Co-navigating the U.S. Educational System: A Multiple Case Study of the Social and Academic Pressures Experienced By Iranian Immigrant Parents and Their 1.5-Generation Immigrant Children

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CO-NAVIGATING THE U.S. EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY OF
THE SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC PRESSURES EXPERIENCED BY IRANIAN IMMIGRANT
PARENTS AND THEIR 1.5-GENERATION IMMIGRANT CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

A Multiple Case Study of the Social and Academic Pressures Experienced by Iranian Immigrant Parents and Their 1.5-Generation Immigrant Children

By

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The United States of America is a complex, diverse nation, and the number of immigrant families grows daily. Since parents and family play central roles in their children’s future and academic achievements, the purpose of this study is to examine how immigrant parents navigate their children’s education in the United States. The goal of this research is to amplify the voices of immigrant families while informing policymakers and individuals about the racial issues and barriers that immigrant families face in society and school, and about how this affects their parenting and their children’s academic performance. This research aims to reduce teachers’ negative views about immigrant families and improve cultural practices that teachers implement in classrooms. Furthermore, this study recommend that policymakers, teachers, and school staff pay attention to the value of parental involvement of diverse groups in order to understand the cultural and lingual tenets and expectations of all students, including immigrants.

This research focused on eight Iranian immigrant parents who arrived in the U.S. with at least one child between 6-12 years old at the time of arrival in the U.S. (1.5-generation child). Consistent with the multiple case study methodology, this study comprised two phases. In the first phase, which included pre-interview sessions, participants answered demographic identity questions to determine their backgrounds, and their socioeconomic and academic status before and after moving to the U.S. Then, in the second phase, participants answered interview questions regarding their identity development and their relationships with their children, as well
as the strategies they used in parenting after moving to the United States.

In order to fully understand how these immigrant parents develop their identities and navigate their children’s education in the U.S., this study aims to answer one primary and three ancillary research questions: how do immigrant parents develop their identities to navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States; how do society and school contexts impact immigrant parents’ identity development and their interactions with their 1.5-generation children; what strategies do immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children develop and use to counter the negative effects of sociocultural pressures in the United States; how do immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children develop positive or negative perspectives regarding the educational settings in the United States?

Analyzing participants’ pre-interviews in phase one revealed three stages of their lives as immigrants including pre-immigration, the decision and process of immigration, and post-immigration. Four major themes were constructed from analyzing transcribed data including illusion confusion, and diffusion; close-knit relationships; resilience and endurance; and innovated identity and negotiation. In order to discuss the findings of this study, Critical Race Theory (CRT) and six components of cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) were re-examined and restructured into the study’s findings and themes. This study found that racism and neoliberalism in society and school influence Iranian immigrant parents’ identity development and the ways they navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the U.S. The findings of this study show that Iranian immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children use different strategies, such as close-knit relationships and resilience to accomplish their social and academic goals in the U.S.

*Keywords:* Immigrants’ barriers, immigrants’ identity development, parents of 1.5-generation children, immigrants’ parental involvement, immigrant education in the U.S.
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, my husband, and my daughters, whose love and support helped me smile through challenges and made this journey worthwhile. They are the owners of my heart and the motive behind my completion of this degree.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT........................................................................................................................................... iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ....................................................................................................................... v
DEDICATION........................................................................................................................................ vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS .......................................................................................................................... vii
LIST OF TABLES .................................................................................................................................. xi
LIST OF FIGURES ................................................................................................................................. xii
CHAPTER ONE: RATIONALE ............................................................................................................... 1
  Introduction....................................................................................................................................... 1
  Problem Statement............................................................................................................................ 3
  Personal Connection to the Study .................................................................................................... 6
  Self-Discovery Through Professional Discovery ......................................................................... 9
  Statement of Purpose ..................................................................................................................... 10
  Research Questions ....................................................................................................................... 12
  Operational Definitions Relative to the Key Topic Literature .................................................... 12
    1.5-Generation Children .............................................................................................................. 13
    Identity ......................................................................................................................................... 13
  Conceptual Framework and Related Topic Literature ................................................................. 14
    Racism through the lens of Critical Race Theory ..................................................................... 15
  Topic Rationale ............................................................................................................................... 16
    Neoliberalism as a New Game of Racism .................................................................................. 16
    Neoliberalism and Education .................................................................................................... 18
    Negotiation of Identities in Dreamland ..................................................................................... 19
    Communication, Innovation and Diffusion ............................................................................... 20
  A Brief Overview of Case Study Methodology ............................................................................ 21
  Scope, Significance, and Delimitations ......................................................................................... 22
    Assumptions ............................................................................................................................... 23
    Limitations .................................................................................................................................. 24
    Significance ................................................................................................................................. 24
  Transition Statement and Chapter Summary .............................................................................. 25
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW ......................................................................................... 26
  Introduction ...................................................................................................................................... 26
  Finding Relevant Literature .......................................................................................................... 26
  History, Culture, and Education .................................................................................................... 28
Whose Culture is at the Top? ................................................................. 30
Community Cultural Wealth ............................................................... 32
    Forms of Capital .............................................................................. 32
Cultural Model as a Main Factor ........................................................... 34
Funds of Knowledge ........................................................................... 35
    Households’ Funds of Knowledge ..................................................... 36
    Teachers’ Funds of Knowledge ......................................................... 37
Parental Involvement ......................................................................... 38
    Disconnect in Definition .................................................................. 39
Similar Barriers and Opposite Strategies .............................................. 40
    Acculturation Without Assimilation ............................................... 42
Negative and Positive Resistance ........................................................ 43
Racially Forbidden Colors ................................................................. 44
    Race, Anglicization, and Americanization ........................................ 45
Immigrants, Identity, and Education .................................................... 47
    Identity Development of Immigrants .............................................. 48
    The 1.5 Generation: Who They Are, and What We See .................. 49
    1.5-Generation Identity .................................................................. 50
    Alternating Between Two Worlds ................................................... 51
    The Identity of Immigrant Parents .................................................. 52
Filling the Gaps ................................................................................. 53
    Shifting Between Two Cultures and Languages .............................. 54
Summary of Chapter Two .................................................................. 56
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY ..................................................... 58
Introduction ......................................................................................... 58
Restatement of the Purpose ................................................................. 58
Restatement of the Research Questions .............................................. 60
Approach to the Study ....................................................................... 60
    Qualitative Approach as a Way to Bridge Applications to Actions ...... 62
Other Foundational Elements ............................................................. 63
Research and the Role of the Researcher .............................................. 66
    Study Design: Assembling the Puzzle ............................................. 69
Methodology ....................................................................................... 69
Review of the Data Collection Process ................................................. 70
    Culture, Politics, and Data Collection .............................................. 71
    Setting ............................................................................................ 72
    Rationale of Participant Sampling ................................................... 74
Review of Data Sources and Research Timeline .................................... 76
Discussion

1.5-generation children’s identity development.
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Sample table created for participants’ responses..............................82
Table 2: Research Timeline.................................................................84
Table 3: The relationships between research questions and relevant themes.........177
Table 4: Participants’ identity demographic data ............................................185
Table 5: 1.5-generation children’s identity demographic data............................190
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Foundational elements of this qualitative research……………………………………………………66
Figure 2: The role of the researcher as insider………………………………………………………………68
Figure 3: Three stages of each Iranian Immigrant parents’ life……………………………………..97
Figure 4: Illusion, confusion, and diffusion……………………………………………………………195
Figure 5: Iranian 1.5-generation children’s pressures for learning English …………………….199
Figure 6: Adaptation and identity: communication, diffusion and innovation………………….213
Figure 7: The alternation between two worlds of home and school in the U.S. ……………….215
Figure 8. The process of Iranian 1.5-generation children’s identity development…………….216
Figure 9. The process of Iranian immigrant parents’ identity development……………………220
Figure 10: Negotiation between Iranian immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children..223
CHAPTER ONE: RATIONALE

“Dominator culture has tried to keep us all afraid, to make us choose safety instead of risk, sameness instead of diversity. Moving through that fear, finding out what connects us, reveling in our differences; this is the process that brings us closer, that gives us a world of shared values, of meaningful community.”


Introduction

Immigration is not a new phenomenon, and it is a prominent everyday experience within the United States. Immigrants from other countries around the world come to the United States of America with the dream of freedom and a better life, while they bring a multitude of cultures and languages tied to their identities (Nieto, 2000). Newcomers often tolerate a high-stakes process of shifting their identities and fighting for social acceptance (Nieto, 1999). The children of those immigrants (i.e., the 1.5-generation) struggle with language barriers lack of communication, and poor academic performance when confronting the U.S. educational system. Rumbaut (2004) defines 1.5-generation children as those immigrant children who were born in other countries, and who migrated to the U.S. when they were between six and twelve years old. Impelling immigrant students into the melting pot, schools impart skills and knowledge to newcomers in a high-risk process (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Nieto, 1999; Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Unfortunately, in that process, students of color, including 1.5-generation children who are racially placed at the bottom of the pot, burn with the flame of segregation.

Immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children often undergo a process of re-developing their identities, which goes unnoticed and unacknowledged. Researchers recently focused on immigrant students’ identities and how their identities develop based on their
communication, needs, and barriers (Ackermann, 2001; Awokoya, 2012; Nieto, 1999; Rumbaut, 2004). Since immigrant parents’ identities are fundamental to the way that they support their children, it is also important to pay attention to the process of their identity development and the barriers they face in the new land. Most immigrant parents experience socioeconomic and academic barriers and develop the new form of identities to adapt to the new environment in the U.S. Immigrant parents’ identity development is vital in negotiating with their children and navigating their educational system in the U.S. Most immigrant parents, who recognize their children’s struggles, develop their identities in a way that facilitates the process of negotiation with their children in order to navigate their social and academic success.

During the last few decades, given the reality of increasing numbers of immigrant families and their children (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013), researchers have examined the importance of minority parental involvement at school and the barriers that immigrant parents face in society and school (Gonzalez et al., 1995; Moll & González, 2004; Nieto, 2004; Yosso, 2005). Phelan, Davidson, and Cao (1991) state that family, school, and peers are initial arenas where students construct and negotiate their realities, adapting from one setting to another while their transitions among these arenas vary widely. Further, they describe these arenas as three worlds and note that students form different perceptions from each of these worlds. Immigrant parents have essential roles in students’ interactions at home and school. Although immigrants’ parental involvement has been the topic of educational research in the last decades (Banks & Banks, 2004), researchers have not yet adequately analyzed immigrant parents’ identity construction. Many unanswered questions remain, such as how, why, and to what extent immigrant parents use different strategies to be involved in their children’s academic success.
This chapter draws the rationale for a study of the identity development of immigrant parents and how that process influences the academic outcomes of their 1.5-generation children within the U.S. educational system. The assumption of this study is that academic performance of 1.5-generation children is directly and indirectly influenced by racism and neoliberalism, which are historically constructed in society and schools. Under that assumption, this study strives to encourage individuals in society and schools to move through fear to choose diversity over homogeneity and sameness. In so doing, they can live in a meaningful community and attain shared values similar to what bell hooks refers to in Pedagogy of Hope (2003).

**Problem Statement**

This research began with an interest in a problem rooted in the inequalities of our society, a society that needs information to make changes (Spradley, 1979). Records of the U.S. Census Bureau (2013) indicate that more than 41 million foreign-born represent 13.1% of the total population in the United States. The population of foreign-born immigrants increased 32% between 2000 and 2013. According to U.S. Census Bureau (2013), the immigrants’ geographic origins shifted from European countries (74% in 1970) to other countries, such as Latin America and Asia (45.9% and 25.6%, in 2013).

Research also shows that the number of minority students including immigrant children is growing faster than other children population groups in the United States (Banks & Banks, 2009), underscoring the urgent need to make education work for them. According to Ogbu (1998), social economic status of minority groups including newcomers impacts their children’s social and academic performances. The author believes that providing equality for diverse groups in society and schools results decreasing gap between minority and majority groups and children’s performances.
The problem that most immigrant students have in American society and schools is how to adapt themselves with dominant groups’ culture and language. Immigrant students come to school with different cultures, languages, and values, which are different from dominant groups’ values and expectations. Accordingly, Yosso (2005) explains that CRT (critical race theory) focuses on the unrecognized abilities, skills, and knowledge, which Students of Color bring with them to schools. CRT also explains how cultural, economic, and social capital of dominant groups results in limited access of minority groups to acquiring and learning strategies to use these forms of capital for social mobility. In this regard, Nieto (1999) explains that the social and academic futures of children are the major components of immigrants’ American dream while their experiences often do not match their expectations. The fact is that language is not only for interaction, but is also essential for building and expressing cultural certainties (Spradley, 1979). Conflict in culture and language can significantly impede communication between majority groups and immigrants in the United States, thus it effects the formation of adapted identities.

One serious consequence of the academic achievement gaps between majority and minority groups is that monolingual and monocultural policymakers and teachers blame immigrant students for being unwilling to learn English, and blame their parents for not caring about their children’s education and academic success. In this regard, Spradley (1979) explains the fact of “translation competence,” which means “the ability to translate the meaning of one culture into a form that is appropriate to another culture” (p. 19). In addition, one-size-fits-all curricula in schools disregards the knowledge, skills, ability and talents those bicultural and bilingual immigrant children bring with them to American schools. The goal of this intentional ignorance is forcing immigrant students to fully adopt American culture and language and assimilate into the American melting pot.
The voices and experiences of newcomers and their children “have been kept strangely quiet and very few of us know or even acknowledge [them]” (Nieto, 1992, as cited in Nieto, 2000, p. 334). Researchers argue that immigrants’ experiences with social, economic, and educational inequality are rooted in race and racism, which is the prevailing characteristic of American history (Banks & Banks, 2004; Nieto, 1999). According to Mayo (2003), increasing academic gaps between newcomers and majority groups in the educational system are rooted in structurally oppressive social relations between these groups.

Accordingly, multicultural education scholars acknowledge significant interest in inviting individuals to think about their basic human and educational rights in order to understand how cultural and ethnic boundaries create social and academic inequalities in society and school (Banks & Banks 2004; Nieto, 2004). Power and privilege are at the heart of academic gaps in the United States. This provides an important framework for rethinking unequal resources, which influence the 1.5-generation’s academic failure or success. As Crawford (1999) asserts, while immigrant students are living in the present, the policy of monolingual language in schools is preparing them for future globalization, and ignore immigrants’ background knowledge and skills.

At the same time, majority groups including teachers and peers in American society and schools do not welcome diverse cultures. Dominant groups ignore immigrants’ culture, language, knowledge and skills, and neoliberalism plays a formative role in negative attitudes regarding newcomers’ abilities and capacities. Neoliberalism, as a new contour of racism significantly affects immigrants’ experiences and the barriers they face in the U.S. Since the lived experiences of immigrant families are viewed as less valuable for research, immigrants’ parental involvement is not defined adequately.
According to Nieto (1999), the apparent strengths of knowledge and skills on the part of immigrant children and their families are converted to deficits in American society and academic institutions. In this regard, Awokoya (2012) explains that in American schools, teachers often have limited understanding and knowledge with minority groups and their cultural values, and the teaching is based on White dominant groups. Consequently, immigrant students and their parents are considered as one of the main problems in the American educational system. What is needed is a fundamental shift in society and schools’ deficit thinking about immigrant parents and their children in order to reduce the achievement gaps across student populations. Identifying immigrant parents’ perspectives and the strategies that they use in their parenting to help their children navigate the educational system is fundamental in this study.

**Personal Connection to the Study**

During several months after arriving as an immigrant to the United States, I realized that my American dream was out of sync with the reality of living here. In addition to the social and economic issues that I experienced in society, such as cultural and language conflicts, and difficulties finding a job, my children’s poor academic performance was a major issue in my dreamland, and I was unsure how to navigate all these barriers. My children’s culture, language, and background were not welcome by their teachers and peers, and I was witness to discriminatory behaviors that they faced in school frequently.

Human beings are storytellers (Stronach & Piper, 2004), and the chapters of my life’s book as an immigrant parent are full of stories and scenarios that my children have shared with me about their challenges as immigrant students. I still remember my older child’s experiences as a newcomer who was so excited to meet students and teachers for the first time in the U.S. She was in sixth grade at the time we arrived in the United States. As she explained, in the first
moments of her arrival at school, she recognized that her skin color and the way she dressed were different from the other students. After she was directed to her classroom, she noticed that the other students pointed at her to mark her as a new arrival. Her teacher and a few students tried to talk to her, but she was unable to understand even one word. She told me that she never forgot the strange feeling that was a combination of excitement and anxiety, hidden behind her silence. While her teacher started to teach in English, she was unable to comprehend anything, and she stressed all day about how to ask for water or the restroom. During lunchtime, when she unwrapped the lunch that I packed for her, she noted other students’ faces and their negative emotional reactions. At the end of the school day, the teacher reviewed the lessons she had taught and the homework that the students were supposed to do, but my daughter did not understand even one word.

Despite my hopes and expectations as her parent, her grades were the lowest in the class because she was not able to understand the material. Her teachers complained that she was not paying attention while they were teaching, and instead she was drawing pictures or talking to other students. When I asked the reason for not paying attention in class, my daughter replied that she was not able to understand what the teacher said in English, so she did other activities to fill the time in the classroom. Her teachers also blamed her for not being responsible for doing homework and not studying what she learned in school; her situation was getting continuously worse. Like other parents, I wanted the best education for my children, but I did not know how I could handle this issue or who could help me solve this problem. Lack of English proficiency and not being familiar with school systems in the United States were the two main reasons that I was unable to communicate with her teachers as they expected, while they believed I did not care about her education. Obviously, my children were not the first or the last immigrant students
who experienced this miserable situation, and this scenario plays out every day for immigrant students in the American schools; however, such problems go unacknowledged by teachers and policymakers.

According to Spradley (1979), when people move from one culture to another in complex societies, they engage different cultural rules. He argues that our schools have their own cultural systems, and individuals see things differently even within the same institution. He also states, “our culture has imposed on us a myth about our complex society, the myth of the melting pot” (Spradley, 1979, p.12). As a bilingual and bicultural immigrant parent of 1.5-generation children, I witnessed my children’s challenges and struggles in the U.S. schools’ melting pot. As I shared my experiences about my children’s academic challenges with other Iranian immigrant parents, I noticed that most Iranian immigrant parents were undergoing the same process in different ways with various consequences for their children’s education.

As Awokoya (2012) states, different socioeconomic and academic factors, such as school, peers, and family, play important roles in 1.5-generation students’ educational outcomes. However, in spite of the barriers that I faced as an immigrant parent in the United States, my professional and personal experiences also directed me to study the social and educational issues of immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation students. Reading various literatures about immigrant families in the U.S., such as studies about immigrant students and their parents, guided me to recognize the gap in other literature regarding the role of immigrant parents in their children’s education. Specifically, there is less attention paid by researchers as to how immigrant parents develop their own identities in order to navigate their children’s education in the American dreamland. My own experience, knowledge, and true passion for this topic can be
recognized from my intersectional identity as an immigrant parent and the inference of my interests in creating and designing this research.

**Self-Discovery Through Professional Discovery**

Reading the literature regarding barriers facing immigrants in social and educational settings was similar to reviewing different chapters of my life as an immigrant parent. Reviewing and comparing different research and critical studies about the barriers faced by immigrant children and their families in the U.S. clarified for me the different stages of unconscious identity development that I went through during the years after I migrated to the United States. I was so involved in overcoming the barriers I encountered that I was unable to recognize how my identity changed during that time. I realized that immigrant parents go through processes similar to those of immigrant students to adapt their identities, but this goes unnoticed. This encouraged me to study more to enhance my knowledge about culture, identity, and immigrant families in the U.S. Recent research indicates the importance of immigrant students’ identity development in the U.S. (Awokoya, 2012), while less or no attention is being paid to immigrant parents’ identity development and to their roles in 1.5-generation children’s education.

As I was developing my professional knowledge and experiences through different courses and by reviewing the literature about immigrant families, I recognized many commonalities between my experiences and those of other immigrant parents; while, simultaneously, I identified gaps in the literature. Sometimes, noting the similarities between the social and educational barriers faced by me and other immigrants was emotionally disturbing, but it gave me the feeling that I was on the right path for my research. Improving my academic knowledge helped me understand and discover more about myself, and as a result, guided me to personal and professional development and to greater confidence in my assumptions for this
study. Although scholars separately discuss the identity construction of 1.5-generation students and immigrant parental involvement at school, the gap in the research is the failure to look at immigrant parents’ identity development in relation to their interactions with their children based on their constructed identities. The process of negotiation between constructed identities of both immigrant children and their parents is unaddressed in the literature although it plays an important role in immigrants’ educational experiences.

Throughout my personal and professional learning process about immigrants’ lives and struggles, I increasingly understood the difference between who we are as immigrants and how dominant groups see us as aliens. My personal experiences as an immigrant helped me to understand immigrants’ issues directly from an insider’s perspective, while my professional knowledge helped me to view the common issues that all immigrants face in the United States from an outsider’s perspective. This combination of theory and practice assisted me in considering the gaps in the literature about the role of immigrant parents in their children’s social and academic performances and informed the assumptions of this research. This study particularly aimed to understand recent Iranian immigrants’ social and academic experiences and the barriers they face in society and school. This research investigated the process of immigrant parents’ identity development, which I call “identity innovation,” among Iranian immigrant parents and its impact on their 1.5-generation children’s educational outcomes.

**Statement of Purpose**

Understanding and analyzing the social and academic experiences and barriers that immigrant parents and their children face in the United States was the general context for this study. Specifically, this research explained how immigrant parents of 1.5-generation children develop their identity after they migrate to the United States. The goal was to explain the barriers
that immigrant parents experience in the United States, to learn how they develop their identity, and to understand better to what extent society and school contexts influence their perspectives and interactions with their 1.5-generation students. Finally, this research aimed to identify the strategies that immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation students use to overcome these social and academic barriers they face when navigating their educational experience in the United States.

This study used a multiple case study approach while it focused on Critical Race Theory (CRT) as its framework. It also examined the role of socially constructed neoliberalism and racism in society and the educational system, and their influence on minority groups, such as immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation students. This study comprised two phases, including pre-interview and interview sessions as data-gathering techniques. Participants included eight Iranian immigrant parents who were recruited at Iranian cultural events; they met with the researcher for the pre-interview and interview sessions in a public place chosen by participants.

This research was advocacy oriented with the aim of political and ideological motivation for society and institutions. The goal of the researcher for completing this study was to expose and push back against the oppression and barriers faced by immigrant families in society and school that influence their 1.5-generation children and their social and academic experiences. The advocacy component of this research strived to determine the origins of these barriers as well as the current negative perspectives and discrimination against immigrant families, seeking solutions to racism, oppression and stereotyped biases. As Freire (2000) emphasizes, individuals’ self-consciousness of both oppressors and oppressed groups are essential to changing society. This research aimed to inform parents regarding the impact of factors potentially affecting their identity development and their interactions with their children. It also intended to raise the level
of consciousness of immigrants and dominant groups in order to eliminate social and academic barriers that immigrant students and their parents face in society and school. This study sought the development of attitudes, knowledge, and skills that can improve educators’ approaches towards diversity in the classroom, helping to ensure academic success for diverse students.

**Research Questions**

Based on the intended purposes of the study, the researcher designed four research questions including one primary and three ancillary questions, which guided the process of this research. The primary question was: How do immigrant parents develop their identities to navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States? Three ancillary questions were: 1) How do society and school contexts impact immigrant parents’ identity development and their interactions with their 1.5-generation children? 2) What strategies do immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children develop and use to counter the negative effects of sociocultural pressures in the United States? 3) How do immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation students develop positive or negative perspectives regarding the educational settings in the United States? The core of research questions was based on Critical Race Theory (CRT), which was the conceptual framework in this study. Answering these questions allowed the researcher to partially fill the gap in literature regarding immigrant parents’ identity development and its influence on 1.5-generation children’s education. More detailed discussion is offered in chapter three.

**Operational Definitions Relative to the Key Topic Literature**

In this section, two operational definitions are discussed that were of particular significance to the key topic literature focused on in this study. These definitions pertain to the concepts of 1.5-generation youth and identity formation.
1.5-Generation Children

The literature holds different definitions for 1.5-generation. For example, some researchers define 1.5-generation children as those immigrant children who migrated with their parents to the United States before they reach twelve years (Awokoya, 2012). In general, foreign-born immigrants’ children who arrive to the U.S. as children (under the age eighteen) are labeled as the 1.5-generation. As Rumbaut (2004) describes, those immigrant children who come in the U.S. before they reach six years old are labeled as the 1.75-generation; those children who come to the U.S. during middle childhood (ages 6-12) are known as the 1.5-generation; and those who arrive before they reach 17 years old (ages 13-17) are labeled as the 1.25-generation. Various elements, such as children’s age, social environments, the legal status, and socioeconomic status of immigrant families in their countries of origin and in the U.S., and different reasons that they migrated to the United States play important roles in the 1.5-generation’s children’s lives and futures. These factors also contribute to the evolution of identities and to the social mobility of immigrant parents as well as their 1.5-generation children. Regardless of newcomers’ knowledge, skills, and needs, a one-size-fits-all model is a common educational experience for different categories including immigrant students (Ladson Billings, 1998; Nieto, 2004).

Identity

Identity is defined differently in a variety of areas as a fundamental tool for understanding people individually or in groups, and different possible approaches exist to making sense of the concept. Sociologists and psychologists have used different definitions of identity. As Gee (2000) explains, focusing on identity helps researchers to understand the context of society and school. He explains that individuals’ interactions in different contexts are
distinguished by others as a “kind of person” or some “different kinds”. At the same time, this kind of person can behave differently from context to context or moment to moment. Gee further emphasizes that in a diverse society such as the U.S., with the existence of “new capitalism,” we can view identity in four ways including: 1) Nature identity (N-Identity), i.e., “we are what we are primarily because of our nature”; 2) Institution identity (I-Identity), which suggests “we are what we are primarily because of our position in society”; 3) Discourse identity (D-Identity), which posits that “we are what we are because of our accomplishments as they are interactionally recognized by others”; and finally, 4) Affinity identity (A-Identity), which means “we are what we are because of the experiences we have had within certain sorts of affinity groups” (p.101).

These forms of identity are interrelated, and this classification guides us to focus on various ways that identities might form or be constructed in different societies. A person can be a combination of identities or move from one to another in different times and different spaces. These definitions and categories of identity can be used as an analytic lens in research about individuals’ behavior in society and schools, while it helps us to understand how immigrants’ identities develop unconsciously and how they can be flexible depending on the contexts. Identity development of immigrant parents and its impact on 1.5-generation students will be discussed in great detail in further chapters.

**Conceptual Framework and Related Topic Literature**

Increasing diversity and the changing demographics of immigrants in the last decades spurred recent research that evolved around linguistic diversity and newcomer’s status. Citing Delgado (1995), Ladson-Billings (1998) asserts that CRT developed during the 1970s to discuss racial gaps in society and schools. As Delgado and Stefancic (2012) describe, CRT originated
after the Civil Rights Movement when some legal scholars acknowledged that many aspects of racism returned.

**Racism through the lens of Critical Race Theory**

Delgado and Stefancic (2012) pointed to a number of doctrines of Critical Race Theory. The authors argued that CRT explains how segregation and racism are ever-present and pervasive in the social system, perpetuated by whites’ domination of rules and laws affecting people of color. Scholars have suggested social thought and relations as variables that directly and indirectly manipulate race and racism in the educational system (Banks & Banks 2004; Ladson Billings, 1998; Nieto, 2004). They agree that dominant groups often intentionally ignore the origins, history, and intersectional identities of minority groups. CRT reveals how a variety of factors affect the behavioral and academic outcomes of minority groups, such as immigrant students in society and schools. Critical Race Theory also emphasizes the importance of minority groups’ voices and storytelling regarding their experiences and history of oppression in the U.S. (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012).

In a parallel study regarding CRT, Gloria Ladson-Billings (2004) critiques contemporary aspects of the U.S. educational system, such as school and school funding, curriculum and instruction, and assessments practices. According to Gloria (2004), Swartz (1992) critiques the curriculum for presenting the “white, upper-class male [voice] as the standard knowledge students need to know” (p. 341). Instead of using critical pedagogy and critical thinking, which involves students in instruction, one-way pedagogy is racialized and selective in schools (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Nieto, 2000). Assessment policies and one-size-fits-all curricula pose greater challenges for students with diverse background and lower English proficiency.
Topic Rationale

In this section, the rationale for the topic of this study is discussed relative to three key concerns regarding to neoliberalism. These concerns are explicated under general headings of neoliberalism relative to racism, education, and immigrants’ identities. Neoliberalism is a new form of racism, which focuses on free trade of the cultural, social, and economic practices of minority groups, including immigrants with the aim of globalization.

Neoliberalism as a New Game of Racism

Racism is rooted in American society and institutions. While minority groups beat the drum for the Civil Rights Movement in the 1970s, capitalists imported the idea of neoliberalism to empower racism. As Chomsky (1999) explains, the original purpose and meaning of neoliberalism changed after its emergence in the United States. The aim of neoliberalism in Latin America, such as Chile, was independence from foreign countries, but in the United States the goal of neoliberalism was eliminating state control and privileging private sectors over public interests. In this regard, Mayo (2003) highlights neoliberalism as the latest form of global capitalism. Neoliberalism means the modern form of liberalism, which centers on free markets, and the idea of neoliberalism was imported to the West and the U.S. under the mask of economic development. Unfortunately, majority and minority groups are forced to believe that they “have no choice but to adapt both [their] hopes and abilities to the new global market” (Aronowitz, 1998, p. 7, as cited in Giroux & Giroux, 2006). As Suarez-Orozco (2001) states, the rubric of globalization is based on cultural, social, and economic change. Neoliberalism serves as a new tool of racism and social injustice to desegregate cultures and languages (Lee, 2012). The ambition of neoliberalism is the free trade of the values and cultures of the working class while benefiting the rich and upper class by ignoring minority immigrants’ knowledge and skills. The
question is: who pays for this trade? Minority groups such as immigrant families are the victims of free trade and neoliberalism while their voices are hidden behind their oppression (Lee, Menkart, & Okazawa-Rey, 1997).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2013), more than 65% of newcomers in the U.S. live in poverty. Racially and economically marginalized groups, such as immigrants, experience the pressure of extremely stratified social, economic, and educational relationships, which adversely impacts their children’s lives. The negative consequences of neoliberalism, such as poorly paid jobs without insurance and the disappearance of work opportunities, increase the poverty of minority groups including newcomers. Many private companies offer part-time jobs in order to cut insurance benefits for their employees. Numerous private companies have sent jobs and business to undeveloped countries, where labor is cheaper, and use those countries simultaneously as producers and consumers. Sending jobs to undeveloped countries instead of creating local jobs increases unemployment and poverty, especially for minority groups and immigrants.

Free trade not only does not improve the economic status of the working class, but actually works in the opposite way. For example, Anglo merchant standards of evaluating knowledge and skills force educated and expert immigrants to accept inadequate jobs regardless of their previous professions. Interestingly, when educated immigrants propose their knowledge and skills to apply for jobs, companies and factories often deny and reject their applications with the excuse of overqualified applicants. Ignoring the knowledge and skills of immigrant groups results in newcomers’ poverty and low socioeconomic status, which in turn jeopardizes their children’s (the 1.5-generation’s) lives and success.
Neoliberalism and Education

According to Mayo (2003), increasing academic gaps between newcomers and the dominant groups in the educational system are rooted in structurally oppressive social relations between these groups. Giroux (2013) defines neoliberalism as the most dangerous ideology in this century, while it represents different kinds of free trade in society and schooling. For example, immigrant parents and their children are forced to trade their values, beliefs, cultures, and languages in order to fit into American culture. Since the Civil Rights Movement, minority groups’ health, education, and future well-being have been controlled by neoliberalism and the global economy. According to Mayo (2003), “it is the neoliberal ideology that underlies much of the discourse concerning education in this day and age” (p.39).

