study.

My signature indicates that I am the _____
authorized representative in the administration of this research project. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely, _____

Enclosures: _____

Appendix C
Metro Site Approval Letter

[REDACTED]

Mary L. Fontes
1080 Walnut St.
Grand Forks, ND 58201

Dear Ms. Fontes:

This letter is to confirm that [REDACTED] is supportive of your dissertation project to research the educational decisions of female refugees from Africa who are currently enrolled in two-year colleges. We understand that you would like to identify three students at our college who fit the profile for your research and who would be willing to participate in your study. [REDACTED] has informed me that [REDACTED] is willing to make some students (who fit the eligibility requirements) aware of the opportunity to participate in your research study. Those students will be invited to contact you if they are interested in participating in your research. [REDACTED] will not provide you directly with any names. In addition, you may advertise the opportunity on campus, as needed.

Prior to making any efforts to identify particular students, please provide my office with documentation that shows you have received IRB approval for your study from UND.

We would be interested to learn of the results of your research once your dissertation is complete.

Please let me know if I can be of any additional assistance.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

cc: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Appendix D Fontes-Interview Protocol

Fontes – Interview Protocol 1

Understanding Women African Refugee Education Decisions at Two-Year Institutions in the Midwest: A Narrative Approach

Protocol for Qualitative Inquiry

____ Introductions

____ Identification of New Immigrant Status

- Permanent Resident
- Refugee
- Asylee

____ Woman

____ African Country of Origin _____

____ Informed Consent

____ Select a Pseudonym _____

Questions

(Interview #1)

1) Past – Take me back in time to your home country and tell me about your life there.

2) Tell me about ...

Family (mother, father, siblings) _____ Favorite memories _____ Where you lived _____

Family job/s _____ What your family wanted you to do _____

What you enjoyed doing _____ School _____ Really good at _____

3) If this hasn't already been answered, ask the following:

What was it like growing up in your country? Tell me about a day in your life in your country...

4) What did you think you would do when you grew up?

5) Follow-up questions: Why was that important to you?

What would you do when you grew up _____ What your family wanted you to do _____

Really good at _____ What you enjoyed doing _____ School _____ Memories _____

6) Tell me why you left your country?

7) Anything else you would like to share with me but haven't had the chance?

(Interview #2)

Thank you for sharing your home country experiences with me in the previous interview, now we will focus on coming to the U. S. and your first experiences in the U. S. up to starting college.

8) Transition – First tell me about your experiences coming to the U. S.
Where she came from ____ Preparation ____ Family (mother, father, siblings) ____
Challenges ____ Most exciting experiences ____

9) Early U. S. experiences– Tell me about your life when you first came to the U. S.
Family (mother, father, siblings) ____ Challenges ____ Most exciting experiences ____
Enjoy doing ____ Individuals of importance ____ Learning the language ____ Looking for
work ____

10) Tell me about your decision to attend college...

11) Follow-up on questions: Why was that important to you?
College attendance ____ Program choice ____

12) Anything else you would like to share with me but haven't had the chance?

(Interview #3)

Thank you for sharing your home country experiences and your experiences coming to the U. S. with me in the previous interviews. For this interview we will follow up on your experiences choosing college, your experiences in college, and your future plans.

13) Let's start with your decision to attend college, tell me about...
Preparation ____ Family (mother, father, siblings) reaction ____
Challenges ____ Most exciting experiences ____ Individuals of importance ____

14) Tell me about your experiences in college...
Family (mother, father, siblings) support ____ Classes enjoy ____ Good at ____
Challenges ____ Most exciting experiences ____ Activities enjoy ____
Individuals of importance ____

15) Future – Tell me about what you see yourself doing in the future.
Self ____ Family (mother, father, siblings) ____ Career/Job ____
Family career choice ____ Enjoy ____ Really good at ____ Challenges ____
Individuals of importance ____

16) Follow-up on questions: Why is that important to you?
Career/Job ____

17) Anything else you would like to share?

____ Token of Appreciation ____ (2) ____ (3)

____ Email for member checking or ____ Address for member checking

Appendix E Fontes-Informed Consent

**The University of North Dakota
INFORMED CONSENT**

TITLE: Understanding Women African Refugee Education Decisions at Two-Year Institutions in the Midwest: A Narrative Approach

PROJECT DIRECTOR: Mary Fontes
Margaret Healy, Advisor

PHONE # Mary Fontes (218)793-2460 (work)
(701)739-2259 (cell)

Margaret Healy (701)777-4255

DEPARTMENT: Educational Leadership

STATEMENT OF RESEARCH

If you are to participate in this research (interviews), you must give what is called informed consent. This consent must be based on an understanding of the nature and risks of the research. This form provides information that is important for this understanding. Research projects include only subjects who choose to take part. Please take your time in making your decision as to whether to participate. If you have questions at any time, please ask.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

You are invited to be in a research study (interviews) about understanding women African refugee students' program decisions because you were identified as a woman enrolled at a two-year institution and a new immigrant originally from Africa.

The purpose of this study is to find out what influences the program decision you have made. Understanding what factors influence new immigrant women African students' program decisions is important to career counselors, other educational professionals who serve students at two-year institutions, and other personnel who are in positions to make decisions about activities and services offered at educational institutions. Colleges may gain insight into services, programs, and policies that may need revisions in order to serve you better.

