Conflict Behaviors: Religiosity, Culture, and Gender as Predictors for Conflict Management Styles Among First and Second Generation Arab Muslim Immigrants in the United States

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CONFLICT BEHAVIORS: RELIGIOSITY, CULTURE, AND GENDER AS PREDICTORS FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES AMONG FIRST AND SECOND GENERATION ARAB MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

by

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DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in International Conflict Management in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw, Georgia

2015
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Conflict Behaviors: Culture, Gender, and Religiosity as Predictors for Conflict Management Styles Among First and Second-Generation Arab-Muslim Immigrants in the United States

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DEDICATION

For the soul of my parents who wished they could have witnessed this success,

my brothers Mahmood and Ali for supporting all my academic endeavors,

and my wife Rula for bringing out the best in me.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to start by expressing my deepest appreciation to my committee chair, Dr. Jesse Benjamin, whose guidance throughout my Ph.D. has been priceless. My journey has been difficult, but your continuous and infinite support not only helped me reach to this point, but also gave me this unique hybrid lens, which helps me look at academia in a way I had not thought of before. Without your guidance and persistent support this dissertation would not have been possible.

Special appreciation also goes to Dr. Ulf Zimmermann and Dr. Clarence Lo for their guidance as my Ph.D. dissertation committee members. Your comments and edits challenged me to create a scholarly work that is novel and adds great value to the current literature. Each of you has contributed to my dissertation in a different way and I feel blessed to have such a diverse group of scholars on my committee.

I would also like to thank my family, my brothers, and my sisters for all their support. You have surrounded me with your love, passion, and prayers throughout my academic journey.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, for always standing by my side. As you struggled through your medical residency, you always found the time to provide me with all the support I needed, supporting me through my own struggle of academia.
ABSTRACT

Multiple studies have shown that culture, religiosity, and gender influence people’s behavior in managing their conflict; however, there has been little investigation of the impact of the acculturation process on these variables utilized by Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States. My study follows a sequential explanatory model with a mixed methods approach, and specifically explores the conflict management styles utilized by first and second-generation Arab-Muslim immigrants in the U.S. and how their culture, gender, and religiosity contribute to these processes. Data was collected by conducting 257 online surveys and 24 face-to-face semi-structured interviews, with the sample population stemming from the Arab-Muslim communities in Columbia, Kansas City, and St. Louis, Missouri. Binary logistic regression and Chi-square tests were used to analyze this quantitative data through SPSS.

The resulting analysis showed that first-generation immigrants tended to be more collectivistic, have a higher level of religiosity, and utilize a wider variety of conflict management styles including obliging, compromising, integrating, and avoiding. Second-generation immigrants were more likely to have a lower level of religiosity and were more likely to utilize the dominating conflict management style for managing their interpersonal conflicts. In addition, gender had a significant relationship only with the avoiding conflict management style, while level of religiosity had a significant relationship with the obliging, compromising, integrating, and dominating conflict management styles. Finally, culture had a significant predictive relationship with integrating and avoiding conflict management styles.
In this sequential explanatory model, more weight was given to the quantitative phase; however, the face-to-face semi-structured interviews enhanced the understanding of the overall trends in conflict management style preferences of first and second generation Arab-Muslim immigrants when trying to manage their interpersonal conflicts. While this study establishes predictive relationships between gender, culture, and religiosity with utilization of the various conflict management styles, other studies should be conducted to better understand the implications of these relationships.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Background Information

The immigrant population in the United States has grown considerably over the last 50 years, more than doubling since the 1960s. In 1990 the immigrant population was 19.8 million, which increased to 31.4 million in 2000 and reached a record of 40.4 million by 2011 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). The Arab immigrant population\(^1\) in the United States has also increased, accounting for about 2.5 percent of the total immigrant population in 2009. According to the United States Census Bureau, the Arab immigrant population was slightly over one million, which more than tripled to 3.5 million in 2010, indicating a greater rate of increase than that of the overall immigrant population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011).

As members of the United States workforce, Arab-Muslim immigrants make important contributions in their fields. The American workforce includes governmental and non-governmental workers and has become increasingly heterogeneous. The Arab-Muslim immigrant newcomers leave their mother culture and move to the United States, which starts the acculturation process. In some cases, acculturation can lead to some obstacles, especially in the work environment. Cultural differences between workers and the organizations they work for can lead to misunderstandings and ultimately conflicts in the workplace (Elsayed-Ekhouly, 1996). In fact, cultural differences can exist between

\(^1\) Arab countries: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen,
workers from different cities within the same nation. For example, New York is known for its fast pace and quick business transactions. An employee from a small southern town may not approach his or her work duties with the same haste as someone employed by the same company from a large urban city where there is a sense of urgency for every task (Fitzsimmons, 2013).

The ultimate goal of any organization is to bring together individuals such that they unite to perform a designated mission in order to achieve specific goals (Barnard, Goldstein, & Hazy, 2006). As organizations aim to increase the diversity of their workers, conflict becomes inevitable, necessitating members within the organization to decide their approach to conflict based upon their culture (LeBaron & Zumeta, 2003). Conflict is, therefore, a consequence of organizational (and workplace) communication within organizations (Cetin & Hacifazlioglu, 2004).

Pelled, Eisenhardt, and Xin (1999) conducted a study that determined that an individual’s racial and cultural background contributes to an acceleration of emotional conflict within a workgroup. They noted that since race is an impermeable attribute, one that cannot be altered for any individual person, stereotypes were easily formed within the workgroup and this led to tense communications within workgroups, directly limiting organizational goals. Culture is an ever-evolving phenomenon and immigrants to the United States who are new to the United States environment will have different experiences within the workplace compared to their second-generation immigrant counterparts (Waldinger, 1996). This is due in part to the acculturation process through which immigrants engage with United States culture over time.
Roots of Acculturation

Martin (2005) traced the roots of acculturation to 1880s anthropology literature. It was developed to enhance understanding of the change that occurs when “two or more autonomous cultures interact with each other” (Martin, 2005, p. 72). While some scholars such as Bisin and Verdier (2000) argue that the assimilation theory fails, and that individuals strive to maintain their culture, others such as Berry (1980) believe there are multiple ways for individuals to go through the acculturation process. For example, some individuals assimilate, and specifically don’t want to maintain their native cultural identity; instead they become absorbed into the host society (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovis, 1936). The other extreme is individuals that separate, placing a value on holding on to their original culture and at the same time avoiding interaction with others (Berry, 1980). Others integrate, trying to maintain their own culture while interacting with other groups (Berry & Kalin, 1995). Finally, there are those who marginalize, who avoid social interaction with others (to avoid exclusion or discrimination) and have little interest or possibility in maintaining their heritage (because of enforced cultural loss) (Berry, 1997).

Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits (1936) stated “acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups” (p. 149).

Arabs have been immigrating to the United States since the 1800s (Abu-Laban & Suleiman, 1989). However, the majority of Arabs immigrated after the 1960s (McCarus, 1994). This is due to the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965, which abolished the national quota system that structured the United States immigration policy since the 1920s,
replacing it with a preference system focusing on immigrant skills and family relationships with United States citizens and/or residents (Keely, 1971). Ammar (2000) argued that Arab immigrants (or Americans of Arab descent) are divided into two categories: Christians who held the majority of the early waves of immigration in the 1800s and Muslims who made up the bulk of Arabs in the second wave after the 1960s.

Little research has focused on the second wave of Arab immigrants in the United States, however, El-Sayed (1986) found a positive relationship between the length of residence and the acculturation process for Arab immigrants, indicating that the longer their residency, the more they are assimilated to United States culture. Nevertheless, differences in language, ethnicity, culture, and religious practice between generations of Arab-Muslim immigrants are exhibited in the United States workplace. Another study by Amor (2006) revealed interesting results that Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States tended to design their homes in the United States in such a way that it kept them attached to their origin. The interior furniture and accents were mostly imported from their origin country. The way they divided their rooms was also influenced by their root culture. In essence, the Arab-Muslim immigrants transformed their physical culture to compensate for alienation they experienced in United States culture.

**Introduction to Conflict Management Styles**

Many studies have suggested that culture plays a significant role in an individual’s choice of conflict management style (Dinsmoer, 1984; Elsayed-Ekhouly & Buda, 1996; Jaeger & Kanungo, 1990; Levine et al., 1995). Hofstede (1984) specified that people from the Middle East differ from Americans in all four dimensions of culture: power distance,
Conceptualization of conflict management has evolved from Blake & Mouton’s managerial grid (1964), which proposed a typology of the five management styles to the schemes developed by Hall (1969), Thomas (1976) and Rahim (1983). The five main conflict management styles include the following: competing, accommodating, avoiding, compromising, and problem-solving (Rahim, 2001). Figure 1.1 from Sorenson (1999) illustrates the 5 main conflict management styles (and some synonyms used for them).

Figure 1.1. Conflict Management Styles

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2 Power distance: extent to which the less powerful members of institutions/organizations within a country accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. Individualism: societies in which the ties between individuals are loose, as in everyone is expected to look after him or herself. Collectivism: pertains to societies people from birth are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people’s lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for loyalty. Masculinity: extent to which dominant values of a society are masculine, assertive, and competitive. Masculinity also pertains to societies in which social gender roles are distinct. Femininity pertains to societies in which gender roles overlap: men and women are expected to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.
When individuals utilize different conflict management styles to overcome obstacles, it can lead to greater conflict and misunderstanding. The diversity of the United States workforce makes conflict unavoidable. Multiple studies have shown that cultural differences have been identified as a source of project failure within organizations (Dinsmoer, 1984; Jaeger & Kanungo, 1990; Muriithi & Crawford, 2003; Verma, 1995). There is a clear gap in the literature, however, when it comes to examining workplace conflict for Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States.

The role of gender in determining an individual’s choice of conflict management style has also been researched extensively in the literature (Cunnison, 1999; Heim & Murphy, 2001; Jordan, 2001; Nelson & Lubin, 1991; Rojahn & Willemsen, 1994; Rowley, 2010; Shockley-Zalabak, 1981). Heim and Murphy (2001) describe sex role identity theory and how children learn from observation of their surrounding environment. Specifically, males develop their masculine characteristics and how to be strong and unemotional while women develop their feminine side by learning how to be sensitive, cooperative, and emotional. The literature on gender’s role in conflict management has fluctuated and remains inconsistent. Some researchers argue that gender plays a significant role in conflict management styles (Nelson & Lubin, 1991) while other scholars argue that gender provides no significant role in choice of conflict management style (Kim et al., 2007).

The role of religion has also been investigated in the literature when it comes to determining conflict management styles. Alison (1975) and Geertz (1973) argue that religion, for most people, is the main cultural pillar through which they identify themselves. Randeree (2008) argued that the majority of Muslims utilize Islamic values to resolve their conflicts. Interestingly, Abdalla (2001) expands on this concept by arguing
that Muslims also sometimes manage interpersonal conflict via Western techniques so long as these techniques don’t conflict with Islamic teachings.

One interesting study focused not only on religion, but also on the level of religiosity of participants and how this impacted conflict management styles of Christians and Muslims in Australia (Wilson & Power, 2004). The study found that Christians (practicing and non-practicing) and non-practicing Muslims tended to collaborate when dealing with conflicts, while practicing Muslims who correlated themselves with a higher level of religiosity preferred utilizing the compromising style for managing their conflicts (Wilson & Power, 2004). The lack of adequate research on the role of religiosity and not merely religion in predicting conflict management styles makes this an ideal variable to investigate further.

**Research Questions and Hypotheses**

This study explores how culture, gender, and level of religiosity of first and second generation Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States impact their choice of conflict management styles to resolve interpersonal conflicts in the workplace. Specifically, it will focus on a comparison between the first and second generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants living in the United States. Because Arab-Muslim immigrants come to the United States with differing cultures, their norms differ from those of United States culture. In the workplace, differences in expectations regarding workplace nature, norms, and interpersonal relations with co-workers, gender roles, and religious values can create conflicts. Because Arab-Muslim immigrants come from a different cultural background,

3 First generation Arab-Muslim immigrants: an adult who immigrated to the United States from an Arab country prior to the age of five. Second generation Arab-Muslim immigrants: refers to the children of first generation immigrants born in the United States. Second generation immigrants also include any foreign-born immigrants who came to the United States after the age of five.
they will likely utilize different conflict management styles. The question becomes, do conflict management styles utilized by first generation workers get passed down to the second-generation Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States? More specifically, the research question for my study is: Can culture, gender, and level of religiosity predict conflict management styles utilized in the workplace by first and second generation Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States? Below are the overall research questions, sub-questions, and appropriate hypotheses for this research study.

RQ1: What are the overall trends in conflict management style preferences in the workplace between first and second-generation Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States?
- H1a: First generation Arab-Muslim immigrants will have significantly higher scores on avoiding, obliging, compromising, and integrating in managing their interpersonal conflict than the second generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants.
- H1b: Second generation Arab-Muslim immigrants will have significantly higher scores on dominating in managing their interpersonal conflict than first generation Arab-Muslim immigrants.

RQ2. Is there a predictive relationship between culture (Individualism vs. Collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using obliging to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for first and second generation Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States?
- Ho2: There will be no predictive relationship between culture (Individualism vs. Collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using obliging to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first or second-generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants.
- Ha2: There will be a predictive relationship between culture (Individualism vs. Collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using obliging to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first or second-generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants.
RQ3. Is there a predictive relationship between culture (Individualism vs. Collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using compromising to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for first and second generation Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States?
- Ho3: There will be no predictive relationship between culture (Individualism vs. Collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using compromising to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first or second-generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants.
- Ha3: There will be a predictive relationship between culture (Individualism vs. Collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using compromising to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first or second-generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants.

RQ4. Is there a predictive relationship between culture (Individualism vs. Collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using integrating to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first and second generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States?
- Ho4: There will be no predictive relationship between culture (Individualism vs. Collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using integrating to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first or second-generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants.
- Ha4: There will be a predictive relationship between culture (Individualism vs. Collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using integrating to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first or second-generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants.

RQ5. Is there a predictive relationship between culture (Individualism vs. Collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using avoiding to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first and second generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States?
- Ho5: There will be no predictive relationship between culture (Individualism vs. Collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using avoiding to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first or second-generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants.
- Ha5: There will be a predictive relationship between culture (Individualism vs. Collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using avoiding to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first or second-generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants.
RQ6. Is there a predictive relationship between culture (Individualism vs. Collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using dominating to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first and second generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States?

- Ho6: There will be no predictive relationship between culture (Individualism vs. Collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using dominating to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first or second-generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants.
- Ha6: There will be a predictive relationship between culture (Individualism vs. Collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using dominating to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first or second-generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants.

**Organization of the Study**

This study is organized into a series of chapters that provide both background and results on current literature on conflict management styles, acculturation, and conflict resolution in the Arab and Islamic perspective, followed by chapters on the specific methodology, data analysis, and discussion and conclusion of my specific study. Chapter two begins by analyzing the concept of workplace conflict and how cultural differences play a role in workplace conflict. This chapter also introduces on the topic of acculturation with a focus on Arab-Muslims who immigrate to the United States. Finally, chapter two discusses the role of culture, gender, and religiosity in determining conflict management styles.

Chapter three begins with a discussion of the first colonists/immigrants to the United States and then analyzes the waves of immigration to the United States. Chapter three then discusses the motives of the immigrants and the waves of Arab immigration specifically. The chapter ends with a discussion on the overall struggles faced by the immigrant and what makes the Arab-Muslim community unique.
Chapter four provides a more detailed analysis on the acculturation process for Arab Muslim immigrants in the United States. It explores the waves of Arab immigration to the United States, why immigrants come to the United States, and addresses the potential culture shocks faced by some immigrants as they undergo an acculturation process. It also discusses the role of the Islamic religion in the acculturation process of these immigrants and how it factors in to their experiences in the United States. Chapter three also investigates the traditional differences between Arab immigrants and Western civilization and ends with a discussion of the potential negative aftermaths of a difficult acculturation process.

Chapter five investigates conflict resolution through the lens of the Islamic and Arab perspective. It begins with an introduction to the field of conflict resolution and then becomes more focused on the impact of Arab culture as well as the Islamic religion on conflict resolution. Finally, it provides a short analysis on conflict resolution from the Western perspective.

Chapter six provides a comprehensive overview of the methodology utilized in this study, providing the research design, the method of investigation, a discussion on validity and sampling as well as a detailed break-down of phase I and phase II of the study. Chapter seven provides the data analysis that was conducted for the study using the SPSS program for the quantitative phase of the study and thematic analysis for the qualitative phase of the study.

Finally, chapter eight provides a discussion of the study’s results, and analyzes the role of culture, gender, and level of religiosity in the Arab Muslim participants’ utilization of conflict management styles to overcome their interpersonal conflicts. It also analyzes
the limitations and ethical considerations of the study and concludes the study with considerations for future research.
Certainly, culture plays a major role in an individuals’ perception of conflict (Hofstede, 1980) and their chosen conflict management style (Davidhizar, 2004; Tjosvold & Wong, 2004). In order to better understand how culture influences workplace conflict and the way that conflict is ultimately resolved, a full literature review of peer-reviewed literature is included. First I will describe the concept of workplace conflict, and how cultural differences play a role in workplace conflict. The second focus will be on the acculturation process of immigrants coming to the United States, with a focus on Arab-Muslims. In addition to discussing the role of culture in determining conflict management style, I will also discuss the current literature on the role of gender and level of religiosity in determining conflict management styles.

**Organizational Conflict**

Conflict is a widely defined topic within the literature. It occurs when an individual perceives differences with others about interests, beliefs, or values that are important (Starks, 2006) or perceives interference with the accomplishment of goals (Greenberg, 2003). Rahim (2002) expanded on this definition, specifying that conflict is “an interactive process manifested in an incompatibility, disagreement, or dissonance within or between social entities” (p. 207). Other scholars such as Labovitz (1980) describe conflict economically and state that conflict is generated when individuals compete for limited resources.
Workplace conflict wastes the time of managers, impacting the bottom lines of organizations, and impacting the growth and development of the organizations (Alzawahreh & Khasawneh, 2011). One study showed that managers spent up to 20 percent of their valuable time dealing with organizational conflict and that conflict management is an issue of increasing importance within the organization (Thomas & Schmidt, 1976). Conflicts could be secondary to misunderstandings of organization structures, rules and procedures, hierarchy, channel of command, lack of harmony, lack of cooperation, etc. (Ajarouch & Jamal, 2007).

Given the diversity in the workplace, it is expected that conflict becomes a normal, natural result of interpersonal communication. This occurs with every relationship because it brings individuals from all cultures together, forcing them to acquire skills to manage conflict. The ways in which culture impacts the conflict management styles of individuals has a broad influence due to its impact on the economic and social levels of the organizations. Therefore, identifying potential differences in conflict management styles between Arab-Muslim immigrants and their co-workers could potentially lead to earlier solutions to problems in the workplace, limiting the costs associated with prolonged conflict in the workplace.

Many studies have shown that cultures differ in their preferred forms of handling conflict (Chua & Gudykunst, 1987; Elsayed-Ekhouly & Buda, 1996; Leung, 1987; Morris et al., 1998; Ting-Toomey et al., 1991; Trubisky, Ting-Toomey & Lin, 1991; Chen, Ryan & Chen, 2000; He, Zhu, & Peng, 2002). Elsayed-Ekhouly and Buda (1996) examined the impact of culture on styles of handling interpersonal conflicts and found that Arab executives use more of an integrating and avoiding style in handling interpersonal conflicts.
at work while their American counterparts use more of an obliging, dominating, and compromising style. Rahim (2001) suggested that people from individualistic cultures utilize a dominating or obliging style to resolve their conflicts. This is supported by a study conducted by Trubisky and Ting-Toomey (1991) found that Taiwanese students used obliging and avoiding styles more than United States students when faced with conflicts. Morris et al. (1998) also found similar results in his study of United States and Asian workers’ approaches to conflict management. Perhaps some of these differences in conflict management styles can be attributed to differences in culture based on individualism and collectivism. The following sections will review the basis of the individualism versus collectivism dimension of culture and discuss research that assessed the impact of this dimension when individuals proceed with a particular conflict management style.

**Individualism versus Collectivism**

Hofstede (1980) defined culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes one group or category from another” (p. 89). He also categorized cultural differences based on four dimensions: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, and masculinity versus femininity (Hofstede, 1993). Power distance refers to the degree of accepted inequality that exists among people with and without power. In other words, societies with a high power distance score accept an unequal distribution of power and societies with a lower power distance score share power in a well-dispersed manner (Hofstede, 1980). The masculinity score refers to how much a society values and maintains traditional male and female roles, with societies having high masculinity scores expecting that men remain tough, be the provider, and be assertive
(Hofstede, 1980). In addition, societies with high uncertainty/avoidance index indicate that individuals in this society try to avoid ambiguous situations when possible, that these people seek “truth” rather than value differences. Finally, the individualism score refers to the strength of ties that people have to the community, with a high score indicating a loose connection and a low score indicating a more collectivistic society (Hofstede, 1980).