White monolingual and mono-cultural curriculum, instruction, and assessments result in immigrant students’ low performance. As Sonia Nieto states in her book, *Affirming Diversity*, “institutional discrimination generally refers to how people are excluded or deprived of rights or opportunities as a result of normal operations of the institutions” (Nieto, 2004, p. 37). She explains that, whether this exclusion is intentional or unintentional, it has negative outcomes. Scholars believe that exclusion of minority groups is not new in the educational system, and is in fact built into American history (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Nieto, 1999).

Sonia Nieto (2004) explains that the one-way direction of mono-cultural and monolingual schools’ environments is designed to train students of color to fit into future markets. Instead of meaningful learning in schools, students of color, such as 1.5-generation students, are jostled into the melting pot mainstream classroom to be prepared for and assimilate into American culture and language (Nieto, 1999). Regardless of minority students’ needs and barriers, the same layered-model of management in business is used in the educational system in order to control
curriculum, instruction and assessment (Lee, 2012). The goal of these functions is creating the commodity of good workers instead of training knowledgeable individuals.

**Negotiation of Identities in Dreamland**

The ways that immigrants join American society and schools are different based on their backgrounds, perspectives, and their trust of white majority groups. Immigrants’ education has long been a major issue in the American educational system, especially during the last decades (Banks & Banks 2004; Nieto, 2004). In response, the educational performance of 1.5-generation students in the last decades has received public and scholarly attention. Scholars provide evidence that socioeconomic and demographic circumstances influence 1.5-generation students’ performances (Cohen, 1982; Hogan, 1978; Morawska 1985; Olneck, 1995). Among the various factors that influence the 1.5-generation’s outcomes, their families, culture, and language play crucial roles in children’s academic performances and behaviors. It is also important to consider the factor of parental origins when analyzing children’s cultures and languages, especially in the American educational system. Historically, parental origins have had no place in the social and educational system except to serve the prejudging of students’ social and academic outcomes by dominant groups. For example, the question regarding parental origins removed from the long-form questionnaire of the U.S. Census Bureau between mid-1970s to mid-1990s (Rumbaut, 2004).

Dennis, Phinney, and Chuateco (2005) assert the important role of parents in students’ academic motivation and outcomes. Some immigrant parents are eager to learn the English language and adapt to American culture, while others try to hold onto their own cultures and languages. Whether the process of culture and language shifting is voluntary or forced, it impacts the identity construction of immigrant parents and their children (Nieto, 2000). The 1.5-
generation and their parents develop their identities in different ways. In the last decades, scholars and researchers focused on how the identities of 1.5-generation and their parents have shifted (Ackerman, 2001; Rumbaut, 2004). According to Awokoya (2012), immigrant students’ multiple identities develop based on their environments and ideologies. The negotiation between immigrant parents’ and their children’s developed identities is an unnoticed process, which is nevertheless essential in navigating the education of 1.5-generation students.

While some studies explore the identity development of immigrant students, less attention is given to exploring whether immigrant parents’ interactions with their children influence 1.5-generation student outcomes. Richer empirical work is needed to investigate how immigrant parents, within the same ethnic group, navigate their children’s education and why they use different strategies regarding the 1.5-generation’s schooling. This study aimed to explore the social and academic pressures on immigrants and how the identity development of immigrant parents impacts their children’s cultural and linguistic diffusion without full assimilation.

Communication, Innovation and Diffusion

The way that individuals communicate with others is based on their identities. According to Rogers (2010), “communication is a process in which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding.” Rogers describes innovation as “an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adaptation” (2010, p. 11). Diffusion is a unique form of communication, and it means “the process by which an individual is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system” (p. 5-6). Different degrees of uncertainty are involved in diffusion, and time is an essential factor in this process. Individuals face innovation in different ways based
on their backgrounds and socioeconomic situations; consequently, they have positive or negative attitudes towards innovation, which result in accepting or rejecting the innovation. Then, they form their attitudes about innovation (accept or reject) through practice and evaluate the results of the innovation. The speed of this process is different based on individuals’ backgrounds and experiences (Rogers, 2010).

**A Brief Overview of Case Study Methodology**

Due to the nature of the research questions being asked, this is a qualitative study using a multiple case study designs along with other qualitative research elements, such as constructivist philosophy, epistemological perspectives, social justice theory, and transformative theoretical framework. Since the core research questions strove to investigate the identity development of immigrant parents and its influence on their children’s academic performances in the U.S., Critical Race Theory (CRT) was used as its main framework. Consistent with multiple case study methods, this study used pre-interviews and interviews for data collection. Data sources for this study provided a greater opportunity to understand the interpretations and experiences of participants in various situations as immigrant parents of 1.5-generation children in the U.S. This study attained to classify themes in order to answer the research questions and understand the new patterns of racism in the U.S. society and schools. It is anticipated that this study will guide improvements in teacher preparation, and reduce negative perspectives about immigrant parents and 1.5-genration students. Ideally, such knowledge might also reduce the academic gaps between majority and immigrant students.

Being a member of the same community as the participants in this research, the researcher is familiar with the participants’ culture, language, and values. As Creswell (2005) states, a multiple case study methodology is an appropriate approach to explore the participants’
realities and points of view regarding social issues. A multiple case study methodology allowed the researcher of this study to explore the socioeconomic and academic barriers that immigrants face, as well as behavioral issues that are historically rooted in racism and neoliberalism. Focusing on Iranian immigrant parents and their involvement in the educational system, the characteristics of this research included nonrandom sample selection, naturalistic settings, and rich descriptions of participants’ perspectives (Babchuck & Badiee, 2010). Using this approach also allowed the researcher to address explanatory questions (how and why) and/or descriptive questions (what) in an interview protocol, collecting data in natural settings (Yin, 2011). These questions facilitated the researcher to explore to what extent parental involvement influences Iranian children’s social and academic performances, how Iranian parents navigate their children’s learning, and why Iranian parents use different strategies of parental involvement and have different attitudes regarding education in the U.S.

**Scope, Significance, and Delimitations**

Great effort is aimed toward increasing student’s success in the United States. While majority and minority groups are demanding a better education for students, policymakers and teachers ignore the barriers that immigrants face in society and schools and their needs in the educational system. This research expected to provide a broader understanding of the impacts of immigrant parents on their 1.5-generation children’s learning preferences and education in the United States.

A limited body of research exists about the role of immigrant families and the ways they navigate their children’s education. Policymakers, teachers, and dominant groups are looking at immigrants as problem in society and schools, and have negative views regarding immigrant parents and their children. Recently, education researchers have given more thought to the
socioeconomic and academic situations of immigrant families in the U.S. while multicultural education scholars have identified major barriers that minority groups such as immigrants face in society and schools. However, there still remains limited empirical research about immigrant parents and their impacts on 1.5-generation children’s performances in the United States.

Assumptions

Several assumptions were fundamental in this research. First, this study assumed that, as Nieto (2004) states, in spite of the shift in demographic origins of immigrants from Europe to Latin and Asian countries, the one-size-fits-all American standards are still aligned with European norms and values. This results in social and academic barriers for immigrant families, which have been socially constructed in American history. The second assumption was based on Critical Race Theory (CRT), which was used as the framework for this study. The major assumption was that the contexts in which U.S. society and schools operate are largely shaped by a specific version of neoliberalism, which is a new form of racism. Neoliberalism partakes of newcomers’ skills and background knowledge, in trade for their beliefs, values and cultures in a high-stakes process to prepare them for future globalization (Giroux, 2013).

It was also assumed that the deficit thinking paradigm held by dominant groups, teachers, and policymakers, immigrant parents use different strategies to be involved in their children’s social and academic performance (Moll & González, 2004). In addition, immigrant parents and their 1.5-gentration children go through different processes of identity development to find a balance between home and dominant cultures after they move to the U.S. Finally, this study suggests that the process of negotiation between immigrant parents’ and their 1.5-genration children’s identities is crucial to the way that they handle social and academic issues and navigate 1.5-generation academic performance in the United States.
**Limitations**

Like other studies, several possible limitations that aligned with this research. First, this study focused on experiences of Iranian immigrant parents, and the findings of this study might be different for future research that also focuses on different ethnic or identity characteristics, therefore; its result may not be generalizable to populations or groups with different intersectional identities. Second, participants’ gender may have considered as an issue because this study focused on data collected from eight Iranian immigrant mothers of 1.5-generation children and gender of participants may be considered as limitation of this study. Finally, since the researcher of this study is an Iranian immigrant parent of 1.5-generation children, another probable limitation of this research may be the perception of the researcher as an insider. Since the researcher is from the same community as participants, that may bias the researcher’s perspectives on data collection and interpretation.

**Significance**

As previously discussed, the number of immigrant students is growing exponentially in the United States, and many studies report persistent educational achievement gaps between majority and immigrant groups. Parents and family play essential roles in the lives of all children. This study specifically intended to examine how immigrant parents influence their children’s social and academic performance, exploring the negotiation between immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children in navigating their academic challenges in America’s educational system. While many educational researchers have focused on parental involvement in their children’s learning and academic performances (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001), very few researchers have examined the importance of immigrant parental involvement in 1.5-generation students’ academic outcomes. Likewise, researchers have paid less attention to adequately
analyzing immigrant parents’ identity development and how, why, and to what extent they might use different strategies to be involved in 1.5-generation students’ academic outcomes. However, this study aimed to augment the research in this area, while seeking to explain other socioeconomic variables that might influence immigrant parental involvement and how they navigate 1.5-generation’s academic performance in the American educational system.

**Transition Statement and Chapter Summary**

Chapter one served as the introduction to and rationale for this research, while it provided details regarding the conceptual framework, problem statement, the purpose, and related operational definitions of the study. It also outlined the researcher’s professional and personal role as insider and outsider in this study. Finally, this chapter concluded with underlying assumptions, potential limitations, and the significance of this proposed study. As mentioned, the aim of this qualitative research was to interrupt socially constructed racism in U.S. society and schools, while it explained the process of negotiation between immigrant parents’ and their children’s identities as well as its impact on 1.5-generation academic performance.

Chapter one also summarized CRT as a conceptual framework suitable for understanding the process of identity development of immigrant parents and its influence on their interaction with 1.5-generation children. It suggested that this interaction is influenced by the negotiation between their respective identities in order to navigate the U.S. educational system. Using Critical Race Theory, this research intended to explain how dominant groups’ and teachers’ negative perceptions about immigrant parents and their children influence 1.5-generation students’ outcomes. The next chapter outlines and reviews various theoretical and empirical literature related to the purpose of this study.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The first chapter of this study introduced the foundation of and rationale for this research. It also provided a conceptual and theoretical foundation for a multiple case study examining immigrant families’ experiences and how they impact 1.5-generation children’s academic outcomes. It offered insights on immigrants’ personal and professional connections to social and educational experiences and difficulties that influence the strategies they might use to navigate their children’s education in the U.S. More specifically, it covered operational definitions, summarized Critical Race Theory as the study’s conceptual framework, justified a case study methodology, and identified the study’s potential assumptions, limitations, and significance.

In an extensive search using Google Scholar and peer reviewed journals, the literature review for this study validated the significance of the study by identifying gaps in the literature considering the importance and power of immigrants’ parental involvement in their 1.5-generation children’s education. Chapter three, which focuses on the methodological approach, as well as the informed consent process, ethical and moral considerations, participants’ recruitment, and the limitations of this study will follow this chapter.

Finding Relevant Literature

A thorough investigation of empirical and theoretical research relevant to the topic of this study found very few articles addressing the role of immigrant parents in their children’s academic performance in the U.S. From a search of scholarly literature and educational databases regarding “immigrants in the United States”, thousands of articles were retrieved, but many were not relevant to the purpose of this research. This led me to refine database searches using several key terms in the following areas: “racism”, “immigrants’ education”,

26
“acculturation”, “assimilation”, “parental involvement”, and “identity”. Most articles did not consider the role of immigrant parents in 1.5-generation children’s social and academic performance, and only a small number of articles were found regarding immigrant students’ identities. While some research exists on identity development of immigrant students, it appears that there is a gap in the research regarding immigrant parents’ identity development and the negotiation between newcomers and their children in order to navigate American educational system. Accordingly, to increase the body of applicable literature, I extended the scope of the literature search to include related subjects such as, “immigrant families in the U.S.”, “immigrants’ barriers in the U.S.”, and “immigrant children in the U.S.”.

Subsequently, using the UNLV (University of Las Vegas, Nevada) library website, I used ERIC (a database of scholarly journal articles, book chapters, and reports) and Education Full Text (a database housing full text journal articles in education), as the main resources to find scholarly peer-reviewed articles. In addition, I used Refworks, which is a web-based bibliography software package (provided by the university’s library), which enabled me to organize my research articles and categorize the bibliography with appropriate citations. This software helped me to import and store the references from Google Scholar and other data sources and include citations while writing the literature review.

Through a vast online investigation in the field of education via ERIC, nearly 20,000 search results emerged with the initial keyword search phrase “immigrants in the United States”. Since many articles appeared which were unrelated to the topic of this research, I chose the option of “Advanced Search” to add and select other fields relevant to the topic of this study. I added other phrases and words, such as “education”, “cultural differences”, and “academic barriers” in order to limit sources, and as a result, more than 700 articles emerged. Then, the
articles that were most relevant to the topic of this study were chosen. Subsequently, organizing and reviewing the remaining articles helped me identify three additional themes in the literature: “cultural wealth,” “funds of knowledge,” and “parental involvement.” Identifying these themes assisted me in developing a wider scope of articles to expand the review of literature, as well as a richer understanding of the significance of this study.

**History, Culture, and Education**

Variability from person to person and the social, cultural, and linguistic differences of individuals are not new concepts in psychology and anthropology. Cultural-historical psychology extends back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and there are numerous theories and approaches regarding how individuals’ social and cultural differences impact their behaviors and learning. For example, Vygotsky’s cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) and socio-cultural perspectives theory indicate that learning has historical and social origins, and is mediated by culture and its products (Jenlink, 2013). These theories describe settings surrounding individuals and how socio-cultural factors impact their behaviors and performance.

Relatedly, Ogbu and Simons (1998) acknowledge the cultural model by focusing on socio-cultural dynamics as the main factors that affect minority students’ success or failure. The authors explain how the elements of environment and ecology (as setting) and culture (as the way individuals see the world around them) impact minority groups’ behaviors and responses to their environments. The authors assert that socio-cultural discrimination and community forces (the pressure of host and native communities) are the main reasons for minorities’ lower performance. Ogbu and Simons (1998) emphasize that genetic and cultural differences do not influence students’ performance, i.e., no one does better at school because of inherent linguistic, genetic, or cultural superiority. As the authors explain, in order to understand the reason behind
the differences, one has to know several facts about these marginalized groups: minority groups’ historical experiences, their incorporation into the U.S., and how societal forces impact their performance in schools (Ogbu and Simons, 1998). Nevertheless, the authors conclude that different minority groups have different social and academic attitudes, behaviors, and performances.

In another study, Ogbu (1991) emphasizes that the way minority groups in the United States view the world is different depending on their origins and historical experiences. He divides minority groups into voluntary and involuntary groups. Involuntary groups are those individuals who have been enslaved, oppressed, or colonized in the U.S., such as African Americans, Native Americans, and Mexican Americans. On the other hand, voluntary groups or immigrants are those who willingly moved to their dreamland for better opportunities, and despite their experiences of subordination, they have positive perceptions of white dominant groups in the United States.

Involuntary groups tend to distrust white dominant groups and school personnel who control societal institutions. Relatedly, Ogbu (1989) asserts that involuntary groups perceive their social identity as oppositional and develop corresponding beliefs and practices, such as particular ways of speaking or communicating. Involuntary minority groups identify problems and barriers differently, and they often show their opposition towards majority groups by resisting social and academic goals. Both types of minority groups, voluntary and involuntary, are facing different forms of undocumented prejudice and discrimination by dominant groups.

As a specific example, Ogbu (2008) explored how nine Black women constructed their academic and social identities by choosing “Black achievement ideologies.” The participants used positive resistance strategies based on transforming “the burden of acting white” into the
“honor of being Black” (Ogbu, 2008, p.212). The findings of this research signify that assimilation is not the only way to achieve in society and school, nor does resistance always lead to failure of minority groups.

**Whose Culture is at the Top?**

The United States’ population reflects diversity and a large number of immigrants in the last decades. Recently, the geographic origins of the newcomers in the U.S. have changed from Europeans to other races, such as Latinos (45.9%) and Asians (25.6%) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). The social and academic gaps between majority and minority students in the U.S. have led researchers to investigate the roots of social and academic issues. Researchers have long understood that the increasing gaps between majority and minority groups have serious consequences, such as higher rates of school dropouts, crime, and incarceration for students of color (Banks & Banks, 2004; Nieto, 2004). In the last decades, Critical Race Theory (CRT) has shifted the stance of research from a shortfall interpretation of the cultural poverty and disadvantages of minority groups to a perspective focusing on the under-utilization of their assets of knowledge, skills, and abilities (Yosso, 2005).

Solorzano (1997) spotlights several themes of Critical Race Theory that form its central framework for research on racism, such as the centrality and intersectionalities of race and racism and commitment to social justice. The author also emphasizes the importance of the interdisciplinary perspectives, the centrality of experiential knowledge, and the challenge to dominant ideology. Focusing on different forms of racism, Solorzano describes the racial stereotype of people of color, and the ways in which their knowledge and existences are ignored by dominant groups. DuBois (1989) explains, “the problem of the 20th century is the problem of color-line,” meaning the asserted superiority of one race over another (p. 29, as cited in
Solorzano, 1997). The color-line and color-blindness are also the main social and academic issues of the 21st century, areas that continue to be based on racial deficit thinking regarding minority groups and people of color.

In addressing the academic color-line, the knowledge of dominant groups is deemed as capital value in the U.S., and as a result, those who are born in a subordinate class should learn the dominant knowledge through schooling (Yosso, 2005). Moreover, dominant groups and teachers believe that students of color come to school without standard cultural and lingual knowledge and skills and that their parents neither support nor value their children’s academic success. As Yosso (2005) states, policy makers believe it is the schools’ responsibility “to fill up supposedly passive students with forms of cultural knowledge deemed valuable by a dominant society… and that students, parents and community need to change to conform to this already effective and equitable system” (Yosso, 2005, p. 75). Regardless of all the socio-academic barriers they face, such deficit thinking perspectives persist in blaming minority groups such as immigrant students and their families for their poor social and academic performance.

Deficit thinking is often hidden within social policies and practices in the educational system. According to Solorzano (1997), the theoretical foundation of deficit thinking comes from two traditions: cultural deficit models and genetic determinism. The cultural deficit model argues that the cultural values that are conveyed through minority families are dysfunctional, and this is the main reason for lower social and academic performance. According to genetic determinism, the low performance of minority students can be attributed to deficiencies in minority groups’ genetic structure (Solorzano, 1997).

On the other hand, different kinds of racial stereotypes, such as public racial stereotypes (e.g., media) and professional racial stereotypes (e.g., unequal treatment of students and literature
which perpetuates stereotypes) are obvious and undeniable examples of racial biases in American society and institutions (Solorzano, 1997). Accordingly, some authors assert that “at a highest level of educational policy, we have moved from deficiency theory to theory of difference, back to deficiency theory” (Kretovics and Nussel, 1994, p. x). As a result, monocultural policymakers ignore the culture and backgrounds of minority students, utilize a one-size-fits-all policy and ignore the diversity of children in American school.

**Community Cultural Wealth**

For better understanding of community cultural wealth, Tara Yosso develops a broad explanation of culture and cultural capital. She explains that “culture refers to behaviors and values that are learned, shared and exhibited by a group of people… for example, with Students of Color, culture is frequently represented symbolically through language and [also] can encompass identities around immigration status” (Yosso, 2005, p. 75-76). Considering the work of Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), Yosso explains, “cultural capital refers to an accumulation of cultural knowledge, skills, and abilities possessed and inherited by a privileged group in society” (p. 76). The power of the dominant group is a key to accessing these capitals. Therefore, some communities, such as white dominant groups, are culturally wealthy, and their knowledge and skills are valued in society, while the culture and knowledge of other communities are not valuable (Yosso, 2005).

**Forms of Capital**

The combination of deficit thinking and racial stereotyping at school contributes to marginalized students’ failures. Different factors inside and outside of school influence minority students’ social and academic performance. Relatedly, Yosso (2005) defines six forms of capital that overlap one another and result in minority students’ outcomes and behaviors: (a) *aspiration*
capital, which refers to dreams and hopes for their future; (b) linguistic capital, which discusses communication experiences and individuals’ intellectual and social skills in additional language; (c) familial capital, which means understanding background culture, memory, history, and intuition nurtured among family and native community; (d) social capital, which includes network communication and group resources such as friends and other community contacts that offer influential and emotional support; (e) navigational capital, which includes abilities and skills to maneuver through institutions (especially community and inner resources, social aptitudes, and individuals’ cultural competences, which permit minority students to survive and achieve); and (f) resistant capital, which means the skills and knowledge fostered by their oppositional performance which confronts inequity and inequality (Yosso, 2005). Opposing genetic determinist and cultural deficit models, Yosso (2005) notes that different kinds of capital impact the behaviors and outcomes of bilingual and bicultural students.

Drawing on Yosso’s cultural wealth model, it seems clear that the way the 1.5-generation view the world is based on their cultural models, which means the hopes and dreams that minority groups maintain despite of the barriers they face in society and schools. The 1.5-generation’s funds of knowledge, such as their background knowledge, intellectual abilities and skills in their native language, their background and memories, and their community resources and social contacts are the essential keys to their learning. On the other hand, the 1.5-generations’ families are important factors in shaping students’ identities, abilities, and skills to overcome barriers, survive, and succeed. Immigrant parents use different strategies and parenting styles in order to balance their community cultural wealth with dominant cultural wealth. In the fact of deficit thinking regarding immigrants’ parental involvement, immigrant parents desire the best education for their children; therefore, they use different strategies in order to support their
children’s academic and social achievements. Under these circumstances, one may find the influence of three concepts—cultural models, funds of knowledge, and parental involvement—in immigrant students’ behaviors and performance.

**Cultural Model as a Main Factor**

Ogbu (1998) addresses the conceptual framework of the cultural model for studying variability in minorities’ school performance. He focuses on differences in the responses of minority groups, rooted in their understanding of the universe and their physical, social, and economic environments. Drawing on Ogbu’s work on voluntary and involuntary groups, understanding immigrants’ cultural models and views allows a wider interpretation of why some 1.5-generation students do well in society and school, while others do not. The way that immigrant families view socioeconomic barriers varies between groups, and consequently, their responses to society and school, are based on these perspectives and their (dis) trust of dominant groups.

Ogbu (1991) argues that the cultural model provides the framework for an individual’s interpretation of educational situations and experiences, guiding their behavior in the school context. According to Bohannan (1957, as cited in Ogbu, 1991), there is no right or wrong cultural model. Cultural modeling is a framework, which focuses on individual differences as resources to empower students whose culture and language are devalued in society and classrooms. Two similar studies by Rumberger and Larson (1998) and Akom (2003) offer powerful support for the importance of the cultural model as a major tool in understanding diverse students and their behaviors. Rumberger and Larson (1998) emphasize the mobility of voluntary minority students. The findings of this study indicate that three factors, including positive attitudes, rigid morals, and self-determination, can influence minority students’
achievements. In this regard, Akom (2003) emphasizes the impact of the social environment on involuntary minority students, specifically the relationships between cultural identity, social mobility, and academic achievements.

The standard in the United States is that bilingual students face the need to become fluent in English, and they should learn English as fast as possible. Rumberger and Larson (1998) state that learning English for bilingual students is the essential key to occupation in American society and schools. Those who live in poverty and with limited resources to become proficient in English have less chance of success. The authors emphasize that those bilingual students who are fluent in English have higher academic achievement than those students who are limited in English proficiency or even those from English-only backgrounds. The cultural values and knowledge of bilingual and bicultural minority groups including immigrant students are essential in their learning, and it is necessary to focus on how to use minority students’ previous knowledge in teaching and learning.

**Funds of Knowledge**

Wolf (1966) presented the term “funds” regarding the relationship between knowledge and social networks, and the notion of “funds of knowledge” developed in the literature in 1992, introduced by Velez-Ibanez and Greenber (as cited in Rios-Aguilar et al., 2011). It seems likely that this term was used for analyzing Latinx families and discussing capital regarding minority groups and lower socioeconomic households. Rios-Aguilar and colleagues (2011) discuss the relationship between different forms of capital and funds of knowledge to explore issues regarding the power of dominant group in society and schools. The authors also examine if and how funds of knowledge and different concepts of capital complement each other within the educational setting.
Households’ Funds of Knowledge

Unlike traditional research, which studies students and their parents based either on funds of knowledge or particular forms of capital, Rios-Aguilar et al. (2011) combine both approaches to explore power and inequity in the educational setting. The authors explain that all individuals have cultural capital even if the cultural capital of marginalized groups is unnoticed. The authors examine Latinx funds of knowledge and their background skills from cultural, lingual, and social capital perspective for better understanding of students’ opportunities, experiences, and outcomes. Then they explain the strength of funds of knowledge, which highlight and value the resources surrounding students and their families, and utilize their skills and abilities. Finally, the authors encourage future researchers to study how children and their families know how to navigate and switch between forms of capital and funds of knowledge in various situations.

In an anthropological qualitative study of Mexican households, Moll, Amanti, Neff and Gonzalez (1992) highlight the notion of funds of knowledge, which draws upon the background knowledge and skills of the local working-class. Central to this study was visiting low-income Mexican households in order to document families’ social and labor history and their productive activities. The research was based on teacher-researcher collaborations involving observations and interviews of twenty-five Latinx households. The authors emphasize the cultural and intellectual resources of households and the community, which are helpful for classroom practices. Funds of knowledge and skills that are beneficial for the well-being of households may include farming, construction, business, and finance.

Researchers in this study explored how family members used different kinds of social networks in order to develop their knowledge and skills. The authors assert teachers’ understandings of children and their parents developed during their observations. For example,
one of the teachers (DN) explained, “one of the things that we learned about the Lopezes that we
didn’t know before was the depth of the multicultural experience their son Carlos had in cross-
border activities. It wasn’t just a superficial experience for him” (Moll, et. al., 1992, p.136). In
this research, teachers visited the households in the role of learners. Finally, DN emphasized, “it
is so important to learn how culture is expressed in students’ lives, how students live in their
worlds. We can’t make assumptions about these things” (Moll, et al., 1992, p.137). Minority
students’ social networks, including their families and community resources outside the
classroom, help them become active learners.

In a similar study using home visits, Gonzalez and colleagues explain that frequent use of
the term “disadvantaged” has led to lowered expectations for minority students and their families
(Gonzalez et al., 1995). Rather than focusing on abilities and skills as a foundation for learning,
schools emphasize the lack of language and knowledge of minority students. These authors state
that viewing households, their cultures, and languages results in teachers reformulating the
definition of culture and how they approach culture. As a result, it changes the negative
perceptions of households. Finally, the authors conclude that many factors could be involved
when parents do not show up for school events, such as lack of English language skills or
conflicts with work.

**Teachers’ Funds of Knowledge**

Researchers continue to explore parents’ and students’ funds of knowledge, whereas
Hedges (2012) focuses on teachers’ funds of knowledge. She explains that teachers’ funds of
knowledge—including both formal and informal knowledge—impact their teaching and their
deficit thinking about minority groups. While more consideration is given to teachers’
professional knowledge and formal training, there is less attention paid to teachers’ informal
knowledge and experiences. Hedges concludes that teachers’ funds of knowledge “have developed in their families as intuitive sources of cultural and cognitive resources”, therefore; teachers’ funds of knowledge include their theoretical knowledge and practical experiences which they learn everyday (Hedges, 2012, p. 21). Similar to parents and students, teachers’ cultural models and funds of knowledge influence their beliefs, behaviors, interactions, and decision-making skills.

**Parental Involvement**

While minority parents desire to be more involved in their children’s social and educational settings, they feel excluded from American society and school. Quiocho and Daoud (2006) discuss the situation often faced by immigrant parents, who have high expectations for their children’s academic success yet face teachers’ negative attitudes and low expectations regarding their children’s education. Dominant groups believe that minority families do not want to support children’s academic development. In order to investigate Latinx parents’ hopes and desires about their children’s social and academic success, Quiocho and Daoud (2006) examined two schools that serve diverse student populations in California. After visiting the households, the researchers found that Latinx parents want to and do actively support their children’s academic and moral development. Although immigrant parents want their children to maintain their native culture and language in order to support their family ties, they also want their children to learn English language in order to be successful in American schools.

While immigrant parents know that maintaining native culture and language results in discrimination against their children, they encourage their children to follow the rules at school and behave well in school. They also expect their children to learn English while still valuing native culture and language. Guerra and Valverde (2007) argue that, irrespective of the cultural
background and socioeconomic status of immigrant parents, they care about their children’s social and academic performances. Differing cultures and languages and deficit thinking regarding immigrants’ origins result in dominant groups’ negative attitudes about immigrant students’ social and academic outcomes. The authors believe that state support is not sufficient to enable immigrant students to catch up with school in middle-class communities.

Rethinking how to educate students who are labeled “underachievers” or “disadvantaged” is a key issue in the American educational system. Teachers believe that immigrant students and their parents do not have very much to offer and just add to existing issues. The reality is that 1.5-generation students cannot learn what they are not able to understand. Guerra and Valverde (2007) explain that home visiting and community activities can encourage parents to be involved in school events and conferences. Understanding immigrant parents’ barriers and providing facilities for them to feel comfortable with school involvement encourages parents to participate and help their children be successful. To provide a bridge between school and home for 1.5-generation students’ success, Guerra and Valverde (2007) suggest empowering parents by increasing knowledge, dispelling myths, and valuing home culture and language.

**Disconnect in Definition**

A misunderstanding of what culture is leads school staff and faculty to focus on superficially observable aspects of culture including holidays, food, and dance, rather than the beliefs and validation of minorities (Nieto, 2004). Tinkler (2002) believes that, while schools’ culture emphasizes working individually and competitively, most minority homes’ culture highlights working cooperatively. Research shows that shifting understanding of the culture from merely superficial to a more contextual and dynamic basis leads school members to bridge cultural divides and facilitate the collaboration between home and school cultures and
perceptions (Nieto, 2004; Tinkler, 2002). Tinkler (2002) notes a mismatch of definitions and expectations between home and school regarding parental involvement. As the author states, “when considering varying perceptions of parent involvement, there are also differences in the perceived roles of teachers and parents” (Tinkler, 2002, p. 7). Zarate (2007) states that Latinx parents’ definition of parental involvement equates to involvement in children’s lives, such as monitoring their children, which results in students’ appropriate behaviors and, in turn, academic success. The author emphasizes the importance of households’ culture and intellectual resources for students’ academic success. This way, rather than focusing on students’ performance (thin standards), students are considered as “whole” persons with different skills and knowledge (thick standards).

Similarly, Chrispeels and Rivero (2001) assert that, while minority parents respect teachers, the way that parents define parental involvement is different than teachers’ definitions. The authors’ research on eleven Latino families shows that Latinx parents define their involvement as supporting the total well-being of children and informal activities at home; whereas, schools’ definitions focus on aspects such as meeting and working toward school expectations. Training teachers and parents to bridge the gaps in perceptions, expectations, roles, and actions helps teachers to connect school and home and defines the role of parents in their children’s social and academic aspects.