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL PARTICIPATE?

A minimum of 6 people will take part in this study, 3 individuals from 2 different colleges. Also, a pilot study will take place involving one subject. The pool of candidates will be identified from college contacts and other participants.

HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THIS STUDY?

Your participation in the study will consist of three interviews on three separate occasions. The interviews will last approximately one to one and a half hours per interview which is equal to a total commitment of three to four and a half hours.

University of North Dakota
Institutional Review Board
Approved on FEB 17 2012
Expires on FEB 16 2013

I

Date _____
Subject Initials: _____

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THIS STUDY?

After determining that you meet the eligibility requirements and that you are willing to participate through a college contact, the research (interviews) will be conducted in a setting that is agreed upon by both you and me. You will be asked to sign this Informed Consent form. Verbal consent will be obtained and a pseudonym (a made-up name) will be selected by you prior to starting the digitally recorded interview. Questions will include, but not be limited to, the set of attached interview questions. Questions will be asked regarding your life (past, present, and future), and your education decisions. You are free to skip any question that you prefer not to answer.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THE STUDY?

There may be some risk from being in this study. Some questions may be of a sensitive nature, and you may become upset as a result. However such risks are not viewed as being in excess of "minimal risk." If, however, you become upset by questions, you may stop at any time or choose not to answer a question. If you would like to talk to someone about your feelings about this study, you are encouraged to contact 24 hour national crisis line 1-800-273-8255, Grand Forks, ND area crisis line (701)775-0525, or a counselor at the college you are enrolled.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?

You may not benefit personally from being in this study. However, I hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study because we may gain a better understanding of what factors influence and the meaning of new immigrant African women students' program decisions and offer timely and appropriate supportive services.

WILL IT COST ME ANYTHING TO BE IN THIS STUDY?

You will not have any costs for being in this study. The only cost is the time involved in the three interviews and possible follow-up conversations.

WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATING?

As a token of appreciation, a nominal gift card of \$5 will be offered to you for each interview.

WHO IS FUNDING THE STUDY?

This study is not funded. I am not receiving any payments from other agencies, organizations, or companies to conduct this research study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The records of this study (interview) will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. In any report about this study that might be published, your name will be changed and all identifying characteristics will not be specified. Any information that is obtained in this study and that can be identified as your information will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

Confidentiality will be maintained by means of using a pseudonym (made-up name) for your real name, and keeping digital recordings, and any written materials that come from the research in a locked fire-proof cabinet (separate from the consent forms) that I will maintain access to the file cabinet in order to safeguard data collected. The only other individuals who will have access to the research materials are

University of North Dakota
Institutional Review Board
Approved on FEB 17 2012
Expires on FEB 16 2013

Date _____
Subject Initials: _____

persons who audit IRB procedures. You have the right to review and edit the recordings. If I write a report or article about this study, I will describe the study results in a summarized manner so that you cannot be identified.

HOW WILL DATA BE DESTROYED?

The voice recordings and transcripts will be kept in a locked fire-proof cabinet at my home, separate from the consent forms, for minimum of three years after data analysis is complete, or for a period of time sufficient to meet federal, state, and local regulations, and organizational policies and procedures. The researcher and persons who audit IRB procedures will be the individuals who have access to the data. All voice recordings, transcripts, and other documents collected will be destroyed by the researcher after three years from the ending date of the study. The paper research documents will be shredded and the voice recordings will be erased.

IS THIS STUDY VOLUNTARY?

Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of North Dakota or _____
(name of college attending)

You will be informed by me of any significant new findings that develop during the study which may influence your willingness to continue to participate in the study.

CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS?

The researcher or person conducting this study is Project Director – Mary Fontes. You may ask any questions you have now. If you later have questions, concerns, or complaints about the research (interviews) please contact Mary Fontes at (218)793-2460 or (701)739-2259 during the day. You may also contact the Project Director’s Advisor, Margaret Healy at (701)777-4255.

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, or if you have any concerns or complaints about the research, you may contact the University of North Dakota Institutional Review Board at (701) 777-4279. Please call this number if you cannot reach research staff, or you wish to talk with someone else.

Your signature indicates that this research study has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Subjects Name: _____

Signature of Subject

Date

Received Token of Appreciation Date: _____ Subject Initials: _____
Date: _____ Subject Initials: _____
Date: _____ Subject Initials: _____

University of North Dakota
Institutional Review Board
Approved on FEB 17 2012
Expires on FEB 16 2013

Date _____
Subject Initials: _____

Appendix F
Meaningful Units by Participant and Interview

Meaningful Units by Participant and Interview

Participant	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Total Meaningful Units
PIPA	78	49	41	168
S1P1	53	41	50	144
S1P2	68	44		112
S1P4	86	43	43	172
S1P5	37	40	16	93
S2P1	82	28	31	141
S2P2	32	34	30	96
S2P3	57	37	43	137
Total	493	316	254	1063

PIPA = Pilot Participant – **Zenab**
 S1P1 = Site One, Participant One – **Shalambood**
 S1P2 = Site One, Participant Two – **Nimo**
 S1P4 = Site One, Participant Four – **Sabrina**
 S1P5 = Site One, Participant Five – **Sagal**
 S2P1 = Site Two, Participant One – **Zaytun**
 S2P2 = Site Two, Participant Two – **Sabrina II**
 S2P3 = Site Two, Participant Three – **Shamqali**