Hofstede (2010) expanded on these dimensions by adding “long-term versus short-term orientation,” which was rooted in Michael Harries Bond’s “Confucian work dynamism). The long-term component of this dimension represents cultures characterized as “perseverance, thrift, ordering relationships by status, and having a sense of shame” while the short-term component represents cultures with reciprocating social obligations, respect for tradition, protecting one's 'face', and personal steadiness and stability. Interestingly, both the United States as well as Islamic countries generally fall under the umbrella of short-term oriented countries. The sixth dimension, “indulgence versus restraint”, was developed by Minkov, a Bulgarian scholar, who was invited by Hofstede and his son to co-author their third edition of the *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. This sixth dimension of indulgence versus restraint focuses on “happiness research:” indulgence stands for a society that allows for gratification of basic and natural human desires related to enjoying life and having fun. Restraint stands for a society that controls gratification of needs and regulates it by means of strict social norms. While United States culture fits more into the indulgence category, Islamic countries generally occupy the restraint groups.

Studies have shown that one’s cultural background, whether based on individualism or collectivism, has a significant impact on the individual’s choice of
conflict management styles (Rahim & Blum, 1994). Indeed, having a deeper grasp of the cultural idiosyncrasies among people allows for a deeper understanding of the various avenues used by individuals to address the conflicts they are faced with (Hofstede, 1993).

The division between individualistic cultures and collectivistic cultures has been widely used in cross-cultural research (Hofstede, 1980; Ting-Toomey, 1988; Hofstede, 2001; Gudykunst et al., 1996; Kozan, 1989). Those from individualistic cultures value their own personal goals over those of the group. Their counterparts from collectivistic cultures, on the other hand, value the groups’ needs and values over those of the individual (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Triandis (1995) argued that individualism occurs when “loosely linked individuals…view themselves as independent of collectives; are primarily motivated by their own preferences, needs, rights, and the contracts they have established with others; [and] give priority to their personal goals over the goals of others” (p. 11). On the other hand, Triandis (1995) argued that collectivism occurs when individuals who are closely linked view themselves as part of one or more collective entities and “are motivated by the norms of, and duties imposed by, those collectives; are willing to give priority to the goals of these collectives over their own goals; and emphasize their connectedness to members of these collectives” (p. 11). While the individualist’s focus on the goals and concerns of the self, the collectivist focus was on relationship (Triandis, 2004) and the concerns and goals of the group (Cai & Fink, 2002). Conflicts arise when individuals abide by individualistic norms in a collectivist society. Similarly, conflicts also arise when individuals adhere to collectivist norms in an individualistic society (Kozan, 2002). Furthermore, researchers have labeled societies such as African, Arab, Asian, Eastern European, and those with
Latin roots as collectivist-oriented and those with American, Canadian, Australian, and Western European countries as individualistic (Cai & Fink, 2002; Chiu, Wong, & Kosinski, 1998; Hofstede, 2001).

Many scholars have examined the differences in individualistic and collectivistic cultural logics and scripts and how they result in differing notions of what constitutes proper treatment by others (Hofstede, 2012; Leung & Cohen, 2011; Oetzel et al., 2001). In individualistic cultures, people are expected to look after themselves and their closest kin. On the other hand, individuals from collectivistic cultures are expected to show unconditional loyalty and support not only for their extended families, but also for members of particular in-groups (Hofstede, 2012).

There are many reasons for conflict among individuals with different cultural background in the workplace. Leung and Cohen (2011) suggested that cultural logics and behaviors lead to “a certain logical consistency and coherence for the people of a culture” (p. 508). These logics and scripts are often invisible to outsiders, which make them easily violated by those from a different culture. This in turn leads to conflict. Wagner (1995) suggested that when personal and group interests reach a conflict, individualists tend to give less of a concern to the group’s interests. Collectivists give greater concern to the overall group’s needs and interests. When those from individualistic and collectivistic cultures constitute the group, then it is easy to recognize how conflicts can arise. Given the differing cultural backgrounds of Arab-Muslim immigrants compared to their American counterparts, it is also essential to investigate the differences in conflict management styles utilized by each group.
The Role of Gender

As previously discussed, multiple studies have investigated the role of gender in determining conflict management styles utilized by individuals. Mills and Chusmi (1988) investigated managers in the United States and found that males tended to use the forcing, competing, and problem solving conflict management styles compared with their female counterparts. In another study Brewer, Mitchell, and Weber (2002) investigated how gender role impacted conflict management styles of workers in three similar organizations and found that both genders preferred accommodating, collaborating, and compromising approaches to conflict. Brewer et al. (2002) also found that males preferred using dominating styles while female participants tended to use avoiding in the bulk of their interpersonal conflicts.

Other studies found similar results in their investigations of the role of gender in predicting conflict management styles (Lindeman et al., 1997; Polkinghorn & Byrne, 2001; French et al., 2005; Osisioma, 2009). It should be noted, however, that some investigations by scholars showed that gender does not seem to influence people’s conflict management styles. Haare and Krahe (1999) investigated Indonesian and German children and tried to determine whether gender and culture influenced their conflict management style. They concluded that while culture did have an influence on interpersonal conflict management styles, gender did not have any significant role in the matter. This inconsistency in the literature indicates the need for more larger scale studies on the role of gender in predicting conflict management styles.
The Role of Religiosity

As discussed in the introduction, there are many studies that have investigated the role of religion as a predictor for the conflict management styles utilized by individuals. Polkinghorn and Byrne (2001) found that participants from different religious backgrounds used different conflict management styles to address their conflicts. Croucher (2011) investigated how religion, specifically Islam and Christianity in Western Europe, influenced the way participants managed their interpersonal conflicts. Croucher found that religion did have a significant impact on participants’ preference of conflict management styles. Specifically, Muslims preferred more compromising and obliging conflict management styles while Christians preferred the dominating styles overall. In addition to the multiple studies investigating the role of religion in predicting conflict management styles (Alison, 1975; Geertz, 1973; Randeree, 2008; Abdalla, 2001). Wilson and Power (2004) investigated the role of religiosity in impacting conflict management styles. This study was unique in that it assessed the extent to which individuals practiced their major religious requirements, and whether this predicted their choice of conflict management styles. The study found that Christians (practicing and non-practicing) and non-practicing Muslims tended to collaborate when dealing with conflicts, while practicing Muslims who correlated themselves with a higher level of religiosity preferred utilizing the compromising style for managing their conflicts (Wilson & Power, 2004). The authors hypothesized that “this difference in Australian practicing Muslims could be a reflection of their minority status in that less dominant groups have to ‘fit in’ more with the dominant culture and thus become practiced at compromising” (p. 80), an argument which goes back to the acculturation process of immigrants that will be addressed in my research study.
Conflict Management Styles

As highlighted in the introduction, different conflict management styles are defined based on general and consistent orientation toward the opposing/conflicting party and the conflict. They manifest in observable behaviors that form a pattern and share common characteristics over time (Ruble & Thomas, 1976; Thomas, 1976; Thomas & Kilmann, 1978). While the goal of most conflicting parties is to handle the conflict, researchers have found that individuals vary in their ways of approaching their interpersonal conflict (Lulofs & Cahn, 2000).

Researchers have identified conflict management based on concern for self and for others, classifying the concerns based on high or low concern. This is attributed to the dual concern theory, which proposed five styles for handling conflict (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986; Rahim, 1986; Thomas, 1976). The dual concern model is rooted in Blake and Mouton’s (1964) theory that conflict is managed in different ways based on whether a manager has a high or low concern for production and high or low concern for people. These two dimensions led to the five ways of handling conflict.

The majority of scholars have agreed upon the five patterns of conflict management styles introduced by Black and Mouton in 1964 and expanded by Killman and Thomas (1975) as well as Rahim (1983). Rahim categorized the five patterns approach as follows: avoiding, obliging, dominating, integrating, and compromising. *Avoiding* is associated with intentionally withdrawing from the conflict situation, with a low concern for others as well as a low concern for self. The *obliging* style focuses on areas of agreement and sets aside differences. This style tends to reflect the individuals’ concern with others’ needs over personal needs and views. *Dominating* reflects low concern for others and a high
concern for self and is described as forcing one’s own views on others. The integrating style reflects high concern for others and high concern for self, an approach that strives to integrate the views of all those involved. The final conflict management style, of compromising, reflects moderate concern for all and is associated with finding a middle ground based on a common solution that addresses everyone’s interest.

In a study investigating the conflict management styles of managers from collectivistic (Japan, China, Korea, Taiwan, and the Middle East) and individualistic societies (the United States), the authors found that the managers from collectivistic societies were less confrontational, and more likely to use a group interaction to overcome conflict compared to their individualistic manager counterparts (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001). Rahim (2001) found that individualists tend to use dominating or obliging approaches in solving their interpersonal conflicts, while their collectivist counterparts use integrative (such as collaborative or accommodation) approaches. Similarly Chua and Gudykunst (1987) found that international students from collectivistic cultures were significantly less confrontational than students from individualistic cultures or low-context cultures. Triandis et al. (1988) also found that Japanese immigrants were less confrontational than students from the United States.

Kozan (1989) conducted a study comparing Arab-Muslim managers in Jordan and Turkey with American managers. He found that Jordanian and Turkish managers shared similar conflict management styles, clearly preferring the collaborative style in handling their conflicts. On the other hand, the American managers preferred force and accommodation. This is yet another example of how individuals from more collectivistic societies resolve conflict in a different manner compared to their peers from individualistic
societies. Similar findings were found in other studies comparing individuals from collectivistic and individualistic cultures (Trubisky et al., 1991; Fletcher et al., 1998; Elsayed-Akhouly & Budy, 2012).

**Justification**

Perhaps one of the greatest gaps in the literature based on the review is that the majority of studies compare and contrast conflict management styles of those from collectivistic and individualistic cultures within their native culture. On the other hand, the results of the majority of these studies have led to the generalization that collectivists are more likely to be non-confrontational (obliging, avoiding, and collaborating) whereas individualists are more likely to be more confrontational (compete and dominate) (Ting-Toomey, 1988, 1999; Ting-Toomey, Yee-Jung, Shapiro, Garcia, & Oetzel, 2000). The novelty in my study would be that it compares the conflict management styles of two generations of Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States, thus incorporates the dimension of acculturation within a family, providing rich data and a new perspective on the factors that impact the choice of a conflict management style when faced with a conflict in the workplace. Furthermore, my study will provide useful data regarding the roles of gender and level of religiosity in predicting conflict management styles utilized by participants.

Conflict management styles have been the subject of extensive research and work and there is consistent evidence suggesting that the way an individual deals with interpersonal conflict is influenced directly by culture (e.g., Ting-Toomey, Yee-Jung, Shapiro, Garcia, Wright, & Oetzel, 2000). Research investigating conflict resolution styles of Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States, however, is scarce. Furthermore, there is
no empirical research that examines how individuals exposed to more than one culture (e.g., second generation immigrants) handle interpersonal conflicts. Given the large percentage of first and second-generation Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States, understanding the way in which these immigrant families handle interpersonal conflicts is of great importance.

While the first generation of Arab-Muslim immigrant families came from largely collectivistic societies, the second generation was born and grew up in the United States and to some extent reflect a blend of individualistic and collectivist cultures. Based on Hofstede’s division (2010), the Middle East and the United States fall in differing clusters, with the Middle East showing collectivistic culture and the United States showing individualistic culture.

Another gap in the literature is the fact that there are few studies addressing the role of religiosity in conflict management styles, therefore this component in my study will provide useful insight on the matter that was not thoroughly investigated previously.

I chose this as the topic of my Ph.D. dissertation because there is a clear gap in the literature in terms of studying Arab-Muslim immigrant families in the United States. Ideally, I would like to develop a model that can be used in the diverse workplace to help avoid conflicts due to interpersonal conflicts involving Arab-Muslim immigrants and their peers but also to help alleviate tensions by conflict management in the workplace among a diverse group of people. As a Ph.D. student in international conflict management, I believe that this research would be of great benefit because it studies the ongoing conflicts between the first and second-generation Arab-Muslim immigrants in their workplace in the United States. Not only does it focus on conflict management styles utilized in the
workplace, it also studies the acculturation process in the case of first and second-generation immigration families.
CHAPTER THREE: THE IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE:

From United States Origins to the Contemporary Arab-Muslim Immigrant Context

The First Colonists

In 1606, King James I of England issued a charter authorizing a group of investors, the Virginia Company of London, to send colonists to North America (Stubblefield, 2003). The goal of such an endeavor was to collect fees for passage to the colony from settlers and the crops the settlers were expected to produce. Therefore, the Virginia Company of London’s 104 settlers made initial landfall on April 26, 1607 but they were attacked by Native Americans so they went further upriver to Jamestown, Virginia, on May 14, 1607 (Carrion, 2004). Over time, the colony’s area of settlement continued to grow. In 1634, the land north of the Potomac River became known as Maryland. Maryland’s establishment as a colony was done with the granting of religious freedom for Catholics. Much of the economy of Maryland was based on tobacco as a commodity crop, harvested by African slave labor and indentured servants from Britain.

In 1665, the area south of the Currituck Inlet became known as the “Carolina” (Carrion, 2004). During the 1700s, Spain, France, and Virginia claimed unexplored land west of the Mississippi. The American Revolution (1765-1783) began when rebel colonists in the thirteen American colonies rejected the British monarchy, overthrowing the authority of Great Britain and officially founding the United States of America (Thelin, 2014).

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4 The thirteen colonies were: Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts Bay, Maryland, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Virginia, New York, North Carolina, and Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.
There were multiple economic, religious, social, and political motives for migrating from Europe to colonize the United States. The economic motivations were quite effective as many wealthy European businessmen sought opportunities to invest their money, which made them eager to participate in joint-stock companies such as the Virginia Company of London. Many of the settlers also hoped they would find gold in the colonies. Some colonists also hoped to benefit from American raw materials, especially the vast amount of timber available, which was often stolen from Native Americans. Of course, many individual colonists were also motivated by the simple desire to own their own land and enjoy a better and more independent lifestyle than was available to them in England, or other parts of Europe.

Many of the original colonists left their religious enclaves within Europe to settle in the Americas so they can practice their religious beliefs without persecution (Ahlstrom, 2004). In 1608 a group of Puritans went to the Netherlands in hopes of escaping religious persecution, however, in 1620 they finally decided to settle in Delaware in the New World (Baltzell, 1979). While the Puritans strived to escape religious persecution in their migration to the Americas, they were also intolerant to settlers with other religious beliefs, primarily the Religious Society of Friends (the Quakers). Therefore Puritan communities often banished any religious outsiders from their communities. In 1656, a group of Quakers left England for Massachusetts, and upon their arrival demanded that they be allowed to practice their own religion freely, but the Puritans forced them to take the next ship out (Baltzell, 1979). Perhaps this clash of religions in early colonial America marks the birth of religious discrimination that would continue into the third millennium. While the motivations of the original immigrants to the United States were primarily based on
religious and economic causes, the motivations of contemporary immigrant populations vary even more widely.

**Waves of Immigration to the United States.**

The first modern immigration wave in United States history spanned from 1609 to 1775. While many of the first people to come to the United States were indentured servants and slaves, many scholars do not consider them immigrants because they did not come to the United States by their own free will. The majority of immigrants came from England, France, Germany, Ireland, and Italy (Carrion, 2004). During the 1700s, the population of immigrants more than doubled to nearly 500,000, with the majority of immigrants entering the United States through Philadelphia, but some immigrants also entered through Baltimore, Maryland, and Charleston, South Carolina (White, 2010).

The American Revolution and wars in Europe brought a decline in immigration, with the second major wave of immigration starting around 1820 (White, 2010). During this time, most immigrants entered the United States through New York City, and in 1855 Castle Garden opened on Manhattan Island as the country’s first immigration station (Carrion, 2004). Most of the immigrants during this second wave of immigration were Irish who were escaping the potato famine and Germans who settled inland buying farms in the Midwest.

The third wave of immigration spanned from 1881 to 1920. With railroad companies seeking laborers in the 1880s, many agents were sent overseas to recruit immigrant workers (Carrion, 2004). Between 1881 and 1920, over 23 million new immigrants left their home countries for the United States (Carrion, 2004). The majority of the immigrants came from Europe, especially since restrictive United States immigration
laws kept numbers of immigrants from Asia low (Tichenor, 2005). This was especially the case between 1917 and 1924. One such law was the Immigration Act of 1917, which required all immigrants to demonstrate their literacy (Tichenor, 2005).

The restrictive immigration policy of quotas based on nationalities ended in 1965, marking the fourth large immigration wave. The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 was less restrictive but did continue to have a quota system that was based on hemispheres (Marinari, 2014; White, 2010). The Act allowed for 120,000 immigrants per year from the Western Hemisphere and 170,000 from the Eastern hemisphere (Marinari, 2014). These quotas were changed in 1978 such that there was a worldwide quota of 290,000 immigrants from all parts of the world (Carrion, 2004). The first decade of the twenty-first century marked a time when 10 percent of all residents in the United States were foreign born. In addition, there are an estimated nine million immigrants in the United States illegally. When about ten percent of the United States population consists of individuals who were born in other countries, the question becomes: what motivates these immigrants to leave their home country for the United States? This is the focus of my next discussion.

Motives of the Immigrant

According to the U.S. Census, the United States has over 38 million legal and illegal immigrants (U.S. Census, 2011). As discussed, some of the nation’s earliest settlers were motivated to immigrate to the United States by their search for religious freedom. This includes the Puritans in Massachusetts, Roman Catholics in Maryland, and Quakers in Pennsylvania. This continued into the 1800s and 1900s with several waves of Jewish immigrants fleeing religious persecution in Russia and Germany (Maisel, Forman, Altschiller, & Bassett, 2004). German Jews began immigrating to the United States in
large numbers in the 1840s because of persecution and restrictive laws. In fact, under the Displaced Persons Act, approximately 85,000 Holocaust survivors were allowed entry in the United States after World War II (Harris, 2011). The Displaced Persons Act was specifically designed to help victims fleeing persecution from the Nazi government as well as those fleeing persecution based on race, religion, or political opinions (Harris, 2011). It should be noted, however, that not all Jewish immigrants to the United States were welcomed. Actually some who attempted entry to the United States were turned away immediately. For example, the MS St. Louis was a German ocean liner that set sail in 1939 with 915 Jewish settlers who strived to find a home in Cuba, only to be denied entry to Cuba, the United States, and Canada, only to return to Europe (Miller, 2006).

Fleeing from religious persecution is not the only reason immigrants choose to come to the United States. Sometimes, freedom from political oppression is the motivator. These individuals who seek humanitarian protection make up a small percentage of each year’s immigrants, about five to 10 percent. However, it should be noted, that they often still reach the annual ceiling set by the United States government, set for 70,000 for fiscal year 2015 (Ludwig, 2014). Many refugees leave their families behind in their native countries because they fear political oppression when there is civil unrest in their country of origin. Often they flee victimization, or the fear of being brutalized by a despotic regime. One study investigated the motives of asylum seekers in the United States. For example, one subject from Cameroon described how he is his father’s eldest son, and was expected to continue in his family’s footsteps and protest the dictatorial regime (Eisold, 2012). Eisold provided another example, of a subject from Tibet, who was expected to continue in his family’s tradition of protest:
Similarly, Subject #4, from Tibet, was expected to continue the family tradition of protest. His father had died in prison, he said, and his uncle, released, after years of imprisonment, had died soon thereafter, an ill, weak elderly man, in front of his extended family. Accordingly, when Hero #4 returned from eight years of imprisonment himself, at the age of 18, he was told, not only by his family, but by his entire community, that he had the intelligence and strength to continue the fight and should do so. Having suffered a great deal already, however, he chose instead to marry and have his own children (Eisold, 2012, p. 8).

There are many recent examples of individuals immigrating to the United States to seek asylum and freedom from oppression including from Kosovo, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Congo, and Somalia, as well as Arabs from Middle Eastern countries such as Libya, Iraq, and Syria.

Economic motivations have always been a powerful reason for immigration to the United States. Many immigrants come from countries with extreme wage disparities, prompting them to leave their comfort zone among their families for a country where they sometimes know no one. Sometimes they don’t even speak English, but they take this bold risk and immigrate to the United States nonetheless. In the 1840s, the Irish potato famine led to the emigration of nearly half a million Irish to the United States, which accounted for over 50 percent of all immigrants to the United States during that decade (Kinealy, 2002).