**Similar Barriers and Opposite Strategies**

Immigrants with different origins have a common need for English proficiency in American society and schools. In addition to socioeconomic and sociopolitical barriers based on their race and class, there are many discriminatory institutional practices that segregate them from majority groups. Those immigrant students who are not fluent in English are less able to
understand the content and materials in the classroom and, consequently, have lower academic achievement. English language proficiency is not the only reason that some 1.5-generation students do well at school while other immigrant students are left behind. Researchers Rumberger and Larson (1998) sought to understand why different groups of immigrants, who encounter the same barriers within society and school, tend to use different strategies, attitudes, and behaviors regarding schooling.

According to Rumberger and Larson (1998) scholars believe English language acquisition influences the acculturation and assimilation of immigrants (Cafferty, 1992 & Gordon, 1964). Portes and Rumbaut (1990) stated that learning English facilitates immigrants’ acculturating to American norms and culture. The authors explained that the kind of assimilation that was more common among previous European immigrants does not apply to recent immigrants, such as Latinx and Asians, who instead engage in a process of “segmented assimilation.” On the other hand, social class and occupational skills influence recent immigrants’ assimilation. While lower social class immigrants who settle in homogenous and insular neighborhoods are limited in opportunities to learn English, professional immigrants are more likely to live in heterogeneous locations and areas with the need and opportunity to learn dominant language as quickly as possible (Portes & Rumbaut, 1990). Family size, structure, and socioeconomic status (SES) play essential roles in immigrants’ language proficiency and the resulting 1.5-generation’s academic achievement. One consistent finding is that Latinx immigrants with lower SES have lower educational achievement (Rumberger & Larson, 1998). Parents’ education also plays an important role in 1.5-generation students’ academic success. The authors added, according to McArthur (1993), more than 50 percent of Spanish-language
parents have completed fewer than twelve years of schooling, compared to 20 percent of the parents of children who spoke Asian and Pacific Islander Languages.

**Acculturation Without Assimilation**

Ogbu (2008) describes four patterns of behavior that may characterize minority children such as involuntary groups: (a) assimilation to dominant groups in order to gain equal schooling, (b) resistance to academic achievement, (c) acting “white” when they try to accomplish academically, or (d) rejection of schooling and societal norms. Similarly, Latinx and African immigrants might use the same patterns as involuntary groups in order to achieve acculturation in American culture without full assimilation. Dominant groups define assimilation as “learning English, getting a job, and settling down” and learning the dominant culture (Orozco & Orozco, 2001, as cited in Quirocho & Daoud, 2006, p.39).

Drawing on the work of Rumberger and Larson (1998) and Ogbu (1992), it is clear that, for immigrants, learning English is not only viewed as a skill for better performance, but also as a key to acculturation. In addition to socioeconomic and sociocultural differences, immigrants’ perceptions on assimilation and learning English are not the same; the way that they reflect on learning American culture and language is based on their views of the dominant group. Rumberger and Larson (1998) explain that some immigrants view learning English as a strategy to get ahead and are willing to learn English while continuing to maintain their native languages. On the other hand, some immigrant families such as Latinx, who are treated like Mexican Americans in society and schools, view learning English as a symbol of assimilation into American culture.

Gibson and Ogbu (1991) discuss how historical experiences and socioeconomic environments impact the academic outcomes of individuals with the same ethnicity. The authors
found that neither heredity cultural theory nor deprivation cultural theory captures a true picture of students’ outcomes. For example, Korean students’ performance in Japanese schools as involuntary groups and in American schools, as voluntary groups are completely different. Despite the similarities between both language and culture of the majority Japanese group and the involuntary Korean group, Korean students are not doing well in Japanese schools. On the other hand, in spite of all the difficulties that Korean students face in relation to their language and culture in the U.S., Korean students are doing well in American schools in the U.S., and teachers have positive attitudes towards Korean students. The findings of this research indicate that voluntary and involuntary Koreans in Japan and in the U.S. use different strategies as response to barriers in society and schools. The findings of this study also support the validity of Yosso’s (2005) fifth and sixth forms of cultural capital. These forms include navigational capital (which refers to the abilities and skills of minority groups to maneuver in educational settings), as well as resistant capital (which includes the skills and knowledge fostered through their oppositional performances and challenges to inequality). Navigational capital and resistant capital are two different kinds of strategies that immigrant families use in the United States based on their backgrounds, socioeconomic status, and their perspectives regarding dominant groups in the U.S.

**Negative and Positive Resistance**

Drawing on Gibson and Ogbu (1991) and Yosso (2005) studies, the current study addressed immigrants’ different responses to the barriers present in U.S. society and schools. Some immigrants, such as Asians, consider social and educational barriers in the U.S. as temporary issues which can be removed in the future by hard work. Teachers have positive attitudes towards this group of immigrants, and view Asians as smart and easy to teach because
they tend to learn English as fast as possible. Asian families who compare the U.S. to their home
countries try to work hard to be successful in American society while encouraging their children
to get ahead socially and academically in order to overcome social discrimination and barriers.
This is an example of a positive response to barriers, or positive resistance.

Similar to involuntary minority groups who view the social and educational systems as
permanent barriers, some voluntary oppressed immigrants have the same negative perspectives
regarding white dominant groups. Latinx immigrants view their situation as similar to native-
born Mexican Americans (involuntary) and they do not trust the dominant group. Since Latinx
immigrant parents and students are treated like involuntary Mexican Americans, they oppose the
social and educational systems by choosing to be behind in school and society (negative
resistance). Similar to involuntary Mexican Americans, immigrant Latinx parents with low SES
believe that, in spite of their hard work, they always will be racially segregated and discriminated
against by the dominant group. On the other hand, those voluntary African immigrants who
move to the U.S. are treated the same as involuntary African Americans in society and the
educational system, but involuntary groups mostly choose an oppositional strategy to be behind
unique challenges in constructing their racial identities since they are radicalized similar to other
black groups as both groups are subjected to homogenizing of Blackness in the U.S. Similarly,
Weaver (2010) states that some African American immigrants do not desire moving towards the
white majority groups, and they lead to moving towards underclass and downward mobility.

Racially Forbidden Colors

In science, the color white is the combination of seven other colors including violet,
indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red. Although the four colors of yellow, green, blue, and
red are the main colors in white, they are named “forbidden colors” (Crane & Piantanida, 1983). Interestingly, when looking at the color white, one is not able to recognize forbidden colors despite their existence. Forbidden colors also are known as impossible colors because they are not perceived in normal light, but only in particular circumstances. The power of the color white makes one’s eyes blind to the forbidden colors’ existence.

The existence of white and forbidden colors is not only the subject of science, but also the everyday experience of minorities. As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. states in one of his most inspirational quotes: “everything which we can see is a shadow cast by what we are not able to see.” Relatedly, American society and schools experience the salience of racial color and supposed color-blindness, which is the main reason for socioeconomic and academic gaps between majority and minority groups. Historically, policymakers see white as the only existing color in society and the educational system, while people of color have only been visible in particular circumstances. As Freire (2000) discusses, “being present and yet not visible” is a painful experience of oppressed groups (p.11). The knowledge and ethics of white dominant groups are capital values in curriculum, instruction and assessment in the educational system. However, 1.5-generation students encounter racially stereotypical views, which have existed since long before their coming to the U.S. While the existence of forbidden colors is necessary to empower white, they are not seen within the color white. Similarly, the power of white results in the blindness of policymakers, who consider white as right, while ignoring students of color.

**Race, Anglicization, and Americanization**

During American history, policymakers have ignored the needs and struggles of immigrant students and their parents, and traditionally, Anglicization is tied to institutionalized racism and privilege against minority groups, such as immigrants. Since language is tied to
culture, by ignoring language, Anglicization was used as the first step to ignore diverse cultures and languages of minority groups. According to Nieto (2000), government and policymakers are essential elements in fostering the conformity to Anglicization benchmarks in American society and schools. Crawford (1999) briefly reviews historical records of the wave of language policy during the last centuries. As he explains, imposing the English language on Native Americans by Anglicization was the first movement to expand the dominance of English speakers.

In the 1750s, Benjamin Franklin promoted English assimilation programs through religious instruction. Then, in the 1780s, John Adams established the American Language Academy. Later, in 1789, Noah Webster promoted “federal English” as a mother language for Americans. From 1790 to the 1880s, the English language expanded widely in the United States with no uniform policy. In 1907, President Roosevelt explained “we have room for but one language in this country and that is the English language” (Crawford, 1999, p.28). In Texas, in 1919, English-only-instruction was enforced upon Mexican American students who were segregated in inferior schools.

Later, during the 1930s, the methodology of English as a Second Language (ESL) was developed. Congress passed the Bilingual Education Act in the 1960s, which was the most important law in recognizing diverse linguistics. In 1994, the Bilingual Education Act was reauthorized with the purpose of “developing bilingual skills and multicultural understanding.” More recently, George W. Bush approved an anti-bilingualism policy within the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law in 2002, which promoted the adoption and implementation of English language instruction. As a result, NCLB imposed the high-stakes testing system that left minority groups including immigrant students more behind than ever. As Giroux (2013) states, these policy changes in public schools that refer to new educational reforms are the work of market
mercenaries, who seek to turns students into compliant subjects unable to learn meaningfully and think critically about their relationships to the world.

As Button and Provenzo (1983) explain, “despite democratic principles of government, the history of American people reflects the tradition of discrimination” (p.153). Building on the work of Button and Provenzo (1983), a brief review of U.S. public education demonstrates the relationship between gender, religion, race, ethnicity, and class within American education. The following examples represent the root of segregation in educational history. Between the 1500s and the 1600s, boys were privileged in education, and schools were connected to cathedrals under the control of church organizations. Education for people of color and Native Americans mirrored the racism and stereotypes of white culture and language, which fit well into the colonial model. Similarly, monolingual and mono-cultural education was the only option for Mexican Americans with the goal of Americanization. According to Suarez-Orozco (2001), Americanization by Anglicization was a historical strategy of controlling minority groups who had different cultures and languages. Clearly, the colonial model continues to exists but with a different shape.

**Immigrants, Identity, and Education**

Recently, researchers have increasingly focused on issues and difficulties that immigrant students face in society and schools, resulting in conflicted social outcomes and lower academic performance of 1.5-generation children (Banks & Banks, 2004; Nieto, 2004). Scholars, such as Lee (1996, as cited in Banks & Banks, 2004) and Matute-Bianchi (1986, 1991), explore the link between individuals’ identities and education within immigrant ethnic groups. For example, researchers assert that differing orientations (positive or negative) toward school between recent Mexican immigrants and long-term Mexican immigrants depend on their sense of what it means
to be Mexican. Those students who hold to a modal involuntary model (oppressed non-immigrant minority groups), tend to oppose cultural and language diffusion by a rejection of schooling (Matute-Bianchi 1986, 1991). On the other hand, some new Asian immigrants who identify as “new wavers” are resistant to schooling as part of their identities, though Asian Americans have generally positive attitudes towards schooling (Lee, 1996, as cited in Banks & Banks, 2004).

As mentioned previously, Moll and his colleagues explore how immigrant parents’ definitions of parental involvement differ from those of teachers and majority groups (Moll et al., 1992; Moll & González, 2004). They also assert that the conflicts among home and school environments, cultures, languages, and expectations impact in 1.5-generation students’ behaviors and academic outcomes. Similarly, in her study about Nigerian 1.5-generation students, Awokoya (2012) reported about the role of school, peers, and family in the ways that Nigerian immigrant students develop and negotiate their ethnic and racial identities.

**Identity Development of Immigrants**

Immigrant parents and their children come to the United States from different backgrounds, cultures, and languages. Based on their socioeconomic status in the U.S., immigrants construct and develop their identities unconsciously; this identity construction influences their behaviors and socio-academic performance. While majority groups often have negative perspectives towards immigrants as “problems” in society, policymakers and educators view immigrants’ education as an important issue in the American educational system. Monolingual and monocultural educators and school staff often ignore the role of immigrant parents in their children’s social and academic performance. It is significant to mention that immigrant parents can foster their children’s success by understanding them and engaging in
positive interactions with their children. The following chapters will discuss about how both immigrant parents and 1.5-generation students develop and construct their identities unconsciously based on community forces and their relationships with native and host communities. The negotiation and interactions between the developed identities of immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation students affect immigrants’ family ties and how they navigate the educational system.

The 1.5 Generation: Who They Are, and What We See

The number of Immigrant children is continuously growing; they are, in fact, the fastest growing portions of the youth population in the U.S. Despite the changing demographic profile of immigrants’ origins from European to Asian and Latin American countries (Kandel, 2011), individual and institutional assessment is still based on European monolingual and mono-cultural measurement (Nieto, 2004). According to Rumbaut (2004), those immigrant children who arrive in the United States when they are between six and twelve years old are known as 1.5-generation children. Similar to other minority groups and immigrants, this group of children and their families confront social and academic barriers in U.S. society and schools. In addition to socioeconomic struggles, American schools are like cultural factories, which use acculturation and Anglicization processes in order to control minority groups. Schools’ policies sever 1.5-generation students from their home cultures and languages in order to prepare them for future globalization. Immigrants and other students of color are prejudged according to positive or negative stereotypes held by teachers and peers’ families (Awokoya, 2012). Regardless of immigrants’ backgrounds, the white dominant group often assumes that immigrants from poor socioeconomic backgrounds come to the United States in order to have better jobs, and use American benefits and taxes. As Pierre Bourdieu states, “any viable politics that challenges
neoliberalism must refigure the role of the state in limiting the excesses of capital and providing important social provisions” (1998, as cited in Giroux & Giroux, 2006, p.31).

1.5-Generation Identity

Individuals’ identities are not fixed, and the way people think and act changes over time. Ackerman (2004) points to how children’s knowledge develops based on their worldviews, interests, environments, and the tools used for learning. The intersectionalities, such as race, class, religion, and gender, of the 1.5-generation students impact how they behave and develop their identities in different ways. Conflicts between native languages and cultures at home and those at school result in the construction and development of multiple identities for 1.5-generation students (Awokoya, 2012). As the author states, three contexts of peers, teachers, and families also influence identity developments of immigrant students. Immigrant students struggle to reach a balance between home and school environments in order to be accepted by peers and teachers, as well as their families. As a result, immigrant children develop their multiple identities unconsciously, and they develop and shape a moderate identity as a middle ground between their home and school’s identity.

In her work on Nigerian immigrant youth, Janet Awokoya (2012) presents an intricate consideration of the effect of social context on individual identity development. Awokoya (2012) found that 1.5-generation children often encounter inner struggles to build and affirm their multiple identities. Immigrant students are torn between the cultures and languages of school versus home. Despite immigrant parents’ internal desires to maintain native ties, school imposes external pressure on students to leave their culture and language at home and integrate into American culture using the English language.
In school, children experience the pressure of peers’ and teachers’ (non) acceptance. Newcomers gradually realize that their resistance to acceptance of American culture and language results in teachers’ and peers’ formal and informal rejection. Newcomers’ identities gradually shift from their original cultures and languages to the dominant capital values, and the speed of this process is different based on students’ and parents’ mobility. The school culture and environment encourages students to reconstruct their identities based on American capital culture and values, which are considered the best. As a result, immigrant students learn that their success in the future is based on their distance from their background cultures and languages and integration into the language and culture of dominant group. In the American educational system, assimilation to the dominant culture and language defines students’ success, and academic assessments are based on this success.

**Alternating Between Two Worlds**

As Awokoya (2012) explains, social and academic conflicts arise from the disparate cultures, languages and values of school versus home and situate immigrant students in the precarious position of acting differently in those two settings. The way immigrant students think, talk, eat, and act at home is gradually influenced by the American culture and language they learn in school. The 1.5-generation’s favorite music, heroes, and preferred celebrities shift based on what they learn from their peers and the new environment. Learning the English language changes the words and attitudes that 1.5-generation students use in their conversations at home; in turn, these changes affect the relationships between these children and their parents. While 1.5-generation students are eager to learn English and American culture, barriers and struggles in society, home, and school often result in low confidence and disadvantages behavioral outcomes (Nieto, 1999). In alternating between two worlds (home and school), the 1.5-generation students
unconsciously develop a new identity as a middle ground between native and American culture and language, which can be identified as the 1.5-generation’s “moderate identity.” The 1.5-generation’s moderate identity is not fixed; parents’ ideologies, lifestyles, religion, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status also play important roles in how 1.5-generation students develop their moderate identities.

Developing the moderate identity of 1.5-generation students is about striking a balance between home and school cultures and values in order to be accepted by both. As a result, the 1.5-generation’s moderate identities swing between home and school values based on their age and relationship with school and family members. The process of shaping identities of 1.5-generation students is very complex, and different factors and incidents at home and school might change the direction of this process. The 1.5-generation students are often confused about how to balance their moderate identities between home and school. As Awokoya (2012) explains, some immigrant parents believe that close relationships between their children and their American friends result in losing parental control and a shift in children’s beliefs and habits toward American values. Those immigrant students, who cut off their home culture and language, yet are not fully accepted by teachers and peers are at risk of diminishing their sense of self-efficacy and dropping out of school. Therefore, immigrant parents have important roles and responsibilities in understanding 1.5-generation students and their struggles.

The Identity of Immigrant Parents

While immigrant children struggle to develop their identities between two worlds, their parents undergo the indiscernible and intricate process of reconstructing their own identities. This study provides detailed information about the process of identity reconstruction by immigrant parents, which is often unconscious and unnoticed, hidden behind their unheard
voices. Immigrant parents as diaspora outcasts encounter economic and social barriers and struggle to reconstruct a middle ground identity in order to be accepted by both their original and American communities. The way that immigrant parents develop their identities impacts their children’s social and academic performances.

Researchers indicate that dominant groups in the U. S. ignore immigrants’ knowledge, skills, cultures, beliefs, and values (Banks & Banks, 2004; Nieto, 1999). Rafael Ramirez defined “culture” as a complex system with two subsystems including a culture of liberation and a culture of survival (1974, as cited in Nieto, 1999). Ramirez described the culture of liberation as “the values, attitudes, traditions and behaviors that embody liberatory aspects of culture.” He explained the culture of survival as “attitudes, values, traditions, and behaviors that are developed in response to political, economic, or social forces” (as cited in Nieto, 1999, p. 59). Immigrant parents’ identities are tied to their native cultures and languages, and parents often prefer to hold onto their native beliefs and behaviors as their liberated identity. On the other hand, immigrant parents are forced to develop their survival identity by following dominant culture and language as a means to survive, with the goal of being accepted by dominant groups in society and in their children’s schools. Unfortunately, resistance to this process equates to denial by dominant groups in society and schools. Learning English and American culture is necessary for social relationships at work, and immigrant parents voluntarily or involuntarily undergo the process of developing a survival identity by integrating American capital culture in order to have a better life.

**Filling the Gaps**

Despite the plentiful research on minority groups, little is acknowledged regarding how immigrant families support and navigate their children’s social and academic performance in the
United States. The assimilation of European immigrants created a certain set of expectations, which have not been met by later immigrants. Recently, the origins, cultures, languages, and experiences of newcomers are different from previous European immigrants; thus, the ways that newer immigrants develop their identities to acculturate and adapt to American society are also distinctive. Understanding immigrants’ lives, cultures, experiences, and expectations would help us realize how immigrant parents and students develop their identities and navigate educational systems in the U.S. As was mentioned, the three concepts of cultural models, funds of knowledge, and parental involvement are key to understanding how 1.5-generation students use their funds of knowledge, develop their identities, and use varying academic patterns for social and academic performances. These students use positive or negative resistant strategies based on their background experiences, their families’ socioeconomic status, and their own attitudes and levels of trust toward educational settings in the United States. Despite the negative perspectives deficit thinking in society and school about the 1.5-generation and their parents, immigrant parents desire the best future for their family, especially their children even though they support their children at home and school in ways that may not be recognized or acknowledged by some dominant groups. As a result, immigrant parents also use negative or positive resistance strategies in supporting and navigating their children’s acculturation without full assimilation.

**Shifting Between Two Cultures and Languages**

In addition to socioeconomic barriers, immigrant parents face particular obstacles in dealing with cultural and lingual differences after moving to the United States. Conflict between American and home cultures and values create an undesirable split between immigrant parents and their children. Immigrant parents and children use different approaches to strike a balance between their native culture and language at home and American culture and language at school.
At this point, some parents are eager to learn American culture and language faster than others based on their perspectives about their native versus the dominant culture. In addition, different variables, such as their backgrounds, English language fluency, the reasons that they migrated, and their socioeconomic status in the U.S. influence how they navigate their children’s social and academic performances.

Despite what some of majority groups and teachers believe about newcomers, immigrant parents use their own strategies to contribute to their children’s socio-academic performance. While immigrant parents straddling two worlds and cultures, they recognize their children’s struggle in society and school in order to adapt American culture and language. As a result, immigrant parents attempt to find middle ground between home and school culture and negotiate with their children who follow American norms. This process of negotiating and balancing between two cultures and languages is unfamiliar for most monolingual individuals; predominantly, recognizing and understanding of this process requires personal experiences.

Sonia Nieto (1999) emphasizes the importance of fostering individual, collective, and institutional awareness in order to reduce academic gaps. This level of consciousness entails understanding about existing oppression and bridging knowledge to praxis and action in order to overcome barriers (Freire, 2000). In this regard, Paulo Freire explains that oppressed people should recognize their existence and oppression and investigate various ways to survive (Freire, 2000). In a largely unconscious process, immigrant parents, as well as their 1.5-generation children develop their identities as they shift between both cultures to make a balance between home and American values. The process of identity development of immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children, the negotiation between them, and the strategies they use to overcome
social and academic pressures in society and school to achieve their goals are the focus of this study.

As Freire (2000) suggests, dialogue is an important tool of knowing and learning. Dialogue between immigrant parents, 1.5-generation children, and teachers leads to sharing knowledge, experiences, and expectations, which in turn, helps them to recognize and overcome academic obstacles and struggles. Dialogue creates the opportunity to talk about love, fear, hope, conflict and possibility (Freire, 2000). Dialogue between teachers and immigrant parents and their children results in thinking critically, which yields problem posing and problem solving. Tara Yosso, in her podcast speech about minority students’ education, suggests that it is time to investigate the source of leadership that is available in society to solve the problems (Yosso, 2016). Understanding different styles of immigrants’ parental involvement at school and home provides the opportunity to use parents as an important source of leadership (Yosso, 2016), as well as to bridge the divide between two worlds (home and school). This fosters a balance between the cultures and languages at school and at home. There is no set formula regarding this process because intersectional identities and socioeconomic factors play essential roles in this procedure.

**Summary of Chapter Two**

Various empirical and theoretical literature were discussed in this chapter in order to fully understand the importance of the role of immigrant parents in their children’s future in the United States. Chapter two described the challenges that these parents confront in supporting their 1.5-generation children’s integration into American schools’ culture. In addition, it discussed how these parents learn to navigate their home and host (U.S.) cultures, seeking to successfully acculturate while resisting pressures to assimilate. The reference points for this
chapter highlighted the importance of this process. After reviewing the literature, it was found that there was less attention on and, therefore, limited knowledge about how immigrant parents navigate their children’s education in the United States. However, chapter two concluded by stating that, this study seeks to fill those gaps in the research. The next chapter will discuss the design and the methodological approach most appropriate for this study. Chapter four will explain the findings while chapter five will discuss the interpretations and implications of the findings.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study focuses on immigrant parents who migrated to the U.S. with at least one child between 6-12 years old (1.5-generation child) at the time they came to the United States. Research regarding the socioeconomic and academic pressures on immigrant families pointed to the necessity of empowering this group and amplifying their voices (Nieto, 2004; Ogbu, 2008; Yosso, 2005). Based on research in related arenas, this study utilized Critical Race Theory (CRT) as its conceptual framework and used a qualitative multiple case study approach.

This research aimed to explain how different variables, such as immigrants’ socioeconomic barriers, identity development, and interactions influence on their 1.5-generation’s children’s academic outcomes in the U.S. Concerning the purpose of this study, chapter one described the conceptual framework and established the rationale for this research. Chapter two reviewed the empirical and theoretical research-based literature and identified a gap in the literature that supports the importance of this study. In order to better understand the methodology of this study, chapter three outlines the research design and the rationale for sampling and recruitment of participants. It also provides details regarding the informed consent process for study participants, data sources, data collection, study limitations, and the timeline for completion of this research.

Restatement of the Purpose

As previous chapters revealed, immigrant parents play important roles in their children’s social and academic performance. The limited empirical research that has been done supports the importance of understanding identity development in immigrant students, but less attention has been paid to immigrant parents’ identity development and why immigrant parents use different
strategies to support their children. In addition, the existing literature, has shined limited focus on why, how, and to what extent immigrant parents navigate their children’s social and academic outcomes in the United States, how social and academic variables influence their parental involvement, and the means by which they navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the U.S.

Understanding and analyzing the experiences of immigrant parents of 1.5-generation children, especially, the strategies they use in response to social and academic pressures in order to navigate their children’s education in the U.S., constitute the general purpose of this research. Specifically, this research aimed to explore identity development of immigrant parents and their interactions with their 1.5-generation children after they have migrated to the United States. Immigrant parents’ experiences were examined to understand how and why they developed their identity after moving to the U.S., and how they interacted and negotiated with their 1.5-generation children in order to navigate the children’s social and academic outcomes.

Additionally, the aim of this qualitative research was to search for and identify those socioeconomic, academic, and cultural pressures on immigrant parents that influenced their identity development and their interactions with their children in the United States. This qualitative study targeted the development of attitudes, knowledge, and skills that could improve educators’ approaches towards diversity in the classroom, helping to ensure academic success for students from different backgrounds. This research also sought to inform parents regarding the impact of other variables affecting their identity development and their interactions with their children. Thus, a key purpose of this research was to raise the level of consciousness of immigrants and of dominant groups in order to eliminate social and academic barriers that immigrant students and their parents face in society and school.
Restatement of the Research Questions

This research addressed one primary question and three ancillary questions aimed at providing greater understanding of the experiences affecting identity development of parents of 1.5-generation children. The primary question that guided this research was: How do immigrant parents develop their identity to navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States? Three ancillary questions also were considered in this study: 1) How do society and school contexts impact immigrant parents’ identity development and their interactions with their 1.5-generation children? 2) What strategies do immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children develop and use to counter the negative effects of sociocultural pressures in the United States? 3) How do immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation students develop positive or negative perspectives regarding the educational settings in the United States? The researcher created additional questions, aligned with each research question, for pre-interview and interview sessions (appendix H) in order to conduct detailed examinations of immigrant parents’ social and academic experiences in the United States. By answering these questions, this research intended to fill a gap in the literature around immigrant parents’ identity development, their interactions with their 1.5-generation children, and specifically, identity development’s impact on 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States. Finally, this study hoped to provide research-based solutions to issues of social, economic and academic pressures on immigrant parents that impact their parental involvement and, subsequently, influence their children’s social and academic outcomes.

Approach to the Study

This research was grounded in a qualitative approach and focused on three central components in order to design the study: (a) knowledge claims; (b) the strategies of inquiry,
which inform the procedures; and (c) the rationale for chosen methods, data collection, and data analysis (Creswell, 2003). The knowledge claims in this research were shaped by information, evidence, and rationale considerations, which were collected through a multiple case study of recent Iranian immigrant parents. This study explained how Iranian immigrants’ background, personal knowledge, cultural and historical experiences shaped their interactions and the strategies they used to overcome social and educational barriers. Focusing on “socially constructed knowledge claims” (Creswell, 2003), this research addressed the process of interactions and negotiations among immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation students when navigating the educational system in the U.S. Addressing socially constructed knowledge claims, Crotty identifies three assumptions that ground constructivism:

1. Meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting. Qualitative researchers tend to use open-ended questions so that participants can express their views.

2. Humans engage with their world and make sense of it based on their historical and social perspective[s] — we are all born into a world of meaning bestowed upon us by our culture. Thus, qualitative researchers seek to understand the context or setting of the participants through visiting this context and gathering information personally. They also make an interpretation of what they find; an interpretation shaped by the researchers’ own experiences and backgrounds.

3. The basic generation of meaning is always social, arising in and out of interaction with a human community. The process of qualitative research is largely inductive, with the inquirer generating meaning from the data collected in the field (1998, as cited in Creswell, 2003, p.9).
In addition, based on advocacy knowledge claims, this study highlighted the influence of politics and political agendas on inquiry by addressing the social issues, inequality, and oppression of immigrant families. This advocacy might amplify the unheard voices of recent immigrant parents, increase their consciousness, and advance an agenda for social and academic change in U.S. society and institutions (Creswell, 2003). However, in order to critique the social and educational barriers of immigrant parents and 1.5-generation students, Critical Race Theory (CRT) was used as an essential framework in this research. As Parker and Lynn (2002) state, CRT relies on three tenets: 1) CRT presents stories about discrimination from people of color’s perspective, such as qualitative case studies of descriptions and interviews, in order to construct cases of racially stereotyped officials or discriminatory practices. 2) CRT discusses the suppression of racial defeat by recognizing that race is socially constructed, it is not a fixed term, and that racism is formed by political forces which are informed by experiences of individuals 3) CRT focuses on other areas of dissimilarity and intersectionality such as class (Parker & Lynn, 2002).

**Qualitative Approach as a Way to Bridge Applications to Actions**

According to Creswell (2005), knowledge claims focus on applications of actions, situations, and consequences, and highlight solutions to problems and what works. Within the knowledge claim regarding immigrants, multicultural education and CRT tend to utilize a critical realist approach toward raising important questions about the oppressive situations faced by minority groups, in order to empower them and bring change to society. However, focusing on the researcher’s personal experiences and a review of the related literature, the inquiry of this study used a qualitative approach to expand specific knowledge about the influence of oppressive situations and community forces on immigrant parents and their children that could
lead them to use negative or positive resistance in social and school settings. Focusing on collected and analyzed data, this study developed different themes to fill the gaps in current research regarding immigrant parents, and hopefully, to open doors for future studies.

Qualitative research has the possibility to “[advocate] for change and [better] the lives of individuals” (Creswell, 2005, p. 43). Creswell also adds, if the literatures yield little information about a problem or phenomenon, a qualitative researcher uses different tools to find more from participants through research. In this regard, advocacy knowledge emphasizes understanding of the relevant social problems in order to enhance consciousness of marginalized groups and foster needed change. Therefore, advocacy researchers view and use qualitative research as a public responsibility and moral dialogue in order to bring change to the society (Creswell, 2005). Maxwell (2012) asserts that qualitative research and case study are relevant to the culture and human experiences. Putnam’s view is that “mental statements of individuals’ beliefs, reasons, and motives can be valid explanations of that person’s actions” (1999, p. 149). In these regards, this research used a qualitative multiple case study methodology to address the gaps in previous literature around immigrant parents and their impacts on 1.5-generation children’s success or failure.

**Other Foundational Elements**

As Creswell (2013) states, qualitative research is an intricate fabric. Although the foundation of this study ultimately appeared best aligned with qualitative research and multiple case study, different theoretical frameworks, philosophical assumptions and approaches to qualitative research have been influential in shaping this research. Different foundational elements were used for this study, such as social justice concepts and critical race theory (CRT), constructivist epistemology, interpretive research, and epistemological assumptions associated
with the multiple case study method.

This research used a multiple case study approach grounded in an epistemological perspective and constructivist philosophy, which provided the opportunity to answer research questions. This allowed engaging each participant to develop their cases independently and to evaluate their social and academic experiences and classify the themes. One of the benefits of this methodology was the intimate relationship developed between the participants of this study and the researcher while focusing on participants’ stories (Creswell, 2013). These stories assisted the researcher to better understand the participants’ perspectives and identify what other studies have not been able to cover regarding the lived experiences of immigrant parents’ identity development and its influence on 1.5-generation children’s education. However, this research used multiple case study as an applicable approach in order to answer the research questions, while providing in-depth description to understand the unique experiences of Iranian immigrant parents of 1.5-generation children and to develop a holistic view of how parents’ identity developments influence their children’s social and academic performances in the United States.