REFERENCES

- American Association of Community Colleges. (2010). *About community colleges*. Retrieved from <http://webadmin.aacc.nche.edu/AboutCC/Pages/default.aspx>
- American Association of Community Colleges (2008). *Community colleges—A unique opportunity to study in the United States*. Retrieved from <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Resources/aaccprograms/international/Pages/ccuniqueopportuccun.aspx>
- American College Testing [ACT], Council for Opportunity in Education [COE]. (2013). *The condition of college & career readiness 2013: First-generation students*. Retrieved from <http://www.act.org/newsroom/data/2013/states/pdf/FirstGeneration.pdf>
- Arrive Ministries (2014). *Somalis in Minnesota*. Retrieved from <http://arriveministries.org/who-we-serve/refugee-populations/somalis/>
- Asylumlaw.org. (n.d.). *Asylum seeker start*. Retrieved from <http://www.asylumlaw.org/asylumseeker/>
- Auerbach, S. (2006). If the student is good, let him fly: Moral support for college among Latino immigrant parents. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 5(4), 275-292.
- Bal, A. & Perzigian, A. B. T. (2013). Evidence-based interventions for immigrant students experiencing behavioral and academic problems: A systematic review of the literature. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 36(4), 5-28.

- Bang, H. J. (2011a). Newcomer immigrant students' perspectives on what affects their homework experiences. *The Journal of Educational Research, 104*(6), 408-419. doi:10.1080/00220671.2010.499139
- Bang, H. J. (2011b). Promising homework practices: Teachers' perspectives on making homework work for newcomer immigrant students. *High School Journal, 95*(2), 3-31.
- Baum, S., & Flores, S. M. (2011). Higher education and children in immigrant families. *Future of Children, 21*(1), 171-193.
- Belenky, M. F., Clinchy, B. M., Goldberger, N. R., & Tarule, J. M. (1986). *Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice, and mind*. New York: Basic Books, Inc.
- Bennett, P. R., & Lutz, A. (2009). How African American is the net Black advantage? Differences in college attendance among immigrant Blacks, native Blacks, and Whites. *Sociology of Education, 82*(1), 70-100.
- Besteman, C. L. (1999). *Unraveling Somalia: Race, violence, and the legacy of slavery*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Bikos, L. H., Dykhouse, E. C., Boutin, S. K., Gowen, M. J., & Rodney, H. E. (2013). Practice and research in career counseling and development-2012. *Career Development Quarterly, 61*(4), 290-329. doi:10.1002/j.2161-0045-2013.00058.x
- Birman, D. (2006). Ethical issues in research with immigrants and refugees. In J. E. Trimble & C. B. Fisher (Eds.), *The handbook of ethical research with ethnocultural populations & communities* (pp. 155-177). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

- Bitew, G., & Ferguson, P. (2010). Parental support for African immigrant students' schooling in Australia. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 41(1), 149-165.
- Blustein, D. L. (2006). *The psychology of working: A new perspective for career development, counseling, and public policy*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Blustein, D. L., Kenna, A. C., Gill, N., & DeVoy, J. E. (2008). The psychology of working: A new framework for counseling practice and public policy. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 56(4), 294-308.
- Blustein, D. L., & Nourmair, D. A. (1996). Self and identity in career development: Implications for theory and practice. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 74(5), 433-441.
- Brown, L. J. (2004). *The literature of immigration and racial reform: Becoming White, becoming other, becoming American in the late progressive era*. New York: Routledge.
- Bujold, C. (2004). Constructing career through narrative. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 64(3), 470-484.
- Callahan, R. (2005). Tracking and high school English learners: Limiting opportunity to learn. *American Educational Research Journal*, 42(2), 305-328.
- Center for Community College Student Engagement. (2013). *A matter of degrees: Engaging practices, engaging students (High-Impact Practices for Community College Student Engagement)*. Austin, TX: The University of Texas at Austin, Community College Leadership Program.
- Chen, L., Gunderson, L., & Seror, J. (2005). Multiple perspectives on educationally resilient immigrant students. *TESL Canada Journal*, 22(2), 55-74.

- Cloud, D. (2004). To veil the threat of terror: Afghan women and the <clash of civilizations> in the imagery of the U.S. war on terrorism. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 90(3), 285-306.
- Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative. (2011, 2014). *Human Research, Group 2. Social / Behavioral Research Investigators and Key Personnel*. Retrieved from <https://www.citiprogram.org/index.cfm?pageID=140&ID=73299389.47920124201407165229827840.409>
- Connelly, F. M. & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, 19(5), 2-14.
- Corey, A. T. (2000). *Correlates of Asian American college students' career aspirations: Generational status, self-reports, and parental-reports on acculturation and perceived prejudice*. University of Nebraska, Lincoln.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The “what” and “why” of goal pursuits: Human needs and self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227-268.
- Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2005). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