With the end of slavery in 1865, many free Blacks sought to negotiate wages for their labor work, which prompted the “Great Wave” of immigration in the 1880s, because previous slave owners looked for cheaper labor. With the 1880s came a “Great Wave” of immigration to the United States, and once the immigrants were in the United States, their local populations grew quickly because of the wider availability of better foods, and greater life expectancy. Tobacco also quickly became a major colonial export, attracting
settlers to contracts with merchants to supply indentured servants to work the fields. Indentured servants were able to become landowners after serving a certain number of years. With the California Gold Rush starting in 1848 came nearly 25,000 Chinese migrants who worked as cooks, launderers, and laborers for the miners, many of them later transitioning to work on the Central Pacific Railroad as well (Ling, 2013). In fact, the influx of Chinese immigrants to the United States had increased so much that the United States Congress enacted the Chinese Exclusion Act to decrease Chinese immigration to the United States (Ling, 2013). These are just a few examples of financial motivators for immigration to the United States.

**Waves of Arab Immigration**

In order to better understand Arab immigration to the United States, and in some cases their assimilation within United States culture, it is important to know the history of Arab immigration. The first wave of Arab immigration came during a period of mass migration (1880-1924), when more than twenty million immigrants entered the United States (Kumar, Seay, & Karabenick, 2015). During this time, over 95,000 immigrants that entered to the United States were from Greater Syria. It should be noted that, during this period the majority of Arab countries were under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. In her book *Between Arab and White*, Sarah M.A. Gualtieri relates the story of a twenty-three-year-old Syrian immigrant named Costa George Najour who in 1909 appeared before Atlanta’s circuit court to present arguments regarding his petition to become an American citizen. Najour had met the language requirements as well as fulfilled the five-year residency requirement of the United States Naturalization Law. As Gualtieri stated “The

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5 Greater Syria includes present-day Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, and Syria
6 The Ottoman Empire ruled the Arab world from 1500-1917.
question to be decided was whether Najour met the racial requirement of the law, which dictated that, to acquire citizenship, persons not born in the United States – that is, “aliens” – had to be either “free white persons” or of “African nativity or descent.” Ignoring the possibility that Najour was the latter, the lawyer for the government argued that he was not a white person but “Asiatic” and that he could not, therefore, be accepted into the American citizenry” (Gualtieri, 2009, p. 1). Interestingly, Najour won his court case on the basis that Syrians were to be considered Caucasian, and therefore he met the “white” requirement for citizenship. Najour’s story provides an interesting perspective of the struggles faced by Arab immigrants, and other immigrants alike who share common goals of reaching the American dream. The motivations of many of these Arab immigrants were based on political oppression, financial hopes, and flight from war. Many of them settled in New York, Boston, and Detroit where various industries promised potential employment and a better life for their families. And in fact, many of these Arab migrants were Lebanese and Syrian Christians and not Muslims.

The second wave of Arab immigration came in the post-World War II period, when a more diverse group of Arab immigrants immigrated to the United States. This group of immigrants included many urban middle class Muslims, and they often had a higher level of education. Some of these immigrants were students who strived to earn college degrees from United States universities that they would take back to their homeland, but ended up staying in the United States due to irresistible employment opportunities following university graduation.

The third and final wave of Arab immigration to the United States started in the 1970s and extends to the present day. Initially there was an increase in the number of
immigrants entering the United States from Lebanon, Palestine and Iraq because the United States lifted many restrictive immigration laws, which allowed many non-Europeans to immigrate to the United States. The Immigration Act of 1965 led to an influx of immigrants from the Middle East because it finally abolished all limitations of immigration based on national origin.

**Struggles Faced by the Immigrant**

While Berry (1990) argued that individuals either assimilate, integrate, separate or marginalize, many recent scholars have argued that such black-and-white statements are all too simple and do not incorporate or begin to explain the complex immigrant experience upon arrival to the United States. For example, Berry argued that when some immigrants assimilate, they develop the identity of the United States dominant host culture (1990). However, how does one characterize the “dominant” United States culture? Thomas Sowell eloquently stated, “the sheer magnitude of American ethnic communities makes them autonomous cultures with lives of their own – neither copies of some “mainstream” model nor mere overseas branches of some other country’s culture” (Sowell, 1981, p. 3). Labeling these immigrant groups as “minorities” also does not do them justice, because then the question becomes, what is the majority? Is there a common majority?

The largest ethnic strains in the United States come from British, German, and African ancestry (Sowell, 1981). However, generations have passed since the majority of United States citizens or members of society had their first family members immigrate to the United States, to the point that many United States citizens self-identify not as British, or German descent, but simply as “American” (Alba, 1990). Therefore, while Sowell argues that “there is no majority” in United States society, there are some characteristics of
the dominant United States culture that overcome previous breaks in ethnic strains that existed when the initial generations of immigrants came to the United States. Throughout the various waves of immigration to the United States, most, if not all, immigrants to the United States have experienced some level of discrimination from some members of United States society. This is not the general experience of immigrants. Actually, the majority of Americans welcome diversity in United States culture, and for every discriminatory event, there are many hundreds and thousands more of cooperation between immigrants and other members of United States society (Fuchs, 1990). While it is not totally clear how the melting pot mentality slowly transitioned to an argument against assimilation, the current mentality is that of celebration of ethnicity and the “perception of the stubbornness of ethnic difference” (Alba, 1990, p. 2). In her book *Sister Outsider* Audre Lorde engages some of the struggles of discrimination (1984). In her essays Lorde emphasizes that we should not hide our differences, rather, we should celebrate them through a process of self-actualization (1984).

It is important not to negate the discrimination experienced by many immigrants at sometime during their journey in the United States. Over the last decade, there has been a shift from immigrants coming from mostly Hispanic countries, to a larger majority of immigrants coming from Asia (Pew Research Center, 2012). The new Asian immigrants tend to have a higher education level and work in higher positions in work compared to their previous Hispanic counterparts (Krings, Johnston, & Binggeli, 2014). While there is robust literature on workplace discrimination, scholars have not given the immigrant population sufficient attention (Binggeli, Dietz, & Krings, 2013). Workplace discrimination is not always obvious as is the case in a reduced call-back rate for
interviews when applying for jobs. Sometimes subtle prejudices exist, and in fact they can be based on mixed (positive and negative) stereotypes. Because some individuals have positive stereotypes about a certain immigrant population, it makes the negative stereotypes less prejudicial, and therefore normalized (Glick & Fisk, 2001). These subtle prejudices could be as simple as interrupting, ignoring, or being condescending towards coworkers. While such prejudices or discriminatory practices may seem low-intensity, they can still lead to greater levels of stress for the immigrant affected (Pearson & Porath, 2004).

Discrimination is not only limited to the workplace or the media. It is also present in the economy. Take for example the growing body of research on discrimination in the housing markets. This discrimination can take many forms, including limited access to housing in better neighborhoods, but also higher rental or sale prices. In their 1992 study, Turner and Mikelsons found that there is significant discrimination against Hispanics in the housing market, especially when it comes to rental prices, but also when it came to obtaining home loans from banks (Turner & Mikelsons, 1992).

The “English Only” movement is also characterized by anti-immigrant discrimination. While on the surface it may seems as a movement to simply identify English as the national language in the United States, under closer analysis, it seeks to restrict access to many political and civil rights, and at times has had a negative impact on immigrants’ healthcare (Lawton, 2013). The English Only movement began in 1981 when Senator Hayakawa proposed an English Language Amendment to the United States Constitution, which would ban the use of other languages at the federal, state, and local levels (Lawton, 2013).
Over the last 20 years, hate crimes against multiple immigrant populations including Hispanic and Arab immigrants have also been on the rise. The terrorist events of 9/11 amplified the discrimination against Arabs (and those who were thought to be Arab) in the United States. In fact, hate crimes against Muslims (Arabs and non-Arab) increased by 1600 percent from 2000 to 2001 (CNN.com, 2002). Hate crimes against Arabs increased from 354 in 2000 to 1501 in 2001 (Oswald, 2002). Interestingly, it didn’t necessarily matter whether an individual was Arab; simply “looking Arab” or their name “sounding Arabic” prompted many of these hate crimes (Cainkar, 2002).

Take for example the story of an Arab American family who were vacationing in Mackinac Island, only to be approached by Mayor Doud as they were throwing away trash in the trash can outside the Mayor’s restaurant, where they had just dined. Apparently, the Mayor told the family to take their trash and go back to where they came from (Bengtsson, Iverman, & Hinnerich, 2012). Following the 9/11 attacks, the United States government also enacted many executive orders and laws that affected immigrants, 15 of which were predominantly aimed at targeting Arabs (Daraiseh, 2012). These laws dampened some Arab immigrants’ trust of police and the government and led to reduced rates of immigration from many Middle Eastern countries. Some have likened the government’s treatment of Muslims and Arabs following 9/11 to the experience of Germans during World War I and Japanese Americans during World War II. Government actions include passage of the USA Patriot Act, which reduced the legal protection of American Muslims and Arabs, increased intrusive undercover monitoring of Muslim communities, generalized “random checks” when going through airport security, government raids of Muslims in
positions of leadership, deportation without cause, as well as profiling of Muslims in general (Smith, 2010).

One population of Muslims that were directly impacted by higher amounts of anti-Muslim discrimination were Muslim women who chose to wear the hijab or the traditional Islamic dress that covers all parts of the woman except for her face and hands. Because the hijab directly identifies Muslim women by a “tangible marker of difference,” they were under greater risk of discrimination of less educated members of society who generalized the actions of a few to a whole people because they follow a certain religion (Jasperse, Ward, & Jose, 2012).

It is the actions of 9/11 that instigated an exponential increase in Islamaphobia, and hate crimes against Muslims and those who appeared to be Muslim or Arab (who are non-Muslims as well). This continued discomfort and media propagation of rhetoric against Muslims and Arabs makes their communities in the United States unique. As previously discussed, many Arab-Muslim immigrants never experience any sort of discrimination, or at least, perceive any type of discrimination against themselves. However, others do experience discrimination in their life in the United States in one way or another.

Immigrant groups in the United States may experience discrimination at one point or another during their lives in the United States. Sometimes discrimination is direct, such as the case with hate crimes against Arabs and Muslims and those who appear to be Arab or Muslim or even undue verbal discrimination against Muslim students. Other times, discrimination takes a more subtle approach, such as fewer opportunities in the workplace or economy, increased profiling by local police forces, or a lack of welcoming atmosphere in a given community. Nonetheless, the Islamaphobia following 9/11 and the
consequential hate crimes and discriminatory acts against the Muslim community (whether direct or more subtle) that exist to this day that make Arab-Muslims unique compared to other immigrants in the United States. This highlights why it is so essential to better understand the acculturation process of Arab Muslim immigrants and evaluate how it has changed through time.
CHAPTER FOUR

ACCULTURATION PROCESS FOR ARAB-MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

Background Information

In the last several decades, population migration increased greatly in many parts of the world, including the United States. This means that a great number of people in the world, by choice or necessity, have moved to another state despite their country of origin. Such movements are explained by a variety of reasons, but scholars especially underline the economic security or globalization processes. However, in spite of the causes, it has to be noted that immigration is a difficult and complicated process, especially if an individual immigrates to a country with a different culture, language, and overall values. Despite the rapid processes of globalization where cultural differences are blurring, it is impossible to claim that the distinctions are totally gone. Westernization tends to penetrate even the deepest corners of the world, but there are still a wide variety of diversities between and within different nations (Zemore, 2007).

Western and non-Western cultures contain distinctions between each other that are embodied in values, ethical standards, languages, moral principles, methods of approaching problems, behavior, traditions, and customs. Certainly, even the division between Western and non-Western, or Western and Eastern cultures is controversial, and artificial (Said, 2003). As Said argued in Orientalism Reconsidered, the line that separates Occident from Orient is not one that is present by nature (1985). Said states, “there could be no Orientalism without, on one hand, the Orientalists, and on the other, the Orientals.”
Similarly, Gayatri Spivak (1988) emphasizes that much of Western academic thinking has underlying motivations and biases. She questions how non-Western society can be studied without considering colonial implications of defining the “other” “over there.” This speaks to the point of Western scholars documenting non-Western culture in academia, implying they are the most qualified and educated to speak on the subject. Or how the media and Western culture label minority groups within society to meet their own needs, referencing portions of religious script, taken out of context, or only putting images of those who vilify a religion rather than represent it. It is difficult these days to use the label of “Arab” or “Muslim” without thinking of the term terrorists or Islamic extremists. Even those in the public spectrum who avoid using such labels are criticized for not augmenting the media supported link between Islam and terrorism. Nevertheless, in this study the terms Western and non-Western will be utilized for the sake of simplicity.

The list of differences among cultures can be long if analyzing the history of both regions and the development of non-Western and Western cultures. In reviewing Middle Eastern culture, it is easy to find even more distinctive patterns that can be characterized as different, and even at times the opposite to the Western values (Chen, 2012). One question that arises from the study of Orientals is the motivation for such an endeavor. While Lewis argues that this quest is “motivated by pure curiosity,” Said argues that there are multiple underlying biases that motivate such a quest (1985). Nonetheless, differences among those from different backgrounds do exist, but they don’t exist by nature as essentialism theory would have one believe, through their “essence,” they are relative (Tan, 2014).

Such diversity usually leads to clashes and conflicts at all levels, as individuals from each culture perceive reality in a different way, drawing distinctive conclusions based
on their own experiences. In light of current events, it is reasonable to argue that the relationship between the Middle East and the West is not in the best condition. Especially hostile relations between these regions can be observed due to multiple events preceding the present situation.

The United States is a country of unique composition. Inhabited by a great variety of ethnicities, races, and nationalities, the United States has become a diverse container of people from all corners of the world. Millar and Shamshad (2013) emphasized that “the number of immigrants in the United States continues to rise, increasing from 28 million foreign-born individuals in 2000 to approximately 39 million foreign-born individuals in 2009” (p. 1). Constant diversification made the United States a special place where different cultures are blending, enriching each other with special features and unique experience.

At the same time, despite the constant attempts to blur the barriers between different cultural clusters, conflicts between people erupt on a daily basis (Lerner, 1986). The reasons for the conflict can be different, but bearing in mind the cultural diversity, it is easy to assume that a distinctive global outlook is one of the main causes. Taking into consideration the potential differences between United States and Middle Eastern culture, it is easy to assume that immigrants from the Middle East experience the biggest difficulties during the process of acculturation.

It must be stated that acculturation of some kind is the inevitable process in the case of immigration, despite the cultural differences between the cultures. Schwarz et al. (2006) gave the following definition of acculturation, “in the most general terms, acculturation can be defined as the process of cultural change and adaptation that occurs when
individuals from different cultures come into contact” (p. 2). Each immigrant undergoes acculturation at different levels, like adaptation to ideas and values and retention of norms existing in the culture of the country where he or she came from. It was also revealed that the identity of an immigrant experiences particular alterations as well, at the level of both cultural and personal identities (Chen, 2012). In the case of Northern and Western Europeans, the assimilation process to American culture may be easier. Many of these immigrants are similar to the dominant United States culture in their racial and religious characteristics and actually share many cultural norms (Alba, 1990). These immigrants were often more skilled and educated than some other immigrant groups, allowing them to bring more money to the United States and secure a more stable beginning, which contributed to the lower degree of rejection (Alba, 1990). However, for the immigrants who came from countries with stronger cultural differences, they often underwent more difficult processes of acculturation. In this case, some Middle Eastern or Arab immigrants can serve as an excellent example.

**Overview of Acculturation Process Specific to Arab-Muslim Immigrants**

Before digging deeper into the acculturation process of Arab immigrants, it is important to note that the United States has been a country of immigrants since its birth. While talking about the existence of dominant culture, it is crucial to remember that in the United States prevailing culture consists of different blocks representing various origin nations. Therefore, it is rather difficult to claim that the dominant culture in the United States is homogeneous; though, it does have shared vision, values, and norms characteristic for the majority of the American citizens despite their cultural identity. Certainly immigrants to the United States experience some changes in their lives upon arriving to the
United States, and some face a complete culture shock. The acculturation process differs from one immigrant to the next. In some cases, immigrants move to areas within the new host country where they already have previous acquaintances. This explains the mini niches in the United States of people of various cultures, such as the Somali population in Minnesota, Italians in New York, Bosnians in St. Louis, Mexicans in Texas and California, and Arabs in Detroit. In these cases, the culture shock appreciated by immigrants may be mitigated, because they are in a more familiar environment compared to an immigrant who moves to a host community in which there are no other similar minorities. Nevertheless, for immigrants the process of acculturation is difficult and ongoing where the level of difficulty depends on several issues. Several studies found that the duration of stay within a country, the range of differences between the cultures, age of immigrants, intermarriage, and discrimination play the most important role in immigrants’ acculturation despite the country of origin (Eylem Gevrek, Gevrek, & Gupta 2013).

It is important to explore the specificity of recent and current Arab immigration to the United States. While past researchers found that the majority of the Arab immigrants coming to the United States were Christian (Ayoub, 1989, p. 28), later studies revealed that around 75 percent of modern Arab immigrants practice Islam (Camarota, 2002, p. 320). Such differences can be associated with an overall increase of popularity of the fundamental movements in the Middle Eastern countries due to reasons that still remain unknown to scholars (Duschinsky, 2012, p. 22). Nobles and Sciarra (2000) discussed the roots of each wave of Arab immigrants. The first wave, which took place in the late 19th century consisted mostly of Arab Christians males from Syria and Lebanon who intended to stay in the United States for a short time to earn sufficient income to improve the quality
of life for their families overseas. The second wave, described by Nobles and Sciarra, included more Muslims, many of whom were Palestinians, Syrians, and Iraqis escaping political conflict as well as those Palestinians displaced by the establishment of Israel. Finally, the third wave beginning in the mid 1960s consisted of many professionals and entrepreneurs who fled unrest and wars in the Middle East (2000).

As to the Arab immigrants, Faragallah et al. (1997) stated that “length of residence in the United States has a positive relation with the acculturation process for Arab immigrants” (183). In general, the duration of exposure to a different culture plays a dominant role among the other factors not only among Arab immigrants, but also those who came from other regions showed the same correlation as well (Faragallah, 1997). It makes sense, as the more an individual is exposed to a particular culture, the more possibilities that he or she will obtain the same values, interests or vision of the world as the host culture contains. At the same time, it was argued that Arab immigrants are the most difficult to assimilate to the dominant culture. While conducting research, Khalid et al. (1997) found out that “the majority of immigrants questioned in the survey revealed that most were more inclined to retain their original national culture for their private and/or social lives than to adopt the United States national culture” (p. 217). Such results make it possible to investigate what the reasons are for such rejection of the host culture.

One of the central reasons and perhaps the most influential one is the religious differences between the Arab immigrants and the United States population. The majority of Arab immigrants follow Islam, while the United States dominant religion is, despite the diversity, Christianity. However, I argue that religious differences play less of a significant role than the great quantity of conflicts that can be found in history. The first known armed
clash between Christians and Muslims dates back to 1096, the First Crusade, that was inspired by religious as well as economic differences (Ayoub, 1989, p. 30). After that time, world history experienced a substantial number of armed conflicts between the representatives of these religions, escalating and culminating in the division and colonization of the Arab world by the great Western powers after World War I. Therefore, it has to be noted that some hostility existing between these cultures is understandable. Taking into account the events happening in the present day, it is easy to see the reason why some Muslims and Christians find it difficult to exist peacefully in the current conditions. It should also be noted, however, that some scholars naturalize the conflicts between Christianity and Islam, however, this is not accurate (Karabell, 2007). For most of history in fact, Muslims and Christians have lived as neighbors without major conflict (Mamdani, 2002).

At the same time, the level of opposition to the process of acculturation seems to be different among Arab immigrants, if taking into consideration such variables as religion. Ibrahim and Cass (2011) revealed that the success in acculturation process of Arab immigrants depends on the level to which they stick to the religious traditions and the character of religion as well (p. 388). Islam, as with other world religions, contains different interior movements distinctive from each other in beliefs, traditions, norms, and values. Such differences, according to Ibrahim and Cass (2011), play an immense role in the future process of acculturation, where more radical Islamic views hinder the process of acculturation (p. 389).

Despite religion, which may be the primary cause of slower acculturation processes, age was revealed as a prominent factor influencing the process of acculturation
as well. It was observed that the younger the immigrants are, the easier the process of acculturation they are undergoing. This finding is important, as children tend to be more flexible on several levels, including linguistic and perceptual (Berry et al., 2006, p. 330). In addition, depending on the age of a child, easier acculturation stems from the fact that children were exposed to the culture of their country of origin less time than were the adults. However, some scholars argue that the level of acculturation among children depends on family traditions as well (Ibrahim & Cass, 2011, p. 388). As children depend on older family members, their acculturation process can be influenced by them, and in the case of the practicing of more radical traditions, the acculturation will generally be more difficult.