Race does not have a fixed meaning and interpretation; and political demands and forces form racism in different periods of American history (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). The aim of a Social Constructivist researcher is to focus on participants’ points of view, which are socially constructed based on their cultural and historical experiences, in order to develop a theory or pattern of meaning. Constructivist researchers also discuss the processes of interaction of individuals in order to understand the effect of historical and cultural settings on the specific context wherein they live and work. In addition, Phelan, Davidson, and Cao (1991) introduce Three Worlds Theory, which focuses on family, school, and peers as three initial arenas in which immigrant children construct their identities, and they use different strategies to move from one
setting to another one. Immigrant students’ perceptions about boundaries between these worlds impact their behavior and interactions (Phelan et al., 1991). In addition, this study is linked with interpretive research in which researchers’ own backgrounds shape their analyses, based on their personal, cultural and historical experiences, as well as the researcher’s intent to make sense or interpret other’s views about the world (Creswell, 2013).

According to Creswell (2013), social justice theories address the social injustice and issues in our societies, including the exclusion of particular cultures or the unequal power position of individuals. Related to this, Parker and Lynn (2002) assert that Critical Race Theory “focuses theoretical attention on race and how racism is deeply embedded within the framework of American society” (as cited in Creswell, 2013, p.31). Counter-stories by people of color may change the dominant’s points of view and discourses since many individuals experiences the White privilege throughout stories of dominant groups (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). In this regard, CRT presents stories about discrimination from people of color’s viewpoints such as qualitative case studies of descriptions and interviews in order to be drawn together and focus on cases of racially discriminatory practices in society and institutions. CRT also discusses the elimination of racial suppression by highlighting that race is socially constructed (Parker & Lynn, 2002).

Since the principle of multicultural education is that knowledge is not neutral but rather mirrors the power and social relationships in a society, the aim of knowledge construction is to improve both society and the status of marginalized groups. In this regard, the Transformative Framework supports the goal of multicultural education in addressing the idea and actions, which consider structural laws and theories that fit marginalized groups or individuals (Creswell, 2013). It also helps that the voices of participants are heard through the research process.
Finally, the intricate fabric of this research was also associated with Constructivist Epistemology. The participants are from marginalized groups (i.e. different race or religion), and the study is conducted in the environments where participants live. In addition, the research is based on what they are saying, and on the knowledge gained through understanding the subjective experiences of these marginalized groups (Creswell, 2013). Relying on the fundamental tenet of the qualitative multiple case study approach, this research was conducted through a thick descriptive analysis of each unique case to determine individual experiences, which were interpreted for the purpose of this study. Figure 1 shows the foundational elements of this qualitative research as mentioned above.

![Figure 1. Foundational elements of this qualitative research](image)

**Research and the Role of the Researcher**

This study uses a qualitative case study method to pursue the knowledge and experiences of Iranian immigrant families as a marginalized group in order to critique dominant perspectives and attitudes regarding immigrant families. According to Smith (1999), “There are diverse ways of disseminating knowledge and of ensuring that research reaches the people who have helped make it” and “[s] haring knowledge is also a long-term commitment” (p. 16). As the author states, “Imperialism frames the indigenous experience. It is part of the story, our version of modernity” (p.19).
Similarly, neoliberalism frames immigrants’ experiences; it is part of their story, a version of racism. Piper and Stronach (2004) introduce human beings as storytellers; however, numerous stories and scenarios are inherent in each immigrant’s lifetime, which are unheard or unnoticed. According to Nieto (2004), the counter stories of immigrant families as marginalized groups and the ways they overcome social and academic barriers in the United States are ignored historically. Dominant groups often have negative attitudes regarding immigrant parents’ knowledge and experiences, as well as the roles they play in their children’s education.

As a newcomer and an immigrant parent of two 1.5-generation students (6 and 12 years old at the time we arrived in the U.S.), I witnessed various struggles of my children at school, especially in the first few years of our arrival in the U.S. Since I live in a community of Iranian immigrants, I noticed that some barriers faced by immigrant parents and their children were very similar to our experiences. For example, unfamiliarity with American culture, language, and the educational system creates numerous barriers in society and schools for immigrant parents and their children. Different variables, such as school environment, peers, and family play important roles in immigrants’ experiences. Experiencing these barriers was the catalyst for me as an insider researcher to create and design this study with the goal of filling that gap in the literature.

The combination of my experiences as an immigrant parent and my professional knowledge guided me to question how immigrant parents use different strategies to navigate their children’s education in the United States. This helped me to recognize parents’ identity development and its impact on 1.5-generation children’s academic and social success or failure. Relatedly, this study aimed to enhance the level of consciousness of immigrants, as well as educators and policymakers in order to eliminate the social and academic barriers and deficit thinking regarding immigrant families. Figure 2 illustrates the connection between my
background experiences and professional knowledge for creating and designing this research.

Figure 2. The role of the researcher as insider

In this study, I was the sole researcher who gathered, analyzed, and stored the data. A third party was included in the transcription of interviews. It is necessary to mention that this person as transcriber was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and signed the confidentiality forms, which was prepared by the IRB. The transcriber, as a third party in this research did not have any influence on creation or construction of the interviews or on data analysis. As the only researcher for this study, I designed and created all data gathering materials and analyses, and conducted all interviews. I also created the recruitment form (the flyer), pre-interview, and interview questions. I ensured that participants were not compromised, and that their participation in the study was confidential. It was my responsibility to maintain the reliability and integrity of this study by ensuring informed consent and protecting the participants of this study. During the pre-interview and interview processes, I met face-to-face with each participant separately. I audio-recorded the interviews, and I paid special attention to ensure that the participants’ views and perspectives, as related to their experiences were treated respectfully, and recorded accurately.
Study Design: Assembling the Puzzle

Designing a research study is similar to assembling different pieces of a puzzle (Creswell, 2005), and “designing requires thinking about the connection between the pieces—the implications that each piece has for others—throughout the process” (Maxwell, 2012, p. 80). In this study, different elements of qualitative research, such as the research problem, purpose, research questions, participants, and data, served as different pieces of the puzzle. As a researcher, I assembled these pieces in order to find relevant themes and address gaps in previous research regarding immigrant parents, their relationships with their children, and the strategies they use in their parenting to in order to navigate their children’s educational outcomes in the U.S. My intersectional identity as an immigrant parent of 1.5-generation children, as well as my personal and academic experiences guided me to find the gaps in the literature, the methods that I used, the participants that I chose, and the research design; this, is called a realistic model by Maxwell (2012).

Methodology

This qualitative research was designed as a multiple case study of recent Iranian immigrants to examine their “meanings, motives, and understandings” of American society and schooling (Maxwell, 2012). The methodology involved interviews, which “allow[s] a much greater opportunity to develop and test interpretations of the meanings for participants of situations and events” (Maxwell, 2012, p. 43). This study focused on aspects such as participants’ perspectives and words that are difficult to quantify and attribute to interpretation or deconstruction (Glesne, 2011, as cited in Babchuck & Badiée, 2010). According to Creswell (2013), sampling procedures, gaining permission, recording information, storing data, and anticipating ethical issues are involved in a multiple case study approach.
Focusing on Iranian immigrant parents and their involvement in the American educational system, the characteristics of this research included naturalistic settings, rich descriptions, an understanding of participants’ points of view or meanings, data collection, inductive data analysis, and nonrandom and purposeful sample selection (Babchuck & Badiee, 2010). Different basic types of data were collected through pre-interview and interview which were then organized, stored, and analyzed carefully in order to determine codes, categories, and themes, all as a connected process. Based on participants’ perspectives and my own interpretations, I subsequently analyzed data and discussed my findings and compared them with both the relevant literature and my personal views (Creswell, 2013). Throughout, I engaged in validation and confirmation of data, and solicited outside review of my process.

**Review of the Data Collection Process**

The process of participant sampling and recruitment was completed through Iranian cultural events. As an Iranian immigrant, I was able to attend various Iranian cultural events in order to develop relationships with Iranian immigrant parents. This community network was an influential recruitment avenue for finding Iranian immigrant parents of 1.5-generation children. As an Iranian immigrant who lives in the same community, I am familiar with cultural and lingual aspects that characterize communications with Iranian immigrants. Culturally, there are many differences of values and morals that Iranians follow in their intra-group communication versus communications with non-Iranians in the U.S., which limited the triangulation of data sources of this study. On the other hand, growing political issues between Iran and the United States negatively affected participant sampling and recruitments, especially after presidential election of 2016 following which new strict rules against Iranian immigrants were enacted in the United States.
Culture, Politics, and Data Collection

In order to understand the culture, language, and lifestyle of minority groups, including immigrants, observation is one of the best tools to collect data and inform research about the differences in their lived routines, values, and cultural models. In order to triangulate and expand the data of this study, I planned to observe the lifestyle, cultural, and lingual practices in a few Iranian participants’ houses. My goal was to observe the behavior and interaction of Iranian parents in their households in order to draw a picture of their cultural and lingual behaviors and interactions. Furthermore, a rich understanding of their cultural and lingual behaviors at home would help explain the strategies that they use as immigrant parents. I consulted with the experts at the Office of Research on Human Subject at University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) about my plan to visit participants’ houses.

Since I was the sole researcher in this study, my plan of visiting participants and collecting data in their houses was rejected by the IRB due to safety concerns for the participants and myself as a researcher. I was told that I would have to have a third-party observer from UNLV, accompany me anytime I had planned to visit participants’ houses. Culturally, I was aware that having another person with me for these home observations might have the following effects: it could influence the context of the observation; change the nature of data collection and participants’ behavior; and make participants uncomfortable by having a third party with a different culture and language in their homes where they may speak Farsi or practice different cultural behaviors. Consequently, I decided to not use in-home observations for collecting data since the IRB restrictions compromised the natural setting.

Alternatively, the qualitative case study approach endorses group interviews as a good way to collect and triangulate the data. Unfortunately, I decided against using this method...
because, culturally, I believed that participants of this study might not be comfortable discussing their social and economic barriers as well as their children’s social and academic issues with other Iranians from the same community. Therefore, group interview was also eliminated as a tool of triangulation in this research.

As mentioned in the first chapter, one of the purposes of this study was to provide a rich understanding of immigrants’ cultural and lingual values and the strategies they use to navigate their children’s social and academic outcomes. It also aimed to inform policymakers about the importance of diversity for changing their negative perspectives and expectations about immigrants, who are currently viewed as an issue in society and a problem in the American educational system.

Unfortunately, because of the U.S. presidential election in November 2016, immigration policy changed radically, and this had a huge negative influence on immigrants’ points of view regarding their situation and safety in the United States. This was an additional barrier in recruiting participants and collecting data. Since Iran was on the list of countries that were influenced by immigration laws after the 2016 presidential election, Iranians were banned from entering the United States. Thus, the situation of Iranian immigrants was dramatically worse than before, and this made immigrants even more stressed about their immigration status in the United States after the election.

Setting

This study utilized purposeful sampling, that is, using the strategic selection of where, when, and from whom data will be collected based on the purpose of the study (Maxwell, 2010). Participants in this study were Iranian immigrant parents from the same Iranian community of which the researcher is also a member. As an Iranian and a researcher, I was aware of cultural
aspects that might influence Iranian participants’ availability and willingness to participate in the research process. For this reason, in order to follow the rules of the Office of Research Integrity and the IRB regarding safety, all project sites for this study, including the recruitment of participants, the pre-interviews, and interview sessions took place in public spaces.

Participants chose the time and the public location for both pre-interview and interview sessions, based on their personal availability. Participants in this study were those who self-identified as Iranian immigrant parents of 1.5-generation children and came to the U.S. in the last three decades. Participant recruitment took place at Iranian cultural events in public spaces (i.e. public parks) through an informational flyer. In September 2016, I began attending different Iranian cultural events in order to recruit participants. At each cultural event, I handed Iranian parents the flyers, and I asked them to read the flyers as I explained the goals of the research and the details that were mentioned on the flyer. Finally, after a few months, I was able to identify eight participants who were qualified and agreed to participate in this study.

Culturally, Iranians are known as people who welcome guests in their houses for any occasion, and mostly prefer to have guests in their houses to have a conversation rather than talking in public places. Asking participants to choose a public place for pre-interviews and interviews was not appropriate culturally, but I had to follow the IRB’s rules to do pre-interviews and interviews in a public place for both participants and my safety. The participants suggested to me several times before the pre-interview and interview sections that it would be more convenient to visit them at home for interviews and data collection, but professionally, I had to follow the rules of the Office of Research Integrity and Human Resources and ask participants to choose a public place for both sessions. This caused delays of almost three months in the originally suggested timeline that I considered for collecting data because some of my
participants were busy with their schedule of working and family responsibilities and they reluctant about meeting in a public place. Conflict between academic rules and cultural values was one of the obstacles for collecting data. I had to explain about the institutional rules and policies for conducting research through the university to each participant and make sure they understood why I was unable to interview them in their homes.

Rationale of Participant Sampling

Purposeful sampling was used to conduct the research for this study. Purposeful sampling and using research participants from specific backgrounds can offer valuable perspectives on the problems and processes that the researcher wants to address (Creswell, 2013). Although 1.5-generation children themselves were not participants in this study, the age range of 1.5-generation children upon arrival in the U.S. was important, since age might affect their interactions with their parents and their academic success or failure in the United States. No enrollment restrictions based on gender or age were placed on participants.

The key criteria for this purposeful sampling were being an Iranian immigrant parent of at least one 1.5-generation child and residing in the southwest U.S. This age range was chosen due to the following assumption: The age of immigrant children at the time of their arrival in the U.S. might influence children’s interactions with parents, peers, teachers, as well as their adaptation to the American culture and language. The participant of this study emigrated from Iran at the time their 1.5-generation child(ren) were between six to twelve years old. This range of children’s age is crucial in forming children’s identities and the way they interact with their parents, peers, and teachers in the new land. The identity of this group of children were formed partially in Iran before their immigration, but their interactions with Iranian and non-Iranian friends in the U.S. influence their identity development, their relationships with their parents, and
the ways their parents navigate these children’s education in the U.S. On the other hand, the socioeconomic and educational variables, such as the areas they choose to live, the cultural and language differences at home and school, and their parents’ expectations and attitudes about the U.S. educational system may differently influence their social and academic outcomes.

Recruiting participants accrued almost simultaneously with the presidential election of 2016, and this had a significant influence on Iranian immigrants’ feelings of safety because of new presidential travel policies that categorized Iranians as terrorists and banned as they were categorized as terrorists by the newly elected president. This affected all Iranians living in the United States, including those who agreed to participate in this study. They were worried about their immigration status or their family members who went to visit Iran and were unable to return to the U.S. New policies against Iranian immigrants after the election were like adding fuel to the flame of social and political pressures on Iranian immigrants, changing their hopes and fears about their future in the dreamland. Popular media certainly fanned the flames of negative stereotyping regarding Iranian immigrants in the United States as well.

Relatedly, one of the participants who agreed to participate in my research called me two days after the presidential election and said that she was no longer interested in participating in my research. Overall, three of the participants who had agreed to participate in this research called and refused to participate in this study. This was totally understandable as I was a witness to the sad news regarding the strict rules against Iranians in the United States. I appreciated them letting me know and emphasized that it was totally understandable, and their rejection did not affect our relationships as Iranians who are members of the same community. I also emphasized that their decisions regarding refusing to participate in this study would be confidential and, as a researcher, the ethical aspects of research including confidentiality of any information are my
As a result, I had to wait to attend other Iranian cultural events in order to recruit more participants. This additional recruitment phase took a couple months for participants to contact me and to confirm their participation in this study. In total, I was able to collect data from eight Iranian parents of 1.5-generation who had come to the U.S. in the last three decades, after the Iranian revolution. Since the Iranian revolution in 1979, many Iranian immigrants migrated for different reasons from Iran to different countries, especially to the U.S., which was imagined as a dreamland.

**Review of Data Sources and Research Timeline**

Case study designs for collecting, analyzing and reporting data are one of the most popular methods for studying marginalized groups such as immigrants (Creswell, 2013). Yin defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry about a contemporary phenomenon (e.g., a ‘case’), set within its real-world context—especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2009, p. 18). Focusing on the actual types of data and the procedures for collecting data are important aspects of data collection. It seemed appropriate to use a multiple case study design for the purpose of this research because it allowed me to address explanatory questions (how and why) and/or descriptive questions (what) through pre-interview and interview sessions where data were collected in natural settings (Yin, 2011).

**Data Sources**

Using several methods for collecting data is known as an effective and valid avenue for triangulation of research. As explained previously, this study aimed to use triangulating evidence and various sources to gather the case study data, such as direct observations and group interviews. Considering both cultural values and academic research regulations, I had to exclude
using observation and group interviews as data sources in this study. I refused to use group interviews because, as an Iranian immigrant, I understand that Iranian parents (culturally) might not be comfortable talking and sharing the social and economic barriers they face with other Iranian parents; therefore, for participants’ confidentiality and comfort, no group interviews were conducted.

My cultural and linguistic background allowed me to better understand the issues of Iranian parents, and have closer communications with participants. My experience as a bilingual and bicultural Iranian immigrant parent let me ask demographic identity questions and interview questions which were bonded to Iranian culture and language, while addressing related issues and conflicts with American society and institutions. Two different data sources were used for the purpose of this study. One data source was the parents’ pre-interviews. In these instances, I arranged to meet with each Iranian immigrant parent individually face-to-face and ask them some demographic identifying questions. An additional data source for this study included the actual interview sessions. Hence, each participant met me face-to-face through two different phases of pre-interview and interview sessions.

**Phase One: Pre-interview**

Most pre-interview sessions, as expected, lasted less than half an hour; participants met me in a public place they chose based on a time and location convenient for them. I printed two copies of the consent form for each participant, and before we started the pre-interview session, I asked each participant if they had questions about the study or the process of research and interviews. Then, I asked them if they had had a chance to read the consent form, which I provided for them and sent as an attachment when I replied to their emails. Regardless, I reviewed different parts of the consent form for each participant before they signed it, and I
asked them to sign both copies of the consent form (Appendix C). Since both pre-interview and interview sessions were audio-recorded, there was a separate section at the end of the informed consent form notifying participants of this arrangement and requiring their permission to make these interview recordings. One of the signed copies of the consent form was returned to each participant and I kept the second signed copy.

For pre-interview sessions, I provided thirty demographic identifying questions (Appendix D) to determine specific information that could help me, as a researcher, develop an understanding of their socioeconomic and educational status as an immigrant, as well as why, how, and when they migrated to the United States. Since I felt some English words that I used in pre-interview questions (i.e. white collar) might be unfamiliar to Iranian participants, I translated all pre-interview questions for participants and prepared a hard copy of the pre-interview questions with Farsi translations. As I asked each pre-interview question, participants were able to see both English and Farsi versions of the question as I read it.

Answering demographic questions in pre-interviews also provided a basic foundation for determining what kinds of economic, social, and academic status participants experienced in Iran, since these factors could influence their socioeconomic and academic experiences and expectations in the U.S. For example, their expectations, experiences, and the nature of the threat that they experience in the United States might be related to their socioeconomic backgrounds in Iran and the reasons that they migrated to the U.S. These elements also might impact participants’ speed of acculturation in the United States. Relatedly, those Iranian immigrants who experienced a higher class, education, and socioeconomic status in Iran may well have different lifestyles, socioeconomic status and higher expectations after they move from Iran to the United States. They also might face different social and academic stereotype threats from dominant
groups in the US. In this regard, answers to demographic questions helped me to understand participants’ social and economic status both in Iran and in the United States.

In pre-interview sessions, most participants also discussed the time and location for the interview session to follow. In the pre-interview session, I tried to ensure that participants had enough time to ask their questions regarding the interview process and any other questions about this study. All efforts were made to accommodate participants’ preferences for times and locations for interview sessions. After the pre-interview meetings, I sent an email to thank participants and confirm the location and time of their interview session (Appendix E). There were no financial costs for participants before, during, or after participating in this research, including pre-interview and interview sessions since I covered the costs for food and soft drinks during each face-to-face meeting.

**Phase Two: Interview**

Being from the same community of Iranian immigrants who agreed to participate in this study, and being familiar with participants’ culture and language helped me to create a supportive, trusting, and safe environment that encouraged participants to ask questions and explain their points of view. Participants in this research, who voluntary agreed to participate, signed the consent forms, and answered the demographic questions in a pre-interview session were eligible for answering questions in interview sessions. Selected participants, who were Iranian immigrant parents of 1.5-generation children, were individually interviewed in a public place of their choice. I created approximately sixty-five open-ended Interview questions aligned with the research questions (Appendix H). The interview sessions also were audio-recorded by me in order to be transcribed at a later date. A third-party transcriber was approved by the IRB. I checked the accuracy of transcripts, and I also asked participants for member checking. I was
able to check with seven participants for the reliability and validity of this data, but one participant was on vacation, and I was not able to contact her for member checking.

Upon completion of the participants’ interviews, an interview protocol (Appendix F) was employed for each participant to explore their lived experiences regarding their perspectives about their identity development and socialization, their interactions with their children, and social and academic pressures in the U.S. During the interview sessions, I asked questions regarding participants’ experiences as immigrant parents, and about any conflicts between their native culture and language and the American culture and language, and about stereotypes regarding Iranians they had encountered in the U.S. that might impact their parenting. For example, I asked: How, if at all, has your relationship with your children changed since moving to the United States? Or, if there had been a change, what factors do you think are the most influential in bringing about this change? (e.g., school, teachers, peers, media, other factors). Each interview session was approximately one hour, except a couple participants who were kindly spent more than one hour in interview sessions in order to provide rich information regarding their experiences and the barriers they faced as an immigrant before and after their immigration to the United States.

**Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Analyzing data refers to “taking the data apart” to represent it and then “putting it together” in order to explain and discuss the conclusions and provide answers to research questions (Creswell, 2005). It is important to read through transcribed data several times, to understand the overall meaning, in order to most effectively code and label the chunks of data. In order to analyze the data, I read the full body of data collected several times to become
sufficiently familiar and in order to find codes, categorize the codes, and to find the relationships within and between the facts (Maxwell, 2012).

Qualitative interpretations situate findings within broader meanings. In this study, analyzing and interpreting data consisted of text analysis, developing descriptions and themes, and stating the larger meaning of findings (Creswell, 2005). Accordingly, after collecting data and audio-recorded interviews, I prepared and organized the data. I read the whole body of collected data line-by-line, color-coded, and made careful notes to assist in categorizing data, and identified the themes for each pre-interview and interview separately. After categorizing data, I organized categorized data, to reduce the number; I identified the common themes across categories, and finally, I provided the interpretation of data using findings and themes.

Taking notes, color coding, and providing rich descriptions of individuals and situations helped me to identify categories and themes. In order to organize data at the beginning, I created a table with nine rows for each question, including pre-interview and interview questions. Each question was located in the first row and each participant’s answer to that particular question was located in subsequent rows, i.e., eight rows for eight participants. By creating these tables, I was more easily able to view all participants’ answers to the same interview question. This helped me to recognize the similarities and differences in participants’ answers to a particular question, compare different codes, categorize data in order to find related themes, and ultimately, answer the research questions. The following table illustrates an example of a table for organizing the responses to each pre-interview and interview question.
Table 1

Sample table created for participants’ responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Interview Question #1: Do you consider yourself Iranian?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afsoon</td>
<td>Afsoon’s Answer to Question #1: Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladan</td>
<td>Ladan’s Answer to Question #1: Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilda</td>
<td>Hilda’s Answer to Question #1: Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elahe</td>
<td>Elahe’s Answer to Question #1: Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nooshin</td>
<td>Nooshin’s Answer to Question #1: Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roohi</td>
<td>Roohi’s Answer to Question #1: Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soraya</td>
<td>Soraya’s Answer to Question #1: Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mina</td>
<td>Mina’s Answer to Question #1: Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Review of the Research Process and Timeline

As an Iranian immigrant living in the Southwest, where the study took place, I have had the opportunity to develop relationships with many Iranian immigrant families. In order to choose participants for this study, as a researcher, I attended different Iranian cultural events from September 2016 to April 2017. These events were held in public spaces such as public parks, which are frequent gathering spots for Iranian cultural events. As a researcher, I described the study and my role as a researcher while giving out flyers (Appendix A) to fellow Iranian immigrants, inviting them to participate in the study. Specifically, I shared my personal, professional and academic experiences and background, the purpose of the study, and the research selection criteria. I provided my email address and contact information in the flyer and asked those who were interested to email me if they met the criteria and had at least one 1.5-
generation child. I had determined the number of participants I could accept, with a target of eight participants.

During September and October, from a total of approximately 15 possible candidates, I received emails from nine people who were interested in participating in this study and met the selection criteria. Then, I emailed each participant separately (Appendix B) and asked all participants to confirm the time and location of a public place to meet for a pre-interview session, based on their availability. I also attached the consent form (Appendix C) in my email and asked them to carefully read the content of the informed consent form. In this form, I explained the criteria for participants as well as ethical aspects of this research. Additionally, participants were informed about the purpose and procedures of the study, the benefits and risks of participation, the cost/compensation, and the study’s confidentiality. I also emphasized that they could contact me if they had any questions about the research or the consent form. I indicated that I would bring two copies of the consent form to the pre-interview session for them to sign before we started the meeting.

As mentioned previously, the presidential election and changing policy toward immigrants generally, and toward Iranians in particular because of political issues between Iran and the United States, resulted in withdrawal by a few original participants. As an Iranian immigrant, I totally understood the stress and feelings of those who decided to drop out and I accepted their rejections respectfully and removed them from my list of participants. When they contacted me to inform me about their decisions, I emphasized my understanding of their concerns and their refusal to participate in this research, and assured them of confidentiality around this decision. This did not affect our relationships in the Iranian community. However, since some participants withdrew, I was felt with an inadequate number of participants for my
study. As a result, I renewed the same process for recruiting participants by attending additional Iranian cultural events; this obviously delayed the purposeful sampling process for a few months. Once I had eight suitable participants, I was able to complete collecting data by February 2017. Finally, I started analyzing data in May 2017 with the goal of completing the dissertation in September 2017. The following table displays a tentative timeline for completion of this study from Spring 2016 through Summer 2017.

Table 2

Research Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Stage of the Research Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 2016</td>
<td>Develop IRB protocol and create pre-interview and interview questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2016</td>
<td>IRB approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2016-February 2017</td>
<td>Recruit participants and gain consents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2016-April 2017</td>
<td>Conduct pre-interviews and interviews; transcribe and analyze part of the data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2017-September 2017</td>
<td>Analyze data; write and prepare dissertation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is an important factor in collecting, reporting, and analyzing data in any qualitative research. In this study, it was important that interactions with study participants were free of jargon. To address the concerns of potential critics of qualitative research, as the researcher, I sought to satisfy Guba’s four criteria of trustworthiness: creditability, transferability, dependability, and conformability (Shenton, 2004).
Credibility deals ensuring that the researcher presents a true and accurate picture of the subject in their description. According to Shenton (2004), a researcher’s background and experience is important in qualitative research since the researcher is the key instrument of collecting and analyzing data. One component of credibility is development of familiarity with participants’ culture. Since I am from the same community and familiar with the language and culture of participants, I was able to consider and understand and cultural and language differences. This helped me to develop a closer relationship with participants, and also led me design, implement, and interpret this study. Participants were informed that they could refuse to participate in this study at any point. Finally, I checked and evaluated the project as it has developed. For example, I checked the pattern, theories, and techniques that have been employed in the study, using detailed descriptions to convey the actual situations and surrounding contexts being studied (Shenton, 2004). Member checking was another strategy that I used during and after interviews. Sharing the transcribed interviews with each participant helped me to assure the accuracy of the data generated.

Regarding transferability, since the sample size in this study was small, it was important to provide sufficient information and details about the fieldwork and data for readers to decide if the findings of this study could legitimately be applied to other settings or populations (Shenton, 2004). Detailed information includes but is not limited to the type and number of participants, any restrictions for choosing participants, the site of the study, the research and data gathering methods employed, and the time period over which data was collected. The researcher followed this process of reporting “to develop a preoccupation with transferability” (Shenton, 2004, p. 70).

As Shenton (2004) states, dependability refers to the reliability of the research, and the researcher of the study must employ techniques that enable future researchers to repeat the study
in the same context with the same or similar methods or participants. It is the researcher’s responsibility to report the research process in sufficient detail to enable future researchers to assess the extent to which methods and practices can be replicated. Therefore, the researcher reported the techniques and methods, and explained the design and implementation of the study in order to facilitate evaluating the effectiveness of the study.

Finally, conformability addresses the researcher’s concern with objectivity and whether or not the findings reflect participants’ perspectives and experiences, and not the researcher’s biases and predispositions (Shenton, 2004). This means that the researcher offers detailed methodological descriptions to the readers to determine the real data, which is distinct from the researcher’s biases.

**Ethical Considerations**

Since this study included human participants, it followed the guideline of the research protocol proposal, which had been approved by the Institutional Research Board (IRB) at UNLV, designed to protect participants from potential risks. IRB approval was required prior to collecting data that are associated with this study (Appendix G). All participants were informed of their rights through the consent form, which was sent to them prior to the pre-interview session (Appendix C). In order to protect participants’ identities and information, I chose pseudonyms that were used throughout the data collection, analysis and interpretation.

Access to participants’ contact information was limited to me as the sole researcher of this study. I used my personal computer when emailing participants, and I did not use group emails, thus protecting participant contact information. During the pre-interview session, and prior to initiating any data collection, I explained to participants about their rights to not answer any questions that made them uncomfortable and their right to withdraw from participation in
this study at any time and at any level of this study, including the pre-interview or interview process. In order to protect confidentially, all data were kept on securely stored USB devices, and on my personal laptop, which is password protected. Data will be destroyed after five years.

Significance of the Study

Increasing diversity of cultures and languages in the U.S. and the lived experiences of minority groups suggests that there are socioeconomic and academic challenges surrounding immigrant families, which impact their children’s academic outcomes. In this regard, using qualitative research can be an effective tool for understanding immigrants’ lives and perspectives when tackling these challenges. This study provides the option to consider cultural and linguistic difference as opportunities for improving identities and communicative practices, which are the focus of multicultural education.

Although educating immigrant parents and involving them in problem posing and problem solving is often ignored in American social and educational settings, providing this level of consciousness raising is not only possible but also offers potentially significant benefits for society and school. This qualitative research aimed to “contain an action for reform that may change the lives of participants, the institutions in which they live and work”, and “as these issues are studied and exposed, the researchers provide a voice for these participants, raising their consciousness and improving their lives” (Creswell, 2013, p.26).

Specific benefits of this research for society and individuals may include the following:
1) Members of society, including majority and minority groups will be more aware of and educated about the racial issues and barriers that immigrant families face in daily interactions; 2) Educators may become more aware of diverse cultures and culturally responsive strategies and practices that they can implement in their classrooms to affirm students of color. This may also
lead to better teacher education programs and improve multicultural educational curriculum for diverse students; 3) Educators may shift away from their negative views regarding immigrant students’ parental involvement; 4) Immigrant parents may increase awareness of how and why socioeconomic issues and barriers around notions of race might impact their children’s education. As a result, this study aims to potentially eliminate social and academic barriers and add value to immigrant parental involvement in 1.5-generation students’ education.

Limitations

The fact that this research has a personal connection to my own experiences and views may cause me to impose my personal perspectives and beliefs on the research and data analysis. Therefore, it was essential that I remained sensible of my own feelings, critical views, and biases that could impact my judgment and/or over identification with participants’ views and experiences. On the other hand, I consider this connection a motivating factor in creating and completing this research, and offering connection that can foster closer relationships with participants. Obviously, additional factors can influence the academic success of 1.5-generation students such as health, access to positive or negative role models, and teachers’ consideration and attention. However, the focus of this study, the influence of parents and their interactions with the education system, is believed to be a significant factor that has not been adequately studied.