- Department of Homeland Security. (n.d.). *U. S. immigration and naturalization service – populating a nation: A history of immigration and naturalization*. Retrieved from http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/about/history/legacy/ins_history.xml
- Department of Homeland Security. (2009). *Definition of terms*. Retrieved from <http://www.dhs.gov/ximgtn/statistics/stdfdef.shtm>
- Department of Homeland Security. (2009). *Refugee definition*. Retrieved from <http://www.dhs.gov/files/statistics/stdfdef.shtm#17>
- Department of Homeland Security. (2009). *Asylee definition*. Retrieved from <http://www.dhs.gov/files/statistics/stdfdef.shtm#0>
- Department of Homeland Security. (2009). *Temporary protected status definition*. Retrieved from <http://www.dhs.gov/files/statistics/stdfdef.shtm#19>
- Department of Homeland Security. (2009). *Permanent resident definition*. Retrieved from <http://www.dhs.gov/files/statistics/stdfdef.shtm#15>
- DeRusha, J. (2011, January 19). *Good question: Why did Somalis locate here?* Retrieved from <http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2011/01/19/good-question-why-did-somalis-locate-here/>
- Diemer, M. A., & Blustein, D. L. (2006). Critical consciousness and career development among urban youth. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 68(2), 220-232.
- Droogsma, R. A. (2007). Redefining hijab: American Muslim women's standpoints on veiling. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 35(3), 294-319.
- Dunbar, Jr., C., Rodriguez, D., & Parker, L. (2003). Race, subjectivity, and the interview process. In J. A. Holstein & J. F. Gubrium, *Inside interviewing: New lens, new concerns*, (pp. 133-150). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

- Elmi, A. A. (2010). *Understanding the Somalia conflagration: Identity, political Islam and peacebuilding*. New York, NY: Pluto Press.
- Espinoza, A. (2010, March 5). Re: Somali population, cultural tension rising in St. Cloud [Online story]. Retrieved from <http://www.mprnews.org/story/2010/03/15/st-cloud-tensions>
- Euvard, G. (1996). Career needs of Eastern Cape pupils in South Africa. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 24(1), 113-128.
- Exposito, S., & Favela, A. (2003). Reflective voices: Valuing immigrant students and teaching with ideological clarity. *The Urban Review*, 35(1), 73-91.
- Fergusson, J. (2013). *The world's most dangerous place: Inside the outlaw state of Somalia*, London: Bantam Press.
- Flum, H. (2001). Dialogues and challenges: The interface between work and relationships in transition. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 29(2), 259-270.
- Forman, M. (2001). "Straight outta Mogadishu": Prescribed identities and performance practices among Somali youth in North American high schools. *TOPIA*, 5(33), 33-61.
- Fouad, N. A. (2001). The future of vocational psychology: Aiming high. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 59(2), 183-191.
- Fuligni, A. J. (2006, July). Family obligation among children in immigrant families. *Migration Policy Institute*. Retrieved from <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/family-obligation-among-children-immigrant-families>
- Fuligni, A. J., & Pedersen, S. (2002). Family obligation and the transition to young adulthood. *Developmental Psychology*, 38(5), 856-868.

- Fuligni, A. J., Tseng, V., & Lam, M. (1999). Attitudes toward family obligations among American adolescents from Asian, Latin American, and European backgrounds. *Child Development, 70*(4), 1030-1044.
- Fuligni, A. J., & Witkow, M. (2004). The postsecondary educational progress of youth from immigrant families. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 14*(2), 159-183.
- Gibson, M. A., & Ogbu, J. U. (1991). *Minority status and schooling: A comparative study of immigrant vs. involuntary minorities*. New York: Garland.
- Gilligan, C., Spencer, R., Weinberg, M. C., & Bertsch, T. (2003). On the listening guide: A voice-centered relational method. In P. M. Camic, J. E. Rhodes, & L. Yardley (Eds.), *Qualitative research in psychology: Expanding perspectives in methodology and design* (pp. 157-172).
- Glesne, C. (2006). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Glesne, C. (2011). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Gray, M. J. & Vernez, G. (1996). Student access and the 'new' immigrants. *Change, 28*(5), 40-47.
- Guerrero, L. & Singh, S. (2013). The psychology of working: A case study of Mexican American women with low educational attainment. *The Career Development Quarterly, 61*(1), 27-39.
- Halabi, J. O. (2005) Nursing research with refugee clients: A call for more qualitative approaches. *International Nursing Review, 52*(4), 270–275.

- Hammond, L. (2014). *New issues in refugee research: History, overview, trends and issues in major Somali refugee displacements in the near region* (Research Paper No. 268). Geneva, Switzerland: UNHCR Policy Development and Evaluation Service.
- Hansen, J. C. (1987). Cross-cultural research on vocational interests. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development, 19*, 162-176.
- Hansen, J. C., Scullard, M. G., & Haviland, M. G. (2000). The interest structure of Native American college students. *Journal of Career Assessment, 8*(2), 159-165.
- Hansen, S. S. (2003). Career counselors as advocates and change agents for equality. *The Career Development Quarterly, 52*(1), 43-53. doi: 10.1002/j.2161-0045.2003.tb00626.x
- Harper, M. (2012). *Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, war, and hope in a shattered state*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hartung, P. J., & Blustein, D. L. (2002). Reason, intuition, and social justice: Elaborating on Parson's Career Decision-Making Model. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 80*(1), 41-47.
- Hartung, P. J., Fouad, N. A., Leong, F.T.L., & Hardin, E. E. (2010). Individualism-collectivism: Links to occupational plans and work values. *Journal of Career Assessment, 18*(1), 34-45. doi: 10.1177/1069072709340526
- Holland, J. L. (1966). *The psychology of vocational choice*. Waltham, MA: Blaisdell.
- Holstein, J. A. & Gubrium, J. F. (2003). *Inside interviewing: New lenses, new concerns*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