One additional factor positively influencing acculturation among Arab immigrants is the level of satisfaction with life in the United States. Aprahamian et al. (2011) revealed that the extent to which an Arab family is satisfied with life in the country where they immigrated is directly proportional to their rates of acculturation (p. 82). Such correlation refers to the hypothesis that many people immigrating to the United States are not satisfied with life in their country of origin. Stout (2008) provides an excellent analysis on the reasons why immigrants come to the United States. Financial incentives or aspirations are not the only motivating factors that lead immigrants to leave their native country. Sometimes people immigrate to the United States to flee oppression and brutal killing (Stout, 2008). Take for example, the recent influx of Syrians, Iraqis, and Libyans who left their native countries due to the ongoing lack of safety from war. Alfred (2001) suggested that “the basic reason why immigrants come to America is the gap between the life aspirations and expectations and the means to fulfill them in the sending country” (p. 3). At
the same time, economic and social factors can play the most important role in the level of satisfaction, which at the beginning of life in the United States can often be quite difficult for immigrants. It has to be noted that satisfaction with life at the initial stages of acculturation can be very difficult, as immigrants undergo a difficult process where they struggle to live in the conditions of a broadly different culture, language, values, and norms of behavior. Ultimately, the reasons for immigration vary, which plays a role in the acculturation process of immigrants.

Interrace marriage is one of the factors influencing the acculturation process of Arab immigrants. According to Kulczycki and Arun (2002), “the extent to which ethnic intermarriage occurs is widely accepted as an important indicator of assimilation and identification” (202). Arab-Muslim immigrants are not excluded from this rule. However, as scholars insist, intermarriages among Arab-Muslim men happen more frequently than among Arab women due to their cultural traditions and religious beliefs. “Four out of five (79%) Arab-Muslim men and more than three out of five (60%) Arab-Muslim women had non-Arab spouses” (Kulczycki & Arun, 2002, p. 208). Intermarriage was revealed as a positive factor in the process of acculturation, as it facilitates the interchange between the cultures, smoothing the corners. However, as it was revealed, some Arab husbands insist on change of religion from their wife, and continue to live within the traditional family mode characteristic to their Arab culture. Perhaps this is rooted in Islamic regulations that prohibit women from marrying non-Muslim men but allow Muslim men to marry women who were of the book (Christian, Jewish, or Muslim) (Ali, 2010). The mentality behind this is that the father should be Muslim so that his children may continue the legacy of Islam (Ali, 2010).
While discussing the factors positively influencing on the acculturation process, it is important to emphasize the conditions that have directly opposite effects. Researchers found that discrimination is the main negative factor preventing the Arab immigrants from successful acculturation (Willems, 2012; Shaheen, 1984). He emphasized the significance of this factor in the process of successful acculturation among Arab immigrants, claiming that they became the targets of racial discrimination due to racialization patterns existing in the United States. According to the author, Arab immigrants have diverse religious and cultural beliefs that have been substituted in the popular culture by images of terrorism and extreme violence (Willems, 2012, p. 2; Shaheen, 1984).

This factor plays a negative role in the process of acculturation due to its ability to influence the quality of life of immigrants as well as their mental state. However, at a much broader level, the entire acculturation process itself can be a huge source of stress to immigrants. Khalid et al. (2007) state that “when people come into contact with a new culture, differences in the language, physical, and psychological dimensions from their original culture cause them to experience acculturative stress” (218). At the same time, discrimination often remains one of the central factors causing stress among Arab immigrants. Ramdhonee and Bhowon (2012) showed the same process to be ongoing among the majority of immigrants, despite their degree of acculturation (p. 126).

There are several studies proving that discrimination can cause serious mental strain and even impairment among Arab immigrants (Aprahamian et al., 2011; Willems, 2012; Jadalla and Lee, 2012). Such assumptions are relevant if taking into account that the image of Arabs is rather negative in the United States. Experiencing constant hostility, the immigrants tend to exclude themselves from other communities except their own. It was
emphasized by Jadalla and Lee (2012) that Arab immigrants experience discrimination in the job market, in public places, in the workplace, and in daily life overall (p. 164). Such exposure of ongoing discrimination frequently leads to serious mental health problems, like depression, anxiety, and trauma. Discrimination is one of the reasons why Arab immigrants stay within their own community, not making the attempts to interact with representatives of other communities (Aprahamian et al., 2011).

While discrimination against Arabs and Muslims in the post 9/11 era certainly intensified, these events did not mark the birth of discrimination and stereotypes against Arabs and Muslims (Mamdani, 2002). Aprahamian et al. (2011) underlined that Arab immigrants feel themselves inferior compared to other citizens, due to constant discrimination and the stereotypical image of their ethnicity in the eyes of the United States population (p. 93). The acculturation process can become nearly impossible if the dominant culture rejects the immigrants of a particular nationality or ethnicity. While some still harbor the belief that the United States has a unique composition as a diverse country that prohibits discrimination against anyone, it also should be noted that the hostility against Arab immigrants is more tolerated than toward almost any other minorities (Camarota, 2002).

The situation intensified after the 9/11 attack and the following war on terror proclaimed by the United States that predisposed the Iraq War and several armed conflicts of the United States military within the Middle Eastern and Islamic countries. Nassar-McMillan et al. (2011) argued that due to the constant conflicts between the United States and the Middle East, “some Arab immigrants become active in social justice initiatives, others may become embittered and further disenfranchised, while still others may vacillate
due to situational criteria” (p. 38). The relationship between the Arab-Muslim immigrants and the United States citizens sharpened significantly and stays critical nowadays due to such episodes as the Boston Marathon Bombing (The Associated Press). Such intensification of Arab and/or Muslim stereotypes or misconceptions makes it even more difficult for Arab-Muslim immigrants to acculturate in United States host culture (Nassar-McMillan et al., 2011 p. 39).

At the same time, some researchers emphasized that despite the negative attitude of the United States citizens to their culture especially after the events listed earlier, Arabs tend to immigrate to the United States anyway. “Interest in coming to America remains very strong in the Middle East even after September 11” (Camarota, 2002, p. 315). These interests could be due to bad economic situations, ongoing armed conflicts, or political reasons in their native country, as a large proportion of Arab immigrants are also refugees (Haboush, 2007). In addition, Camarota drew attention to the fact that a great number of Arab immigrants tend to be highly-trained specialists and well-educated individuals who usually seek better employment and economic stability, which they cannot find in their motherland (p. 318).

Nevertheless, analyzing the factors influencing the acculturation process among Arab immigrants, it is possible to determine the primary root of the difficulties preventing them from assimilating into United States culture more successfully. While reviewing all causes, the differences in religious beliefs and traditions are the central barriers of mutual understanding between the American citizens and Arab immigrants. It is possible to assume that some quantity of differences stem from stereotypical perceptions of Arabs and the Middle East in general; though the distinctions between the Western and Middle
Eastern countries do exist at different levels, and are, therefore, also real factors in social dynamics.

**Traditional Differences between Arab Immigrants and Western Civilization**

This section focuses on the complex differences between Arab culture of immigrants and United States hegemonic culture. This comparison is vital because it plays a significant role in the overall acculturation process of Arab Muslim immigrants. According to the United States Religious Landscape Survey conducted in 2012, the majority of the United States citizens who characterized themselves as religious claimed to be Christian (72%), while, for example, the inhabitants practicing Islam were in a minority (0.6%). Such radical difference makes it possible to claim that Christianity in America is the dominant religious tradition (U.S. Religious Landscape Survey, 2012).

While comparing religious beliefs, one of the primary distinctions that divide Muslims and Christians is the traditionalism of Islam. While comparing the Middle Eastern and Western countries, it is possible to conjecture that religion in general plays a less significant role in the West. In the United States, religion is a personal choice of the individual, but in mainstream United States culture, it doesn’t necessarily influence the daily lives of all members of society. In the majority of the Middle Eastern countries, Islam plays a more prominent role, influencing every aspect of the lives of its citizens and even newcomers (Kattan, 2014).

Traditions of Arab immigrants who follow Islam are rooted in their religion, which influences their everyday and personal life, in some cases including food and clothes. There is a paucity of such traditions in Western culture, as people often choose such things according to their interests and needs. Providing an example of such traditions, Islam does
not permit its followers to eat pork. Women tend to wear special clothes covering their figure, head, and in some cases even their faces (Mishra, 2007, p. 5). In addition, followers of Islam have to pray five times a day despite the fact that this can be a difficult routine in the conditions of Western cities (Bankston & Hidalgo, 2006, p. 29). Certainly all Muslims do not necessarily avoid pork, wear the expected modest clothing, or pray five times a day. However, Muslims are more likely to have a greater level of religiosity than their Christian or Jewish counterparts (Bankston & Hidalgo, 2006; Wilson & Power, 2004).

Nevertheless, while analyzing the differences in traditions and religions, it should be noted that the most vivid distinction among all may be the social construction of gender roles and customs by both cultures. In this aspect, the views are radically opposite, as the Middle East in general is highly masculine culture where women are not perceived as equal to men (Hakim-Larson, 2007, p. 315). Such attitude to women can be observed at different levels in the countries practicing Islam, especially of fundamentalist nature, like Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Iran.

However, even in the countries where radical views are followed only by minorities, women do not have equal rights with men. The type of clothes, the ability to go out, drive a car, doing a job, or even speaking to individuals of the opposite gender is regulated by the respect of the Islamic teachings (Cook-Masaud & Wiggins, 2011, p. 248). This is only a brief overview of the Islamic view towards women. On the contrary, in the United States, equal rights in general are the central ideas of the cultural life, with some exceptions in the smaller cities and rural communities in the South and border states. Therefore, such traditions practiced by Arab immigrants contradict United States culture and its legislation.
In addition, Arab immigrants usually complain that it is rather difficult to preserve family traditional values in the conditions of the United States today due to various reasons. According to the traditions existing within the Middle East, the family is a sacred compound of the society, as are the family ties. In comparison to United States culture, it is possible to generalize that while family values certainly do exist within the culture, their influence is less significant, for example, in professional life, or in personal interests and use of space.

While Western culture is dominated by ideas of individualism, the Middle Eastern world can be characterized more as collectivist. Yet, it is possible to claim that family values in both cultures play very different roles. Emphasizing this point, Abu Baker (1999) revealed that for “Arab people who live within collective societies, socialization process leaves very little for individual decisions” (p. 953). Thus, it is possible to assume that the acculturation process targeting an individual despite the collective will lead to negative consequences. Being absolutely patriarchic, an Arab family has the right to decide the destiny of their children and does not accept the concept of divorce (Itzhaky & Ribner, 1999, p. 135). An average United States family has different values, which can further result in misunderstanding within the society.

The moral values of Arab immigrants tend to be very different from the American norms as well. The most vivid distinction can be observed in the inter-gender relations, where women and men are not allowed to engage in a pre-marital relationship, or in some cases even to be alone in a room with each other (Boosahda, 2003, p. 53). Taking into account open-mindedness of the United States citizens in such questions and popularity of mass media in the country, it is easy to assume that Arab immigrants tend to feel
uncomfortable in such conditions. Overall, it is possible to assume that the cultural
traditions usually practiced by Arab immigrants differ from the norms and values existing
within Western culture and in the United States in particular.

Taking into account the traditions characteristic of Arab immigrants, it is plausible
to conceptualize that their acculturation process contains a substantial number of cultural
barriers that are difficult to overcome at once. The results of the investigation performed
by Barry (2005) and Barry et al. (2000) showed that the acculturation process of Arab
immigrants “was not associated with overall ethnic identity investment, religious-family
values, or sense of belonging” (p. 182; p. 141). In general, the researchers argued that the
process of acculturation and integration into United States society was accompanied by
total refusal of the traditional values existing within Middle Eastern culture.

Such findings can be perceived as the negative outcome of the acculturation
process, as the participants in the study lost their cultural identity. From the other point of
view, such exploration revealed that one reason for the successful acculturation of the Arab
immigrants is the loss of cultural identity. This conclusion leads to the question of whether
traditional Middle Eastern culture can seamlessly co-exist within the dominant United
States culture, especially in the case of first generation Arab-Muslim immigrants to the
United States.

**Negative Aftermaths of a Difficult Acculturation Process**

The consequences of a difficult experience with acculturation for some immigrants
can lead to unwanted results. As was mentioned earlier, due to the potential challenges,
some Arab immigrants may even experience health disparities due to the obstacles of
acculturation. Interestingly, Brown et al. (2003) showed that the lack of acculturation for
some Arab immigrants could increase the risk for diabetes. The primary factors contributing to the development of diabetes were traditional Arab food, older age, and less activity among the immigrants (Brown et al., 2003, p. 15). Other scholars also revealed negative health consequences among the Arab immigrant populations due to their inability to acculturate faster. Hattar-Pollara and Meleis (2005) argued that some of the participants in their study underwent serious distress while trying to create similar conditions of living compared to their motherland within the settings of the United States; and when constantly failing to reach their goal, the examinees experienced severe stress.

While mentioning that the process of acculturation can be particularly stressful, the resistance to acculturation can be even more destructive for some immigrants. Taking into account the fact that some Arab immigrants experience difficulties in the ability to accept United States culture, their levels of distress and constant medical problems could lead to even more serious impairments, in their mental state, as well as in the overall health quality. At the same time, it is crucial to acknowledge that psychological distress as the symptom of failed acculturation process was found among other ethnicities emigrating to the United States.

Benner and Kim (2010) found that Chinese immigrants sometimes experience similar health struggles as their Arab counterparts (p. 2). Other scholars came to similar conclusions. Greenberger and Chen (1996) suggest that high levels of stress were characteristic for Asian immigrants as well (p. 714). Ultimately, high levels of distress among immigrants exacerbate existing challenges in the acculturation process, and in the ability to integrate successfully into the community.
Such levels of stress and ongoing process of acculturation are frequently the cause of conflicts within the family. As mentioned above, children tend to experience the acculturation process far more easily than adults. Such difference in the ability to acculturate can be the reason of conflicts in the family between the children and parents of immigrants (Kim, 2011; Farver et al., 2002). Kim and Wolpin (2008) agreed with this conclusion, as the adolescents from the immigrated families tend to undergo the process of acculturation quicker and adopt new culture faster than their parents (p. 115). In another study investigating the acculturation process of Asian immigrants, Chung (2001) argued that “there are patterned variations in intergenerational tensions over expectations regarding family interactions, educational and career concerns, and dating and marriage issues” (p. 382). Chung also argued that the clashes between first generation Asian immigrants tended to occur more frequently with their daughters, but that the clashes among immigrant families were reduced as the parents became more aware of United States culture. Farver (2002) also conducted a study on Asian/Indian families and argued that the stress level in the acculturation process was positively correlated with the difference between the native and host culture. Farver also argued that the less integrated to United States culture the parents (first degree immigrants) were, the greater the extent of psychological problems within their family. Such differences in acculturation, in some cases, can lead to difficulties in the relationship between the parents and their children and the further breaking of ties with family members and the cultural identity.

While noticing that the loss of cultural identity can be the price of acculturation, it is also important to emphasize that this is a negative aftermath of acculturation overall. Such a result is almost inevitable and in some cases can be omitted if some of the
traditional values can exist within the dominant culture. Berry (2008) stated that the process of ongoing globalization and the recent tendencies of migrations of population lead to the diminishing role of cultural identity within society, as it tends to be global and common to everyone (p. 329). It is a frustrating process; though, as the results showed, the loss of cultural identity was the aftermath of Arab immigrants’ acculturation in the majority of cases. Despite Berry’s statements, many Arab immigrant families continue to move to the United States and a large majority of them strive to maintain their native culture and religion. And while the acculturation process may lead to incorporation of some components of American culture, this is not to say that a global culture for these immigrants overwhelms that of their original roots.

As Bisin and Verdier argued in “Beyond the Melting Pot,” the theory of assimilation has not been a certain phenomenon (2000). Herberg (1955) provided the example of religious traditions of Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish immigrants who strived to maintain their religious beliefs to distinguish from each other. Bison and Verdier also focused on the generational differences in assimilation when comparing first and second-generation immigrants, and how parents tried to influence their children’s characteristics through “direct socialization,” which sometimes conflicted with the indirect socialization of society on second generation immigrant. In fact, many immigrants purposefully strive to maintain their own identity and try to actually avoid assimilation to their host culture. This becomes more interesting when considering the children of immigrants, the generation who was exposed to their parents’ (and arguably their) native culture, and that of the United States, the country in which they grew up.
While analyzing the process of acculturation of Arab immigrants in the United States, I found that there are a variety of potential barriers hindering Arab-Muslim immigrants from successful integration into the United States society. Cultural and religious differences, distinctions in moral and ethical values, perception of gender relations, demonization of the Arab population in mass media, and discrimination are the major factors causing the overall struggles of the acculturation process. The difficulty of some Arab immigrants to acculturate successfully sometimes roots in their beliefs and eagerness to maintain the same conditions of living within the country where the majority of such beliefs are not widely accepted. As a result, Arab-Muslim immigrants tend to stay within their ethnic and national community, which makes the process of acculturation even more complicated.
CHAPTER FIVE
CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN THE ISLAMIC AND ARAB CONTEXT

Introduction to Conflict Resolution

Conflict is an expected part in any relationship between two parties, whether the parties consist of individuals, groups of people, political organizations, nations, and even continents (Bellamy & Williams, 2010; Hall, 1976). Parties within a relationship then develop diverse strategies to resolve conflicts, but oftentimes third parties get involved in an attempt to bring about positive growth between two conflicting parties (Bayazit & Mannix, 2003; Ozcelik, 2006). Mismanagement of the conflict may exacerbate poor outcomes. On the other hand, when a conflict is properly managed by positive reinforcement strategies, reconciling different values, perceptions, motivations, and ideologies, it builds on the bond between involved parties (Abu-Nimer, 2000). Reconciliation may be difficult at times, because opposing views in a conflict may burden relational and personal attachments between parties. This burden on the relationship between opposing parties involved in a conflict generates the need for conflict resolution strategies to restore safety, respect, value, and togetherness (Forsyth, 2009).

Conflict resolution is a reconciliation process in which methods and processes are developed and implemented to institute a peaceful way of terminating and addressing the root causes of the conflict to bring in peace and tranquility (Johnson, 1976; Van de Vliert & Euwema, 1994). In search of reconciliation, the parties engage in active dissemination of information ideally via effective communication skills and channels that acknowledge conflicting ideologies as well as reasons behind grounded beliefs and expectations (Marty
& Appleby, 1993; Jarboe & Witteman, 1996). Conflict management differs from conflict resolution because it focuses on controlling the conflict rather than resolving it entirely. While there is extensive literature on conflict resolution styles in the Islamic and Arab context, little research exists on the conflict management roots in this context, therefore, this chapter will focus on conflict resolution specifically.

In Middle Eastern cultures, there have been different conflicts in history that were resolved based on the beliefs and teachings of the Islamic religion. Methods of conflict resolution utilized to resolve these conflicts are often based on Islamic religious teachings and the Quran (Bercovitch & Kadayifci-Orellana, 2009). Opponents of Islamic beliefs sometimes have a notion that the religious teachings of Islam are the major cause of conflict. In reality, understanding Islamic teachings can provide greater understanding regarding what led to the conflict as well as how to resolve it, especially since this is the primary framework for conflict resolution used in the Middle East, in both formal and informal settings.

**Impact of the Islamic Religion on Conflict Resolution**

While there are multiple texts available that detail Islam as a religion of war, there is a paucity of literature discussing Islam in the context of conflict resolution and peace. As Abu-Nimer notes (1996), “when one searches the Library of Congress subject catalogue for resources on Islam and nonviolence, fewer than five items appear on the screen. However, thousands of items are listed when violence and Islam are the search words” (p. 2). In order to better understand the impact of the Islamic religion on conflict resolution, it is essential to trace the roots of the Islamic religion itself.
Muslims derive their teachings and beliefs from two sources believed to be divine. First is the Holy Quran, the book believed to be the words of God relayed to Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) through the Angel Gabriel. The second divine source is the Sunnah. The Sunnah refers to the deeds and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, including everything he stated, reported, did, and described. The Quran and the Sunnah guide Muslim followers throughout their lives and provide knowledge on what is the recommended way to resolve conflict.

The word Islam is derived from the Arabic word Salam, which means peace. When a person bears witness that “there is no God but Allah and Mohammad is his Messenger,” he/she is “making submission (taslim) to the will of God.” Throughout the Quran there are multiple concepts of peace including mercy and compassion, justice, love, friendship, and forgiveness. While the word sword is never mentioned in the Quran, and the word Jihad is mentioned 41 times, the words mercy, peace, and compassion were mentioned 355 times in the Quran.

The Quran and Sunnah provide guidance regarding the etiquette of war and conflict. Prophet Muhammad commanded fighters “do not transgress, don’t kill who is not fighter, don’t kill women, children, old men, or a person who works in the field and even a worshipper and don’t destroy crops or cut trees. Murder of a human being is considered one of the greatest sins” (Khan, 1997). Again, according to the Quran and Sunnah, the lives of non-combatants are considered sacred and any unnecessary destruction of an enemy’s crops or property is forbidden in the etiquette of conflict.