Since one of the criticisms of this case study approach might be its small sample size, I do not intend to assert generalization to a larger population. Limiting the study to Iranian immigrants may also raise concerns that the experiences described may not apply to non-Iranian immigrant parents from other races or ethnicities. However, I have chosen to focus on Iranian immigrant families because I believe my personal experiences as an Iranian immigrant parent of
1.5-generation children could help me to understand the issues of immigrant parents in society and schools and the subsequent impact on 1.5-generations’ education in the U.S. Since race and identity can be difficult conversation, my background culture and experiences was of key importance in helping me create a comfortable, trusting environment for participants during pre-interview and interview sessions.

Another limitation of this case study approach might be the gender of participants. Although gender was not restricted as a criterion for participants and flyers were given to all Iranian parents (male and female), all Iranian immigrant parents who participated in this study were females. This is not surprising because, culturally, mothers are more responsible for raising children at home and developing relationships with teachers and monitoring their children’s behavior and education. For example, when I asked immigrant fathers if they wanted to participate in this study, they preferred for their wives to participate in this study for those very reasons.

Chapter Three Summary

The way that individuals communicate with others varies based on personal views and characteristics, as well as on background and experiences. Researchers’ social and cultural perspectives direct how they engage with and make sense of the world (White & Corbett, 2014). As a constructive researcher for this study, I “address the processes of interaction among individuals” (Creswell, 2013, p. 8), while at the same time, addressing similarities and shared values, with the goal of building connections and caring. In this regard, I used multiple case study to collect information about the recent Iranian immigrant parents and the strategies they use to navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States. This study used a
qualitative approach to collect descriptive data while using inductive thinking to understand participants’ points of view (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, as cited in Babchuk & Badiee, 2010).

Chapter one introduced the rationale for this proposed study and chapter two provided a review of relevant literature. This chapter has delineated how this study was designed and implemented. It has addressed the purpose of the study, research questions, the role of the researcher, the methodological approach, ethical consideration in data collection and analysis, and the significance and limitations of the study. Combined knowledge from a review of the literature and my own experience regarding immigrant parenting and 1.5-generation children, firmly grounds this investigation of an existing gap in the research. My ultimate goal is enhancing the consciousness of immigrant families as well as of dominant groups regarding immigrant parental involvement in schools, with the hope of removing social and academic barriers facing immigrant families and thereby improving the educational achievement of 1.5-generation students.
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Introduction

This study aimed to explain how immigrant parents and their children face undeniable barriers in the United States, which historically, have been disregarded. Although current literature has highlighted the importance of parental involvement, limited research is available about the impact of social, economic, and academic barriers on immigrant parents and on their relationships with their children. In addition, little research exists about the strategies immigrant parents and their children use to overcome sociocultural hardships, or about the ways these parents navigate their children’s education in the United States.

This study utilized a qualitative multiple case study approach to discuss the nature of the social and academic experiences of immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children. This study also used CRT as a framework to criticize neoliberalism and racism in society and schools in the U.S. In addition, it aimed to explain how monolingual and monocultural policies impact the social and academic performance of 1.5-generation children and their parents in the United States. Since the number of immigrants in the U.S. grows exponentially, policymakers and educators need to consider different perspectives when reviewing minority groups, including immigrant families with different cultures and languages. In this regard, this study attempted to reveal a deeper understanding of the identity development of immigrant parents of 1.5-generation children after moving to the United States. Unlike recent research that has focused on students’ challenges, this study aimed to explore immigrant parents’ difficulties and identity development, as well as how these variables impact parents’ interactions with their children, their attitudes towards the educational system, and the ways they navigate their children’s education in the United States.
The preceding chapters defined the study’s rationale, reviewed the literature, and discussed the methodology employed. Chapter one provided the foundation, including the social and academic pressures rooted in historical racism and neoliberalism in the U.S. Chapter two reviewed the existing literature and identified the gap in current research regarding immigrants’ parental involvement and the socioeconomic and academic pressures surrounding immigrant families. Chapter three discussed the methodology of this research, as well as data sources and the process of data collection. This chapter describes the findings obtained from both the pre-interview and interview sessions, and it explains the key themes that emerged from analyzing the transcribed data.

Chapter four begins by introducing emergently constructed themes. It reviews the purpose of the study, the research questions, and the transition process from the research questions to data analysis. This chapter reports detailed information regarding the findings of both phases one and two. It also describes participants’ profiles in order to better understanding their experiences before and after immigration. In addition, it lends a greater understanding of the strategies they used to overcome the social and cultural pressures, as well as parental feelings about children’s education in the U.S. In closing, chapter five will discuss the interpretations and implications for future research of immigrant parents’ identity development as well as their involvement in children’s education in the United States.

A Brief Review of the Problem Statement and Purpose of the Study

The number of immigrants in the United States has continued to increase dramatically in the last decades. Recently, the demographic origins of immigrants have changed from Europe to other countries, including Latin and Asian countries. Despite this change, the colonial patterns of European socioeconomic and academic policies and values still control society and schools in
the United States (Nieto, 2004). This results in veiled racial and academic gaps between
dominant majority groups and immigrants; however, immigrants’ education has been a major
issue in the American educational system for centuries. In addition to the ignorance of
socioeconomic and institutional racism, there have been negative attitudes towards immigrant
families who are blamed for their poor socio-academic performance. In response, the educational
performance of immigrant children has received public and scholarly attention (McCarthy,
1998).

This research began with the researcher’s personal experiences and interest in amplifying
immigrants’ voices regarding the barriers they face, which originate from inequalities in the
United States. In this regard, this study focused on social and academic pressures on immigrant
families and the negative perspectives about immigrant groups in society and schools. It aimed to
explain that, despite the deficit-thinking paradigm held by majority groups in society and
schools, immigrant parents use different strategies to be involved in their children’s social and
academic lives. In addition, it discussed how immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children
go through different processes of identity development to create a balance between their home
and the dominant culture and language after they move to the U.S. This study aimed to explain
the process of negotiation between immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children’s
identities since this negotiation is crucial to the way that they handle social and academic issues
and navigate 1.5-generation children’s academic performance in the United States.

The Transition Process from Research Questions to Data Analysis

Recently, educational researchers have given increasing consideration to students’
academic success, especially marginalized groups and including immigrant students in the
United States. Although both majority and minority families are currently demanding better
education for students, policymakers and teachers ignore the barriers faced by immigrant families in society and schools when trying to meet their children’s needs. Conducting a literature review, in conjunction with my personal experience and professional knowledge as the researcher of this study, helped me recognize the gaps in the existing literature about immigrants’ parental involvement, and their identity development after moving to the United States.

This study started with four research questions: one primary and three ancillary questions. The purpose of this study was to answer these questions in order to provide a broader understanding of the impacts of sociocultural pressures on immigrants’ parental involvement and the ways they navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States. In order to answer these research questions, the researcher developed a variety of interview questions aligned with each research question (see Appendix F). The research questions that guided this study were:

- How do immigrant parents develop their identities to navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States?
- How do society and school contexts impact immigrant parents’ identity development and their interactions with their 1.5-generation children?
- What strategies do immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children develop and use to counter the negative effects of socioeconomic pressures in the United States?
- How do immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation students develop positive or negative perspectives regarding the educational setting in the United States?

The data was collected through two phases, including pre-interview and interview sessions. The researcher met and interviewed eight Iranian immigrant parents of 1.5-generation
students in public locations, such as a public cafe or the library, chosen by the participants for the pre-interview and interview sessions. The interview data was audio-recorded and transcribed in order to identify themes and answer the research questions. The data collected was screened for emergent patterns, codes, and themes. As the researcher of this study, I followed different steps in order to answer the research questions: (1) After collecting the data, I organized and transcribed it in two different folders for the pre-interview and interview sessions with the same order of participants’ pseudonyms; (2) I read through the transcribed data multiple times to understand its overall meaning; (3) I coded the data, then I labeled it in chunks; (4) I organized the chunks of codes or labels into a smaller number of categories, and contexts; (5) I identified the patterns and themes which I found in both sessions, pre-interview and interview, and finally; (6) I offered interpretations of the data.

The process of data analysis included an inductive strategy of using within-case analysis in order to find the patterns in each case as well as cross-case analysis to find the commonalities and differences between different cases to find the common themes (Creswell, 2013). In within case study analysis, I followed the “three C’s” data analysis method including coding, categorizing, and concepts (Lichtman, 2011). During the three C’s data analysis method, I generated over two hundred initial codes including words, phrases, and definitions for all transcript data. After reviewing the initial codes several times, I filtered some redundant codes and created brief phrases for similar codes. Then, I organized them into 24 hierarchical categories and subcategories. Next, I assigned all categories to seven concepts that were aligned to the keywords in research questions. Finally, four themes emerged from this process of analyzing data.
In using a multiple case study approach, I was able to provide information that helped me answer the research questions that addressed the purpose of this study. The conceptual framework in chapter one and the literature review in chapter two served as primary tools for analysis and interpretation, while data was examined through a social constructivist perspective, focusing particularly on immigrant parents’ identity development and its influence on 1.5-generation children’s education. The following sections describe the findings from phase one, which consisted of demographic identity questions, and phase two, which consisted of questions aligned with the research questions.

**Phase One: Pre-Interviews**

In phase one, which included the pre-interview sessions, each participant including Afsoon, Ladan, Hilda, Elahe, Nooshin, Roohi, Soraya, and Mina met the researcher separately, signed two copies of the consent form, and answered demographic questions. Each pre-interview took less than half an hour, except one pre-interview that took longer than expected. The researcher chose an Iranian pseudonym for each participant for the confidentiality of this research. All participants identified as Iranian immigrants and parents of 1.5-generation children who came to the U.S. after the 1979 Iranian Revolution. Although no distinct rule for gender distribution was initiated for this study, all participants included immigrant mothers of 1.5-generation students. This might allude to the fact that culturally, Iranian mothers are more involved in their children’s social and academic performance as oppose to their spouses. All Iranian parents who participated in this study live in the Southwest United States, in the same community as the researcher. The participants’ educational backgrounds and socioeconomic status varied, as well as the reasons for and paths for coming to the United States. In addition, all participants came to the U.S. in the last 20 years. All participants except one held higher
education degrees before their immigration to the U.S.; five parents hold bachelor’s degrees, one holds an associate’s degree, and one holds more than one master’s degree. Regarding the genders and ages of their 1.5-generation children, three participants have 1.5-generation sons (7-9 years old at the time of arrival), while five participants have 1.5-generation daughters (7-12 years old at the time of arrival). All participants identified their socioeconomic status as middle to upper class, mostly white collar in Iran.

Participants’ responses to the demographic questions during the pre-interview sessions illustrate that the life history of all immigrant parents who participated in this study can be broken down into three stages: 1) life in home country before immigration; 2) the reason for and the process of immigration; and 3) life in the U.S. after immigration. All participants’ stories show that, in the first stage, they lived in Iran until the time they decided to emigrate for various reasons; for example, having immediate family in the United States and thus being eligible to receive a green card, or being unhappy living in Iran as a result of sociopolitical pressures in the society and institutions. This later group, despite of having relatives and substantial financial investment in their country decided to leave Iran and live somewhere else. Figure 3 shows the three stages of all participants’ lives: immigrant parents’ lives before immigration in Iran (pre-immigration), immigrant parents’ decisions and the process of immigration, and immigrant parents’ lives after immigration in the U.S. (post-immigration)

Figure 3. Three stages of each Iranian immigrant parent’s life
**Identity Demographic Questions**

In the pre-interview sessions, each participant answered a variety of questions regarding their socioeconomic status, their educational and employment status in Iran, and their English language fluency. The same questions were asked regarding their spouses’ employment, educational, and socioeconomic status in Iran, as well as the spouses’ English fluency and employment status in the United States. All participants described the importance of family and friend networks as the main reasons for choosing the southwestern United States as a place to settle. Some participants learned English before coming to the United States, and some attended college courses in order to learn English as a second language after moving to the U.S. Participants were able to answer all questions in English with varying levels of fluency and accents.

The major commonality among participants’ answers to the pre-interview questions was that they all had experienced some kind of sociocultural pressures, especially at the beginning of their arrival to the United States. Language, social, and academic pressures, as well as discriminatory behavior, were the most common issues faced by immigrant families after arriving to the U.S. Analyzing the transcribed data from the pre-interview questions shows that participants and their children faced various challenges in the U.S.; hence, they used different strategies, such as learning American culture and language to overcome the socioeconomic and academic pressures and adapt to the new environment.

Participants’ immigration stories regarding their lives before and after immigration indicated that immigrant parents’ socioeconomic, education, and employment status in Iran (pre-immigration stage) influenced their expectations and perspectives about socioeconomic and employment status in the United States. Since most participants identified as middle or upper
middle class and held white collar jobs in Iran, they hoped to reach the same level of socioeconomic and employment status in the United States. In addition, all participants emphasized the importance of family and friends’ support after they moved to the United States. All participants described their children’s lack of English fluency at the time of arrival, but all also noted their 1.5-generation children’s fast improvement in learning the English language; most parents described their children’s language fluency as currently close to native fluency with no accent. More details about the three stages of each participant’s life will be discussed in each participant’s profile.

Decision and the Process of Immigration

Each participant had a specific reason for leaving Iran and moving to the United States. The reasons they chose the United States and the ways that they came to the United States varied. In addition, the duration of the decision-making process and the procedure of immigration differed across participants. Some of them had family in the United States, while some just came because they were not happy about the social and political situation in Iran. Participants’ answers to the demographic identity questions show that they all had a family or friend network in the geographic area they chose to settle, and most participants used family or friends’ networks for choosing their neighborhood as well as the schools’ national or district rank. Two major factors behind choosing the Southwest over other areas around the United States were: having family or friends as their support in this particular area, and the lower cost of life compared to other states in the U.S. The following section describes the information regarding participants’ lives after moving to the Southwest, as well as the years of their residency and how parents and their 1.5-generation children described their identity in general.
Phase Two: Interviews

All eight participants agreed to continue participating in phase two for the interview sessions. Participants were asked to confirm the location and time of the interview sessions based on their availability; then, each participant met the researcher separately in order to answer the interview questions. Each interview took about one hour, except two interviews that took longer than expected. The purpose of the interviews was to understand participants’ perspectives regarding their social and academic experiences after they migrated to the United States as well as their attitudes about the American educational system.

The researcher created and asked questions based on the research goals, and all participants answered the same interview questions. Most questions in interview session were about participants’ economic and academic experiences and pressures, their parental involvement at home and school, their interactions with their children and teachers, and the strategies they used to overcome the social and academic barriers they encountered. For example, in order to understand Iranian immigrants’ parental involvement and identity development, I asked participants to explain whether their standards for parenting were changed after moving to the United States and if they noted any changes in their children’s interactions and relationship at home and school. Participants were also asked their views about their children’s relationships with teachers and peers at school.

Participants’ stories regarding their lives after immigration to the U.S. indicated that their socioeconomic and employment status did not matched their previous socioeconomic and employment status in Iran, and were generally far behind their expectations. Overall, six professional and skilled participants defined their socioeconomic and employment positions in the U.S. as being lower than their status in Iran, where they had been middle or upper class and
had held white-collar jobs in Iran. Differences in culture and language, as well as socioeconomic pressures in their new home were the most challenging to the immigrant parents.

All participants considered language as an important tool for communication in society and school, and consequently learning American culture and language was influential to their relationship with their 1.5-generation children and their teachers. Most participants exhibited a desire to learn American culture and language in order to better understand their children and have closer relationships with them. Most participants mentioned that communication with non-Iranians in the U.S. was key both to understanding American culture and to understanding their 1.5-generation children who adopted American culture after moving to the U.S.

A majority of participants stated that English proficiency helped them to have better relationships with non-Iranians and with their children’s teachers. This also helped them to change their attitudes and perspectives regarding the American educational system and to develop their relationship with their 1.5-generation children. In addition, most participants recognized the cultural and language differences between them and their 1.5-generation children that resulted from the impact of peers, teachers and media after moving to the United States. Interestingly, all participants except one identified as Iranians, since they were born or grew up in Iran; whereas most defined their 1.5-generation children as American, since they grew up in the U.S. and followed American culture and language, regardless of where they born.

A few participants also mentioned the importance of social networks to find a good neighborhood with qualified schools in the southwest U.S. and thus offer their children opportunities for quick improvement in English language fluency. Participants’ explanations regarding the differences between the Iranian and American educational systems illustrates that their educational expectations after moving to the U.S. were mostly based on their Iranian
cultural values and educational system. Most participants currently had positive attitudes about the American educational system and their children’s future in the U.S. Nevertheless, discrimination in society and schools was another challenge that most participants and their 1.5-generation children faced after moving to the U.S. More details about participants’ life before and after immigration is discussed in their respective profiles.

Overview of Participants’ Profiles

This study included eight participants and the following section presents participants’ experiences and life histories in Iran and the United States. The information gathered during the pre-interview and interview sessions addressed participants’ lifestyles and backgrounds in Iran, the reasons they decided to migrate from Iran, the process of their immigration, and in-depth information about their lifestyles as immigrant parents of 1.5-generation children in the United States. Iranian pseudonyms assigned to the participant are Afsoon, Ladan, Hilda, Elahe, Nooshin, Roohi, Soraya, and Mina, and the order of the participant profile discussion is the same as the order in which interviews were conducted.

In this section, I present each Iranian immigrant parent’s case in a similar fashion. In order to protect participants some detailed information regarding the process of their immigration is not discussed. I start with information gained from the pre-interview sessions regarding their backgrounds, specifically, their socioeconomic, employment, and educational status in Iran. It is followed by their perspectives on the Iranian educational system and their interactions with their children and their teachers in Iran. Then, I discuss participants’ personal and professional experiences in the United States, focusing on their interactions at home, in school, and in society to address their identity development and the way they negotiate with their children and navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States. It is important to note the complex
relationship between each participant’s experiences regarding the three stages of their lives as an immigrant parent of 1.5-generation children in the United States. Typically, in addition to sociocultural and economic pressures such as finding jobs, understanding and handling the issues regarding their cultural and language differences, school, their parenting styles, and their relationships with their children in the U.S. were the core challenges they faced after their arrival in the U.S. The following section draws from the interviews, and I will apply different aspects of community cultural wealth (Rogers, 2010; & Yosso, 2005) to highlight identity development and parental involvement of Iranian immigrant parents of 1.5-generation children in the U.S. This data also reveals the strategies Iranian immigrant families use to overcome the social and academic pressures and navigate their children’s education in the United States. The following participant profiles include the three stages of their lives as Iranian immigrant parents of 1.5-generation children.

Afsoon and the Three Stages of Life

Afsoon is an Iranian immigrant parent who migrated to the United States about five years ago with her husband and daughter, who was almost seven-years-old at the time of their arrival. Afsoon received a career and technical certificate in the U.S., and she is currently working at a beauty company. Afsoon’s husband works as a driver in the Southwest area. Afsoon contacts her relatives and family, who live in Iran, in a daily basis, and she also has communication with her Iranian friends in the United States almost every day.

Pre-immigration: Life in Iran

I began the interview by asking Afsoon what it means to be Iranian, and she responded that being Iranian means a person who was born and also raised in Iran. She self-identifies as Iranian since she was born there and her parents and extended family are Iranian. Afsoon’s
daughter was born in Iran, and lived there for almost seven years. Before Afsoon’s daughter attended the first grade, they moved from Iran to a third country; therefore, they did not have any experiences regarding Afsoon’s daughter’s school and education in Iran. Afsoon defined her socioeconomic status as middle class before they emigrated from Iran. She also described her employment status as white collar in Iran because of her position there as an art instructor. In addition, she defined her husband’s job as white collar in Iran because he had his own business there.

Neither Afsoon nor her husband hold advanced degrees as they did not pursue higher education in Iran or the U.S. Afsoon explained that she is not fluent in English, and she attended ESL (English as a second language) classes at a college in the southwestern United States, and she wants to continue her education in art. At the time of our interview sessions, she was able to understand the interview questions in English and answer them in English. Even though sometimes she was not able to match the verb tenses and objects in her sentences in English, her answers and conversation were comprehensible. Afsoon explained about social pressures they faced in Iran because of the conflicts between strict governmental rules and her husband’s job. Afsoon’s husband owned his business and worked in a profession related to women’s cosmetology, which was against the religious and governmental rules in Iran.

**The Decision and Process of Immigration**

Afsoon claimed that they had a comfortable life with regard to their socioeconomic and employment status in Iran. On the other hand, the social pressure on her husband because of the particular job he had there resulted in their decision to emigrate from Iran:

We have a lot problem. The one month my husband in the jail… and he have to pay a lot of money, that’s why we have a lot of problem. We live good, we have everything we
need in Iran, but always have a problem, go to court, something like that, that’s why we go out from the Iran.

Afsoon moved with her family to a third country, and she had to stay there for a while.

As Afsoon described, at the beginning, they planned to move from Iran and live in a neighboring country, but after living in one of the neighboring countries for a couple years, they planned to move to the U.S. Finally, Afsoon and her family migrated to the northeast United States; however, she was not happy living there since they did not have any Iranian friends. Subsequently, they decided to move to the southwest United States because her husband had friends in the area.

**Post-immigration: Life in the U.S.**

Afsoon believed that her daughter benefits more than she and her husband from their living in the United States. I asked Afsoon if they were happy about their decisions to immigrate to the U.S., and she replied: “for my daughter yes, but for mine and my husband no, because all my family is in my country and it’s too hard here to live for us. But I think for her, for the future is good.” Afsoon described that at the beginning, they faced many issues mostly because of language barriers. In addition to economic pressures, her daughter’s language barriers resulted in having a negative experience in American schools in their early time as immigrants.

I remember the first years we came here, and my daughter she can’t speak English and she want to talk with somebody for, her friend in the class, and she touched them and after two or three days, the principal calls us and call her and they say, “Your daughter is not friendly, is not nicely, they touch somebody, they hit them” but my daughter is so cry and said “No, I want to call them, but I don’t know how to call.” Yeah, so I remember that one, and they don’t know…immigrant come here that maybe they cannot speak or
they came in from different culture…and they know that my daughter cannot speak, she cannot speak English…she suspended for two days she can’t go to school just for touch the student…

After a while, however, her daughter learned English, was better able to communicate with her peers and teachers at school and, consequently, she had positive attitudes about teachers and peers in the U.S. Similar to most immigrant children, Afsoon’s daughter experienced the new version of colonialism for controlling minority groups, which continues to exist in American schools (Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Afsoon described her daughter’s English language fluency as near native fluent now, and for this reason, her daughter enjoys spending time with her teachers and peers at school. Afsoon added: “She like it, and she thinking there is perfect and she is so happy to go to a school and stay with the teacher and she like it there.” This manifests the culture of survival, i.e., the attitudes and behaviors that are developed by minority groups against social and institutional forces in the United States (Ramirez 1974; Nieto 1999). Afsoon’s daughter was able to learn English quickly to have a better relationship with her friends and be accepted at school, which demonstrates her resilience, and this resulted in changing her daughter’s perspective about her school in the United States.

Afsoon likes to maintain her Iranian culture and language, while she likes something about American culture too. She explained that she did not notice any changes in her cultural practices since moving to the United States, but sometimes she has to make some changes because of her daughter, as she explained: “I have to see what she likes and sometimes I have to change it. For she, but for me, no.” Afsoon clarified that living in the United States is very difficult for immigrant parents since their children grow up in a different culture and they want to follow American culture. She noted: “…Iranian parents, they want to keep our culture and
Afsoon also explained her current socioeconomic status as middle class even though they were working class upon their arrival in the U.S.

**Culture and language.** Afsoon’s responses about identity, such as self-identifying as Iranian while she describes about her daughter as American were revealing. Afsoon believes her daughter would also describe herself as American. She explained that her daughter likes American culture and language more than Iranian culture and language even though Afsoon wants her daughter to follow Iranian culture. Afsoon said that she was not happy about these cultural differences between them because it influences their relationships. She stated: “My feel is, it’s not good, but I like she go more in the culture for Iran, but I like something about the American too.” Later, she described how cultural differences result in conflicts between her and her daughter. Afsoon believes her daughter’s friends and school environment are the most influential factors in these changes. She said:

> For culture example, she wants to go outside with the friend but I don’t know how they are, and I’m saying no once. It’s okay everybody go, but I can’t believe them how they are, who they are; which home they are going, what happened in their home, and that is, it’s a little bit different for me but she can’t understand this one. She say, “No, it’s okay, everybody go, and I want to go too.

I asked Afsoon whether she would like to change her relationship with her daughter and she explained: “Because my daughter go to school and we see that she’s growing up here, and she got the different culture, and I want to relationship with my daughter, and I see that I have to change it.” She added: “I’m change, is more understand what she wants about here because my
English is not good… but her friend, that’s why I have little bit of problem.” Afsoon described that her daughter does not have many Iranian friends here. On the other hand, Afsoon does not have any American friends in the United States; she wants to have better communication with other Americans to better understand her daughter: “I want to relationship that American people, exactly the age for my daughter and I see…how they are doing here, maybe I can more understand my daughter.” Afsoon explained that it is important for her to know her daughter’s friends, as well as their parents, in order to have better communication with them. She wants to understand their lifestyles in order to understand her daughter and have a better relationship with her. Afsoon speaks Farsi at home and her daughter is interested in learning Farsi, but she does not like to maintain Iranian cultural norms. For example, culturally, Afsoon asked her daughter to say hello to those who were older than her when she arrived in an Iranian community, but her daughter believed that it was not necessary to say hi to those who were older than her because she did not know them.

**School.** Afsoon discussed her daughter’s English language fluency as a major issue after they arrived in the northwest United States:

…she came here, she go…to math class and she can’t understand, and next year, she go to second class and she don’t know nothing about the math, and her grade is come down, it fail, it fail, but she don’t have a problem with math or she don’t have a problem with science or something like that. She have problem with English because she can’t understand what the teachers say in the class…

As Yosso (2005) explained, dominant groups and teachers believe that minority children come to school with lack of knowledge and skills, and it is necessary for them to learn American culture and language. Afsoon’s daughter learned English quickly, and consequently, this changed
Afsoon described how her daughter’s teachers had a great influence on her daughter’s academic progress and decisions at school: “…because she’s talking more than with me, with the teacher, and can ask, and the teacher know how she is good in the which way, and they can push her in that way.” She also mentioned that she has a positive perspective regarding her daughter’s education in the U.S., and said: “I think she’s successful in, for study here because everywhere, I see they push her to continue, and they help she, and I think she don’t have any problem with that. If she wants, she can do it.” Later, Afsoon addressed the recent sociopolitical pressures on Iranian immigrants in the United States, especially after the presidential election in 2016, and her fears about their future. On the other hand, she believed it might not affect her daughter’s interactions at school since she might not identify as Iranian at school. She added, “I don’t know if her friends know about the Iranians, but sometime…she don’t want to say in school I’m Iranian.” This illustrates the barriers and struggles that immigrant students face in school which results in students’ low confidence regarding their intersectional identities, and in developing their survival identity rather than holding their liberated identity, which refers to their origin identity (Ramirez, 1974; Nieto 1999)

**Parenting and relationships.** Afsoon believed her standards and parenting style are different from other non-Iranian parents in the United States, as she noted: “some parents here, it doesn’t matter for them that their kids walking and come late to home or no…or they have a lot of make up in the school, but no, that is important for me.” She also explained that her parenting could be different if they stayed in Iran: “I think if I staying in my country, I can help she more, because in here, it’s little bit different, and hard for me. But sometimes, I stay behind...” Afsoon
discussed the strategies she uses as an Iranian parent in the United States: “She have to do homework every day for one hour, and for the school...go the simple clothes.” She said her English language fluency is an issue in regard to helping her daughter in her school, as she explained: “…Because my English is not good, that’s why I can’t help too much to her, but just I’m telling her she stay after school…” Then, she added, “Yeah. Example, after school she comes, she have to do the homework for one hour and two hours…and she have to study for exam or something like that.” Afsoon explained that as a parent, she talks to her daughter and encourages her to continue her education, and she uses different strategies to help her daughter be successful at school.

**Ladan and the Three Stages of Life**

Ladan migrated directly from Iran to the United States about six years ago. She emigrated with her husband and her twelve-year-old daughter. Ladan currently holds a full-time job in the hotel industry in the southwest United States, but her husband has been unemployed for a year. Ladan’s immediate family lives in Iran, and she phones her family in Iran daily. Ladan discussed her close relationships with her Iranian and non-Iranian friends in the United States.

**Pre-immigration: Life in Iran**

Ladan self-identifies as Iranian, as she was born and grew up in Iran with Iranian culture. Ladan’s daughter was born in Iran, and she was in middle school before they moved to the U.S. Ladan addressed the strict rules for girls regarding Hijab and covering their heads in school as her worst experience with her daughter’s school in Iran: “Hijab was the worst, and she couldn’t keep her Hijab there. Like their scarfs, she hated. She always messed up her scarf, and sometimes she lost it. It was so hard.” Ladan claimed she had great relationships with her daughter’s teachers since they shared the same culture and language.
She indicated, because of their income in Iran, her socioeconomic status was middle to upper-middle class before emigrating to the U.S. She identified her employment status as pink collar, again because of her position and income, when she worked as a cosmetology professional in Iran. She described her husband’s employment status as white collar because of his position in business and high income before they moved to the U.S. Regarding academic status, Ladan asserts that she received her associate’s degree, as well as her cosmetology certificate in Iran. On the other hand, Ladan’s husband received his bachelor’s degree when he lived in the U.S. even before he came back to Iran and they married. Ladan described her English language facility as somewhat fluent, the same as her husband’s. I asked Ladan to explain whether she learned English in Iran or in the U.S., and she replied, “I just started here. I went to school here and then, I tried to talk too much with the English people, and I learned more.” She declares that her daughter also learned English in the United States and speaks English very well now.

The Decision and Process of Immigration

Ladan described her immigration as a difficult and complicated process. She explained that both she and her husband applied for American green cards after they married in Iran: “We decided to came here after we got married, like twenty years ago. Then after 12 years, we got our visa and we came here for green card and then, it was too hard to decide it.” She also mentioned that she moved to the United States for her daughter’s future. She said, “I worked there many many years, and it was very good, but I preferred to come here because of my daughter. Yah. I was middle class to high [class] because my husband made a good money there.” Even though Ladan considered her immigration to the U.S. as a difficult process, she believes it was the right choice, and she is happy about her decision to bring her daughter to the United States: “I’m so
happy. My daughter has a really good education here, and I am so glad.” Ladan’s explanation illustrates that she came with her family to the U.S. for her daughter’s education and future, which manifests what Yosso (2005) refers to as aspiration capital, meaning immigrants’ hopes and dreams for their future in the United States.

**Post-immigration: Life in the U.S.**

As Ladan described her immigration process, she moved first with her family from Iran to the western U.S. and lived there for a few months. Then, one of her friends who lived in the southwest U.S. recommended Ladan and her family move there because of the lower costs of living and less expenses. This is evidence of social capital that includes the communication and social network among immigrants that offer support for newcomers (Yosso, 2005). After a while looking for a job, she found employment in the hotel industry which was unrelated to her profession and skills in Iran. Ladan commented that her family’s situation and socioeconomic class were different after their arrival in the U.S., since they did not have family and financial support. Ladan added, “We came here without anything, and we didn’t have any family, and it was so hard. And started from zero… It’s so hard. You don’t have anybody here and you don’t know anybody here, but we started.”

Ladan described her daughter’s perspective regarding the American educational system before and after their immigration: “In Iran, everybody said it [school] is so easy, and everybody took it easy, but when she moved here, she said no mom, it’s hard… Yah, She thought it’s easy, but it’s not easy.” Ladan shared the same perspective regarding her daughter’s education, “I always was thinking everything is easy, but now, when she is going to school, nothing is easy. You have to try it everyday more to get your goal.” Ladan’s and her daughter’s visions and perspectives regarding the American educational system before moving to the U.S. were
different than the reality they faced in the U.S. As Gloria Ladson-Billings (2004) states, all students in American schools are forced to follow a monolingual and monocultural curriculum, which focuses on white upper-class standards.