- Inman, A. G., Howard, E. E., Beaumont, R. L., & Walker, J. A. (2007). Cultural transmission: Influence of contextual factors in Asian Indian immigrant parents' experiences. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 54*(1), 93–100.
- Jaranson, J. M., Butcher, J., Halcon, L., Johnson, D. R., Robertson, C., Savik, K., Spring, M., & Westermeyer, J. (2004). Somali and Oromo refugees: Correlates of torture and trauma history. *American Journal of Public Health, 94*(4), 591-598.
- Jefferys, K. J. (2007). *Annual flow report: Refugees and asylees 2006*. Department of Homeland Security Office of Immigration Statistics. Retrieved from http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/Refugee_AsyleeSec508Compliant.pdf
- Jefferys, K. J. & Martin, D. C. (2008). *Annual flow report: Refugees and asylees 2007*. Department of Homeland Security Office of Immigration Statistics. Retrieved from http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/ois_rfa_fr_2007.pdf
- Johansson, C. B. (1984). *Career assessment inventory: The vocational version* (3rd ed.). Minneapolis, MN: National Computer Systems, Inc.
- Johnsdotter, S. (2012). Projected cultural histories of the cutting of female genitalia: A poor reflection as in a mirror. *History and Anthropology, 23*(1), 91–114.
- Kamya, H. A. (1997). African immigrants in the United States: The challenge for research and practice. *Social Work, 42*(2), 154-165.
- Kao, G. (2004). Social capital and its relevance to minority and immigrant population. *Sociology of Education, 77*(2), 172-175.

- Kim, E. (2009). Navigating college life: The role of peer networks in first-year college adaptation experience of minority immigrant students. *Journal of the First-Year Experience & Students in Transition*, 21(2), 9-24.
- Kim, E. & Diaz, J. (2013). Access to higher education for immigrant students. *ASHE Higher Education Report*, 38(6), 47-60.
- Kim, E. & Diaz, J. (2013). Collegiate experience of immigrant students. *ASHE Higher Education Report*, 38(6), 61-75.
- Kim, E. & Diaz, J. (2013). Immigrant students and community colleges. *ASHE Higher Education Report*, 38(6), 91-107.
- Kim, E. & Diaz, J. (2013). Concluding thoughts. *ASHE Higher Education Report*, 38(6), 109-115.
- Klepfer, K & Hull, J. (2012). *High school rigor and good advice: Setting up students to succeed*. Retrieved from The Center for Public Education National School Boards Association website <http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Staffingstudents/High-school-rigor-and-good-advice-Setting-up-students-to-succeed>
- Korn, F. (2004). *Born in the big rains: A memoir of Somalia and survival*. New York: The Feminist Press at the City University of New York.
- Kreitzer, L. (2002). Liberian refugee women: a qualitative study of their participation in planning camp programmes. *International Social Work*, 45(1), 45-58.
- Kusow, A. M. (2006). Migration and racial formations among Somali immigrants in North America. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 32(3), 533-551.
doi:10.1080/13691830600555079

- Landale, N. & Oropesa, R. (2002). White, black, or Puerto Rican? Racial self-identification among mainland and island Puerto Ricans, *Social Forces*, 81(1), 231-254
- Lee, S. J. (1994). Behind the model-minority stereotype: Voices of high- and low-achieving Asian American students. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 25(4), 413-429.
- Leong, F. T. L., & Gim-Chung, R. H. (1995). Career assessment and intervention with Asian Americans. In F.T.L. Leong (Ed.), *Career development and vocational behavior of ethnic and racial minorities* (pp. 1-6). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Lew, J. (2006). Asian Americans in class: *Charting the achievement gap among Korean American Youth*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Lewis, I. M. (2008). *Understanding Somalia and Somaliland*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Louie, V. S. (2001). Parents' aspirations and investment: The role of social class in the educational experiences of 1.5-and second-generation Chinese Americans. *Harvard Educational Review*, 71(3), 438-474.
- Louie, V. S. (2004). *Compelled to excel: Immigration, education, and opportunity among Chinese Americans*. CA: Stanford University Press.
- Lunde, I. B., & Sagbakken, M. (2014). Female genital cutting in Hargeisa, Somaliland: is there a move towards less severe forms? *Reproductive Health Matters*, 22(43), 169-177. doi: 10.1016/S0968-8080(14)43759-5
- Magied, A. A. (2013). Female genital mutilation in the Sudan: A human rights issue. *Ahfad Journal*, 30(1), 2-8.