On multiple occasions, the Quran commends sulh, or conciliation, as the superior moral course of action to be taken by opposing parties. The active form of sulh is islah,
which means to make good, proper, or right, or to reconcile and settle. The Quran equates the word of *sulh* or *islah* with the notion of inherent good and it is often juxtaposed against corruption and mischief. In chapter 49, verses 9-10, the Quran states:

> And if two factions among the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two. But if one of them oppresses the other, then fight against the one that oppresses until it returns to the ordinance of Allah. And if it returns, then make settlement between them in justice and act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly. The believers are but a single brotherhood, so make peace and reconcile between your contending brothers, and fear Allah, so that Allah may have mercy upon you.

The Quran not only encourages equity, but also favors forgiveness in cases of apology and repentance.

In the year 622 A.D., Prophet Muhammad decided to leave Mecca because the Meccan chiefs had taken action to kill him in his home. For that reason he left Mecca for Medina, a city that at the time had a large population of Muslims as well as Jews. At the time Medina’s citizens were looking for someone to help bring peace and security in Medina. Upon Prophet Muhammad’s arrival in Medina, he consulted with representatives of each of the major parties in Medina and enacted a charter for the city-state of Medina that functioned as a formal constitution for its citizens:

> Muslims and Jews should live as one people; each party should keep to its own faith, and neither should interfere with that of the other; in the event of war with a third party, each should come to the assistance of the other, provided the latter were the party aggrieved and not the aggressors. In the event of an attack on Medina, both should join hands to defend it; peace should be made only after consultation with each other; Medina should be regarded as sacred by both, all bloodshed being forbidden therein; the prophet should be the final court of appeal of dispute. (Ali, 1972, p. 104)

This charter acts as an example of how Islam encouraged tolerance between people of different faith, with the knowledge that each party followed its own faith without
interference from other parties. It is vital to note that Islam’s view of war is that it is a necessary evil and one only resorts to war when it is absolutely unavoidable. The purpose of war in Islam is to gain freedom and peace and if this can be gained without war, the war is prohibited. The Prophet Muhammad told his people: “O people! Do not wish for an encounter with an enemy. Pray to Allah to grant you security; but when you (have to) encounter them, exercise patience” (Al-Bukhari, 1985).

Islam therefore provides guidance to its followers regarding approaches to resolve conflict. Conflict is undesirable, and physical confrontation is a last resort, however, when necessary, there are rules and etiquette for resolving these conflicts. At base, rules are defined so that expectations are well known. Islam encourages equity when reconciling conflicts, but when amicable terms and forgiveness can be reached they are preferred.

**Impact of Arab Culture on Conflict Resolution**

Outside of Islamic roots, there are many well-documented Arab approaches to conflict resolution. Communication is a vital component of conflict resolution and utilizing third party mediators to help establish a consensus between two opposing parties has been practical in Middle Eastern culture for years (Yosuf-Ahmad, 1988). Utilizing a third party to help resolve conflict became an important tenet in Arab culture when conflicts arose due to the scarcity of natural resources in the Middle East. Sometimes conflicts occur between two different Arab families or tribes, and in these situations, an “atwah” may be put in place. *Atwah* is an Arabic word which stands for a verbal binding truce that can last anywhere between days to months and even years. During this period, the members of the victim’s family are not allowed to seek revenge or initiate conflict with any member of the perpetrator’s family (Abu-Nimer, 1996). This *atwah* period of time
allows for leaders of the mediating and opposing parties to help build an amicable solution to the conflict prevailing between the involved parties.

The mediation delegation is called the “jahah,” which is composed of leaders from the mediating party. The members of the jahah are expected to understand the norms, beliefs, and tradition of Arab culture within the region (Abu-Nimer, 1996). The jahah then listens to statements from both sides of the conflict, together with their requisites, tribulations, penalties as well as the roots encapsulated in Arabic norms, beliefs, values, and cultural tolerance (Irani, 1998). It is stipulated that during the atwah, the guilty perpetrator/instigator of the original conflict is under the custody of the mediating party to allow for unbiased investigations. It is vital to emphasize that all conditions defining the atwah must be met by both parties involved, such that any breach of the truce by either of the parties led to consequential fines and charges (Abu-Nimer, 1996). Atwahs are common in Arab culture and they are largely accepted as means of reconciliation by most of the Arab countries in the Middle East. Ultimately the verdict of the jahah is upheld by both parties and by their local governments. The outcome of each mediation process involves the musalaha, the conciliation, which by default includes the exchange of apologies and mitigation of the conflict.

**Conflict Resolution from the Western Perspective**

Conflict resolution has been evolving as a field of study since the 1950s, and its emergence can be traced to the human relations and intergroup relations movements that followed the Second World War. Many scholars believe that conflict resolution is a Western concept, but new research is showing conflict resolution has roots outside of Western literature (Adebayo, Benjamin, & Lundy, 2014). The Western approach is to
identify conflict as negative, therefore making the goal to end conflict entirely, with little focus placed on minimizing or controlling conflict (Irani, 1999). On the other hand, Islam identifies conflict as a natural occurrence, not simply as a source of instability or threat. As Salem argues in his critique of Western conflict resolution, the Western concept of conflict resolution focuses only on the “suffering generated by conflict rather than on the justice or morality of the cause,” which may be impractical in attempting to resolve a conflict as well as prevent it in the future (Salem, 1997, p. 4). Salem also identifies an important difference between Western and non-Western techniques for conflict resolution. Westerners approach conflicts with confidence that they can be resolved, however, others may enter a conflict resolution discussion with pessimism. Non-Westerners may regard conflicts as inherently unmanageable and identify conflict resolution discussions as over-optimistic and naïve, which reflects the potential differences between opposing parties from Western and non-Western backgrounds upon entering conflict resolution discussions. While Westerners may have an optimistic view that through discussions, a particular conflict may be resolved, some non-Westerners may see this as over-optimistic and unrealistic. This difference in mentality may create a gap in understanding when trying to resolve a particular conflict between Western and non-western parties.

Many Western manuals for conflict resolution start with exercises that break the ice, allowing opposing parties to open up, share their personal experiences or feelings to ultimately recognize common ground with their opponent. This, however, may go against some non-Western negotiation situations where a higher level of formality is expected in open discussion for the purpose of conflict resolution.
Abu-Nimer investigates the assumptions of Western conflict resolution techniques and identifies several vital assumptions. One of these main assumptions is that since Western society values individualism, those who are not directly related to the conflict have minimal involvement in the conflict resolution process; therefore the general public is alienated from the process (Adebayo, Benjamin, & Lundy, 2014). Conflict is also not necessarily a negative interaction that should be avoided. For example, the civil rights movement led a great conflict in the 1960s, but many of the consequences of this conflict were positive, ultimately establishing the civil rights of African Americans in the United States.

Another important aspect of Western perceptions of conflict resolution is that often-times Western approaches incorporate teaching and exporting Western perceptions of conflict resolution when working to resolve conflicts with Middle Eastern and Islamic groups. Such an approach may be based on an assumption that Western norms for conflict resolution may be more developed and effective, and may disregard the accepted norms of Middle Eastern or Islamic society. Furthermore, Muslims and Arabs may be even more hesitant to accept Western ideals for conflict resolution when they are not reflections of the actual conduct of Western nations in the international system, both historically (colonialism) and in the present.

Western approaches to conflict resolution also differ from Arab or Islamic approaches because they more often neglect to incorporate Christian precedents in their conflict resolution approaches. This is not to say that all Westerners are Christian, or believe in Christian ideals, but more to the point is the fact that while the majority of Westerners believe in Christianity, it is interesting that many Western conflict resolution
techniques avoid incorporation of Christianity in their conflict resolution processes. In fact, Western approach often surrenders to a separation between Church and state, and thus disregards the incorporation of religious ideals in its approach to resolving conflicts. On the other hand, Arab and Muslim approaches to conflict resolution draw on religious values as a mechanism to empower society to participate in resolution based on common ideals of religious values. In addition, Western approaches incorporate the use of tangible leverages such as money, while in the Middle East, conflict resolution usually revolves around non-material things such as honor, dignity, power, leadership, etc.

**Conclusion**

Clearly, many differences exist when comparing Arab, Muslim, and Western influences on approaches to conflict resolution techniques. Interestingly, this study addresses the conflict management approaches of Arab Muslim first and second-generation immigrants in the United States, therefore potentially incorporating a combination of Islamic, Arabic, and Western/American techniques in their conflict resolution and management approaches.
CHAPTER SIX

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A two-phase methodology, sequential explanatory (Creswell, 2013) mixed-method study was used to explore whether gender, religiosity, and cultural variations impact conflict management styles utilized by Arab-Muslim immigrants in the workplace. Phase one was a quantitative study that looked at the statistical relationships between gender, religiosity, and cultural variation and conflict management styles utilized by participants. Following this macro analysis, phase two utilized a qualitative study approach in order to better understand the dynamics of certain conflict management styles by conducting semi-structured face-to-face interviews with 24 participants.

According to Creswell, this sequential explanatory method (please refer to Figure 6.1) starts with the collection and analysis of quantitative data followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data (2013). This strategy gives more weight to the quantitative approach than qualitative data. In phase one, the quantitative data is collected and analyzed. Phase two consists of qualitative data, in this case based on a semi-structured face-to-face interview. The sequential explanatory model (Figure 6.1) is essential because it requires that phase two is built and designed based on findings from the initial phase of the study.

**Figure 6.1.** Sequential Explanatory Mixed Method Approach
In this study, phase one includes surveys, which were sent to three major Muslim communities in Missouri, specifically, in Columbia, Kansas City, and St. Louis. After data analysis was completed for the surveys, phase two followed with 24 semi-structured face-to-face interviews. While such a methodology does require increased time commitment, it also provides structure and the potential for richer data.

The overall research question in my study is: Can culture, gender, and religiosity predict conflict management styles utilized in the workplace by first and second generation Arab-Muslim immigrants in the U.S.? This study was conducted as a mixed methods approach utilizing quantitative and qualitative methods to maximize the strength of the findings obtained. The major component of the study included 257 completed surveys. Binary logistic regression and chi-square tests were used to analyze this quantitative data. The data consisted of three independent variables (predictors) and a categorical dependent (outcome) variable, therefore binary logistic regression and chi-square test were deemed the most appropriate statistical test for the quantitative data. The dependent variable – the conflict management style utilized by participants – consisted of five categories: dominating, integrating, obliging, avoiding, and compromising conflict management styles. Following the quantitative data analysis, 24 face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted with particular participants who completed the original surveys in phase one of the study. This helped identify any gaps in understanding in the survey and assisted in explaining and interpreting the findings from the statistical analysis phase.
Operationalization

For the purposes of this study, a first generation participant will be defined as an individual who immigrated to the United States from an Arab country that he or she was born in prior to the age of five years. A second-generation immigrant will be defined as an adult born in the U.S. or who had arrived to the U.S. at the age of five or older. The age of five is utilized because these individuals are expected to have similar experiences as those born in the United States due to their young age of immigration to the U.S. (Britto & Amer, 2007).

Please refer to Table 6.1 for definitions of each of the different conflict management styles, which make up the dependent variables for this study.

Table 6.1. Conflict Management Styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict Management Style</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dominating</td>
<td>Individuals seek to satisfy their own interests regardless of the impact on other parties in the conflict (Robbins et al., 2008).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrating</td>
<td>Win-win resolution where it is assumed that the solution to the conflict can leave both parties in a better condition (Johnson &amp; Johnson, 1994).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding</td>
<td>Ignoring or suppressing a conflict in the hope that it will go away or won’t become too destructive (Johns, 1994).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obliging</td>
<td>When one party in the conflict is willing to place the opponent’s interest above his or her own (Johnson &amp; Johnson, 1994).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromising</td>
<td>No clear winner or loser; each party to the conflict is willing to give up something to come to a resolution (Johnson &amp; Johnson, 1994).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Method of Investigation

Despite the increased time commitment of completing a mixed method of investigation, the benefits of such an approach far outweigh the weaknesses. Phase one of
the study provided a large scale of data that was more generalizable to the study population, and this data was then utilized to design and polish the semi-structured interviews in phase two of the study. Ultimately such an approach provided rich data including both quantitative and qualitative results.

This triangulation approach increases the validity of the data and provides stronger evidence for a conclusion through convergence and corroboration of findings. This in turn increased the generalizability of the overall results in the study. Of course, there are also weaknesses to a mixed-method approach. The time commitment is certainly longer. Furthermore, arranging interviews with individuals can become inconvenient, and the cost of data analysis of quantitative and qualitative results is greater. A triangulation approach is beneficial, however, because it provides the potential for more robust and unexpected findings. This unexpected data can be examined in depth using the appropriate quantitative and qualitative data analysis approaches.

The application of qualitative and quantitative research requires greater preparation and knowledge of appropriate data collection and analysis techniques. It is ultimately more time consuming and work intensive. Nonetheless, the benefits in this case outweigh the disadvantages and therefore a mixed-method approach is most appropriate in this study (Creswell, 2013).

**Validity**

Fielding and Fielding (1986) provide an extensive discussion of triangulation and emphasize that it doesn’t automatically increase validity. Researchers should recognize the fallibility of a particular method and triangulate in terms of threats to validity. As Maxwell (2005) puts it: “Triangulation – collecting information from a diverse range of individuals
and settings, using a variety of methods – … reduces the risk of chance associations and of systematic biases due to a specific method, and allows a better assessment of the generality of the explanations one develops” (p. 112).

This research design triangulated between different sources and sampling methods. Investigating Arab-Muslim American from three different communities also increased the validity of the results (Bailey, White, & Pain, 1999). Triangulation was employed through multiple sources: families from three different Arab-Muslim American communities, each community providing a different perspective on the behavior of handling their conflict (Konecki, 2008). I also triangulated by including a mixed-method approach (quantitative and qualitative) by using the interviews to investigate and help understand findings from the quantitative component, thus effectively increasing the study’s internal validity.

My fluency in the Arabic language was also a major advantage, which helped overcome some of the language barriers that would have otherwise been present. This also has increased the internal validity of the study for the interviews. The interviews were structured in such a way that they begin with open-ended questions that gave the subjects the opportunity to provide the most sincere and accurate answer, without being influenced by my own experiences and personal biases, another component that increased the internal validity of the study. My Arab Muslim background also allowed me to seamlessly integrate within the social environment of the research subjects. I was not seen as an outsider and therefore the research subjects were more open in the interviews, making the data more generalizable and valid (Geertz, 2005). This perhaps also played a role in the large percentage of individuals who completed the surveys.
According to Maxwell (2005) triangulation helps increase the internal validity of a study, by minimizing the risk of systematic bias more likely to be present in single method studies. With a triangulation approach including surveys and face-to-face interviews, each method provides benefits that overlap with the weaknesses of other methods utilized in this study. The mixed method approach employing both quantitative and qualitative results also enriched the data obtained and provided a greater understanding of the study objectives at hand, increasing the external validity, i.e., the generalizability of the overall results.

**Sampling**

As a resident of the state of Missouri, I had access to a diverse Arab-Muslim American population in this state. In addition, as a Arab-Muslim member of the Islamic community of Columbia, Missouri, I already had the trust of many members of the community, which also enhanced my access to members within the Columbia community but also increased my access to members of the St. Louis and Kansas City communities. The sampling frame was focused on the Arab-American-Muslim communities in Columbia, Kansas City, and St. Louis. In order to gain access to this sampling frame, I consulted the presidents of the Arab Islamic Centers in these cities to discuss the goals of research and to gain permission to send out informational emails regarding the study.

For phase I of the study, a probability random sampling technique was utilized to select units from this study’s population to participate in the survey. Upon receiving the email list for each community, I then separated the prospective male participants from the prospective female participants and numbered the male and female participants from each community separately. I then entered the total number of emails for each community into a
randomizing program, and selected the number of random participants desired. The randomizing program then provided me with the randomly selected participants, specifically, a random list of numbers (which correlated to the emails) including 75 males and 75 females from each of the three communities. Such an approach controlled for the number of male and female respondents selected from each community, but provided a random sample with less bias, increasing the potential validity of the results obtained in this study, making the results more generalizable to the target population.

A total of 450 surveys, 150 for each city, were sent out, however, only 257 surveys were completed and returned. The leaders of each of the three Muslim communities were contacted, and an invitation email to participate in the surveys was sent out to the first 150 emails from each of the three Muslim communities. Specifically, the first 75 women and the first 75 men from each email list were contacted by email to participate in this study.

For phase II of the study, a snowball approach was utilized to select potential participants for interview. I began by contacting each of the Muslim community leaders, and discussing with them the overall goals of the study and then asking them if they had any recommendations of individuals for face-to-face interview. After identifying some individuals for preliminary interviews, I consulted with these participants for their recommendations for other individuals to interview. A total of 24 participants were interviewed, including four males and four females from each of the Muslim communities.

This is a purposive, non-probability approach, which is essential because it will increase my understanding of the quantitative phase and ensures that there were no gaps in understanding from the surveys conducted in the quantitative component of this study.
Phase I: Quantitative Study

Procedures

I obtained permission to conduct the study from the Institutional Review Board of Kennesaw State University (KSU). I submitted a description of the study detailing how the data will be collected, how participants will be protected, and a sample of the consent form. Please refer to Appendix A for the IRB approval form.

Data Collection Method

According to Carini et al. (2003), paper surveys are less favorable than online surveys, because of the convenience and anonymity of online surveys. Carini found that the anonymity of online surveys provided more genuine results than paper surveys. Therefore, anonymous online surveys were used in phase one of the study. The surveys were sent online through a program called “Qualtrics.” I gained access to this program through the Information Technology Services at Kennesaw State University. Dr. Jesse Benjamin submitted a Qualtrics student account form to the IRB, which approved the request and provided access to this program. Qualtrics is web-based survey software that is available for use by all KSU faculty, staff, and students. This program allows users to build an online survey, collect data and store it, generate basic statistical results, and export data to multiple programs including SPSS, MS-Word, Excel, and others.

The survey process extended over the course of three months. A consent form was included as the first question in the survey to assure participants of the confidentiality and anonymity of this study. The respondents read the consent form and if they agreed to participate, the survey continued to the remainder of the questions. If participants did not agree to consent to the study, then the survey automatically ended with this first question.
In addition to the link to the survey, the invitation emails included an introduction letter (refer to Appendix B) informing prospective participants about the goals and objectives of the study as well as ways to contact the primary researcher. One-hundred-fifty surveys were sent to prospective participants in each of the following cities: St. Louis, Kansas City, and Columbia. A total of 294 respondents began the survey, with 37 surveys excluded from the data analysis because they were incomplete, leaving 257 completed surveys: 99 from Columbia, 85 from Kansas City, and 73 from St. Louis.

Three different scales were used in this study: religiosity scale, culture, individualism vs. collectivism scale, and conflict management style scale (See Appendix C for complete online survey). The scale utilized to assess culture was the individualism-collectivism scale designed by Hui and Triandas (1986). Rahim’s (2001) conflict management styles scale was utilized to assess the dependent variable in the study. Finally, Huber’s (2012) religiosity scale was also utilized in this study. Each of these scales was tested for their reliability and were therefore optimal for utilization in this study. They are discussed separately in more detail below. Each of the scales had Likert-scale components, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree, 1 = never and 5 = all the time, 1 = not probable and 5 = very probable, etc.

**Individualism–Collectivism scale and its reliability (INDCOL).** This scale was derived from the original (INDCOL), which was designed by Hui and Triandas (1986). The original scale was a 66-item Likert scale, which was set to measure a participant’s level of collectivism by measuring the cognitive attitude and behavior toward his or her family, neighbors, co-workers, friends, and relatives. However, for the purpose of this study and not to burden participants by answering this 66-item scale in addition to the
other two scales, some modifications were made to the 66-item inventory. Cai and Fink (2002), adjusted this scale by removing 22 vague items. After running the confirmatory factor analysis, they divided this scale into three separate scales, which included family, neighbors, and co-workers. They then merged these scales into one consisting of 11 items. This 11-item scale scored on reliability Cronbach’s $\alpha = .76$. Participants were asked to respond to the 11-item questionnaire on a 5-point Likert scale.

**Conflict Management Styles Scale and its reliability (ROCI-II).** The 28-item Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II) was used to assess conflict management styles (Rahim, 2001). This scale has been widely used among researchers in the literature (Van de Vliert & Kabanoff, 1990; Bell & Song, 2005; Wood, 2003). This 28-item Likert scale asks participants the extent to which they agree or disagree on each item. This instrument was developed to improve reliability and validity over other instruments that measure conflict management styles such as Thomas-Kilmann Mode Instrument, 1975).

Five scales, each consisting of five to seven items, were created to represent preference for the five conflict styles: avoiding Cronbach’s $\alpha = .84$; compromising Cronbach’s $\alpha = .75$; dominating Cronbach’s $\alpha = .84$; integrating Cronbach’s $\alpha = .81$; and obliging Cronbach’s $\alpha = .83$. Again, participants were asked to respond to the 28-item questionnaire on a 5-point Likert scale.