Ladan discussed her daughter’s hard work and success at school as well as at her workplace. Ladan’s explanation illustrated the phenomenon of diffusion, which refers to the strategies that immigrants usually use to work hard and be successful in society and school. Further, Ladan noted that, despite the lack of competition at American schools, her daughter had to compete at work, as she claimed, “At her work, everything is by competition, but at school, no.” Ladan’s description of her daughter’s workplace exemplifies the reality of neoliberalism as a new form of global capitalism in the United States (Mayo, 2003). Neoliberalism with the veneer of economic development pushes minority groups to ignore their knowledge and skills and follow the rubric of globalization. Ladan also explained that her daughter is always worried for her future in the U.S.: “Actually, she always worried about her future. She is always worried and have a stress, and I try to help her to be free and not have a stress because it doesn’t help her.”

I asked Ladan to explain about her best experiences in the United States, and she cited freedom as her best experience in the U.S.: “I think the best experience is because you are free and you can do whatever, you can talk whatever you want. Nobody stops you.” Regarding her worst experience in the United States, Ladan recalled her daughter’s language barrier as her worst educational experience after they moved to the United States: “I think just her language because she didn’t know anything about English when we moved here, and that was the worst….” As Nieto (2004) explains, the way that minority groups are excluded in American schools illustrates the fact of institutional discrimination; positive resistance and resilience were
the push back strategies that Ladan’s daughter used to learn English and be ahead in her school and work place in the U.S.

**Culture and language.** Ladan self-identifies as Iranian and different from Americans: “When you immigrate, you don’t feel like you are from that country [Iran]. You can be matched with the people, but not really. Everything is different.” Further, Ladan explained that despite their cultural differences, she is comfortable with Americans: “Actually, I think I am Persian, and I don’t think about any culture…sometimes, I can feel that I’m ok with American people and comfortable, but still it’s different culture.” Ladan believes that since she has a different culture than her co-workers, she is different at her workplace: “We are so different at work. We are so different because they grew up here in different culture. A lot of culture because all my co-workers are from another country, and I can see it, we are so different.”

Ladan believes that even though her daughter was born in Iran and she grew up there until she was twelve, her daughter’s identity is different, and her daughter self-identifies as American:

She is different. She is American. She is a real American…I think she feels she is American because she grew up here; she would like to be an American girl. She doesn’t feel like because she forgot everything about Iran. Sometimes, when I talk about Iran, and I ask her “Do you feel like you are Iranian? or you want to come back or go back to Iran?” She said, “no, I don’t feel it. I don’t have any feeling.” She is eighteen, but she forgot everything.

Ladan explained that since her daughter grew up in Iran for twelve years before they moved to the U.S., their Iranian cultural values and background influenced her daughter and she can keep some parts of their home culture: “…I’m glad we came here after she was twelve-year-
old because she grew up in, actually in Iran with my culture. I am glad because she keeps our culture.” Ladan’s explanation indicates the importance of a cultural model in her daughter’s behavior in society and school contexts (Ogbu, 1991).

Ladan also remarked on non-Iranians’ perspectives of her daughter’s behavior as they comment that Ladan did a great job raising her. Ladan claimed that since she speaks Farsi at home, her daughter speaks Farsi very well. This shows the importance of linguistic capital in immigrant children and their intellectual skills in an additional language (Yosso, 2005). She also noted that her daughter likes to write and share some of her academic experiences from Iran with her teachers and peers at school when she writes an essay: “When she wants to write something in her essay, she always writes about Iran, and her problem in Iran, and her problem at school, and no, nothing stops her.”

School. As Ladan described, “freedom” has been her best experience in the U.S. and this is also true for daughter. In particular, Ladan believes that the school environment in the U.S. is different from Iranian schools, which her daughter attended before moving: “I think the best thing is freedom. She is so free here, and she can do whatever she wants.” Ladan also explained that her daughter’s freedom influenced her relationship with her teachers at school, as she added, “In school…she can talk to her teachers about everything, like when she gets in trouble, she can talk to them. When she has any questions, she can ask them.” What Ladan described is what Yosso (2005) refers to as aspirational capital, that is, the dreams and hopes of immigrant groups regarding the opportunities in the U.S.

Ladan pointed out that American schools also provide a great opportunity for students’ learning compared to Iranian schools, and her daughter has a better chance of obtaining higher education in the United States: “I don’t think so she can have a good knowledge in Iran because
it’s hard to get to university in Iran and here is more easy. You can choose whatever you want to study.” On the other hand, Ladan believes that teachers do not have a strong relationship with parents in the American school system. She clarified that her daughter’s teachers do not invite Ladan as a parent to come to school and talk about her daughter’s issues at school. Ladan elucidated that, despite the lack of a strong relationship with parents, teachers in U.S. schools treat students better than in Iran, since Iranian teachers are very strict. She continued, “I think they are different. Here, they help my daughter…but in Iran, no. We have to do everything by ourselves.” She described her daughter as more independent, and able to handle any issues at school in the U.S.

**Parenting and relationships.** Regarding her responsibility as an Iranian parent, Ladan believes that she has more responsibility to help her daughter since she does not have her relatives around to support her as they had in Iran. She expressed,

> It doesn’t matter if I feel more responsibility because she needs more, she needs me more than Iran because in Iran she had her grandparents, and a lot of people around, but here, she doesn’t have anybody. I have to be more with her and more responsible I think.

Ladan said that if she feels her daughter needs help to improve academically, she would talk to her counselor at school to find a person who would be able to help her, and she clarified that she had already tried this approach and she talked to her daughter’s counselor for help. Ladan found this strategy helpful, saying that it usually works well. Ladan explained that she did not set any particular standard for her daughter’s behavior at home or in school since her daughter is responsible in both places: “I never tell her what do you have to do because she does it right anyway.” Later, I asked Ladan whether she feels her parenting is different from other non-Iranian parents in the U.S. and she replied, “Yah, it’s different because here, parents are so busy,
and they don’t help and they don’t care too much like Iranian parents…Yah, like when kids have any problems, they don’t care”. As Ogbu (1998) explained, individuals’ cultural model and their interpretations of their environments are different based on their background experiences; there is no right or wrong cultural model.

When asked to describe her daughter’s interactions with Iranian and non-Iranian friends, Ladan said that, currently, her daughter does not have any Iranian friends in the United States. Then, she explained her standards and feelings regarding some of her daughter’s non-Iranian friends: “Sometimes, she had a friend with different culture and … I don’t like it. I always say her you have to quit and you cannot be with them anymore.” Ladan expects her daughter to be a good student, have good grades, and stay out of trouble at school. She added, “I cannot describe it to you because she never gets in trouble and she is so strong, and she knows nobody can help her. That’s why she is really good at study and everything is good at school.” Ladan’s daughter shares her social and academic successes and failures with her mom, and Ladan respects her daughter’s decisions about her future, noting, “I’m just thinking about her future education. She can keep going and graduate that study what she wants, and if she can make it, I’ll be really happy.”

Ladan’s hopes and dreams for her daughter’s future again illuminate what Yosso (2005) calls aspirational capital, one of the main factors in immigrants’ aspirations and ambitions for having a better life in the U.S. Later, I asked whether Ladan fears for her daughter’s future, and she replied, “Sometimes yes, because it is so hard to study in another language. Yah, sometimes I’m worry about her…I always tell her…you can make it, or you can just keep going for your goals.” Ladan also described her fears regarding the new immigration rules against Iranian immigrants since her family might not able to visit Ladan and her daughter in the United States.
Hilda and the Three Stages of Life

Hilda is an Iranian immigrant parent who migrated to the United States about fourteen years ago with her husband and son, who was seven years old at the time of their arrival. She is currently working in the medical field in the southwest United States, and her husband owns a business. Since Hilda’s immediate family lives in Iran, she phones them daily. Hilda contacts her local Iranian friends frequently during the week, and usually meets them on the weekends. Hilda communicates with non-Iranians daily through her contact with coworkers, her children’s friends, and her neighbors.

Pre-immigration: Life in Iran

Hilda identifies as an Iranian since she was born and raised in an Iranian family that valued Iranian culture and traditions. Hilda’s son was born in Iran and he grew up there until he was seven years old. Hilda described her socioeconomic status as upper middle class in Iran and she described her and her husband’s employment status as white collar because of their positions and incomes there. Hilda acknowledged that she was a technical designer and manager in a huge company, and her husband owned a business in Iran. Regarding their educational status, both Hilda and her husband hold bachelor’s degrees.

Hilda discussed the high standards of the curriculum as well as the competition in the Iranian educational system, which is different than the American system. She added, “You know, because Iran has high standard of education, I think when my son came to the United States, even if he was just started second grade, you know in math, he was very far ahead of the class.” Hilda also commented that, since the number of colleges and universities in Iran is limited, students have to compete against each other in order to be accepted in different programs in
higher education. She criticized the strict rules in Iranian schools and explained that her son was not comfortable with the environment of Iranian schools before they moved to the U.S.

**The Decision and Process of Immigration**

Hilda explained that, despite their suitable social and economic status in Iran, she was not happy there, and she decided to apply for Canadian and U.S. green cards through jobs in both countries at the same time. Hilda explained that the sociopolitical environment and pressures in Iran were the main reasons that she and her husband decided to move: “because of the situation in Iran at the time, and for political reasons, some people didn’t want stay there because it didn’t match their standards, I think we were one of those people that we never were happy.” She also mentioned that some of her extended family was living in the United States, and she received a job offer from a company in the U.S.: “I got a job offer, but because it was after September eleventh, then, everybody was laid off, and then, the job was no available for me anymore and…they didn’t give me any job.” Hilda’s explanation of the barriers she faced finding jobs when they arrived shows the increasing persecution and xenophobia against Iranians after nine eleven as well as stage growing the level of racism and neoliberalism in the United States. As Ladson-Billings (1998) explains, different forms of segregation and racism in society and schools are rooted in American history since dominant groups perpetuated rules and laws against people of color.

As Hilda explained, she was resilient against socioeconomic barriers, and she stayed in the eastern U.S. for less than two years before moving to the Southwest. Although Hilda had difficulties starting her life as an Iranian immigrant in the United States, she prefers to live in this country rather than Iran; as she said, “this is a country that I can freely express myself, my kids can freely express themselves, and then be whatever they want to be…they can get to higher
levels of education here because…tools is accessible to everybody.” Hilda remarked that freedom was her most positive experience in the United States, as she recognized she never experienced that during the time she lived in Iran.

**Post-immigration: Life in the U.S.**

Hilda started her new life as an immigrant in the eastern U.S., but she had difficulties living there because of higher living expenses. Therefore, she decided to move to the southwest U.S. because of lower cost of living and having a friend who lived in that area. She explained that for the first year of living in the southwest, she was not happy there, but after a while, she adapted to the new environment and she became accustomed to living there.

Since Hilda had difficulties finding a job in her new home related to her education and skills, she decided to change her major and start over to study in the medical field. One of her friends advised her to study in a particular branch of health care in order to find a job with suitable income. She continued, “I changed my major and after completing the pre-requisite, I entered the…program, which was an associate degree and then I went further for bachelor.”

Hilda indirectly explained the importance of community network as she followed her friend’s guidance for moving to the Southwest and finding jobs illustrating Yosso’s (2005) social capital, the communication and group resources that offer social support for newcomers.

Hilda described her and her husband’s employment status currently as white collar because of their positions and incomes. She also discussed her English fluency as fluent with an accent, her husband’s as somewhat fluent, but her son’s English proficiency as native fluent.

Later, I asked Hilda about her socioeconomic class in the United States, and she clarified the way people define their classes in the U.S. differs from Iran, and she is confused about it: “You know, in Iran, because things were totally different, like if you own a house, you have to pay in full for
it. So, you are the owner. So, here, it’s a little confusing from that standpoint.” Hilda defined her socioeconomic status as working class to middle class in the United States.

Hilda further discussed the positive and negative stereotypes about Iranians in the United States. She believes some non-Iranians, who have met successful Iranians in the U.S. or are familiar with Iranian culture and foods have positive perspectives about Iranians. She added, “So people get introduced to the culture and the values are different than people judging but, you know, with their eyes closed to everything.” This illustrates what Ladson-Billings (2004) described as color-blindness of dominant groups in American society and institutions. Solorzano (1997) also explains this as the problem of color-line and the perceived superiority of one race over others in the U.S. Further, Hilda commented on her experiences related to non-Iranians’ stereotypes and their negative perspectives about Iranians in the United States:

Of course there are stereotypes. When they see an Iranian person, they just think of terrorist first. That’s the first thing come in their minds. Then, they think of a country that is, you know, people are poor, they don’t know the values, they don’t have the standards of learning. Unfortunately, most of the people judge based on what they hear. They never go, you know, study themselves. They never want to find out, it’s nothing to them.

…unfortunately, because of the political situation at the moment and before, when somebody ask me, “Where are you from?” And I say, “from Iran,” then, they say “Oh!” And that, I don’t know how to express that answer, I don’t know if it is, “Oh, too bad,” or “too good.” So, I never understood, like if their interaction is positive or negative, but definitely because they are polite, they try to hide it.

Culture and language. Hilda self-identifies as Iranian and she described her Iranian culture as a great and historic culture that values family and relationships. Hilda explained that,
after living for a long time in the United States, she identifies as American, too: “After living here for fourteen years, I consider myself American because over the time, I take some of those cultures and values and I respect… the differences. I think that some of those differences is very important to me.” On the other hand, Hilda believes that her son describes his identity as American since he grew up in the United States. Hilda explained that her son was almost seven when they arrived in the U.S., and he learned different aspects and values of American culture quickly: “I think he first identify himself as being an American, and also the ethnicity and the race, I think he considers himself as white and being part of this country.” She noted that, “when immigrants come to the U.S., when their children are young, their children pick American culture more often than their home culture and values. She emphasized that the ways children replace their culture and language with American culture, all depends on their family and the way they stress their cultural values at home. She believes a child’s age, peers, school, and media consumption have important roles in cultural differences between immigrant children and their parents.

Hilda explained that she also expects her children to respect their background and understand their rich cultural values. She said that her son was not interested in learning Iranian cultural values initially, but as he grew up, he gradually became interested in understanding different aspects of his home culture and in visiting Iran. Hilda speaks Farsi at home, because she believes it is very important that her children be fluent in Farsi, too. She clarified that unfortunately, her children are not fluent in Farsi because most of their friends are non-Iranian, and they speak English. She explained that her son is interested in learning Farsi more than before because it facilitates their communication at home. She added, “As the time goes, he shows interest in knowing better and better because it makes the communication between me and
him easier…So, we’re working on that.” Hilda’s explanation about her son’s attitude and behavior illustrates that her son gravitated toward American culture quickly after their arrival in the United States since he was very young at that time; however, after a few years, he was interested in learning Iranian culture and language.

I asked Hilda if she noticed any changes in her cultural and religious practices since moving to the United States. She clarified that she does not practice any religion, but she noticed some changes in her cultural practices since she does not sacrifice herself anymore as she did before. She continued that in the United States, parents value their children’s opinion and let them freely express themselves at home. She explained that the differences between the two cultures do not affect her love for her children since she wants the best for her children and she tries to adapt to the new environment and situation gradually:

Over the past fourteen years, although it was hard for me, I tried to adapt myself little by little. I couldn’t change over the night, of course, but you know, over time I said, okay, I can sacrifice some, and they have to sacrifice some of their values too. So, we discussed it, we tried to come to a point of agreement together, and I think that was about it.

Hilda’s explanation about changing over time and adaptation to the new environment manifests identity development similar to what Awokoya (2012) describes regarding identity development of immigrant children after moving to the United States to adapt themselves to the new environment. As Hilda mentioned, her 1.5-generation child also adopted American culture and language quickly mostly because of his age, school environment, and peers. Hilda also pointed indirectly to the negation (the point of agreement) between her and her children to reach a midpoint of their cultural and academic values.
Hilda believes that Iranian culture was not a limitation to her success, and her culture was the reason that she worked hard and followed the rules as her parents taught her to “go with what authority wants you to do.” Hilda remarked on the differences between American and Iranian cultures, and she explained that something that might be common in Iranian culture might be unacceptable in American culture and cause problems in individuals’ communications. She clarified some Iranian cultural norms might not be appropriate in America, such as physical touch in conversation. Further, Hilda discussed the roles of culture and language in her relationships with her son’s teachers. She explained that since it is common between Iranian parents and teachers to push children to do better at school and force them to try harder, Hilda asked her son’s teacher to be stricter with her son, but the teachers rejected Hilda’s request. His teachers insisted that Hilda’s son is doing well at school and there is no need to push and force him to work harder. Hilda realized that her academic expectation was far from her son’s teachers’ expectations and point of view. Hilda’s post-immigration socio-economic and academic expectations were based on her pre-immigration life and experiences in Iran.

Hilda described her son’s relationships with his friends at school: “…I see like my son had friends with the different cultures and background experiences, he, he accepted all of those. The acceptance is the key here. They accept friends as they are…” Although Hilda’s son had positive relationship with his friends, he experienced discrimination regarding his nationality, and he claimed that his peers teased him and marked him as a terrorist. Hilda added,

When he came and he told me about how people teasing him, definitely it affected me. I became so upset and sad, and I wanted to guide him, but when I told him, okay, this is the way you have to do it, that was very interesting to me. He came and told me, his answer was: “Mom, maybe we are mistaking. Maybe they didn’t mean it. Maybe they were busy.
Maybe they were upset from somewhere else.” So, he was so positive even about the negative stuff. Then, I thought to myself, it’s not my place to step in and try to force the negativity into his thought.

As Hilda explained, her son had a positive attitude even regarding the negative aspects of persecution. This manifests what Yosso (2005) refers as resistant capital, which refers to the strategies and skills that immigrants foster by their oppositional attitudes and performance against inequality in the United States. Further, Hilda emphasized that negative stereotypes influence how children “see themselves, their identity, and how they identify themselves in a group. They want to be a part of the group, and this is a lot of pressure to teenagers especially.”

Hilda also noted that, despite the diversity and freedom in the United States, some teachers discriminated against her son when he tried to express himself. This illustrates what Hedges (2012) explains regarding how teachers’ background and funds of knowledge impact their interactions with minority groups and students’ academic outcomes.

Hilda also remarked on a few examples of discrimination at her son’s schools. She added, “Some of the teachers, they don’t like my son, I remember that, they wanted him to get into trouble.” Hilda discussed another example regarding her son’s football coach who discriminated against him, and it negatively influenced her son. Hilda decided to go to school and complain about his coach, but her son stopped her and said: “if you come, he’s going to do even worse to me. Please don’t come. I don’t want you to be involved in this.” Hilda said:

You know, although I consider myself as middle-class family socially and economically, but I always think that this religion, the culture, the background will never leave us. Even if you get to the highest position in this country, but you are from different background, still there are some people that discriminating you; there are many people that don’t
dislike you. There are a lot of policies about you, you know, against you. So, it never ends.

Hilda explained that, regardless of immigrants’ socioeconomic and employment status, discrimination and negative perspectives regarding their culture, religion, and background are the core of society and institutions in the United States. This manifests as racism in society and schools, which are historically embedded in American history (Ladson Billings, 1998; Nieto, 2004)

**School.** Hilda indicated that the American schools and educational system are very different than Iran’s educational system. The structure of schools and the way teachers set up their classrooms are different and confusing for immigrant parents; this was especially true at the beginning of their life in the U.S. On the other hand, Hilda believes that communication with teachers can change parents’ perspectives and results in having a better relationship with teachers.

I always wanted to be a part of the school activities. I never had that much time to do it. But I think like sometimes I went, and I helped with copying the papers, helping children reading, and I always thought that interaction is very important. But because I didn’t have a clear picture of the culture here, I didn’t know exactly to what extent I can, you know, I can proceed. But definitely, it changed my perspective. At first, I was afraid of getting involved, but later on, I realized that every single thing that you do, they really appreciate it, and so it changed my way of looking at the whole thing.

Hilda declared that, in the beginning she was confused about the school system and academic expectations, but after a while, her perspective was changed:
When I first came, I didn’t have that much relationship because I was confused about the whole picture of the schools and what is going on; I didn’t know, you know, what do I have to expect, what is the differences, but as my son started going to higher levels of education, like when he was in fourth and fifth grade, I started, you know, changing my attitude towards that school, and not being afraid of going, and asking questions and be part of the you know, activities that is going on. Because that’s, I thought, first it’s important in my son’s self-esteem. If I am participating, he feels better. When I’m there, he feels more proud and he thinks that I want it to be a good example.

She clarified that imagined version of the American educational system was different than the reality after moving to the U.S.:

I always thought to myself, because the picture that I had from America and American people were always successful people. So, I thought that the education system should be much better and much higher than what we had in Iran. But unfortunately, when we came we saw, oh no, this is not the case, always…I think the relationship between the teachers and the students is wrong here. If students respect teachers a lot, they will listen better.

As Hilda noted, she was initially confused about the differences between the American and Iranian educational systems and about the discrepancies between the American school system and what she had imagined. She also described her evolving communication with teachers, which changed her perspective regarding American education. Hilda indirectly mentioned two different aspects, which were involved in changing her perspectives regarding including illusion, confusion about American educational system.

Further, Hilda explained that, she guided her children to take advantage of the opportunities that are available in the U.S.: “I told my children, this is the land of opportunity.
You can become whatever you want to become, but you can go higher and higher, and the resources that are available to you are tremendous.” Hilda explained that her son has a positive attitude regarding the U.S. educational system, and he does not believe that American schools need improvement because he is used to this system. In this regard, Rumberger and Larson (1998) highlight the role of self-determination, positive attitudes, and rigid morals in immigrants’ social and academic achievements in the U.S.

Parenting and relationships. Hilda discussed her relationship with her children in the United States, and she clarified that, since her children grew up in the U.S., they follow American culture. On the other hand, she believes their cultural differences do not affect her love and what she desires for her children’s futures, as she tries to adapt to new situations eventually. Later, she explained that if she could change her relationship with her children, she would have studied American culture in depth:

I think if I wanted to start all over again, I would have studied a little bit in depth the culture, the American culture. If I know the culture, and where these kids coming from, I could accept it really easier, and we wouldn’t have that much hard time that we experienced before.

Hilda explained that understanding American culture is influential in her relationships with her children. She also mentioned that she tried to change herself to have better communication with her children, as she noted, “I tried to change myself because my husband is very open...And the way that the children respect him because of the open communication, I realized over the time that’s the way that I have to change myself towards.” She believes that as an Iranian immigrant parent, her responsibility is to understand the differences between her and her children: “My responsibility is to be understanding. To understand the differences and try to
change my behavior towards whatever is easier and reasonable. At the same time, not to insult my values, but to respect their values and the culture.”

Hilda believes parents and family are the role models for their children: “When children see your value, they pick it up. All of my family members are educated person, people, and I tried to change my major and pursue my education here, so they always saw me reading book or studying.” She noted that Americans also care about their children’s education, and it all depends on each family’s standards, the neighborhood and the environment in which children grow up: “It depends on what family you come from, definitely. But the area we live in, everybody is educated, everybody cares about their children; so, their values are similar.” This illustrates what Akom (2003) asserted about the importance of social environment on immigrants’ attainments.

Hilda clarified that parents should not force their children to do anything, and instead, they should guide them step-by-step since they are worried for their children’s education. Hilda continued, “At one point I say, okay, we taught them the values, we taught them how to be independent adult, so it’s time for them to get independent and use those experience and backgrounds towards whatever they want to pursue.” Hilda’s description supports what Rumberger and Larson (1998) refer to as the importance of immigrants’ funds of knowledge, positive attitudes, rigid morals and self-determination in their social and academic achievements.

Later, I asked Hilda to explain about the strategies she uses as a parent to help her children to succeed academically and socially and she replied that she tried to listen and then, talk to her son even when their perspectives were different. She also explained that since she was not familiar with the American educational system, she tried to communicate with teachers and school staff: “I was trusting just what communication with the school and teachers sometimes, e-mailing back and forth if there was any problem. And I thought to correct whatever was wrong
from that point on.” She said her communications with the school were helpful to understanding her son’s points of view.

Elahe and the Three Stages of Life

Elahe was born in the United States when her parents lived in the southern U.S., but she came back to Iran with her parents and grew up there. Elahe migrated to the United States about two years ago with her family when her daughter was eleven-years-old. Elahe is working in the health field, but her husband is currently working as a driver throughout the week even though he holds an advanced degree. Elahe’s parents live in Iran and she frequently contacts her relatives in Iran several times a day.

Pre-immigration: Life in Iran

Elahe is a parent of a 1.5-generation child and she self-identifies as Iranian although she was born in the United States. She stated: “I was born in United States, so, but I went back to my country, Iran, I grew up over there, married, and we have a child over there, and then, for the first time, I just came here with my family.” Elahe described that she is proud of being Iranian because it means having a big and old culture, and she introduces herself as Iranian-American or Persian. Elahe said that her daughter also introduces herself as Iranian, and she is also proud of being Iranian.

On her responses to questions regarding their socioeconomic, academic, and employment status in Iran, Elahe revealed a clear picture of her family’s comfortable lifestyle in Iran. Elahe defined their socioeconomic status as upper class in Iran, and she added: “You know, in Iran we have our own house, actually, and our own cars, and we bought all of them by cash…we are sure that we have our family behind us, that care of us, and yeah, our job.” Elahe believed that having family in Iran as support was very important. She added: “…everyone is over there to help you
for everything…we didn’t have too much stress over there.” Further, she defined their employment status as white-collar because of their titles and responsibilities at their work places in Iran. Elahe described her job as a manager in a company, while her husband owned a family company with his father before they migrated to the United States.

Regarding her academic status, Elahe stated that both she and her husband held bachelor’s degrees in Iran. Elahe also talked about her daughter’s education in Iran, and she described her daughter’s school as one of the best schools in Iran. She also noted her positive experience regarding her relationship with her daughter’s teachers when they were in Iran, and she clarified that she was able to contact her daughter’s teachers any time she needed to discuss different issues and even personal problems.

The Decision and Process of immigration

Since Elahe was born in the U.S., she was an American citizen and was thus was able to travel to America with her family any time. Despite her comfortable lifestyle in Iran, Elahe decided to come to the United States mostly because of her daughter’s education; as she expressed:

You know, me and my husband are very sensitive about our daughter, and about her education and everything. And in Iran, she went to a very good and very famous school; it was a private school…she was in second grade and they had a very hard testing every week, weekly, and it was very hard for an eight-years-old daughter to pass this kind of tests. They had to have four or three extra books for each lesson. And we decided to bring her somewhere that she could have her own hours, her own games.
Elahe said that, after they decided to come to the United States, her daughter was concerned about learning English, the language differences at school, and about learning different subjects in English:

…she was really, really worried, especially for the language. And she was even sometimes, woke up from her sleep and tell me, “Mommy, are you really expecting me to study science in English?” But right now, I think she’s feeling more relaxed than Iran, because in Iran, they were always worried because they expect the kids more than they could, but here, she’s really relaxed, she knows that she can redo the things, that I don’t like really.

Post-immigration: Life in the U.S.

Elahe and her husband arrived to the southwest United States because of friends and lower costs of living in this area. Elahe discussed that finding jobs was a major issue for them after moving to the Southwest, and finally, after four months, she was able to find a job in the health field, while her husband could not find any job related to his education and skills. After six months, her husband found a part time job as a driver. She commented that her husband always complains about his current job, which is unpleasant for the whole family because he talks about going back to Iran: “…every hour, every minute. It affects very bad on our daughter and me and even him and his depression. He’s always thinking about going back to our country.”

Further, I asked Elahe specific questions regarding their reaction to her husband’s feelings about going back to Iran:

I talk to him, but my daughter gets mad. I don’t know why. She says, “No, you just made me come to the United States to forget all of my friends in Iran, and right now, you’re asking me to do it again, and I’m not going to do that.”
Elahe discussed her husband’s English language fluency as not fluent and with an accent, and she believed that his English language proficiency was one of the major reasons that he could not attend college in the United States. On the other hand, she explained that her daughter speaks English very well, and she has no problem in interacting with her friends. Elahe defined her own English language fluency as fluent with an accent, and she continued: “Actually, my daughter is always laughing at my accent, and she is asking me always “Mommy, would you please not speaking English when I’m with my friends…”"

Elahe explained that her family routinely discussed about their new lifestyles in the United States and their new experiences. She continued: “… right now, we are trying to spend more time to see a movie or series in TV or talk about our experience during the day.” Elahe continued that American and Iranian schools are opposite, but are both extreme in different ways. Further, she recalled her daughter’s academic status after they arrived in the United States:

When we just came here also, the first year was very good because she was working hard, she was trying to be best in everything, but here, I don’t know why, the students are not trying too hard because they know that every time they had a situation to redo, or to do their homework late even no problem, and I think it’s not very good too, you know, both of them are very extreme. So, yeah, I’m trying to tell her that she’s supposed to try more, even the school is not too hard for her, but she supposed to try more.

Elahe’s explanation regarding the way she navigates her daughter’s education in the United States manifests what Yosso (2005) refers to as navigational capital which includes immigrants’ abilities and aptitudes that help them to survive and achieve through schools.
Culture and language. I asked Elahe whether she noticed any changes in her cultural or religious practices after moving to the United States. She explained about some changes in her religious practice, but she mentioned that she did not notice any changes in her cultural practices. She explained that she does not pray anymore because she does not have time, and she also cannot pray at work as she did in Iran every day. Then, I asked Elahe if her nationality played any role in non-Iranians’ interactions with her at work or in society, and she believed that non-Iranians’ lack of knowledge about Iran and Iranian culture resulted in having negative perspectives about Iranian immigrants in the United States. She explained that giving information about Iranian culture could change non-Iranians’ attitudes about Iran and Iranian immigrants. As Solorzano (1997) states, dominant groups often follow a cultural deficit model, which results in their negative attitudes towards immigrant groups and the associated cultural values. As Elahe explained, lack of knowledge about Iranians and their cultural values results in racial stereotypes against Iranian immigrants in the U.S.

Even though Elahe does not think there are many differences between her and her daughter, seeing differences makes her sad, and she believes that all parents have the same feelings when they recognize the differences between them and their children. She said that, after two years living in the United States, her daughter was still mostly the same as her: “…except for something like, when she wants sometimes to wear, some clothes, we have some problems with each other, and I explain to her, but yeah, I think it’s because of her age.” Elahe also discussed the influence of media, on her daughter’s behavior in the United States. She clarified that media, school, and the environment are the most important factors in changing her daughter’s behavior and interactions. She added:
Yes, most of the time when she wants to give me some example, most of the time it’s from a movie that she saw recently or something that the kids do in the school, and then she would tell me, “See what are they doing, so, I’m better than them, so let me do this, let me do that.”

Further, Elahe discussed the role of media in Americans’ negative perspectives about Iranians. When I asked her whether she saw any evidence of negative stereotypes about Iranians in the United States, she said: “…in some interview for my job, I feel that…I can accept that, because the general information here is not too much. They are just listening to the news and think that we believe in just in bombs…”

Elahe explained that her daughter’s behavior in Iran was different because she completely accepted everything that her parents told her. Elahe clarified that the changes in her daughter’s behavior might be because of her age, or their immigration to the U.S.; however, this caused some issues in their relationship. For example, she explained that she did not like when her daughter uses nail polish every day, and this results in arguments with her daughter. Elahe also emphasized that she had to spend a lot of time speaking with her daughter and reminding her about their Iranian culture and its values, which are different from American culture. As Davidson and Cao (1991) explain, three factors of family, school, and peers play important roles in immigrant children’s adaptation from one setting to another. In this regard, Iranian immigrant parents use different strategies such as having a dialogue with their 1.5-generation children to remind them how to value both American and Iranian cultural norms.