- Maramba, D. C. (2008). Immigrant families and the college experience: Perspectives of Filipina Americans. *Journal of College Student Development*, 49(4), 336-350.
- Martin, D. C. (2010). *Annual flow report: Refugees and asylees 2009*. Department of Homeland Security Office of Immigration Statistics. Retrieved from http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/ois_rfa_fr_2009.pdf
- Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370-396.
- Maslow, A. H. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. New York: Harper.
- Maslow, A. H. (1969a). The farther reaches of human nature. *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*, 1(1), 1-9.
- Maslow, A. H. (1969b). Toward a humanistic biology. *American Psychologist*, 24(8), 724-735.
- Mattessich, P. (2000). *Speaking for themselves: A survey of Hispanic, Hmong, Russian, and Somali immigrants in Minneapolis-Saint Paul*. Wilder Research Center. Retrieved from <http://www.wilder.org/Wilder-Research/Publications/Studies/Speaking%20for%20Themselves/Speaking%20for%20Themselves%20A%20Survey%20of%20Hispanic,%20Hmong,%20Russian,%20and%20Somali%20Immigrants%20in%20Minneapolis-Saint%20Paul.pdf>
- Maxwell, J. A. (2005). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Maxwell J. A. (2013). *Qualitative Research Design: An interactive approach* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

- McBrien, J. L. (2003). A second chance for refugee students. *Educational Leadership*, 61(2), 76-79.
- McDonough, P. M. & Calderone, S. (2006). The meaning of money: Perceptual differences between college counselors and low-income families about college costs and financial aid. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 49(12), 1703-1718.
- McGown, R. B. (2003, Spring). Redefining social roles: The extraordinary strength of Somali women. *Women & Environments*, 58/59, 13-14.
- McMahon, M. L. & Watson, M. B. (2008). Systemic influences on career development: Assisting clients to tell their career stories. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 56(3), 280-288.
- McMahon, M. L., & Watson, M. B. (2012). Telling stories of career assessment. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 20(4), 440-451. doi:10.1177/1069072712448999
- Minnesota Historical Society (2012). *Becoming Minnesotan: Stories of recent immigrants and refugees*. Retrieved from <http://education.mnhs.org/immigration/communities/somali>
- Minnesota Humanities Center (2014). *Increase engagement through absent narratives*. Retrieved from <http://www.minnesotahumanities.org/AbsentNarratives>
- Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (2010). *About the Minnesota state colleges and universities system*. Retrieved from <http://www.mnscu.edu/about/index.html>
- Mulongo, P., McAndrew, S., & Hollins M. C. (2014). Crossing borders: Discussing the evidence relating to the mental health needs of women exposed to female genital mutilation. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 23(4), 296-305. doi: 10.1111/inm.12060

- Murray, M. (2003). Narrative psychology and narrative analysis. In P. M. Camic, J. E. Rhodes, & L. Yardley (Eds.), *Qualitative research in psychology: Expanding perspectives in methodology and design* (pp. 95-112).
- Naylor, F. D. & Kidd, G. J. (1991). The predictive validity of the investigative scale of the career assessment inventory. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, *51*(1), 217-226.
- Nguyen, B. Q. (2008). Tomorrow's workforce: The needs for immigrant workers and strategies to retain them. *Public Personnel Management*, *37*(2), 175-184.
- Nieto, S. (1994). Lessons from students on creating a chance to dream. *Harvard Educational Review*, *64*(4), 392-426.
- Nilsson, J. E., Barazanji, D. M., Heintzelman, A., Siddiqi, M., & Shilla, Y. (2012). Somali women's reflections on the adjustment of their children in the United States. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, *40*(4), 240-252.
- Nora, A. (2008, August 7). Reexamining the community college mission [Online AACC Resource]. Retrieved from <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Resources/aaccprograms/pastprojects/Pages/reexaminingccmission.aspx>
- Norguera, P. A. (2004). Social capital and the education of immigrant students: Categories and generalizations. *Sociology of Education*, *77*(2), 180-183.
- Nunez, A. M., & Sparks, P. J. (2012). Who are linguistic minority students in higher education?: An analysis of the Beginning Postsecondary Students Study 2004. In Y. Kanno & L. Harklau (Eds.), *Linguistic minority students go to college: Preparation, access, and persistence* (pp. 110-129). New York: Routledge.

- Ogbannaya, A. O. (1994). Person as community: An African understanding of the person as an intrapsychic community. *Journal of Black Psychology, 20*(1), 75-87.
- Oikonomidou, E. (2010). Zooming into the school narratives of refugee students. *Multicultural Perspectives, 12*(2), 74-80. doi:10.1080/15210960.2010.481186
- Onchwari, G., Onchwari, J. A., & Keengwe, J. (2008). Teaching the immigrant child: Application of child development theories. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 36*, 267-273. doi: 10.1007/s10643-008-0269-9
- Parsons, F. (1909). *Choosing a vocation*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Passel, J. S. & Cohn, D. (2008). *U. S. population projections: 2005-2050*. Retrieved from Pew Research Center website: <http://pewsocialtrends.org/files/2010/10/85.pdf>
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Pavlish, C. L. (2007). Narrative inquiry into life experiences of refugee women and men. *International Nursing Review, 54*(1), 28-34.
- Payne, R. K., DeVol, P. E., & Dreussi Smith, T. (2006). *Bridges out of poverty: Strategies for professionals and communities*. Highlands, TX: aha! Process, Inc.
- Peterson, N. & Gonzales, R. C. (2005). *The role of work in people's lives: Applied career counseling and vocational psychology* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Pope, M. & Sveinsdottir, M. (2005). Frank, we hardly knew ye: The very personal side of Frank Parsons. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 83*(1), 105-115.
- Ranallo, A. B. (2013, November 4). Neediest students most likely to miss aid deadlines. *University of Illinois at Chicago News Center*, Retrieved from <http://news.uic.edu/financial-aid-study>