**The Centrality of Religiosity Scale reliability (CRS).** This scale was used to investigate the religiosity of each of the study participants. This scale has also been widely used by social science studies that look at the sociology and the psychology of religion as well as religious studies. In fact, this scale was translated into 20 different languages,
covering 25 different religions, and modified to fit over the norms of 21 different countries (Huber, 2012). This scale is designed to measure five sides of religiosity. These dimensions are: public practice, religious experience, ideology, private practice, and the intellectual practice. Participants with higher scores on this scale are considered high religious, participants with scores in the middle are considered religious, and participants with low scores are considered not religious. This scale comes in three different versions: five items (CRS-5), 10 items (CRS-10), and 15 items (CRS-15). The last showed more reliability and accuracy because it allocated 3 items for each dimension. Therefore, the 15 item survey was utilized in this study. Reliabilities of the individual dimensions ranged from 0.80 to 0.93, and from 0.92 to 0.96 for the whole CRS-15. To have more fit for the three major Abrahamic religions (Islam, Christianity, and Judaism), this scale had to be adjusted and modified by the original designers. Since this study is only using a sample of Muslim immigrants, we will focus only on the modifications and adjustments made by the designers of the survey so that it would fit specifically for participants from the Islamic religion.

Two specific modifications were made to the original survey. The first modification was a more precise definition of prayer, since Islam requires obligatory prayer five times daily (Salat) but also encourages nonobligatory prayer (Du’aa). The modification therefore assesses the frequency and importance of Salat, but also assesses the importance of Du’aa for the participant. The second modification was a rewording for an item that investigates the participant’s connection with God. The original items asked whether God directly intervened or communicated with the participants. In Islam, if you ask Muslim if he/she has a direct contact with God, they may perceive the question as a
violation for their beliefs in terms of the absolute Almighty God. In order to avoid this misunderstanding, some modifications targeted items 5 and 10. In item 5, the statement was changed from “Intervenes in your life” to “allows for an intervention in your life.” In item 10, the statement was changed from “wants to communicate or to reveal something to you” to “lets something be communicated to you.” Finally, it should be noted that participants were asked to respond to the 15-item questionnaire on a 5-point Likert scale.

Participants

All 257 subjects in this study participated on a voluntarily basis. For the purpose of this study two populations were identified: first generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants in the U.S. and second generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants in the U.S. Among the first generation respondents, 86 were male respondents (33.5% of total respondents) and 59 were female respondents (22.9% of total respondents). Among the second generation 46 were male respondents (17.9% of total respondents) and 66 were female (25.7% of total respondents). A total of 132 males and 125 females responded with completed surveys. Finally, participants who were not born in the U.S. came from 16 countries, including Palestine (n = 36), Jordan (n = 27), Yemen (n = 9), Lebanon (n = 7), Syria (n = 10), Sudan (n = 3), Tunisia (n = 5), Oman (n = 1), Morocco (n = 5), Bahrain (n = 1), Iraq (n = 29), Somalia (n = 3), Qatar (n = 2), Libya (n = 5), Kuwait (n = 1), and Djibouti (n = 1).

Phase II: Qualitative Data Collection

Procedures

After completion of phase I of the study, data analysis of the quantitative results was completed and based on those results, an interview guide was generated for the semi-structured face-to-face interviews. The quantitative study was followed by 24 face-to-face
semi-structured interviews, which provided a more in-depth knowledge about why each generation used a certain conflict management style to handle their interpersonal conflict in the workplace. Specifically, what made some individuals choose one conflict management style over the other? Please refer to Appendix D for the interview guide.

These interviews focused mainly on the first research question of the study, which is about the overall trends of utilizing certain conflict management style by each group. Twenty-four interviews were divided between first and second-generation immigrants equally, with 12 interviewees from first and second-generation immigrants. Utilizing the snowball approach, I was given preliminary recommendations for potential participants by the community leaders. I then specified whether a first or second generation, male or female, was desired. Therefore, eight participants from each community were interviewed, four females (with two falling under the first generation category and two under the second generation category) and four males (with two falling under the first generation category and two under the second generation category) were interviewed from each of the Muslim communities.

Data Collection Method

A semi-structured face-to-face interview approach was utilized to take advantage of many social cues such as voice, body language, etc., of the interviewee. This provided me with opportunities to explore other questions that were not originally part of the semi-structured interview so that I may better understand why these participants answered the way they did in the quantitative component of the study, further validating the quantitative results. Such an approach allowed for flexibility as well, which in turn generated richer data for the overall study (Dearnley, 2005). This method also allowed me to ask all
participants the same basic questions within a flexible framework in which the ordering of questions was determined by responses obtained (Dearnley, 2005). Furthermore, a semi-structured interview was effective for gaining insight into the conflict handling approaches utilized by Arab-Muslim Americans in the workplace.

After initial contact with the chosen respondents, I explained the goals of the interview, obtained consent, and scheduled the appointments. Interview locations were kept in neutral, confidential, quiet, comfortable, and easily accessible locations. Open-ended questions were used to focus on the topic of interest to generate more information and allow the respondents to answer the question and allow me to generate follow up questions as well. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed me to gather data that met the above-stated criteria and that was comparable across cases. Therefore, a semi-structured approach allowed for flexibility, which was better suited than an entirely unstructured interview or a strictly structured one. The majority of interviews were conducted in campus libraries, and the rest were conducted in participants’ homes. The average duration of the interviews was 30 minutes, with the shortest lasting 20 and the longest lasting 40 minutes.

After the respondents’ consent was obtained they were recorded for the duration of the interview. In addition, interview data was kept coded to maintain confidentiality of participants. All interviews were transcribed verbatim. The qualitative data was then analyzed thematically into categories where trends within the qualitative results were present.

After putting similar data together in clusters, I opted for mnemonic codes for thematic analysis of my qualitative data because they are easier to remember when coding
and more practical when identifying categories, subcategories, and overall themes based on the data collected.

**Participants**

A total of 24 interviews were conducted and included participants from six different countries including Jordan, Libya, Tunisia, Palestine, Egypt, and Iraq. They included male and female participants who were either first or second-generation immigrants. Please refer to Table 6.2 for full demographic information for each of the interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Country of origin</th>
<th>Generation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SGM1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>Second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGM2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGF3</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGF4</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>Second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGM5</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>Second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGF6</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGM7</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGF8</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGF9</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGF10</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>Second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGM11</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGF12</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>Second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGM13</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>Second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGM14</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGF15</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGF16</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGF17</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGM18</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>Second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGM19</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGF20</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGM21</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGF22</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>Second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGM23</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGM24</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER SEVEN
DATA ANALYSIS

Phase I: Quantitative Data Analysis

Based on the sequential explanatory model, greater weight was placed on the quantitative results in this study. A total of 450 surveys were sent out to potential participants in the study (Figure 7.1). Of those 450 surveys, a total of 294 surveys were returned, however, 37 were excluded because they were incomplete. The Qualtrics program provided basic descriptive statistical reports for the data.

**Figure 7.1: Phase I Study Participants**

The independent variables (IDVs) were operationalized as following: Generation was operationalized as a dichotomous variable (1 = first generation; 2 = second generation), Gender was operationalized as a dichotomous variable (1 = Male; 2 = Female), Culture was operationalized as a dichotomous variable (1 = Collectivism; 2 =
Individualism), and level of religiosity was operationalized as a dichotomous variable (1 = High religiosity; 2 = low religiosity). The dependent variable (DV) as a categorical variable takes five conflict management styles. Therefore, the five categories of conflict management styles include: Obliging (0 = no obliging; 1 = yes obliging), Compromising (0 = no compromising; 1 = yes compromising), Integrating (0 = no integrating; 1 = yes integrating), Avoiding (0 = no avoiding; 1 = yes avoiding), and Dominating (0 = no dominating; 1 = yes dominating).

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 for Microsoft Windows was utilized to perform this study’s analysis. This statistical software program met all of the requirements proposed by Creswell (2002). In fact, it is considered one of the appropriate software packages utilized in studies conducted involving a dichotomous dependent variable (Menard, 2002). I also met with and consulted statisticians to ensure appropriate data analysis and extrapolation for the survey results.

**Chi-Square Analysis**

**Question 1.** The first research question’s results were analyzed using the chi-square test. The first research question in this study was, what is the overall trend in conflict management style preferences between first and second generations in the workplace of Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States? A chi-square test was used because of the nature of the study’s variables. Through chi-square test, we can see what conflict management styles are utilized by each generation compared to the other generation.

The chi-square test is normally used for two nominal variables, where the data has no meaningful rank or order. It is a test that determines association and provides the extent
of correlation between variables. It can only determine whether a relationship between variables is significant, and does not provide information regarding the strength of a potential relationship. Before discussing the results for question 1 and the chi-square analysis, it is vital to discuss the assumptions of this statistical analysis method. Chi-square analysis has two basic stipulations. The first is that it is only utilized for a 2x2 table. In other words, the variables we are investigating have exactly two possible categories. For example, in the first chi-square analysis, the choices for culture were either individualistic or collectivistic and the choices for generation were either first or second-generation, thus producing the 2x2 table. The second assumption of chi-square analysis is that all expected frequencies should be greater than 5. In this case, all expected frequencies were greater than 5 (please refer to the comments below table 7.1 for expected frequencies for each chi-square analysis completed.

The first analysis explores whether there is a significant association between culture (individualistic or collectivistic) and whether or not the participant is a first or second-generation immigrant. The cross tabulation statistics suggest that there was a significant association. In fact, the first generation immigrant tends to be more collectivists (95.9 percent), compared with only 15.2 percent of second-generation immigrants who were found to be more collectivists (p<0.001). When assessing for a potential significant association between religiosity and the whether an individual was a first or second-degree immigrant, the research showed that 74.5 percent of first generation Arab-Muslim immigrants in this study identified themselves as having a high level of religiosity, while only 25 percent of second generation Arab Muslim immigrants were identified as having a high level of religiosity (p<0.001).
In conducting the chi-square analysis for each of the conflict management styles, certain trends are identified (refer to Table 7.1). First, a chi-square analysis was done to explore whether there was an association between the obliging as a conflict management style and whether the participant was a first or second-generation Arab-Muslim immigrant. Based on the results it appears that the first-generation immigrants were more likely to utilize obliging conflict management styles (80.0 percent of first-generation immigrants) compared to their second-generation counterparts (67.9 percent of second-generation immigrants). The association between obliging as a conflict management style and the first or second-generation status of the participant was statistically significant with a p value of 0.026.

**Table 7.1: Chi-Square Analysis Question 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict Management Style</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culture Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>172.442(^a)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>62.102(^b)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obliging Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>4.931(^c)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromising Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>6.361(^d)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrating Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>10.600(^e)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>8.415(^f)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominating Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>51.937(^g)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) 0 cells have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 44.02.
\(^b\) 0 cells have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 52.73.
\(^c\) 0 cells have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 28.33.
\(^d\) 0 cells have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 29.20.
\(^e\) 0 cells have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 31.38.
\(^f\) 0 cells have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 54.47.
\(^g\) 0 cells have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 40.53.

An association was also identified between the compromising as a conflict management style and whether the participant was a first or second-generation immigrant. In fact, first-generation immigrants were more likely to use compromising (80.0 percent) strategies compared to their second-generation counterparts (only 66.1 percent). This
result was also statistically significant, with a p value of 0.012. An association was also identified between first and second-generation immigrants status and utilizing the integrating as a conflict management style. Again in this case, the first-generation immigrants were more likely to utilize integrating strategies (80.0 percent of the time) versus the second-generation immigrants who only utilize integrating strategies about 61.6 percent of the time. This also was statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.001.

First-generation immigrants were also more likely to utilize avoiding as a conflict management styles compared to second-generation immigrants. In fact, first-generation immigrants utilized avoiding methods to address their interpersonal conflict up to 59.3 percent of the time compared to second generation immigrants who only utilized avoiding strategies up to 41.1 percent of the time. This difference in the extent of utilizing avoiding strategies for their interpersonal conflicts was statistically significant with a p value of 0.004.

The dominating as a conflict management style was the only form that was more likely to be utilized by second-generation immigrants. Second-generation immigrants utilized dominating strategies to solve their interpersonal conflicts up to 88.4 percent of the time. On the other hand, first-generation immigrants only reported utilizing dominating conflict management styles up to 44.8 percent of the time. Based on the chi-square analysis, this association was also statistically significant with a p value of < 0.001. In summary, first-generation immigrants were more likely to identify with a collectivistic culture, have a higher level of religiosity, and utilize obliging, compromising, integrating, and avoiding conflict management styles. However, second-generation immigrants were
more likely to identify with an individualistic culture, have a lower level of religiosity, and utilize the dominating conflict management style to manage their interpersonal conflicts.

**Binary Logistic Regression**

While chi-square analysis was utilized to analyze the data for question 1, for the remainder of the research questions, binary logistic regression was utilized. This was appropriate because the remainder of the research questions investigate whether a relationship exists between culture, gender, and level of religiosity and utilizing each individual conflict management style. Since each conflict management style is a dichotomous variable (you either utilize the conflict management style or you don’t), binary logistic regression is the appropriate statistical analysis method. This is because when the purpose of the study is to see how a set of independent variables (predictors) predicts a certain dichotomous dependent (outcome) variable, a binary logistic regression is the most applicable and suitable to be used (Pedhazur, 1997; Menard 2002). In this study, three independent variables (IDVs), including: gender, culture, and level of religiosity were each recruited to predict one categorical dependent variable (DV). Therefore, binary logistic regression was used to determine whether gender, culture, and level of religiosity predict conflict management styles.

Before discussing the binary logistic regression results, it is important to understand the assumptions of this data analysis method. Binary logistic regression has three main assumptions that should not be violated. It should be noted, however, that real world data might sometimes violate one or more of these assumptions. In this case, certain procedures are followed to overcome any individual violations in the assumptions for binary logistic regression.
The first basic assumption of binary logistic regression is that the dependent variables should be dichotomous variables or measured on a dichotomous scale (Field, 2009). For example, in this study all dependent variables are measured on a dichotomous scale as follows: gender (two groups: "males" and "females"), culture (two groups: “individualism” and “collectivisms”), and level of religiosity (two groups: “high level of religiosity” and “low level of religiosity”). Therefore, the first basic assumption was passed. The second basic assumption of binary logistic regression is that one or more independent variables should be either continuous or categorical (Field, 2009). This assumption has passed as well since gender has exactly two groups (male and female) as a categorical or nominal variable. The final basic assumption of binary logistic regression requires that there is independence of observations and the dependent variable should have mutually exclusive categories (Field, 2009). In other words, the independent variables (gender, culture, and level of religiosity) should be independent of each other, which is the case in this study. This should also be the case for the dependent variables, as is the case in this study as well.

**Question 2.** As was discussed in the introduction, question 2 investigates whether there is a predictive relationship between culture (individualism vs. collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using obliging to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first and second generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States. Binary logistic regression was appropriately utilized to analyze the data. Based on the results, only religiosity had a significant relationship ($p = 0.010$) with utilizing obliging to manage interpersonal conflicts in the workplace. The Wald value of 6.564 also confirms that the predictor of religiosity is making a significant contribution to the obliging conflict
management style. Gender (p = 0.336) and culture (p = 0.148) did not have a significant predictive relationship with utilizing obliging as a conflict management style.

Table 7.2: Binary Logistic Regression for Obliging Conflict Management Style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1a</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Exp(B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender (1)</td>
<td>-.290</td>
<td>.301</td>
<td>.927</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.336</td>
<td>.748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture (1)</td>
<td>-.493</td>
<td>.342</td>
<td>2.088</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.148</td>
<td>.610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion (1)</td>
<td>-.892</td>
<td>.348</td>
<td>6.564</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>4.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>3.610</td>
<td>.714</td>
<td>25.557</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>36.969</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Variable(s) entered on step 1: Gender, Culture, Religion.

**Question 3.** Question 3 investigates whether there is a predictive relationship between culture (individualism vs. collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using compromising to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first and second generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States. The results of the binary logistic regression found that as a group, gender, culture, and level of religiosity were predictors for utilizing the compromising conflict management style (p<0.001). However, individually, the only individual variable that had a significant predictive relationship with the compromising conflict management style was level of religiosity (p = 0.008). Gender (p = 0.530) and culture (p = 0.089) did not have a significant predictive relationship with utilizing compromising as a conflict management style.
Table 7.3: Binary Logistic Regression for Compromising Conflict Management Style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1a</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Exp(B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender (1)</td>
<td>-.188</td>
<td>.299</td>
<td>.394</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.530</td>
<td>.829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture (1)</td>
<td>-.577</td>
<td>.339</td>
<td>2.898</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.089</td>
<td>.561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion (1)</td>
<td>-.923</td>
<td>.346</td>
<td>7.114</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>3.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-.3.587</td>
<td>.708</td>
<td>25.677</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>36.125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Variable(s) entered on step 1: Gender, Culture, Religion.

Question 4. As was discussed in the introduction, question 4 investigates whether there is a predictive relationship between culture (individualism vs. collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using integrating to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first and second generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States. The results of the binary logistic regression for question 4 found that religiosity (p = 0.011) and culture (p = 0.035) had predictive relationships with utilizing integrating as a conflict management style to manage their interpersonal conflicts in the workplace. Gender (p = 0.116) had no predictive relationship however.

Table 7.4: Binary Logistic Regression for Integrating Conflict Management Style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1a</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Exp(B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender (1)</td>
<td>-.465</td>
<td>.296</td>
<td>2.471</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.116</td>
<td>.625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture (1)</td>
<td>-.701</td>
<td>.333</td>
<td>4.430</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.035</td>
<td>4.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion (1)</td>
<td>-.865</td>
<td>.339</td>
<td>6.527</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>4.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>3.997</td>
<td>.714</td>
<td>31.345</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>54.459</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Variable(s) entered on step 1: Gender, Culture, Religion.
**Question 5.** Question 5 investigates whether there is a predictive relationship between culture (individualism vs. collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using avoiding to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first and second generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States. Utilizing binary logistic regression, gender (p = 0.001) and culture (p = 0.028) were found to have a significant predictive relationship with utilizing the avoiding conflict management style to manage their interpersonal conflicts in the workplace. Religiosity (p = 0.056), on the other hand, had no significant predictive relationship with utilizing the avoiding conflict management style.

**Table 7.5: Binary Logistic Regression for Avoiding Conflict Management Style**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1a</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Exp(B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender (1)</td>
<td>-.487</td>
<td>.267</td>
<td>10.100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>4.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture (1)</td>
<td>-.683</td>
<td>.312</td>
<td>4.805</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>5.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion (1)</td>
<td>-.581</td>
<td>.304</td>
<td>3.650</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>3.123</td>
<td>.616</td>
<td>25.744</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>22.722</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Variable(s) entered on step 1: Gender, Culture, Religion.

**Question 6.** Question 5 investigates whether there is a predictive relationship between culture (individualism vs. collectivism), gender, and level of religiosity and using dominating to manage interpersonal conflict in the workplace for the first and second generation of Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States. Binary logistic regression showed that both gender (p = 0.003) and level of religiosity (p = 0.001) had a significant predictive relationship with utilizing the dominating conflict management style for managing their interpersonal conflict in the workplace. Culture (p = 0.502) had no
significant predictive relationship with utilizing dominating as a conflict management style.

**Table 7.6: Binary Logistic Regression for Dominating Conflict Management Style**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1a</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Exp(B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender (1)</td>
<td>-.835</td>
<td>.283</td>
<td>8.718</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>4.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture (1)</td>
<td>.220</td>
<td>.328</td>
<td>.450</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.502</td>
<td>1.246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion (1)</td>
<td>-1.088</td>
<td>.326</td>
<td>11.177</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>3.327</td>
<td>.661</td>
<td>25.362</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>27.860</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Variable(s) entered on step 1: Gender, Culture, Religion.*

**Phase II: Qualitative Data Analysis**

The sequential explanatory model places greater weight on the quantitative component of the study. Nonetheless, the results of the quantitative portion of the study are used to guide the qualitative phase. In this study, I focused on the results of research question 1 specifically to guide the qualitative component of the study. The first research question’s results were analyzed using the chi-square test. The first research question in this study was, what is the overall trend in conflict management style preferences between the first and the second generations in the workplace of Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States. Based on the quantitative results, the interview guide for the qualitative component of the study was modeled to explore why first-generation immigrants were more likely to identify with a collectivistic culture, have a higher level of religiosity, and utilize obliging, compromising, integrating, and avoiding conflict management styles. Similarly, questions were targeted to explore why the second-generation immigrants were more likely to identify with an individualistic culture, have a lower level of religiosity, and
were more likely to utilize the dominating conflict management style to manage their interpersonal conflicts in the workplace.

A total of 24 face-to-face semi-structured interviews were completed, recorded, and transcribed. Trends in the interviews were identified and they will guide the qualitative data analysis. After the coding process was completed, a thematic analysis was utilized based on the recommendations of Miles and Huberman (1994) to combine deductive and inductive coding. To organize each of the transcribed interviews, a simple coding system for each interview was utilized. Specifically, SGM refers to a second-generation male, and SGF refers to a second-generation female. Similarly, FGM refers to a first-generation male, and FGF refers to a first-generation female. In addition, a number following the code was utilized to identify the interview number. For example FGM12 refers to interview number 12 with a first generation male.