Elahe reported that, currently, her daughter had only one Iranian friend, and most of her friends are non-Iranians. She also believed that her daughter wanted to do something similar to her friends, which conflicts with Elahe’s cultural expectations. For example, she discussed her
daughter’s request to sleep over at her friends’ house, which was not acceptable based on Elahe’s standards, as she noted: “most of the time, her friends has sleep party in each other friends’ houses, but I really, I cannot accept when I don’t know their family, let my daughter go to their house…there are some differences between us.”

School. Elahe stated that Iranians are mostly educated, and this influences Iranian immigrant parents and their academic expectations for their children. Elahe explained that, after their arrival in the United States, her daughter’s teacher upgraded her daughter’s math class to two levels higher than what she was in the beginning, and this influenced her daughter’s self confidence in the United States: “The first year that we came here, the math teacher of hers called me to ask me to send her to two more grades in math, so I think even her accept herself more, to be more successful in United States.” Elahe indirectly explained the role of funds of knowledge and skills in her daughter’s academic achievement. On the other hand, she described teachers’ funds of knowledge, which plays an important role in their perspectives about minority students. As Elahe noted, her daughter was able to achieve her academic goals because of her teachers who believed in her daughter’s abilities, and were able to recognize their students’ abilities without any racial judgment. Remarkably, Elahe also discussed choosing her daughter’s school before coming to the United States: “…when we decided to come to the United States, …the only thing that we first checked was the school grades. And then, we find her school is one of the fifty best schools in the whole United States…” As Elahe explained, the school they chose and the teachers were influential in her daughter’s independence and academic accomplishment.

Elahe discussed her relationship with her daughter’s teachers and she believed that because it was not as easy to meet her daughter’s teachers as it had been in Iran, she did not have substantial relationships with her daughter’s teachers in the United States. She explained that any
time she wanted to see teachers in her daughter’s school, she had to send an email or get appointments to meet her teachers. That was very different from her experiences interacting with teachers in Iran; she felt it takes a long time to meet her teacher in the U.S. Later, she discussed this as a major reason that she did not like to meet her daughter’s teachers in the United States, and she added: “I don’t know why, I think it’s because it’s really hard to see a teacher here.” She also commented on her educational expectations for her daughter, which were different from those of her daughter’s teacher, and how communication with teachers changed her perspectives and expectations:

Once I went to see them. At the beginning, it was a bad experience, but at the end it was good. Because the teacher told me “Okay, you are too much caring about your daughter. You don’t let her to be independent. You have to accept that she is a child, but she is independent of you and she’s always waiting for someone to help her.” And that was true. At the beginning was not a good experience, but when I got home and think about that, it was a really good experience.

Elahe explained that her daughter has a positive attitude about the U.S. Educational system. She believed that in American schools, they use different strategies that give children enough confidence to believe that they can do anything. She believed that her daughter is more confident compared to Iran, and “being different” is positive and results in standing out at school, as she added, “sometimes, the difference make you more bold. I think this difference makes my daughter more bold, and she’s more famous here in school here than her school in Iran.” Elahe has a positive attitude about her daughter’s becoming more independent in the United States, as her daughter does not expect Elahe to help her in doing her homework.
Elahe explained that her expectations of the U.S. educational system were not far from the reality: “…before coming here, I’m telling you, I’m really serious, for two years, I had two years I had, I was studying the education here…so, I wasn’t really shocked. I know most of the things what’s going on here.” Elahe believed that in Iran, students study more, spend more time on their homework, and learn more math and science than the U.S. Teachers also spend more time with the parents in Iran. On the other hand, in the U.S., students are independent, but teachers give students several chances to redo their homework or tests. She believed that her daughter is more organized, independent, and serious than before regarding her educational goals, which might be due to her age or to American school’s practices.

**Parenting and relationships.** Elahe noted that in Iran, she had her own family support and she was able to teach cultural values to her daughter because of the environment. And sometimes, she had to recall some family experiences from Iran and frequently had to remind her daughter about the importance of their cultural heritage. What Elahe described here is evidence of familial capital, which means understanding background culture, history, and values nurtured among minority groups and immigrant families (Yosso, 2005). According to Elahe, since education is highly valued in Iranian culture, she tried to teach her daughter those cultural values regarding education, and remind her daughter that she should try hard in order to succeed both because of Iranian cultural values but also because of skills gained in the U.S. (e.g., self-confidence). She added, “And I’m really trying to tell my daughter that she’s supposed to study, it’s not just for money…I really want that she knows more to be better, to feel better for herself.”

Regarding her parenting style and the strategies she used to navigate her daughter’s education, Elahe explained that in Iran, she tried to help her daughter with everything, but recently, she had tried to let her daughter be independent and have her own experiences. Then, I
asked Elahe whether she tried to change her relationship with her daughter, and she explained, “I try to read some articles, and sometimes I’m going to ask my mom, my parents, my other friends that have child, same age…even some classes I remember I went in Iran for this age.” Elahe reported that, similar to all parents, she wants her daughter to learn about their home culture: “Even if I was from Mars, I would like to ask my daughter or my children to be same as my culture of course, I don’t know why, but I feel it.” Further, I asked Elahe whether she expects her daughter to maintain fluency in Farsi. She explained that her family speaks Farsi at home and she wants her daughter to learn Farsi as well as other languages because it will help her in the future. Elahe’s responses also demonstrated what Yosso (2005) calls linguistic capital, which refers to individuals’ intellectual and social skills in additional language.

**Nooshin and the Three Stages of Life**

Nooshin is an Iranian immigrant parent who migrated to the United States about seven years ago with her husband and two daughters, who were nine and three at the time of their arrival. Nooshin just received her license in a medical profession and started a full-time job in the southwest U.S., but her husband did not have a job for a while, and he currently works in Iran. Nooshin has communication with her immediate family who lives in Iran and the U.S., and she contacts and meets her Iranian and non-Iranian friends in the Southwest frequently.

**Pre-immigration: Life in Iran**

Nooshin identifies as Iranian because she was born, grew up in Iran, and spent most of her life there. Nooshin’s two daughters were born in Iran and her older daughter was in the third grade when they moved to the U.S. Nooshin described her socioeconomic status in Iran as upper middle class because of their high incomes. Nooshin discussed her life in Iran, and she clarified that they lived in a good neighborhood, they were able to travel inside and outside of Iran, and
her daughter went to a good school with high educational standards. She described her and her husband’s jobs as white collar in Iran because of their incomes and responsibilities. Nooshin noted that she worked in the medical field, and her husband had a high-income business before they moved to the U.S. Nooshin holds two bachelor’s degrees and her husband holds an associate’s degree.

Later, Nooshin discussed the Iranian educational system, declaring that it was a combination of religion and education: “…they have the combination of religion and some kind of…rules and regulations and even laws for the kids who study. This is the only thing that bothers me very bad.” Then she explained that her daughter’s teachers were friendly and she had close relationships with them in Iran. Nooshin believes that the discipline and competition are two important factors in Iranian schools, and this results in Iranian students’ acceptance in the higher education in the United States, and in their being readily admitted to the best American universities.

The Decision and Process of Immigration

Nooshin explained that the members of her immediate family were American citizens at the time she was in Iran, but she received her green card long after her marriage. Therefore, she came with her husband and children to the eastern United States, where her immediate family lived, and then she moved to the Southwest. I asked Nooshin whether she is happy about her immigration, and she replied:

I really don’t know if I am lucky or happy here because I’m not. Because of all the problems that I have here right now, I’m not happy about. I think that I have been one of the people who tried to have the best level here. I’m not a laborer, I’m a professional here too, but in my real life, now my husband is not here most of the time because of this
immigration, we have had a lot of problems, a lot of arguments, …and we don’t see him, he doesn’t spend time with the kids, so my kids have a very good situation here, they are honors students, they are very good students, but they don’t see their dad most of the time. And because of that, I don’t think that, I don’t know if it has been a good decision for us…he’s not also happy about this, but this is a must for him because he also needs a job, he needs to make more money.

She explained that their family’s situation influenced her children’s education and their success at school. For example, when her husband moved back to Iran, her children’s grades changed and they received lower grades for a while. Then, Nooshin started to talk to them and helped them to have better grades.

**Post-immigration: Life in the U.S.**

Although Nooshin holds two bachelor’s degrees from Iran, she could not find any job related to her knowledge and skills in the U.S.; therefore, she decided to pursue higher education in the medical field in the southwest United States. Nooshin explained that, since her husband is not fluent in English, he could not pursue education in the United States. Nooshin explained that her husband worked a couple years in a pink-collar job, but was not happy about his job and its income because it was not comparable to his job and income in Iran. So, and he decided to go back to Iran and continue his business there. Nooshin described her job in the U.S. as a white-collar job because of her position and income.

Nooshin discussed her communication with Iranians and non-Iranians in the U.S. She commented that she contacts her Iranian friends daily and she meets them every week. She explained that there are many successful Iranian children who live in the same community, and they are good role models for her children. Nooshin also contacts her non-Iranian neighbors and
friends frequently, and meets them monthly. She declared that since she worked long hours
during the day, she was not able to see her children as she did in Iran, and sometimes she spends
only an hour a day with them in the U.S.

Nooshin identified her children’s language proficiency as close to native fluency, and she
explained that her children are very successful in the U.S. As Nooshin stated, her children have
close relationships with her, and they discuss their social and academic successes and failures
with her. Later, I asked Nooshin to explain the term successful, and she clarified, “In terms of
school, it means that you need to be honors student. To us, getting good grades is not enough.
Successful means that you’re honors, for middle school it means you go to accelerated, high
school being honors.” Nooshin described that her children are successful regarding their
education in the U.S.: “I think it’s not too difficult for them to be successful. And mostly, they
have good role models around them, their Iranian peers, and they see them and want to be like
them.” Nooshin clarified that, being successful is “not even a should. It’s a must” for them. She
explained that, she never forced her children to do anything, and she only tried to give them
enough information when they needed it. What Nooshin described here is evidence of
navigational capital, which refers to immigrants’ abilities and skills to maneuver in American
school systems (Yosso, 2005).

Culture and language. Nooshin identifies as an Iranian parent, and since she has been in
the United States for only seven years, most all of her memories regarding her family, friends,
education, and her background belong to Iran. She stated that, although she is an American
citizen with many experiences in the U.S., she considers herself as Iranian rather than American.
Regarding her children, she explained that her older daughter was nine when she came from Iran
and she has many memories and belongings from Iran, but her younger daughter was three at the
time of their arrival in the U.S. and she considers herself more American than Iranian. She believes the ages of her children are important factors in their identity growth. She added:

In our house, we try to be Iranian. We sometimes even watch Iranian films, movies, listen to Iranian music, because I don’t want my kids to forget about all the culture and everything that we have…I want them to be an American because they want to live here for the rest of their lives, and they need to know how to be American, the culture, the interactions, and everything. But I don’t want them to forget about their motherland…

Nooshin’s explanation illustrates that she wants her children to learn both American and Iranian cultures since they are Iranian, but they live in the U.S. Further, Nooshin described that she expects her daughters’ friends to respect Iranian culture when they come to her house. She expects her daughters to ask their friends to respect some important cultural norms in their home: “You know, some of them when they see you, they don’t even say hello. And this is, in our culture, it’s like an insult…they need to be respectful.”

Nooshin believes there is some discrimination against Iranians in the United States. “There are a lot of people who don’t like us because we are from Iran, and this is very obvious…there are a lot of people, who don’t like us because we are from another country, and especially Iran.” Nooshin explained that some non-Iranians are very friendly and they have good relationships with Iranians, and they love Iranian parties and food. On the other hand, some people call Iranians terrorists. She added, “Unfortunately, we live here in the United States with discrimination. The discrimination is for race, discrimination is for religion, for everything, so this effects of the lives of the people. That’s very important.” As Delgado and Stefancic (2012) mentioned segregation and racism are a continuous thread in American history, which directly and indirectly influenced people of color in the United States. Nooshin stated that in very rare
situations, she noticed discrimination against her nationality at her workplace. For example, she explained that one of her previous managers at work did not like Nooshin because of her nationality and tried to force her to leave her job.

Nooshin clarified that her daughters also experienced negative stereotypes against their nationality at school: “…even some people at school, they tell her terrorist or something like this, and then she doesn’t like it, and she will be bothered with those people.” Gibson and Ogbu (1991) highlight that historical experiences and socioeconomic environments influence immigrants’ academic outcomes in the U.S., and immigrant families use different strategies to overcome social and academic barriers in order to achieve their goals. Nooshin also stated that her older daughter had a teacher in high school that did not like her daughter because of her nationality; so, her teacher did not give her daughter good grades even though her daughter deserved it. Nooshin believes that in addition to the barriers her family faced since migrating to the U.S., discrimination and the new sociopolitical environment against immigrants, specifically Iranians, makes her feel more uncomfortable as an immigrant. She said:

You can see that some people let themselves to invade other people, immigrants, different kinds of people, shoot them, insult them, and these are the things that you see every day, all over the United States. So, this is a great impact on our lives also. Sometimes I was so disappointed that, I was thinking about going back to …they say that we are terrorists, but we have never have seen those ones in our country…and if I didn’t have kids, I would go back to my country.

Nooshin discussed her children’s English fluency as close to native. She also believes learning American culture and language is important in communication: “…If you know the second language better, you can belong yourself to the new country better, because you don’t
know language, you don’t have any interactions, communications, you cannot study or anything else…” Nooshin explained that cultural differences are important factors in relationships even though they speak in English. She stated that her older daughter complained that some of her teachers are not friendly, and they do not understand her. Nooshin believes since her daughter had friendly relationships with her teachers in Iran, she expected the same relationships with her teachers in the U.S.

Nooshin discussed her daughters’ relationships with Iranian and non-Iranians in the United States, and she stated that her daughters have good relationships with their friends at school who are mostly immigrants and are neither Iranians nor Americans. Nooshin explained the importance of community network and social capital (Yosso, 2005). She declared that her daughters have good relationship with Iranian friends too:

I feel good because most of our kids, you know who are older than my kids, they are very successful and they are very good role models for my kids. And our kids, you know, in Iranian community, and I feel good when they are together. Because we are a community, we help each other; we are a lucky family, and they also learn how to be friendly and like a family with the peers who are from one culture and one country.

Nooshin’s explanation regarding the importance of social networks and its influence on her children manifests what Yosso (2005) refers to as social capital, which includes friends and community contacts and supports among immigrants.

**School.** Nooshin discussed the American educational system as different than she imagined; her expectations were higher than the reality in the U.S., and after her arrival, she realized that the quality of the educational system is lower than what she anticipated:
Here, the kids at school, they don’t have any competition, nothing is important to them. If a child of family, they want her/him to study, then she or he studies, but nothing encourages them. If they are good, good. Bad, bad. Nothing encourages them. In our country, that’s very important. The encouragement of the school, of the teachers, is more, so because of that kids are, they learn how to be more successful.

Nooshin believes that, in the U.S., everything is according to rules and regulations, but there are not friendly relationships between teachers and parents; specifically, in middle school and high school, parents do not even know their children’s teachers. Nooshin criticized teachers’ relationships with parents because she does not have enough information regarding important issues in her children’s schools. This is further evidence of disillusionment with American education, which results in Iranian parents’ confusion after their arrival in the U.S.

Nooshin clarified that, even though her daughter went to one of the best schools in the city, Nooshin did not know anything about her school, and she did not even meet all the teachers when they had conferences. Nooshin said, “I think that relationships, teacher/parent relationships in Iran, was much better than here, and it was closer…these things are in our culture and we were so close to each other and so more comfortable. Here you don’t know anybody.” On the other hand, she believes cultural differences influence her relationships with teachers in the U.S.

They are very respectful if you go talk to them, they listen to you, but sometimes because of the difference in the culture, they cannot understand what you are talking about. This is the problem. There are some issues that are very important to me as a parent, but this is not even important for that teacher because of the culture or something else that she has in mind, so yeah. This is the one that sometimes the interaction also doesn’t work.
Nooshin explained that she tried to be involved as a volunteer at her children’s schools, but it was not a positive experience compared to Iran. As she noted: “I have been volunteer many times, but it was also something, they tell you for example, do this, do that, and then it’s done. This is not more than like a being a being an employee.” Nooshin elaborated that her daughter does not like the American educational system because her daughter believes she does not learn many useful subjects. Later, I asked Nooshin if her perspectives regarding American schools changed since moving to the U.S., and she said:

… because at the beginning I didn’t know anything. I tried to go to school more and more. And I wanted to know rules and regulations…I can say that now, I know how to deal with the teachers, how to treat with them. These are very important because when you start living somewhere, you don’t know anything; now, I know all these things. I’ve had experiences, I’ve been a substitute teacher; so, yeah, it’s different, it’s very different.

What Nooshin explained illustrates the impact of social environment and the relationship between cultural identity, social mobility and academic achievement among immigrant families (Akom, 2003). All these factors also influence immigrant parents’ identity development and the ways they navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States.

**Parenting and relationships.** Nooshin discussed her relationships with her children before and after their immigration to the U.S. She believes parents and children have closer relationships in Iran than in the U.S. She believes that her children changed from the time they moved to the U.S., and they like to spend less time with their parents and more time with their peers. Further, she believes cultural differences result in a distance between immigrant parents and their children because children believe their parents have a different culture than their peers and children prefer to spend more time with their peers than parents. Later, Nooshin explained
how different factors, such as peers, media, and the whole environment, influenced her children and their behavior in the United States. Nooshin stated that, despite all the difficulties and cultural differences, she has close relationships with her children, and her expectations for her children set high standards. She stated: “The standard is very high, because they are not allowed to say whatever they want to say. They have to respect all the older people, all the grownups, they have to say hello, goodbye. And this is a must for us, in our culture.”

Nooshin believes that, since the American school system is different from Iran’s, it influenced her parenting and standards. Since there is no competition at American schools, Nooshin reacts differently regarding her daughters’ grades in the U.S. compared to in Iran. She described that she tried to talk to her children about their grades, and she is not as strict as she was in Iran regarding her children’s grades. She continued, “I don’t want to change anything, because you know, they are growing up, in a atmosphere that also is Iranian and American.”

Nooshin also discussed the rules and standards she set up for her children’s homework: “We don’t have any day without homework or studying. This is a sin, in our house. If a student doesn’t want to do homework, or go to school without homework, without studying…she will be punished…”

As Nooshin emphasized, statistics indicate that Iranians are successful in the U.S.; so, as an Iranian parent, she expects her children to be one of those successful Iranian immigrants. “So as a parent, I want my kids at least to be one of those successful people who have immigrated from our country to here, and they need to show that they are good citizens, very respectful…and be successful.” This is another example of aspirational capital among immigrant students, which includes their hopes and dreams for the future in the dreamland. Nooshin stated that she tried to be a role model for her children. She added, “So academically, they see me; I have three master’s
degrees…and they know that if I didn’t have these things when we moved to the United States, I even was not able to make money.” Nooshin explained that she has specific cultural expectations for her children’s education in the United States:

Yeah, I have told them, you need to be, in a way that never, ever have a detention or warning or anything, so whatever rules and regulations you have at school, you need to go through those ones, and you need to accept them, you need to agree, and follow.

Nooshin remarked on this kind of ambition as a professional motivation she used with her daughter. She said: “So these are the real things that they see every day, and then they need to be, you know, some kind of ambitious because ambition is something that shows them the good way of life.” It is clear that immigrant parents use different strategies to be involved in their children’s social and academic performance (Moll & González, 2004), and Nooshin taught her children to be resilient to achieve their goals in the U.S. As Nooshin described, her cultural and educational expectations set the standards for her children’s social and academic success in the United States.

**Roohi and the Three Stages of Life**

Roohi is an Iranian immigrant parent who was born and grew up in Iran. Roohi came to the U.S. with her family about eighteen years ago, and she had three children at the time of her arrival in the U.S., including her sons, who were nine and five, and her daughter, who was almost seven. Roohi described her socioeconomic class as lower middle class in the U.S. since her husband lost his high-income job and he is currently in a blue-collar career in the southwest United States. Roohi’s immediate family lives in Iran and the U.S. She contacts them daily, and she meets her Iranian friends almost every week.
Pre-immigration: Life in Iran

Roohi identifies as an Iranian parent as she was born and grew up in Iran. She holds a bachelor’s degree and her husband holds a master’s degree, while they both worked in their own company before they emigrated from Iran. She discussed their employment status as white collar because of their incomes and positions there. She also described their socioeconomic status as upper middle class because her husband owned his business at the time they lived in Iran. Roohi’s three children were in elementary school and pre-school at the time she decided to migrate to the U.S. Roohi discussed the educational system in Iran, and she explained that children learn the basic subjects, such as math, in a more comprehensive manner as opposed to American children. This is why her older son was far ahead of his classmates after they arrived to the U.S. In addition, Roohi explained that she could afford to hire tutors for her children before moving to the United States.

The Decision and Process of Immigration

Despite their comfortable socioeconomic and employment status in Iran, Roohi and her husband decided to migrate to the U.S. with their children. Since Roohi’s husband had an American green card, they came directly to the eastern United States, where her husband had lived when he was single. Roohi explained that they moved to the U.S. because of their children’s future: “…with the kids, I did decide to come here, because we thought we can give our children more opportunity to have a better life.” Roohi described that they wanted a better future for their children even though they had a luxurious lifestyle in Iran.

Post-immigration: Life in the U.S.

Roohi explained that her children were raised and went to school in the U.S., and their English proficiency is close to native fluency now despite their language barriers at the
beginning of their arrival. Roohi declared that she is not as fluent as her husband is in English because he has lived longer in the U.S. Roohi stated that she had many ups and downs in her lifestyle in the U.S. At the beginning of their arrival, her husband had a white-color job with a high income in the East for almost a decade. So, Roohi preferred to stay at home to take care of her children because financially, she did not have to work at that time. They had a different luxurious lifestyle and she was able to provide the best academic and leisure opportunities for her children until the American economic crisis happened and her husband lost his job. This resulted in a change in their socioeconomic status from upper-middle class to lower-middle class and even losing their house in that area. Roohi’s husband lost his job, and he was not able to find another one; consequently, they decided to move to the southwest U.S. because of lower living costs and having friends in that area:

…we started to lose our home, and my husband was laid off from his job, and then we couldn’t stay and spend all expenses. So, we moved here...Actually, I did not like to come myself, but because of some close friends here, so, and you know, we moved here.

Roohi started a different lifestyle in the Southwest and she explained that the difficulties they faced, familial issues, and their socioeconomic status affected her children’s academic performance in the Southwest:

I [thought] the educational system in the United States is the best… but my expectation was wrong because economy at the time that we were in [the East] changed, and we moved here, and all these things influenced everything under educational profiles. It didn’t go true. My dream didn’t go true that I thought it is easy.
What Roohi explained illustrates the challenges that minority immigrant families face in the U.S. since they find their expectations far different than the reality in the United State (Nieto, 1999). Roohi currently works in a pink-collar job, while her husband works in a blue-collar position with lower income. Roohi explained that she pursued higher education in the Southwest to receive a teaching certificate, but she dropped out in the beginning because it was difficult for her to continue her education financially and academically. In this regard, Roohi explained that the family’s income makes a huge difference in their decisions and lifestyles in the U.S.

**Culture and language.** Roohi identifies as Iranian since she was born, raised, and went to school in Iran. Roohi believes that, since she has lived in the United States for a long time, she has both Iranian and American cultures even though she considers herself more Iranian than American. On the other hand, she believes her children identify as Iranian-American with a different culture, which influences their interactions. Roohi emphasized that their relationships became closer as her children grew up.

When they were younger, I thought…I have different culture with my children, and they have different culture from me...But right now, when they grow up, they come back to me more than when they were young…I don’t know what is this, what I can call this, we are gonna be in the middle, we find something.

Roohi indirectly mentioned the identity development of her children since moving to the United States. As she described events, she recognized a wave in her children’s interactions and relationships with parents as they grew up. Roohi realized what Rogers (2010) refers to as diffusion and innovation in an individual’s identity. As Rogers explained, time is an important factor in individuals’ communication, diffusion, and innovation. These three factors are influential in immigrant parents’ and their children’s identity development and the way they
negotiate to navigate the educational system in the U.S. As Roohi noted, this is an unnoticed process, which results in closer relationships between them and the way immigrant parents navigate their 1.5-generation children’s social and academic success in the United States.

Roohi explained that when her children were teenagers, she had a hard time sustaining relationships with them since they did not share their social and academic issues, particularly when they had lower academic performance in the Southwest, and this made her worried about their futures. Roohi expressed that, like all other parents, she wants her children to be educated and successful. She added, “…everything changed for them and me, environment, schools, and teachers, and suddenly, their grades dropped down, and then, they didn’t come to me explain to me, but after years…having hard time, they started talk to me about their problems.” Roohi believes that, at a certain age, it is difficult to control children’s behaviors. She could not control her children’s behavior when they were in high school since they wanted to follow their non-Iranian school friends.

Roohi explained that, although her children are currently fluent in English, they faced language barriers at the beginning of their lives in the United States: “Right now, they are fluent, but when we came here no, they were less in the classes, and I had very hard time with them, but right now, I don’t think they have any accent.” Roohi noted that her family speaks Farsi at home, and she tries to help her children learn Farsi by translating any English word they use at home. She added, “…with me never said any English word. So, if [they] did, I say: you know what, it means this. So, I correct them to say Farsi. I didn’t force them to, I didn’t talk back in English…” Later, I asked Roohi whether she expects her children to maintain Iranian culture and language, and she replied:” You know what, I can’t decide for them. I learned not do tell them what to do or what to pick. If I do, they don’t listen to me. So, they have to find their ways…” Roohi
believes she is more concerned about her culture than before because it makes her feel more like herself. On the other hand, Roohi stated that her children follow American culture more than Iranian culture because they were raised in the United States. She believes her children changed since they moved to the U.S., and if her children were raised in Iran, they would have a different culture and different behaviors. Roohi emphasized that her children have Iranian and non-Iranian friends from different cultures, and they do not consider their cultural differences in their interactions. She said that her children had relationships with Iranian children the same age as them since moving to the Southwest.

Roohi felt that some of her non-Iranian co-workers look at her differently, and it seems they do not like her, while other co-workers do. She added, “Sometimes I ask question. Oh, what does she think? Why she doesn’t like me. They show their emotions, I have the feeling that some they love, not love, they like me, some don’t like me, I don’t know why?” Roohi believes that cultural differences are not the reason for their feelings because in the United States, people come from different cultures and backgrounds, and culture just means the way people live. She described that sometimes because of her heavy accent, her co-workers wonder about her nationality: “…because of my heavy accent, they’re wondered to know where I am from, and at the beginning it was hard for me to describe that…but right now, I make it as a fun, and say fun stuff to them…” She also declared that there should not be any discrimination against any religion or anything else in the United States because American schools emphasize nondiscrimination: “…we all at school learn about discrimination, we said don’t privilege others because of religion or something like that. But today, I don’t know. I’m not sure about that. I’m afraid of this.”

**School.** Roohi reported that, for a few years after she immigrated to the U.S., she did not
work and was not fluent enough in English to communicate with non-Iranians and her children’s teachers in the U.S. She stated, “Because I can’t communicate with them well, maybe, you know, I couldn’t ask them much questions I wanted to, maybe they wanted to, you know, at the beginning, they wanted me to say something.” Roohi believes Iranians are more concerned about the value of education compared to non-Iranians in the U.S., and she had a different vision about the American educational system before moving to the U.S.:

Yah, at the beginning, I thought everything is easy. Children go to school, then you get a tutor if they need that help, you help, but when they got bigger and bigger, then, their problems get bigger and bigger. Sometimes I was confused, what is the problem with them? No, you can’t say…

Roohi believes children spend more time and try to study harder to go college in Iran, but children enter college easily in the United States and this is one of the reasons that they are not very serious about continuing their education. Roohi believes that, despite the high quality of her children’s schools in the Southwest, their schools’ environments are different than in the eastern United States, and students study more in the East. Roohi explained that since she currently has worked as a staff member in different schools in the Southwest, she was aware that schools’ environments are different as well as their children’s motivations for education. Roohi stated that she did not have a strong relationship with her children’s teachers in the beginning of their arrival:

At the beginning, when we came here, I was poor in speaking, and English was really hard for me to talk, communication was very hard for me, I think, at the beginning I had this difficulty with their teachers, to go involved with their problems in their school,
but at the beginning it was this issue, but after years passed, I think I didn’t have any problem.

Roohi said that she only spoke to her children’s teachers when her children did not perform well at school or upon receiving their report cards. Later, I asked Roohi if she considered herself different from other parents and she replied: “…at the beginning yes, because I had difficulty to communicate with the teachers, because it was hard for me to talk to them, and my children were weak in English either, which they can’t explain to their teachers too…” Roohi explained that her children’s teachers in the East had stronger relationships with her compared to the southwest. Roohi explained that her husband’s friend who lived in the Southwest helped them to find a house in a neighborhood with qualified schools in that area. This is another example of social capital among immigrants, which illustrates community and friends’ supports (Yosso, 2005). Roohi described having a difficult time with her children when they were teenagers; however, as they grew up, her children changed and they had closer relationships with Roohi:

… when the kids were teenager, and I went through a really difficult time that time, and I had really really hard time…maybe they thought that time, they saw themselves as they are American and I am, you know, old fashion, I don’t know what they thought about me, but right now, I have no problem with them, they are back to me, and we are in the same page.

**Parenting and relationships.** Roohi discussed her relationships with her children, and she stated that their relationships changed since they moved to the U.S:

When they were teenager more, you know, I had very difficulties…because I didn’t born here, I didn’t raised here, so, all this, I didn’t understand them well because they were
born here, they went to school here, but right now no, they are closer to me and I don’t have that problem.

Roohi believes she treated her children like babies all the time, and she cared about her children more than what they needed, and if she could change her parenting style, she would not have treated them like babies. Roohi stated that, if she were in Iran, her parenting would be different than it is in the U.S., and she was able to control her children more there. She believes there is a big difference between parenting styles in Iran and the U.S. because children learn about freedom in the U.S. Roohi stated that, in Iran, children are taught to respect and listen to their parents, which is different than American culture. She recalled a time that her daughter came home from elementary school and told her: “You can’t yell at me, here is a free country.” Roohi explained that it is beneficial for children to learn to be independent in American schools, but sometimes they choose the wrong way since children do not listen to their parents as they do in Iran. Roohi believes that parents are role models for their children:

…children look at their parents. Parents are the role models for their children. If you study, they go and they study more. If you sit and you don’t read the book and tell them to read the book, they look at your reaction.

Roohi believes her parenting is different than non-Iranian parents in the U.S. She mentioned that she does not mean her parenting was the best, but she preferred to stay home and take care of her children at the beginning of their arrival in the U.S. Roohi discussed her responsibilities as an Iranian parent and she noted that she monitored her children’s food and sleep to make sure they had good nutrition and enough time to sleep when they were younger; she could do this because she did not work in the East. She clarified that she was able to monitor her children until they
were in high school, but she could not control them when they were in high school since they followed their peers at school.

**Soraya and the Three Stages of Life**

Soraya is an Iranian immigrant parent who migrated to the United States about nine years ago with her husband and son, who was seven-years-old at the time of their arrival in the United States. Soraya is currently working in the information technology field. Her husband recently earned a graduate degree and began to work as a health care professional similar to his previous career in Iran. Soraya has a strong relationship with her family and friends in Iran and outside of Iran.

**Pre-immigration: Life in Iran**

Soraya identifies herself as Iranian since her parents and ancestors are Iranian, and she was born and grew up in Iran. Soraya’s son was born in Iran, and he was in the first grade when they migrated from Iran. Since Soraya’s son had only been in school three to four months before they moved from Iran, Soraya did not have that much experience regarding her son’s education in Iran. She recalled that she just met her son’s first grade teacher three or four times, and the teacher was helpful and positive. Soraya recalled her negative experiences regarding the strict rules in Iranian schools, such as the dress code and requirement of short hair. She explained that even though children learn discipline in Iranian schools, she prefers American school system.