- Reig Alcaraz, M., Siles González, J., & Solano Ruiz, C. (2014). Attitudes towards female genital mutilation: an integrative review. *International Nursing Review*, *61*(1), 25-34. doi: 10.1111/inr.12070
- Reinharz, S. & Chase, S. E. (2003). Interviewing women. In J. A. Holstein & J. F. Gubrium, *Inside interviewing: New lens, new concerns*, (pp. 73-90). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Richardson, M. S. (1993). Work in people's lives: A location for counseling psychologists. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *40*(4), 425-433.
- Roy, L. A., & Roxas, K. C. (2011). Whose deficit is this anyhow? Exploring counter-stories of Somali Bantu refugees' experiences in "Doing school". *Harvard Educational Review*, *81*(3), 521-541.
- Roysircar, G., Carey, J., and Koroma, S. (2010). Asian Indian college students' math and science preferences: Influences of cultural contexts. *Journal of Career Development*, *36*(4), 324-347.
- Sealy-Ruiz, Y. (2007). Wrapping the curriculum around their lives: Using a culturally relevant curriculum with African American women. *Adult Education Quarterly*, *58*(1), 44-60.
- Seidman, R. H. (1995, April). *National education 'Goals 2000': Some disastrous unintended consequences*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA.
- Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (3rd ed). New York: Teachers College Press.

- Sodowsky, G. R. (1991). Effects of culturally consistent counseling tasks on American and international student observers' perception of counselor credibility: A preliminary investigation. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 69*(3), 253-256.
- Sodowsky, G. R., Kwan, K.L.K, & Pannu, R. (1995). Ethnic identity of Asians in the United States in the United States. In J. G. Ponterotto, J.M. Casas, L. A. Suzuki, and C. M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counseling* (pp. 123-154). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Stebbleton, M. J. (2004). Unfolding stories: African immigrant, adult students pursuing an undergraduate, four-year degree—A hermeneutic approach to work. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.
- Stebbleton, M. J., Henle, M., & Harris, C. (2006). *Hired: The job hunting/career-planning guide* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Stebbleton, M. J. (2007). Career counseling with African immigrant college students: Theoretical approaches and implications for practice. *The Career Development Quarterly, 55*(4), 290-312.
- Stebbleton, M. J. (2010). The meaning of work for Black African immigrant adult college students. *Journal of Career Development, 39*(1), 50–75.
- Stebbleton, M. J. (2012). The meaning of work for Black African immigrant adult college students. *Journal of Career Development, 39*(1), 50-75.
- doi:10.1177/0894845309358888
- Stebbleton, M. J. & Eggerth, D. E. (2012). Returning to our roots: Immigrant populations at work. *Journal of Career Development, 39*(1), 3-12.
- doi:10.1177/0894845311417131

- Stewart, D. L. (2009). Perceptions of multiple identities among Black college students. *Journal of College Student Development, 50*(3), 253-270.
- Stewart, M. A. (2013a). Giving voice to Valeria's story: Support, value, and agency for immigrant adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 57*(1), 42-50.
doi:10.1002/JAAL.217
- Stewart, M. A. (2013b). What is "educated" in the 21st century? *Phi Delta Kappan, 94*(7), 57-60.
- Stratton, T., Pang, V. O., Madueno, M., Park, C. D., Atlas, M., Page, C., & Oliger, J. (2009). *Immigrant students and the obstacles to achievement. The Phi Delta Kappan, 91*(3), 44-47.
- Suarez-Orozco, C. & Suarez-Orozco, M. M. (2009). Educating Latino immigrant students in the 21st century: Principles for the Obama administration. *Harvard Educational Review, 79*(2), 327-340.
- Super, D. E., Savickas, M. L., & Super, C. M. (1996). The life-span, life-space approach to careers. In D. Brown & L. Brown (Eds.), *Career choice and development* (3rd ed., pp. 121-178). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Sutherland, J. A. (2011). Building an academic nation through social networks: Black immigrant men in community colleges. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 35*(3), 267-279.
- Szu-Yin, C. (2009). Implementation of supportive school programs for immigrant students in the United States. *Preventing School Failure, 53*(2), 67-72.

- Tatar, M. (2012). School counsellors working with immigrant pupils: Changes in their approaches after 10 years. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 40(5), 577-592.
- Teranishi, R. T., Suarez-Orozco, C. & Suarez-Orozco, M. (2011). Immigrants in community colleges. *The Future of Children*, 21(1), 153-169.
- Terrazas, A. (2009). *African immigrants in the United States*. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute.
- Turney, K. & Kao, G. (2009). Barriers to school involvement: Are immigrant parents disadvantaged? *Journal of Educational Research*, 109(4), 257-271.
- United Nations High Commission for Refugees. (2002, July). America here we come. *Refugees*, 3(128). Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/txis/vtx/home/opendocPDFViewer.html?docid=3d9ac1502&query=Refugees%20America%20Here%20we%20come>
- United Nations High Commission for Refugees [UNHCR]. (2002, July). *SomaliBantus begin first stage of journey to United States*. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/3d2194174.html>
- United Nations High Commission for Refugees. (2010, July). *UNHCR Somalia Briefing Sheet*. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/txis/vtx/home/opendocPDFViewer.html?docid=4b791d4c9&query=Somalia>
- United Nations High Commission for Refugees. (2010, July). Retrieved from [http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/txis/vtx/home/opendocPDFViewer.html?docid=5310b0159&query=Somali refugees in the US](http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/txis/vtx/home/opendocPDFViewer.html?docid=5310b0159&query=Somali%20refugees%20in%20the%20US)