Culture

In phase I of the study, first-generation immigrants were more likely to identify with a collectivistic culture, whereas second-generation immigrants were more likely to identify with an individualistic culture. This trend was also identified in the interviews. Many interview participants, especially the first-generation immigrants, relayed a sensation of being homesick, and specifically missing many components of their culture back home (FGM23; FGF15; FGF6; FGM7). Most of the interview participants in this study did not use the labels of compromising, avoiding, obliging, etc. Rather, they often described one of these conflict management styles in their interviews:

*I am used to being surrounded by my family. Actually, I think this is one of the biggest things I miss back home. We used to all gather at the end of the day and talk about our work, our fun, everything. I still have some homesick inside of me*
and this causes me so much stress. I overcome it, but it’s not that easy. I don’t want to stress at work, I feel that I have to work that much harder than all of my colleagues to be recognized. When I am at work, I just don’t want to be known for being a troublemaker, so a lot of times if there is a conflict I will let things go, usually for the favor of my colleague. This satisfies my colleagues and just reduces my own stress, and I’m not identified as someone who causes trouble at work. Less trouble, less stress. (FGM21, personal communication, November 7, 2014).

In the case of this first-generation male immigrant, he seemed to have a level of stress getting used to being away from his family such that at work he settles for what appears to be an obliging conflict management style based on his description.

The acculturation struggles of some of the participants were also relayed in the interviews. The first-generation immigrants were largely faced with a bigger struggle when it came to the acculturation process.

You know, we came from a region that has values, norms, and traditions that are very different from here. I am not saying that the U.S. culture is wrong, but it’s different. We grew up there and found it very hard to fully integrated into the U.S. culture. That’s why I believe I would not use my power, position, or expertise to influence on the other party. I believe my job is my home and my coworkers and colleagues are my siblings, which in turn I should protect the relationship between them and me. So usually, when there is a problem at work, I will try to work it through with my colleagues, I compromise with them and I feel that the problems usually solve this way. (FGF17, personal communication, October 21, 2014)

Interestingly, second-generation immigrants also had a struggle. Sometimes they reported feeling pulled between their parents’ culture and the culture of their host community. One interview participant described how she feels when she is in the United States and when she visited Egypt, her parents’ home country:

Sometimes I find it hard to call a particular place home. In the United States, I sometimes feel left out at work, I’m not that social and I am very shy and that can sometimes lead to problems because my co-workers don’t see my points of view as much. I just try to avoid problems. The funny thing is when we visit Egypt, I don’t necessarily feel at home either. I feel like when my family gathers everyone is so talkative and I am just shy. Sometimes my cousins comment on the ways I do things
In this participant’s case, she more often utilized the avoiding conflict management approach. Interestingly, she was a second-generation immigrant and therefore her conflict management approach actually did not confirm the findings in the quantitative phase of the study. In phase I of the study it was found that the second-generation immigrants were more likely to use the dominating conflict management style compared to their first-generation counterparts.

Struggling to work with some of their American counterparts due to differences in culture or conflict management styles was also emphasized in one of the interviews with first generation immigrants. He stated that interaction with Americans can be “badly disappointing at times,” adding, “a win-win situation should be the ideal way to solve conflicts in the workplace, but I feel that American culture is all about every man for themselves. Why don’t we work out our conflicts in a way that everyone is happy?” (FGM7, personal communication, September 21, 2014). Actually communication between first-generation immigrants and their American colleagues was noted to be a difficult source of conflict by other participants as well, and often this was thought to be due to a lack of cultural sensitivity (FGM11, personal communication, October 2, 2014). One trend to note was that first generation immigrants often moved to areas in the United States where they knew someone or, at least, had a small community that reminded them of their friends or family back home. They searched for advice from their immigrant counterparts to help overcome struggles at home and in the workplace:

Prior of my coming to the U.S., I was not aware of anything regarding the American culture. I learned about it form movies, books, schools, and news. But I
knew this is not enough to understand their culture or live it. That’s why I stayed very cautious in the first year when dealing with Americans in my work. To be honest, I used to go back to one of my friends who had come to America few years before me. I used to work for an international organization back home and I would compromise or work with the other party to solve our conflict. However, here I try not to get involved and stay out of trouble. You know preventing a conflict better than curing it. – (FGM7, personal communication, September 21, 2014)

While almost all the interview participants relayed at least one difficult struggle when it came to their acculturation process to various differences they appreciated in American culture, the majority of the participants also relayed aspects of American culture that they enjoyed or were pleasantly surprised by. One interview participant (SGM1, personal communication, September 3, 2014) discussed how much he appreciated that Americans in public were so willing to just smile: “Back home in Jordan, most people they just don’t smile in your face if they make eye contact, actually it is considered inappropriate sometimes. But one thing I really appreciated about most Americans was that a lot of times if someone makes eye contact with me in public, they would smile. It was nice, surprising and very nice.”

Gender

The statistical analysis in phase I of the study did not show any statistical relationship between gender and the dependent variable of conflict management style utilized in the workplace. The only exceptions were the association between gender and utilization of both dominating (p = 0.003) and avoiding (p = 0.001) conflict management styles in the workplace. Nonetheless, phase II did provide valuable anecdotal data on the potential impact of gender on the conflict management styles utilized in the workplace both for first and second-generation Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States.
I am a female who sometimes sees and feels this gap between my family and me. I was born here in the United States and grew up here as well and have visited my parents’ family several times in the Middle East. Gender roles are very different from there, but I don’t mean bad things though. I believe since I work here in the United States. I handle my interpersonal conflict according to the culture I grew up in. I can’t use techniques that are used in the Middle East to solve a conflict that I have with my American colleague. Women back home don’t confront their problems the way they should. And again I don’t mean all women or bad things. I believe confronting a problem better than leave it. – (SGF10, personal communication, October 2, 2014)

This second-generation female Arab-Muslim immigrant struggled with the expectations or norms that she was taught by her family, specifically, that back home (Palestine) women don’t confront their problems directly. They are less likely to use the dominating conflict management style. On the other hand, she feels that sometimes she would like to attack a struggle in the workplace head on: “Sometimes I feel like I should just take charge at work and just make a decision in a conflict that would directly benefit my own needs.” Of course disagreement between individuals and their parents occur in any culture. However, when looking at first and second-generation immigrants, perhaps more disagreement occurs due to the wider gaps in cultural understanding based on different upbringings or differences in the country and culture they grew up in. This is also the case for differences in social norms for gender, as was reflected in the interview with this participant. Similar stories were also discussed with other second-generation female participants who discussed differences in gender expectations and how it impacted them in the workplace, how it influenced their utilization of conflict management styles, and the differences they had with their families when they discussed their workplace decisions (SGF12, SGF16).
In one interview with a first-generation male immigrant, he relayed the differences in culture that he experienced when coming to the United States, and how this played a role in his choice of conflict management style utilized in the workplace:

Well, you know that we share the same masculine culture where maleness is one of the main pillars in societies. Not putting down female’s roles. As you know, I don’t need to explain to you how female are very respected there. Our roles in our societies built upon the idea that men can do everything and can do anything, however, when I started my job here, I noticed that it is slightly different. Your female colleague could confront you and argue strongly to an extent that would be considered unacceptable for females to back home. – (FGM11, personal communication, October 2, 2014)

This participant relayed that he came from a male-dominated culture, which turned into a surprise for him in the workplace, where a female colleague confronted him and argued about specific conflicts, something that could be considered unacceptable in his country of origin. He went on to state that this surprising experience in his workplace also helped him learn to work with his female colleagues in a more compromising way to solve their interpersonal conflicts in the workplace, something that he had to adapt to here in the United States.

Level of Religiosity

Phase I established a potential association between religiosity and the conflict management style utilized by first and second-generation immigrants in the workplace. This was also reflected in the individual interviews in phase II of this study. Many interview participants believed that religion played a significant role in their daily lives, and they identified themselves as having a high level of religiosity (FGF6, FGF8, FGF9, FGF17, FGM19, and FGM24). Some interview participants who identified with a high
level of religiosity felt that their religiosity specifically played a role in how they handled interpersonal conflicts with their colleagues.

*We are Muslims who see our religion as a life system that draws the borderlines of what we should do or what we should avoid. As a woman who grew up in the Middle East in a Muslim family, I have an expected set of rules on how women should deal with people from the same gender and the opposite gender. You know… I can’t confront a male colleague and be so bold. I usually seek help from another female colleague on how to solve this problem or approach my boss, but if I know I could give to solve problem, I would do right away.* – (FGF20, personal communication, November 7, 2014).

Other interview participants talk about the struggle to mix into American culture when it allows some lifestyle choices that go against their faith. One second-generation male stated:

*My parents always emphasized on me that I should stay away from alcohol since it is prohibited in my religion. A lot of the social gatherings from my work include alcohol, and while I like to socialize with my colleagues outside of work, the drinking makes me uncomfortable, so I don’t end up going to a lot of these events. Sometimes this makes me seem a little bit weird at work, because always the next day after all the social gatherings, everyone is talking about it... I just feel more left out at work, and sometimes I don’t fit in, but I manage I guess.* – (SGM13, personal communication, October 7, 2014)

In his case, his level of religiosity raised his own expectations of himself, that he should avoid alcohol because it is prohibited. This then led to the participant’s perceived feeling of being left out at work and made him feel more uncomfortable. Certainly when someone doesn’t fit in at work as much as the others it could lead more conflicts and dilemmas in the workplace.

Interestingly, one thing that should be noted was that the majority of second-generation Arab-Muslim immigrants identified their religiosity as being less than their parents (SGM2; SGF4; SGM5; SGM14; SGF16; SGM18). This same group of participants also felt that they utilized the dominating conflict management style the most
when they were trying to solve conflicts in their workplace. One of the second generation females (SGF16) stated that she didn’t think that her religion and her work were related, which was in contrast to one of her first generation female counterparts (FGF15, personal communication, October 12, 2014) who stated “religion is a big part of my everyday life, so it really impacts everything I do. Like when I have a conflict at work I don’t just try to take advantage of my colleagues and dominate over them, I usually try to work with them to solve the problem, because for me my religion requires that.” In addition, second generation immigrants more often discussed using the dominating conflict management style to solve the interpersonal conflicts at work:

*I remember one day I had a dispute with one co-workers and I was in higher position than him. I used my position to influence his decision because I was sure his decision was not the best fit there. I know it may sounds bad to you, but no one can evaluate this situation other than me. Long story short, I went home and discussed this situation with my father, who works at the Islamic Center, and he completely looked at this situation differently. He said that, and I still remember it every time I get in a similar situation, “don’t use your power to influence others especially people who work with you, be persuasive and protect the good relationship. You don’t know what the future hiding for you.” Don’t forget how our religion requires us to be nice to others, help them and work as a team. – (SGF22, personal communication, November 11, 2014)*

In this interesting interview, the second generation female reported that she was using a more dominating conflict management style in the workplace, but that when she discussed the situation with her father, he recommended trying to be more open and flexible with her co-workers. This story is a fair reflection of the quantitative data in phase I where second-generation immigrants were found to have an association with utilizing the dominating conflict management style while the first-generation immigrant was more likely to use all the other conflict management styles. In summary, many of the findings in the qualitative
phase of the study reflected results that were found in the quantitative parts of the study, with a few exceptions and surprising results in some of the interviews. Overall the sequential explanatory model for this study allowed the qualitative results to enrich the findings in the initial phase in the study with specific intriguing experiences of both the first and second-generation Arab Muslim immigrants.
CHAPTER EIGHT: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Discussion

The main goal of this study was to explore the extent to which the conflict management styles of first and second-generation Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States are influenced by their culture, gender, and level of religiosity. The study followed a sequential explanatory model, which placed greater weight on the quantitative data, using it to help guide phase II of the study, the qualitative portion of the study. The results of this study have provided an intriguing contribution to the cross-cultural research of conflict management and organizational conflict, specifically with a focus on Arab-Muslim immigrants and their acculturation process in the United States. This chapter discusses the overall findings in phase I and phase II of the study and the implications of the independent variables as predictors of utilization of each of the following conflict management styles: obliging, compromising, integrating, avoiding, and dominating.

The Role of Culture

It should be noted that my study focused on only one perspective of analyzing culture, specifically the comparison between individualism and collectivism. Culture is by definition complex, and there are many different ways to characterize culture. In my study I chose to utilize one of Said’s perspectives on individualistic vs. collectivistic culture. This is by no means a proxy for culture generally, but it does provide a perspective on culture.

Phase I of the study found that first-generation immigrants tended to be far more collectivistic (95.9%) in their culture, when compared with only 15.2 percent of second-
generation immigrants who were found to be more collectivistic (p<0.001). Phase II similarly suggested that first-generation immigrants were more likely to identify with a collectivistic culture, whereas second-generation immigrants were more likely to identify with an individualistic culture (FGM23, FGF15, FGF6, FGM7). These findings could be attributed to a number of factors. Many first-generation immigrants come to the United States with their own thoughts on their culture, and the intention to continue to maintain it (Chen & Sheldon, 2012; Bisin & Verdier, 2000). Chen and Sheldon suggested that one explanation for this was that second-generation Arab immigrants’ parents held Arab culture collectivistic values that conflict with their children’s efforts to develop a bicultural identity that is not only based on their parents’ native collectivistic culture, but also American values of individuality and autonomy. They also argued that first-generation immigrants were more likely to identify with a sense of belonging to their ethnic minority culture, which also explains why first-generation immigrants were still more likely to identify with a collectivistic culture despite having lived in the United States for many years in some cases. Interestingly, Chen and Sheldon also argued that second-generation immigrants were more likely to view their parents as psychologically controlling, which prompted them to avoid their parent’s collectivistic influence and steer closer to the influence of the more individualistic dominant American culture. Farver et al. (2002) pointed out that ethnic minority youth from collectivistic cultures often adopt American values of individualism and autonomy, which sometimes leads to conflicts with their less assimilated parents, which also provides perspective on why first-generation immigrants were more likely to relate with collectivistic culture and second-generation immigrants were more likely to relate with individualistic cultures. Oftentimes, first-generation
immigrants still find it difficult to assimilate and integrate into the new United States culture, especially when they come in with the mentality that they want to maintain their own cultural norms.

The assimilation process for second-generation Arab-Muslim immigrants differs, however, since they are under the “direct socialization” influence of their parents as well as the “indirect socialization” influence of the United States society (Bisin & Verdier, 2000). In the face-to-face interviews, many communicated struggling between their parents’ culture and United States culture they are surrounded by. These individuals arrived to the United States before the age of five years, or were born in the United States and therefore they grew up in United States culture and oftentimes United States culture became at least part of their own identity. While it is easier for this group of immigrants to adapt to United States culture, it is still difficult to fully assimilate because of their strong ties to their parents’ native culture, and the clashes that arise within the family unit when it comes to expectations. Parents tend to design their home in a way that their native culture is preserved in their home interior design, and continue to use their Arabic language to preserve these components of their home cultures (Amor, 2006). This comports with the consensus, since the 1950s, in which scholars such as Herberg (1955), Glazier and Moynihan (1963), and Mayer (1979) have argued against the notion of complete assimilation and provided many examples contradicting this notion.

I found that first-generation Arab-Muslim immigrants tended to utilize a variety of conflict management styles (more commonly obliging, compromising, integrating, and

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7 As discussed in the introduction, for the purposes of this study, I will define first-generation immigrants as those individuals who were born outside the United States, or came to the United States before the age of five years. Second-generation immigrants will therefore be defined as those who were either born in the United States or came to the United States after the age of five years.
avoiding), while their second-generation counterparts were more likely to utilize the dominating style. Culture also had a predictive relationship with Arab-Muslim immigrants utilizing the integrating (p = 0.035) and avoiding (p = 0.028) conflict management styles to help resolve their interpersonal conflicts in the workplace. These findings in part coincide with and yet also contradict the current literature. Rahim (1992) and Triandis (1988) found in their studies that there was a significant predictive relationship between culture and conflict management styles utilized. Rahim and Bonoma (1999) also suggested that culture could be a factor that influenced individuals to choose more than one conflict management style when faced with an interpersonal conflict.

This study’s findings partially contradict findings by Lulofs and Cahn (2000) that managers from collectivistic cultures in the Middle East tended to dominate more than managers from individualistic cultures in the United States. My results do, however, support Ting-Toomey and Oetzel’s (2001) study which instead found that individuals from collectivistic culture tended to utilize obliging and compromising conflict management styles compared to those from individualistic cultures. Chua and Gudykunst (1987) found that international students from collectivistic cultures utilize less dominating than students from more individualistic cultures. Kozan (1989) supported my findings that many Arab-Muslim first generation immigrants utilize the integrating styles for solving their interpersonal conflicts. Kozan also found that American managers often prefer dominating in managing their interpersonal conflicts. Elsayed-Ekhouly (1996) also found that Arab executives use more of an integrating and avoiding conflict management style when handling their own interpersonal conflict.
My study found that Arab-Muslim first-generation immigrants were more likely to label their culture as collectivistic, and were more likely to utilize integrating, avoiding, compromising, and obliging conflict management styles. Second generation Arab-Muslim immigrants were more likely to label their culture as individualistic and were more likely to utilize dominating conflict management styles. Interestingly, Rahim (1992) found that those from individualistic cultures were more likely to utilize dominating and obliging conflict management styles. Therefore, Rahim’s findings partially coincide with my findings, in that those from individualist cultures were more likely to utilize dominating conflict management styles. On the other hand, Rahim also found that those from individualistic cultures were more likely to utilize obliging conflict management styles, which actually contradicts my findings that obliging was more likely to be utilized by first-generation Arab-Muslim and more collectivistic participants. Furthermore, Trubisky and Ting-Toomey (1991) found that collectivistic students preferred obliging and avoiding styles more than their individualistic counterparts, which also supports the findings in my study that first-generation immigrants (who tended to have a more collectivistic culture) were more likely to utilize obliging and avoiding styles. My study also found that these first-generation immigrants were more likely to adapt compromising and integrating conflict management styles.

Some plausible explanations for these findings could be based on the expectations of collectivistic cultures. First-generation immigrants that were more likely to identify their culture as collectivistic valued the needs of the group and the success of the group over the needs and success of the individual. This may explain why the first-generation immigrants were more likely to utilize a wider variety of conflict management styles and
were less likely to utilize a dominating conflict management style when compared to their more individualistic second-generation counterparts. It is noteworthy that prioritizing the needs of the group is also an Islamic notion (Ali, 1992). Second-generation Arab-Muslim immigrants have also been more influenced by the American style of individualistic culture. Phase II of the study provided intriguing results regarding the internal struggles faced by second-generation Arab-Muslim immigrants as they tried to reconcile their merging of components of their parents’ culture and the American culture they are largely immersed in.

The Role of Gender

This study explores whether there is a predictive relationship between gender and the conflict management styles utilized by Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States. While there is extensive literature that explores how gender plays a role in different conflict management styles utilized to solve interpersonal conflict, there is great inconsistency in the overall results. Therefore, my findings will support the findings in some studies and contradict those found in others. Interestingly, I found that gender did have a predictive association with utilization of avoiding (p = 0.001) and dominating (p = 0.003) conflict management styles. However, there was no predictive relationship between gender and utilization of obliging, (p = 0.336), compromising (p = 0.530) and integrating (p = 0.116) conflict management styles.

Again, my findings reinforce some of the results in the literature and contradict others. Haare and Krahe (1999) conducted a study specifically on Indonesians and Germans and found that while culture did have a significant relationship with their choice of conflict management style, gender did not have a significant role in their study. On the
other hand, my study did find a predictive relationship between gender and utilization of avoiding and dominating conflict management styles, however, it was in a different study population entirely. Brewer et al. (2002) found that males preferred using dominating styles while female participants tended to use avoidance in the majority of their interpersonal conflicts. While my study doesn’t specifically investigate which gender prefers a particular conflict management style, Brewer’s study does show that a predictive relationship exists. In addition, Mills and Chusmi (1988) also found that there was a significant relationship between gender and conflict management styles. This is partially supported by my study since such a predictive relationship was found with the utilization of avoiding and dominating conflict management styles. Although there is some literature that explored the role of gender holistically on a macro-level, outside the focus of immigration, there are still many gaps in the literature. My study expanded on the literature by incorporating gender as one of the independent variables on both a macro- and micro-level and assessed whether a relationship existed with the conflict management styles utilized by the Arab-Muslim immigrant participants. In addition, the mixed methods approach provided enriching data, because it gave an in-depth perspective of the complexities of the role of gender and how it related to the conflict management styles utilized by the participants in the study.

Phase I of the study did not show a statistically significant relationship between gender and the dependent variable of conflict management styles utilized in the workplace, with the few exceptions of dominating \( (p = 0.003) \) and avoiding \( (p = 0.001) \) conflict management styles.
One of the possible explanations for my results is that perhaps culture and religiosity play a stronger role in influencing an individual’s choice of conflict management style, as was seen in the phase I analysis. Furthermore, participants in this study live in a liberal country that asserts the importance of gender equality, which plays a role in the comfort of individual males and females to use their personal choice in conflict management styles, compared to their counterparts in the Middle East, where gender roles are quite different (Anderson & Berdahl, 2002). Another possible explanation is that males and females may be exposed to different types of conflicts, which may influence the choice of conflict management styles that they choose to utilize in those different situations (Portello & Long, 1994).

Phase II of the study provided some powerful anecdotal data on the role that gender played as participants chose specific conflict management styles in their workplace (SFG10, SGF12, SGF16, FGM11). Based on the qualitative data, it appears that it isn’t specifically the gender that influenced the conflict management styles utilized but perhaps the cultural expectations of gender that played a larger role. Specifically, patriarchy is more central to Arab-Muslim societal structure compared to United States societal structure where women have greater independence in society and perhaps have greater comfort competing with their counterparts in the workplace.

The Role of Religiosity

Although little research has been conducted to explore the relationship between religiosity and choice of conflict management styles, the studies available give a glimpse of the potential role that religiosity plays when determining conflict management styles utilized in interpersonal conflicts. My study found that religiosity had a significant
predictive relationship when it came to choosing obliging ($p = 0.010$), compromising ($p = 0.008$), integrating ($p = 0.011$), and dominating ($p = .001$) conflict management styles, but had no significant relationship with the avoiding ($p = 0.056$) conflict management style. In addition, first-generation immigrants (74.5%) tended to have greater religiosity than their second-generation immigrant (25%) counterparts ($p<0.001$). Unfortunately, there is a paucity of studies focusing on the role of religiosity in choosing specific conflict management styles. In fact, the only study I could find that investigated this specifically was by Wilson and Power (2004), which found that the level of religiosity does have a predictive relationship with the conflict management styles utilized by individuals. Therefore, since my study did find a predictive relationship with choosing obliging, compromising, integrating and dominating conflict management styles, it supports the study by Wilson and Power (2004).

Other studies investigate specific religions and their influence on conflict management styles. For example, Croucher (2011) found that there was a significant relationship between religion and conflict management styles utilized by (South Asian) Indians. Muslims in his study apparently preferred the integrating and compromising styles, while Hindus preferred the integrating and dominating styles.

Surely, additional studies are needed to truly understand the role religiosity plays on conflict management styles utilized to solve interpersonal conflicts for Arab-Muslim immigrants and others as well. It should be noted that phase II of this study did provide useful data in terms of the role of religiosity as a significant factor worthy of investigation. Many interview participants believed that religion played a significant role in their daily lives, and they identified themselves as having a high level of religiosity (FGF6, FGF8,
FGF9, FGF17, FGM19, and FGM24). Some interview participants who identified with a high level of religiosity felt that their religiosity specifically played a role in how they handled interpersonal conflicts with their colleagues. Not surprisingly, one thing that should be noted was that the majority of the second-generation Arab-Muslim immigrants identified their religiosity as being less than their parents’. This same group of participants (SGM2, SGF4, SGM5, SGM14, SGF16, SGM18) also felt that they utilized the dominating conflict management style the most when they were trying to solve conflicts in their workplace. Perhaps this goes back to the Islamic foundations that encourage prioritizing the groups’ goals, therefore, individuals with a high level of religiosity tended to use a wider variety of conflict management styles, while those with a lower level of religiosity opted for utilizing the dominating conflict management styles. Yet, it remains difficult to disambiguate this supposition from the correlation with gradual assimilation into individualistic cultural practices between first and second-generation Arab-Muslim immigrants.

**Study Limitations**

One of the main disadvantages of a mixed method approach is its time and labor-intensive nature. But it allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the research questions at hand. This is because it not only includes the more objective quantitative data, but it is also enriched by the qualitative data. Another limitation in this specific study is the risk of “backyard bias,” which is well described by Creswell (2009). Backyard bias occurs when a researcher investigates a population that he or she is a part of. Because the researcher is also Arab and Muslim and an immigrant, his own biases may impact his ability to obtain and report data objectively. Phase I of this study helps
overcome such bias because it involves well-studied scales in the survey, allowing the researcher to get unbiased objective data. The second phase of the study was also based on the quantitative results, minimizing the researcher’s bias as well. One of the main advantages of knowing the population that is studied is that the researcher knew the population’s norms. Specifically, in Islam it is unacceptable for a strange man to be seated alone with a female, as would be the case in the individual face-to-face interviews. To overcome the discomfort that could have occurred with these interviews, the researcher informed potential female interviewees that a female colleague would also be present during the interviews. This made the interviews less tense and made the interviewees more comfortable and likely to be open to discuss the questions at hand.

Another weakness in this study is the fact that it only investigates a few factors (gender, culture, and level of religiosity) and how they impact conflict management styles utilized by Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States. There are multiple other factors that would impact such a process including, but not limited to, personality type, social status, level of education, income, psychological state, age, etc. Finally, another weakness in this study is the sensitive nature of some of the data collected. Some of the data collected in the quantitative phase of the study was data that individuals would not want to broadcast to the public. Participants were therefore reassured by the fact that the surveys were kept confidential and anonymous. Anonymity in the face-to-face interviews was more difficult to provide. But interviews were conducted in neutral areas and after the interviews were conducted they were transcribed, and coded appropriately, with names left out of the data throughout the process. Unfortunately, there were three individuals who were approached for interviews but refused, because of the sensitivity of the subject. Yet
another weakness in the study is the way in which participants were pursued. In phase I of the study, the participants were contacted based on the email lists for the Islamic Centers. This approach would not include any Arab-Muslim immigrants who weren’t specifically on the email lists at the Islamic Center. Similarly, because the second phase of the study was conducted by a snowball approach, only those interview participants who were recommended were included in the study.

**Ethical Considerations**

“Ethics refers to the appropriateness of your behavior in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of your work or who are affected by it” (Saunders et al., 2009, pp. 183-184). Ethics continues to be important in social science research so it was given special consideration in this study. Multiple efforts were made in order to maintain ethical research. First, prior to the data collection, the researcher completed the Collaborative Institution Training Initiative (CITI), a training program that provided education regarding the proper procedures for ethical research. Secondly, each study participant was provided with informed consent forms (Appendix E) that were explained to each participant prior to their authorization.

Each participant’s contribution to the study was maintained confidentially and anonymously throughout the research process. All data was stored on an encrypted hard drive which was password protected on a private computer allocated to the researcher for academic purposes only. In addition, all participants were allowed to revoke their consent at any point in the study, for any reason, no questions asked. Creswell (2009) suggested that the fundamental function of ethics is to cause no harm, whether physical, mental, psychological, emotional, social, or economic to study participants. By focusing on the
ethical considerations of the study throughout the research process, the researcher avoided causing harm to the study participants throughout the study.

**Conclusion**

As members of the United States workforce, Arab-Muslim immigrants make important contributions in their fields. The American workforce has grown increasingly more heterogeneous and diverse. Of course, conflict in the workplace always exists. I found the potential differences in experiences between first and second-generation Arab-Muslim immigrants intriguing, so I focused on the general contributions that gender, culture, and level of religiosity had in influencing the conflict management styles utilized by the study participants.

In this sequential explanatory mixed method study, more weight was given to the quantitative phase compared to the qualitative phase. Nonetheless, both phase I and phase II of the study provided valuable and novel data on the ways in which culture, gender, and religiosity predict the conflict management styles utilized in the workplace by first and second-generation Arab-Muslim immigrants in the United States. I found that first-generation immigrants tended to be more collectivistic, have a higher level of religiosity, and utilize a wider variety of conflict management styles. Second-generation immigrants were more likely to have a lower level of religiosity and were more likely to utilize the dominating conflict management style to solve their interpersonal conflicts.

While this study establishes predictive relationships between gender, culture, and religiosity with at least utilization of some of the conflict management styles, further studies could be conducted to better understand these relationships. Specifically, studies
could focus on how each of these factors contributes to conflict management choices of Arab-Muslim immigrants in greater detail. Furthermore, studies could investigate how other factors could influence conflict management styles of this population group. Ultimately, additional research is needed on this subject and there is great potential for finding substantive data on the subject.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A
IRB APPROVAL FORM

8/22/2014
Jamil Al Wekhian, Student

Re: Your application dated 7/1/2014, Study #15-003: Conflict Behaviors

Dear Mr. Al Wekhian:

Your application has been reviewed by IRB members. Your study is eligible for expedited review under the FDA and DHHS (OHRP) designation of category 7 - Individual or group characteristics or behavior.

This is to confirm that your application has been approved. The protocol approved is Face to face interviews and online survey with Arab Muslim immigrants. The consent procedure described is in effect. If your survey questions change you must submit proposed changes to the IRB before proceeding. You are granted permission to conduct your study as described in your application effective immediately.

The IRB calls your attention to the following obligations as Principal Investigator of this study.
1. The study is subject to continuing review on or before 8/22/2015. At least two weeks prior to that time, go to http://www.kennesaw.edu/irb/forms/progress_report.html to submit a progress report. Progress reports not received in a timely manner will result in expiration and closure of the study.

2. Any proposed changes to the approved study must be reported and approved prior to implementation. This is accomplished through submission of a progress report along with revised consent forms and survey instruments.

3. All records relating to conducted research, including signed consent documents, must be retained for at least three years following completion of the research. You are responsible for ensuring that all records are accessible for inspection by authorized representatives as needed. Should you leave or end your professional relationship with KSU for any reason, you are responsible for providing the IRB with information regarding the housing of research records and who will maintain control over the records during this period.

4. Unanticipated problems or adverse events relating to the research must be reported promptly to the IRB. See http://www.kennesaw.edu/irb/reporting-unanticipated-problems.html for definitions and reporting guidance.

5. A final progress report should be provided to the IRB at the closure of the study. Contact the IRB at irb@kennesaw.edu or at (678) 797-2268 if you have any questions or require further information.

Sincerely,

Christine Ziegler, Ph.D.
KSU Institutional Review Board Chair

cc: jbenjam2@kennesaw.edu
APPENDIX B
INTRODUCTION EMAIL

Dear Members of the Islamic Community,

Thank you to everyone who provided their emails today to participate in my anonymous survey. I really appreciate everyone's participation. The link below is an online survey for my Ph.D. dissertation research. I will be doing a comparative study between the first and the second generations of Arab-Muslim Immigrants in the U.S. on how their culture, level of religiosity, and gender impact the way they handle their interpersonal conflicts in the workplace. The survey takes anywhere between 10-30 minutes, although for some people it took even less time. It begins with a consent form and then at the bottom right there are arrows to help click through. Thank you for everyone who is participating.

Best
Jamil Al Wekhian
Ph.D. Candidate in International Conflict Management Kennesaw State University
ABD at the University of Missouri-Columbia

Survey link:

http://cp.mcafee.com/d/k-Kr4zqb2ardXFK9XCQnAknxOrNJ5V55VVASrhuhhu79CzASCOMqehOr3xKhkD7VkJn0Drw09JowjJM04S_W3G2r3_nV6XXPX_nKnjpiLObPzP2vbnhIyyGzt_BgY-F6lK1FI4SyrLOb2rPUV5xcQsCXCOsVHkiP2LMxZdctqGf2PuDPzaRenMo6f930q7730p5v3Wxsqh6NM3R70e75FCN7jP7Biswkl-4fFFzLgrdlI9zz0Kogid40Kogid4099X0Gq82RmPh0Xm9EwmScVmAJJVg8Cy2k3h0Gmd456UCvb6y4S-vroabPBlvRT6m

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APPENDIX C
ONLINE SURVEY

What is your gender?
   a. Female
   b. Male

How old are you? ______

Were you born in the U.S.?
   a. Yes
   b. No

If not born in the U.S., what is your country of origin and at what age did you come to the U.S.?
Country of origin ______
Age when you came to the U.S. ______

How long have you been residing in the U.S.? ______

What is your household income?
   a. Less than $29,999
   b. $30,000 to $49,999
   c. $50,000 to $99,999
   d. $100,000 to $149,999
   e. $150,000 or greater

What is your highest level of education?
   a. Less than High School
   b. High School/GED
   c. Some College
   d. Associate’s degree
   e. Bachelor’s degree
   f. Master’s degree
   g. Doctoral Degree

What is your marital status?
   a. Single
   b. Married
   c. Widowed
   d. Divorced
   e. Separated

If married, what is the country of origin of your spouse? ______

What is your Islamic sect?
   a. Sunni
   b. Shiite
   c. Other

Section 1: Culture Scale
All of us belong to different cultures, where our values, language, traditions and norms are shaped. Please read the following statements and rate how much you agree or disagree with the statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would not let my cousin(s) use my car (if I have one)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>It is enjoyable to meet and talk with my neighbors regularly</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would not discuss newly acquired knowledge with my parents</td>
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<tr>
<td>It is not appropriate for a colleague to ask me for money</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would not let my neighbors borrow things from me or my family</td>
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<tr>
<td>When deciding what kind of education to have, I would pay no attention to my uncles’ advice</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would not share my ideas with my parents</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would help, within my means, if a relative told me that he/she is in financial difficulty</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am not interested in knowing what my neighbors are really like</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neighbors should greet each other when we come across each other</td>
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<tr>
<td>A person ought to help a colleague at work who has financial problems</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Section 2: Conflict Management Styles Scale

Think of how you typically manage your interpersonal conflict in your workplace. Please read the following statements and rate how much you agree or disagree with the statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I generally try to satisfy the needs of my peers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I usually accommodate the wishes of my peers</td>
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<tr>
<td>I give in to the wishes of my peers</td>
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<tr>
<td>I sometimes bend over backwards to accommodate the desires of my peers</td>
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<tr>
<td>I often go along with the suggestions of my peers</td>
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<tr>
<td>I try to satisfy the expectations of my peers</td>
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<tr>
<td>I try to work out a compromise that gives both of us some of what we want</td>
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<tr>
<td>I try to find a middle course or compromise to resolve an impasse</td>
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<tr>
<td>I bargain with my peer so that a middle ground can be reached</td>
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<tr>
<td>I sometimes take a moderate position so that a compromise can be reached</td>
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<tr>
<td>I usually propose a middle ground for breaking deadlocks</td>
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<tr>
<td>I negotiate with my peers so that a compromise can be reached</td>
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<tr>
<td>I try to give and take so that a compromise can be made</td>
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<tr>
<td>I try to work with my peers to find solutions that satisfy our expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>I exchange information with my peers to solve a problem together</td>
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<tr>
<td>I try to bring all our concerns out in the open so that the issues can be resolved in the best possible way</td>
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<tr>
<td>I collaborate with my peers to come up with decisions acceptable to use</td>
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<tr>
<td>I try to work with my peers for a proper understanding of a problem</td>
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<tr>
<td>I usually avoid open discussions of differences with my peers</td>
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<tr>
<td>I try to stay away from disagreement with my peers</td>
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<tr>
<td>I avoid conflict situations with my peers</td>
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<tr>
<td>I try to keep my disagreement with my peers to myself to avoid hard feelings</td>
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<tr>
<td>I try to avoid unpleasant exchanges with my peers</td>
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<tr>
<td>I keep disagreements with my peers to myself to prevent disrupting our relationship</td>
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<tr>
<td>I exert pressure on my peer to make decisions in my favor</td>
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<tr>
<td>I use my influence to get my ideas accepted</td>
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<tr>
<td>I use my authority to get decisions made in my favor</td>
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<tr>
<td>I use my expertise to make others decide in my favor</td>
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<tr>
<td>I sometimes use my power to win a competitive situation</td>
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</table>
Section 3: *Level of Religiosity Scale*

In this country, people try to be attached to their religions; however, level of religiosity differs from one to another. The following statements ask about how religious you are. Please read the following statements and rate how often you agree or disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often do you think about religious issues?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God or something divine allows for an intervention in your life?</td>
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<td>How often do you take part in religious services?</td>
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<td>How often do you pray?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God or something divine lets something be communicated or revealed to you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How often do you keep yourself informed about religious questions through radio, television, internet, newspapers, or books?</td>
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<td>How often do you pray spontaneously when inspired by daily situations?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God or something divine is present?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How interested are you in learning more about religious topics?</td>
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<tr>
<td>To what extent do you believe that God or something divine exists?</td>
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<tr>
<td>To what extent do you believe in an afterlife – e.g. immortality of the soul, resurrection of the dead or reincarnation?</td>
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<tr>
<td>In your opinion, how probable is it that a higher power really exists?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How important is it for you to be connected to a religious community?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How important is personal prayer for you?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>How important is to take part in religious services?</td>
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</table>
APPENDIX D
INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Can you tell me about your overall experiences as an immigrant in the United States?

2. How long have you resided in the United States?

3. Have you faced any interpersonal conflicts in your workplace? If so, can you describe some of the conflicts you have faced? Have these conflicts been a source of stress? How have you addressed these conflicts? What strategies do you utilize to overcome conflicts in your workplace?

4. Do you think these conflicts differed depending on the gender of your coworker? Do you have more conflicts with males or females? Why do you think that is?

5. Have there been any barriers to your religious practices in your workplace? If so, do you think these barriers contributed to conflict in your workplace? Please elaborate.

6. What do you think is the major cause of interpersonal conflict in the workplace?

7. What factors influence your approach to resolving interpersonal conflict in the workplace?

8. Do you feel like you fit in with your American coworkers? Have you had any conflicts associated with social encounters? If so, can you tell me in more detail about those encounters and the struggles that you faced? How did these encounters impact future social interactions, if at all? How do you think that your social encounters with Americans have changed since you first came to the United States? Can you describe these changes in more detail?

9. How comfortable are you with communicating in English with your American coworkers and teachers? Do you have any struggles with your English fluency? If so, how have these language struggles impacted your ability to communicate with others? How has your comfort with communicating in English changed since you came to the United States?

10. How do you experience adjusting to the American culture? Can you tell me if there are aspects of the American culture that were difficult to adjust to? Are there any aspects of the American culture that you don’t understand? Can you tell me some more about that?

11. How satisfied are you with your social relations in the workplace?
Title of Research Study:
Conflict Behaviors: Religiosity, Culture, and Gender as Predictors for Conflict Management Styles Among First and Second Generation Arab Muslim Immigrants in the United

Researcher's Contact Information:
Jamil Al Wekhian
(330) 881-9084
jalwekhi@kennesaw.edu

Introduction
You are being invited to take part in a research study conducted by Jamil Al Wekhian of Kennesaw State University. Before you decide to participate in this study, you should read this form and ask questions about anything that you do not understand.

Description of Project
The overall research question in my study is: Can culture, gender, and religiosity predict conflict management styles utilized in the workplace by first and second generation Arab-Muslim immigrants in the U.S.? I will conduct this study as a mixed methods approach utilizing quantitative and qualitative methods to maximize the strength of the data obtained. I will begin by sending 450 online surveys and completing data analysis for this quantitative component of the study. The final component will follow the quantitative data analysis and will consist of 24 face-to-face interviews, which focus mainly on the first question of my study to gain an in-depth knowledge about my findings.

Explanation of Procedures
Participants are asked to take part in answering this survey, which, tries to measure how culture, level of religiosity, and gender impact conflict management styles among the first and the second generation of the Arab-Muslim immigrants in the U.S. workplace

Time Required
Your participation in this study will take approximately 30 minutes to 45 minutes.

Risks or Discomforts
No risk anticipated.

Benefits
You will not gain any direct benefits from participating in this study except for your contributions to academic research
Compensation
There is no compensation for your involvement in the study.

Confidentiality
Participant privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study. Participants will not be identified by their name in any publications unless they wish. Surveys and interview transcripts will not be identified by name, and will only be seen by the researcher, who will also treat the material as confidential. Media files will be kept in a secure file on the researcher’s computer provided by Kennesaw State University. This computer is used for academic purposes only. The media files will be destroyed one year after project completion.

Inclusion Criteria for Participation
You must be 18 years of age or older to participate in this study who works either part-time or full-time. Also, this study is also directly investigating Arab-Muslim first and second-generation immigrants in this study, so this is our target population.

Use of Online Survey
Data collected online will be handled in anonymous manner and Internet Protocol addresses will not be collected by the survey program.

Research at Kennesaw State University that involves human participants is carried out under the oversight of an Institutional Review Board. Questions or problems regarding these activities should be addressed to the Institutional Review Board, Kennesaw State University, 1000 Chastain Road, #0112, Kennesaw, GA 30144-5591, (678) 797-2268.

PLEASE PRINT A COPY OF THIS CONSENT DOCUMENT FOR YOUR RECORDS, OR IF YOU DO NOT HAVE PRINT CAPABILITIES, YOU MAY CONTACT THE RESEARCHER TO OBTAIN A COPY

☐ I agree and give my consent to participate in this research project. I understand that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw my consent at any time without penalty.

☐ I do not agree to participate and will be excluded from the remainder of the questions.