- United Nations (2012). *Observatory on regional integration in Africa country profiles: Somalia summary statistics*. Retrieved from <http://www.uneca.org/oria/pages/somalia>
- United States Citizenship and Immigration Service. (n.d.). *Legislation from 1961-1908*. Retrieved from http://www.ilw.com/resources/Immigration_Legal_History_Legislation_1961-1980.pdf
- USCIS. (2010). U. S. Immigration and naturalization service – populating a nation: A history of immigration and naturalization. Retrieved from http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/about/history/legacy/ins_history.xml
- USCIS. (2008). *Legislation from 1941 to 1960*. Retrieved from <http://www.uscis.gov/files/nativedocuments/Legislation%20from%201941-1960.pdf>
- USCIS. (2008). *Legislation from 1961-1980*. Retrieved from <http://www.uscis.gov/files/nativedocuments/Legislation%20from%201961-1980.pdf>
- U. S. Department of Education [USDOE] (2013). *Office of Postsecondary Education*. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/programs.html>
- U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. [USDHHS] (2007). *Office of refugee resettlement report to congress FY06*. Retrieved from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/data/ORR_2006_report.pdf
- U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. [USDHHS] (2008). *Office of refugee resettlement report to congress FY07*. Retrieved from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/data/ORR_2007_report.pdf

- U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2010). *Office of refugee resettlement preferred communities*. Retrieved from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/programs/pref_comm_prg.htm
- U. S. Department of State. (n.d.). *Emergency refugee and migration assistance congressional report to congress FY2010*. Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/124513.pdf>
- U.S. Department of State, Bureau of African Affairs. (2014, July 31). Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/outofdate/bgn/somalia/200320.htm>
- Valdes, G. (1998). The world outside and inside school: Language and immigrant students. *Educational Researcher*, 27(6), 4-18.
- Valdivia, C., & Flores, L. Y. (2012). Factors affecting the job satisfaction of Latino/a immigrants in the Midwest. *Journal of Career Development*, 39(1), 31-49.
- Vargas, J. H. (2004). *College knowledge: Addressing information barriers to college*. Boston: College Access Services: Education Resources Institute.
- Venegas, K. M. (2006). Internet inequalities: Financial aid, the Internet, and low-income students. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 49(12), 1652-1669.
- Villegas, A. M., & Lucas, T. (2007). The culturally responsive teacher. *Educational Leadership*, 64(6), 28-33.
- Waldorf, B. S., Beckhusen, J., Florax, R. J. G. M., & deGraaff, T. (2010). The role of human capital in language acquisition among immigrants in U. S. metropolitan. *Regional Science Policy and Practice*, 2(1), 39-49.
- Ward, J. (2008, November). Daring to dream. *Adults Learning*, 20(3), 16-18.

- Warfa, N., Curtis, S., Watters, C., Carswell, K., Ingleby, D., & Kamaldeep, B. (2012). Migration experiences, employment status and psychological distress among Somali immigrants: A mixed-method international study. *BioMed Central Public Health, 12*, 1-12. Retrieved from <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2458/12/749>
- Waters, M. (1999). *Black identities: West Indian immigrant dreams and American realities*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Watkinson, J. S., & Hersi., A. A. (2014). School counselors supporting African immigrant students' career development: A case study. *The Career Development Quarterly, 62*(1), 44-66. doi:10.1002/j.2161-0045.2014.00069.x
- Watson, M. B., Foxcroft, C. D., Horn, M. A., & Stead, G. B. (1997). Occupational Aspirations of Black South African adolescents. *Psychological Reports, 80*(2), 627-635. doi: 10.2466/pr0.1997.80.2.627
- Watson, M. B., & Stead, G. B. (2002). Career psychology in South Africa: Moral perspectives on present and future directions. *South African Journal of Psychology, 32*(1), 26-31.
- Whiston, S. C., and Keller, B. K. (2004). The influences of the family of origin on career development. *The Counseling Psychologist, 32*(4), 493-568.
- Wisell, T., & Champanier, L. (2010). Community colleges as critical gateways for immigrant education. *Diversity and Democracy, 13*(1), 16-17.
- World Refugee Survey 2009 (2008). *Refugees and asylum seekers worldwide*. Retrieved from <http://www.refugees.org/FTP/WRS09PDFS/RefuandAsylumseek.pdf>

- Young, C. (2003). Assimilation and social change dynamics in African and African American communities. *The Western Journal of Black Studies*, 27(3), 164-175.
- Yuen, L. (2012). Refugee health issues now more complex. *Minnesota Public Radio News*. Retrieved from <http://www.mprnews.org/story/2012/09/04/health/refugee-health-issues-now-more-complex>
- Zarate, M. E. & Pachon, H. (2006). *Perceptions of college financial aid among California Latino youth* (Policy Brief). Los Angeles: Tomas Rivera Policy Institute.
- Zytowski, D. G. (2001). Frank Parsons and the progressive movement. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 50(1), 57-65.