Soraya spoke English very well at the time she answered the interview questions, and she considered her English language fluency as fluent or somewhat fluent with an accent. Soraya considered her husband’s English language fluency as somewhat fluent, and her son’s English fluency as native fluent with no accent. Soraya defined her socioeconomic status as upper middle class when she described her lifestyle in Iran: “I think upper middle class, …we have a life, a
secure life, we have a financially secure life and we could save money.” Regarding her employment, she defined her husband and herself as white collar at the time they were working in Iran because of their positions, titles, and responsibilities there.

The Decision and Process of Immigration

Soraya came to the United States by receiving her green card through her immediate family who already lived in the United States. Receiving a green card by immediate family is a long-term process and typically it takes more than ten years, but individuals who receive this kind of green card are able to come to the U.S. with their spouse and children (under eighteen-years-old). Soraya moved to the southwest United States because her immediate family lived there. Soraya clarified that her son’s happiness and education were the reasons they migrated to the United States:

I see my responsibility as a parent is to make him to feel happy and feel confident, and that is one of the reason that I moved here because I knew here, he will have more access to a good education, to the best universities, to everything. You know, Iran has the problem that they consider it as educational abuse on children because families force their children to study and study even during their summer, during their vacation to become successful. That’s one of the thing I like about here that he can enjoy his life while he is studying.

Post-immigration: Life in the U.S.

To a certain point, Soraya’s case was a discrepant case because she found a job related to her education and the career she had had in Iran. She described her employment status as white collar in the United States because of her position and responsibilities. She also supported her husband’s pursuit of higher education in the United States. Her husband’s experience in the
United States was more typical. He worked just a few months in a blue-collar position as a driver in the first year of their arrival in the U.S. even though he had an advanced degree in a medical field from Iran. Later, he was able to pursue higher education to receive a similar advanced degree and acquire a white-collar career related to his career in Iran. Soraya explained that she held a bachelor’s degree from Iran, and she also is interested in pursuing higher education in the United States and changing her job when it is possible in the future.

Soraya has daily contact with her immediate family and her Iranian friends in the United States via media, such as Facebook, and she meets them one to two times a week. Regarding her interactions with non-Iranian friends in the United States, she said: “…unfortunately I don’t have any American friends. I’m working on it…it seems I stayed in my shell. I didn’t interact as I should with the new environment…I stayed in my shell, which, I don’t like it.”

**Culture and language.** Although Soraya defined the United States as her second home, she preferred to live in this country despite identifying herself as Iranian and not American. Soraya stated that non-Iranians in the United States do not consider her an American citizen, but consider her as a second class-citizen, and this is because of her language. She explained that sometimes, when she introduced herself as an Iranian, she felt that people might think differently: “I feel that in somehow they gonna think that I’m gonna kill them or something, or I am very dangerous, or I just ride a camel or something, Yes, I see this in some people interaction.”

Soraya identified her son differently: “I think he knows he is Iranian, but if we define a person with his knowledge, his culture, I think he is more American, but an American person with Iranian parents.” Soraya clarified that school and peers are the most influential factors in her
son’s identity, which foster these differences, especially their cultural differences. When I asked Soraya about her feelings regarding these differences, she replied:

I like it, honestly. I don’t want my son to be like me because if he was like me, there is no improvement. I like him to be different…he spends more time at school and most of his friends are mostly American, or they are like him, they are Iranian kids which grew up in the U.S., so their culture, their views, the way they study, and their language are different …I think all the parents are different from their children because of their generation gap. So, becomes more when you come here and when they grow up with other culture, values, and believes.

Soraya discussed that her son is not interested in having non-Iranian friends in his house because of cultural differences. She said: “he is at the age that he doesn’t like to see these differences. He doesn’t like his peers to see these differences.” Soraya also described that her son believes their house, their decorations, and their food are different and he prefers to go to his friends’ houses rather than bring them to his house. Soraya was interested in learning American history, values, and beliefs since she did not spend as much time in the U.S. as she did in Iran. She explained that she does not like to be isolated and she was interested in having more communication with non-Iranians in the United States to learn their culture and language. She stated:

My son has two friends, that they are very close to each other, so I am, I have a plan to invite them over for a dinner or something, their family, so I can interact with them, although they are not American. But this is starting… and I have a friend, who is professor in UNLV, and I have a plan to, you know, contact with her and have some kind of interaction, maybe some meetings...
Soraya explained that language barriers, especially using slang and words with different meanings were her major problems in communication with non-Iranians in the United States. Soraya added: “…If I want to speak in Farsi, I know how to talk with my friends, how to talk with my manager, how to talk with my son’s teacher…but here, specially at first, I had a problem.” Soraya emphasized that if she were more fluent in English, she would be more successful at work because English language fluency is an important tool to communicate, especially for managers, and it is important for her company that the person who interacts with their clients and customers can speak English well and communicate clearly. She emphasized the importance of understanding American culture and language:

I wish I had very good English language knowledge that I can go talk with them…cultural knowledge is very important too because people talk about TV shows…and when you don’t know anything about it, you cannot be involved. So, when you cannot be involved, you cannot learn. That’s a negative circle that you can’t. I would like to know more about their culture and their language.

Soraya noted that since her son was growing up in the United States, he considers himself completely familiar with American culture and language, and he does not have any problem talking with his peers because he does not have any problems with their culture and language. Soraya noted that she speaks Farsi at home, and if she feels that her son does not understand some words in Farsi, she translates those words to English for him, and her son knows enough Farsi to have relationships with his grandparents and relatives. Soraya explained that her son’s cousins helped her son learn English and achieve close to native fluency, because her son spoke Farsi at the beginning, but one cousin spoke only English and his other cousin was able to translate for them between English and Farsi. This was the first step, and he was able to interact
with them, play games, and be close to them. Soraya highlighted the importance of the need to have emotional bonds, which were the first inspiration for her son to learn English and helped him understand everything around him.

**School.** Soraya stated that, at the time she came to the United States, her family was not very stable financially, and Soraya and her husband were aware that they could not afford to send their son to a magnet school. Therefore, they asked their family and friends about quality school zones after they moved to the Southwest; they figured out that, if they lived in a good neighborhood, there would be some good schools in that area. So, they investigated and selected their neighborhood based on the school district. Soraya said:

…We had a family in school district, and he told us schools are based on ranking, it shows that how successful are children in those schools. In ranking with other states, or other schools. So, there are some criteria that make these schools good. You know, I think it’s based on their educational environment and the rate of the succeed of them in comparison with other schools, and probably their teachers’ achievements… So, that’s how we chose it. Based on their national ranking.

Soraya explained that, after her son attended middle and high school in this area, she was able to understand the differences based on what she heard, even though she did not have experience with other schools in the United States. She realized that her son’s teachers were caring, and the school environment was supportive. Soraya believed that this was the reason her son became successful. Now, her son is in several AP programs in high school. So, she believed that choosing a good neighborhood and good school was a key in her son’s academic success; additionally, he could access educational support. Then, I asked her what she meant by “a good neighborhood,” and she explained: “…neighborhood that first has a good school system, second,
safety, family based. These are what I consider as a good neighborhood.” She explained that some non-Iranian families also care about their children’s education, but Iranian families care more about their children’s grades and education overall.

Soraya had a positive attitude regarding her son’s schools and teachers in the United States. She said that she always had had a positive experience with teachers since her son’s teachers was very supportive and had a great positive impact on his education. Soraya mentioned her language barriers as a limitation and a negative experience in the United States, which results in miscommunications at school even though the teachers are very supportive. She believed that understanding the language is a long process, and learning English is a continuous challenge for immigrant parents. Soraya noted that not being able to speak well and express what she really wants to say in English with her son’s teachers and principals is her most negative experience in the U.S., but recently, she was able to have positive communication with her son’s teachers and school counselors. For example, Soraya discussed that last year, she was concerned about her son’s social improvement because he just attended high school and he was not socially active and Soraya felt that her son was depressed because he did not have any friends. After talking to his counselor at school, Soraya felt differently: “…I was very worried and she [his counselor] made me feel calm, feel confident, and the key sentence that she told me was: Remember that, anyone has their own pace on improvement, on social improvement, so don’t worry…” Soraya defined this interaction as a good experience with American schools. She said that, after her conversation with the school counselor, Soraya felt that there was more support if she needed it and she emphasized that any “interaction makes a change” on each individual. She explained that her son’s peers had a positive impact on her educational expectations and her expectations increased since his friends’ grades are straight As. Soraya also described about how she monitors
and checks her son’s grades in his school’s app, and whenever something happens, such as having a bad grade or missing homework, she asks him to explain and expects him to answer in this regard. She explained: “…I told him that you can be straight A. I know you can, so, I want you to achieve it. I want you. This is the standard I said.”

Soraya discussed the negative stereotypes about Iranians in American schools. She believed that this is not about the educational system as a whole, but is instead about individuals in schools. A few times, her son faced some kinds of racism from his peers, which was not a pleasant experience for him, especially when he was younger and he was in middle school. Soraya said that, a couple years ago, there was a non-Iranian student in his school and whenever he saw Soraya’s son; he started to bully her son about his accent. On the other hand, some students made jokes when they saw an airplane, and told him: “Hey is this your dad that gonna destroyed, is it nine eleven experience, your dad in that airplane gonna blow somewhere? …” She added that once, she called her son when he was in a park with his friends, and as they spoke Farsi, his friend asked him if he was talking about a terrorist plan with his mom. Soraya said that her son believes his friends want to make jokes about something such as his nationality, which was not at first a good experience, but now, it is ok with him because of their friendship; as he believes “they don’t sacrifice him” and his friends are just joking around. Soraya felt that her son had positive reactions in the face of his friends’ perspectives and attitudes when they made such jokes about his race and nationality; as a result, he was able to interact with his friends without having any problems. What Soraya explained about her son’s reaction to his friends’ persecution illustrates resistant capital, which means the skills and strategies fostered by immigrants’ social performances that confront inequality in society and institutions (Yosso, 2005).
**Parenting and relationships.** Soraya believes that both parents show their love and support to their son and have a close relationship with him, although they have some cultural differences. She likes her son to know about Iranian culture, but she does not expect him to maintain Iranian culture, and she wants her son to be happy in his own way, doing whatever he likes. She believes that her son compares both Iranian and American cultures, and he likes some aspects of each culture. Further, Soraya emphasized in her positive communications with her son as she tries to learn American culture and language:

...I’m trying to learn more about American culture, I try to improve my language, I try to, for example, watch movie with him, watch TV shows with him, so, this is what I want to do to make myself familiar with his culture, and talk with his teacher...

Soraya explained that, from the time they started watching television series with each other, they had more common subjects to discuss. For example, she clarified that, last week, for the first time she heard the word “merit,” and she asked her son about its meaning, but he also did not know what it meant. Then, they both checked the Farsi and English dictionary, in order to find the meaning of that word in both languages. Soraya emphasized: “The key thing in our relationship is, I think in any relationship is communication. So, I tried to make this bond. I used whatever I can to establish communication with him.” Soraya mentioned that her relationship with her son has changed since they moved to the United States, and she believes her son’s attitude towards his parents would be different if they were in Iran: “…I don’t think he would have this attitude if we were in Iran, because we are not familiar with their culture, we have accent in English…”

Soraya stated that, when they arrived in the United States, she was like a lost person because she didn’t know anything, and it was like she was born again in a country that she knew
nothing about. Soraya did not know American culture, how to “talk with the children,” and what is right and wrong, but she feels more confident now, and she has a better relationship with her son’s teachers. This represents the concepts of illusion and confusion since immigrant parents have different vision before and after their arrival in the United States. Then, regarding her parenting style, she explained that her parenting style might be differed from other parents because she does not force her son to study, but instead, she talks to him and makes him responsible for discussing the issues and answering her questions regarding any issue, as she explained: “sometimes, I talk to him and say hey, you have a good talent and don’t make laziness takes you behind or something. I made him responsible to answer me...” Finally, Soraya explained that her responsibility as an Iranian parent is to make a calm and peaceful environment for her family and make her son feel happy and confident. Soraya concluded: So, I just, you know, support him and encourage him to continue…and pick up the good work, and that’s the way. Such communication between immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children is also reinforced by findings in the parental involvement literature, that minority parents including immigrants use different strategies to be involved in their children education in the United States.

Mina and the Three Stages of Life

Mina is a single parent who immigrated to the United States with her ex-husband and her daughter about four years ago when her daughter was nine. Mina has a part-time job since she is a college student and also takes care of her daughter. Mina and her ex-husband were together when they came to the United States, but they divorced and lived separately after their arrival. Mina’s immediate family lives in Iran and she contacts them almost every week. Mina has not visited Iran since she moved to the U.S., and she does not have any plans to visit Iran soon.
Pre-immigration: Life in Iran

Mina was born and raised in Iran. Mina’s daughter was also born in Iran and she was in the second grade at the time they moved from Iran to a neighboring country. Mina described her socioeconomic class as upper class since she had a high income, and her ex-husband had a pink-collar job in Iran. Mina holds a bachelor’s degree and her husband holds an associate’s degree from Iranian universities. Mina discussed the educational system in Iran, and she expressed that her daughter was doing well at school, and she was very successful, particularly in reading and writing in Farsi. She clarified that her daughter’s skills and high performance in Farsi influenced her academic performance in American schools. For example, her daughter was very successful in reading and writing in Iran, and she also receives good grades in those subjects in the U.S. even though English is her second language. Mina’s explanation manifests the importance of immigrant students’ funds of knowledge, which refers to their background knowledge, and it impacts on their social and academic performances. (Moll et al., 1992). Mina also discussed her strong relationships with her daughter’s teachers in Iran as she met them almost three to four times a month to talk about her daughter’s grades. She emphasized that since her daughter was very successful there, Mina did not have any problems regarding her daughter’s academic performance in Iran. On the other hand, Mina explained that her daughter had difficulties with lack of freedom because students had to follow their dominant religious rules and practices, such as girls wearing scarves in schools. Mina explained that her family had a different religion than the majority of Iranians, and she felt uncomfortable living there. She declared that social and religious pressures on her family made them feel unsecure although they had an upper middle-class status before moving from Iran. She described the strict religious and political rules in society and schools as the main reasons for leaving Iran.
The Decision and Process of Immigration

Mina declared that lack of freedom in society and schools made her family feel different and uncomfortable because her family practiced a religion that was different than the majority religion in Iran. For example, her daughter avoided following religious rules and practices at school from the time she started: “…she was kind of avoiding for wearing scarf, and all the time, I had problem with her school, and they said she doesn’t respect…it was not that kind of serious because she was only six, seven years old…” Mina’s ex-husband was also uncomfortable working as a member of a minority group in his job. Therefore, Mina and her family decided to move from Iran to a neighboring country before moving to the western United States. Mina clarified that they did not have a plan for immigration, but they had to move from Iran to have a secure and comfortable life in a free country. She noted that, at the beginning, she was worried and she was not sure if their decision to immigrate was the right choice, particularly because of their language barriers and other changes in their lives: “At first actually, I was scared because I heard, you know, I cannot grow up really fast because of language and the other changing for the different aspects, but now, I’m really happy…” Mina explained that at the beginning of her arrival in the U.S., she was unfamiliar with the new environment, and wasted her money and time. She clarified that she feels happy about her decision to migrate to the United States, and she is doing well in the U.S. now.

Post-immigration: Life in the U.S.

Mina identifies as American since she lives in the United States, and she will be an American citizen soon. She declared that, at the beginning of their arrival in the southwest U.S., they did not have any Iranian friends, but she knew other friends who had children the same age as her daughter in other states; so, after a few months, they decided to move to a neighboring
state because they were able to communicate with their Iranian friends in that area. This demonstrates the importance of social network and support among immigrants in the U.S. Mina observed that there are some differences between Iran and the U.S., and she realized these differences more than her daughter. She stated,

Actually, the difference for me is more than her, and she doesn’t feel more differences because she’s growing up here. But I grew up there. But fortunately, I could, you know, manage and myself be kind of a part of this community and this country really fast, but sometimes it’s really hard…she doesn’t feel lot of differences because actually, she cannot remember more about there, and she’s completely satisfy of whole organization for school, and American community here…

Mina declared her English proficiency as fluent with an accent, and her communication with non-Iranian co-workers and classmates in the U.S. helped her learn English faster. She explained that her ex-husband was not fluent in English, but her daughter learned English quickly and she speaks close to native fluency. Mina is currently a college student as she noted, “Yeah, I’m actually, my plan is continue going to school here and be educated, more helpful person in United States as my country.”

Mina described her socio-economic status as pink collar in the U.S. because of her salary, but she likes her job: “Actually I like this job because for it helps me for interact with people, so I can interact, I have interact more with people and talk with them, and I know more about American people from different states…” Mina emphasized that she was not interested in talking about her ex-husband and his living status in the U.S.; therefore, I refused to ask more questions in this regard.
**Culture and language.** Mina defined her nationality as Iranian because she was born in Iran, but she identifies as American since she is currently living in the U.S. She added: “…I kind of can consider myself as an American, completely because I’m in the process to citizen…if I’ll be citizen, I will be American like as, Iranian-American. Yes, I’m living here. It’s my new land; it’s my new life.” Mina believes her daughter describes herself as more American than Iranian, but there are differences between her and her daughter: “…it’s really big difference between us…it was not as like as difference between me and my mom, but now, I can see a lot of differences, even in knowledge, even for the kind of thinking way, and for everything…” Mina was concerned about cultural differences since it makes her daughter’s behavior different than what Mina taught her. Mina clarified that she tried to teach her daughter those aspects of Iranian culture that she believed in, though not all of them, and she wants her daughter to learn the positive aspects of both cultures.

Mina reported that she practices her religion freely in the United States as opposed to the time she lived in Iran. Mina does not have any problem regarding cultural differences at her workplace or with her co-workers, as she noted, “fortunately, I had not any bad experience about my language or culture, culture differences, because I could match myself really fast here…” She noted that she listened to the world news every night before moving to the U.S., and consequently, she was able to adapt faster than others.

Mina also explained that immigrants face some challenges because of their cultural differences, but these differences should not influence their progress in what they do in the U.S. She emphasized that media in the U.S. plays an important role in individuals’ perspectives about Iranians, and those who are unfamiliar with Iran and Iranian culture and follow the media in the U.S. may have negative perspectives and behaviors related to Iranians.
She explained that she has not noticed any evidence of negative stereotypes against Iranians in the U.S., but she heard that sometimes they are labeled terrorists. On the other hand, she noticed some positive experiences with her daughter’s teachers and their perspectives. Her daughter’s teachers claimed that it was unbelievable how quickly Mina’s daughter learned English, putting her ahead of her classmates in reading and writing in the eighth grade. Mina described that she speaks Farsi at home because she wants her daughter to be fluent in Farsi, but she does not expect her daughter to maintain Iranian culture since they do not have enough communication with Iranians.

**School.** Mina discussed her daughter’s education in the United States, and she explained that the American educational system is different from the Iranian educational system. Mina said that she complained to her daughter regarding her study behavior at home: “I was complaining her, your behavior is not good, and you’re not doing good, you don’t study enough”. Although Mina’s daughter received good grades, Mina believes her daughter’s efforts towards homework and studying might not be enough because she did not try to study as hard as she did in Iran:

I used to see a lot of homework, a lot of study, but I cannot see anything here [in the U.S.] … I think maybe here is the easiest school or easy step, maybe is not as hard as over there [in Iran] … and all the time, I’m complaining her. It was really funny, one time, I had appointment with her teacher and said…she’s reading some books not related to her school, and her teacher says, “I don’t know what are you talking about. She’s my best student in the class.”

Mina explained that her daughter was not aware of cultural differences between Iranians and Americans except some differences that she noticed between her family and her friends, and she had difficulties making friends at school. Mina’s daughter was anxious about non-Iranian
children who might refuse to be her friend because of her accent. Later, her daughter realized
that the United States is a diverse country and she should not be afraid of interacting with non-
Iranians in the U.S. Mina described some challenges that her daughter faced regarding her
language barriers upon their arrival: “…she couldn’t understand all the words, and sometimes
some children laughed at her, but later I tried to talk to her about this problem; she could learn
really fast.” As Nieto (2004) explains, the one-way direction of the monocultural and
monolingual American school system is planned to encourage students of color to ignore their
original cultural values and instead follow the American culture and language. Mina discussed
her daughter’s quick English acquisition as her best experience in the U.S. since she is able to
speak English close to native fluency. On the other hand, Mina was worried about her daughter’s
learning math in the U.S. since math education in the United States was far behind her
expectations. Mina indirectly revealed the phenomenon of illusion as she noted that the
American educational system did not match her expectations. She believes that, in addition to
language barriers, cultural differences were another issue for her daughter at school, but her
daughter adapted to the new environment:

…in the first year…she was struggling with accent and also some differences, for
example when she was playing, and because she used to a different way, but gradually,
she learned how to change herself because she’s a child, and you know the children can
change themselves really faster than us.

Mina explained that her perception about her daughter’s teachers changed once she
determined that children worked and practiced as much as they needed at school. Mina clarified
that she did not have enough information about the American educational system before moving
to the U.S., but her perspectives and expectations regarding American schools changed gradually because of her interactions with her daughter’s teachers:

…actually, my expectation was completely different because of the differences and all these, I thought, okay, this system is not asking of child to do homework and study more, and make them lazy because I was a really good student there [in Iran], and always, I can remember, I was writing something, …but here, I couldn’t see, and then later, I found that no, because really it’s difference between the system here and over there [in Iran], and then, when for example, now, when I’m going to her school, I don’t expect as before, so my expectation completely now different of before.

Mina defined the United States as a land of opportunities, and individuals can be successful if they learn new skills and work hard. She said that she is very happy to be in the United States because her daughter has more opportunity for education and growing up compared to Iran. Overall, Mina is satisfied with the American educational system, and she believes children should enjoy their lives, which is a different focus when compared to Iran. She believes her daughter also likes the American educational system since she enjoys her life and she does not experience strict educational rules in the U.S.

Parenting and relationships. Mina believes children have more power and authority in the United States compared to Iran, and consequently, her relationship with her daughter changed since moving here. Mina clarified that she had more authority and strict parental discipline and rules before coming to the United States, but no longer:

…For the two, three years, just I was just struggling for finding myself and you know, a lot of differences between culture and the other differences between two countries…sometimes I thought, I cannot understand her completely because of different
behavior and just, her behavior is completely different of what exactly I expected it should be, like as me and my mom…but here, everything is different; so, I should learn more.

Mina indirectly explained that rather than changing her daughter, she tried to negotiate with her daughter to have a closer relationship with her and match their expectations.

Actually, before I tried to change her to be like as me, and I tried, and it was my problem with her, but recently, I found that I was wrong, and I should not change this relationship. Just I should be match with her...

What Mina described was an example of immigrant parents’ identity development and negotiation with their 1.5-generation children, which will be discussed in detail in the following chapter. Mina clarified that her parenting style is different than in Iran because the system is different, and she cannot use the same parenting strategies to raise her child in the United States as she did in Iran. Mina declared that she does not complain to her daughter anymore about the way she studies because Mina has changed her expectations. She added, “…because now, I can see her progress, so that’s why, I changed my expectation, and I found that I should make peace for her to finding herself in her way.” Mina concluded that her daughter’s goal is to be an educated and helpful citizen in the United States.

**Emergently Constructed Themes**

Four major themes were constructed from analyzing transcribed data including illusion confusion, and diffusion; close-knit relationships; resilience and endurance; and innovated identity and negotiation. The first theme was “illusion, confusion, and diffusion,” which refers to participants’ challenges regarding the differences between Iranian and American culture, language, and educational systems when compared to participants’ visions and expectations.
before moving to the United States. The second theme “was close-knit relationships” as all participants highlighted the importance of the social networks and community supports before and after their immigration. “Resilience and endurance” was the third theme, which referred to the strategies that participants and their 1.5-generation children used to overcome the social and academic challenges they faced in the United States. Most participants indicated the existence of racism and discrimination in society and institutions against Iranian immigrants as the result of political conflicts between Iran and the United States. Inequality and discrimination in society and schools influenced Iranian immigrants’ hopes and fears about their futures. The sociocultural and academic barriers in society and schools also resulted in this group of immigrants’ social and academic adaptation based on their cultural and educational values and expectations. Finally, the last theme was “innovated identity and negotiation,” which deals with Iranian immigrant parents’ identity development and negotiation with their 1.5-generation children. All participants indicated their desires to learn American culture and language in order to understand their children and have closer relationships with them, while valuing both Iranian and American cultures and languages. Participants clarified that learning the English language plays an important role in communication and in understanding American culture and values. This is key understanding and navigating their children’s education in the U.S. Table 3 illustrates the relationships between research questions and relevant themes.
Table 3

The relationships between research questions and relevant themes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research questions</th>
<th>Themes &amp; attributes</th>
<th>Data sources &amp; Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do immigrant parents develop their identities to navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States?</td>
<td>Innovated identity and negotiation</td>
<td>Roohi’s interview: “...I can sacrifice some, and they have to sacrifice some of their values too. So, we discussed it. We tried to come to a point of agreement together…” LR: Gee, 2000; Awokoya, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) How do society and school contexts impact immigrant parents’ identity development and their interactions with their 1.5-generation children?</td>
<td>Illusion, confusion, and diffusion</td>
<td>Hilda’s Interview: “When I first came, I didn’t have that much relationship because I was confused about the whole picture of the schools and what is going on…” LR: Rogers, 2010; Nieto, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) What strategies do immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children develop and use to counter the negative effects of socioeconomic pressures in the United States?</td>
<td>Resilience and endurance</td>
<td>Hilda’s Interview: “…So, he was so positive even about the negative stuff. Then, I thought to myself, it’s not my place to step in and try to force the negativity into his thought.” LR: Yosso, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) How do immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation students develop positive or negative perspectives regarding educational setting in the United States?</td>
<td>Close-knit relationships</td>
<td>Soraya’s Interview: “We had a family in school district, and he told us schools are based on ranking, it shows that how successful are children in those schools… So, that’s how we chose it; based on their national ranking.” LR: Ackom (2003)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Four Summary

Chapter four detailed findings of a multiple case study of Iranian immigrant parents and the social and academic challenges they face in the U.S., which influences their identity development. Participants’ profiles included their personal and professional background and detailed information regarding their socioeconomic and educational status before and after moving to the U.S., as well as the reason for and the process of their immigration. Eight Iranian immigrant parents of 1.5-generation children participated in both phases one and two. Phase one covered identity demographic questions and participants described socioeconomic and academic status before and after their immigration to the U.S. In phase one, participants also explained their relationships with their 1.5-generation children and their peers and teachers in Iran and in the United States.

Phase two included a variety of questions aligned with the research questions, and participants explained the socioeconomic and academic challenges they faced in the U.S. as well as the strategies they used to overcome these barriers and to navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States. Four major themes were constructed from participants’ responses including illusion, confusion, and diffusion; close-knit relationships; resilience and endurance; and innovated identity and negotiation. The relationships between the major themes and the research questions will be discussed in the following chapter. Chapter five explains the similarities and differences among and between the cases in order to explore the strength of the themes and findings of this study. It also addresses the implication of this study, and offers recommendations related to immigrant parental involvement, and the challenges they face after their arrival in the U.S. to navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States.
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Introduction

This study includes five chapters. Chapter one detailed the rationale of this study. It provided the researcher’s personal and professional experiences relevant to this study. Chapter two detailed the empirical and theoretical research related to the topic of this study to address the gaps in current research and the significance of this study. The third chapter provided detailed information about a multiple case study methodology, while it disclosed information regarding data collection and data analysis in the study. Chapter four discussed each participant’s profile and the findings of this study. Finally, chapter five discusses four major themes that emerged from the findings; each theme answers a relevant research question. In addition, the discussion and implications in this chapter confirm aspects of Critical Race Theory and other significant literature relevant to the themes. This chapter also covers the limitations, recommendations, and the conclusions of the study.

This research was conducted in two phases including the pre-interview and interview sessions. In phase one and two, eight participants—Afsoon, Ladan, Hilda, Elahe, Nooshin, Roohi, Soraya, and Mina—were met and interviewed separately to answer various questions, which were created by the researcher of this study. In the pre-interview sessions, all eight participants individually met the researcher and answered the same identity demographic questions. In the second phase, the same participants were interviewed separately to respond to the questions aligned with the research questions. Participants’ interviews were transcribed, stored, and reviewed in order to analyze participants’ responses within and across the cases; finally, four major themes were identified from the findings of the study.
The major theme of “close-knit relationships” was identified from participants’ responses in phase one. Participants’ stories about their immigration in the pre-interview sessions indicated that their lives as immigrants included three stages: pre-immigration (life in Iran), the decision and the process of immigration, and post-immigration (life in the U.S.). I used this pattern in presenting each participant’s profile in chapter four to describe their socioeconomic, education, and employment status before and after immigration.

The second theme that emerged from the findings of phase one and phase two was “illusion, confusion, and diffusion,” which referred to participants’ social and academic perspectives before and after their immigration and to what extent their dreams were matched with the reality in the United States. The findings indicated that Iranian immigrant families face different barriers in the United States because of the differences in culture, language, and the educational systems of Iran and the United States. In addition, the political conflict between both countries resulted in discriminatory attitudes against Iranian immigrants in American society and schools.

The third theme that emerged from the interview data was “resilience and endurance,” which addresses the strategies that participants and their 1.5-generation children used to overcome the social and academic barriers in the United States, as they tried to adapt to the new environment without full assimilation. Finally, participants’ responses to the interview questions in phase two indicated that Iranian immigrant parents adopted innovated identities, which refers to the process of their identity development in the new land and their negotiations with their 1.5-generation children. Participants explained that after realizing the increasing gap between them and their 1.5-generation children, they used different strategies, such as having more
communication with non-Iranians—including their children’s teachers and peers—in order to understand their 1.5-generation children and navigate their education in the United States.

**Review of the Study’s Significance and the Research Questions**

Due to the increasing number of immigrant families in the U.S., researchers have shown considerable interest in immigrant children’s education in the last decades. Among the contemporary research, a wide range of studies focus on at-risk immigrant children’s academic and behavior outcomes. On the other hand, the role of immigrant parents in their children’s education, and the positive behaviors and achievements of immigrant families have been ignored. Decreasing the social and academic gaps between majority and minority groups has been a controversial topic in American education; while policy makers historically ignore the barriers minority groups face in society and schools. Due to the important influence of culture and language on an individual’s identity and communication, it is essential to examine the impact of American culture and language on immigrants’ identity development and their performance in society and schools.

Cultural and lingual capital of dominant groups in the United States, and pervasive negative perspectives against immigrants are undeniable in American history (Nieto, 2004; Yosso, 2005). Newcomers come to the dreamland with different prospects and dreams, but they all desire social and academic success for their children. In addition, society and school contexts play important roles in immigrant families’ hopes and fears, as well as their social and academic successes and failures. Diverse immigrants with different cultures and languages face common obstacles such as language barriers and unfamiliarity with culture and the school system after they arrive in the U.S. Immigrant families commonly experience social and academic challenges contrary to their images of the dreamland. As a result, despite the deficit thinking of dominant
groups regarding immigrants’ parental involvement, immigrant parents use different strategies to overcome social and academic pressures to navigate their children’s education in the United States.

This study focused on one main question and three ancillary questions, which were key to the data collection process. The main research question is: how do immigrant parents develop their identities to navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States? Three ancillary questions are: (a) how do society and school contexts impact immigrant parents’ identity development and their interactions with their 1.5-generation children? (b) what strategies do immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children develop and use to counter the negative effects of socioeconomic pressures in the United States? and (c) how do immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation students develop positive or negative perspectives regarding the educational setting in the United States? Answering these research questions increases our understanding of the significance of immigrant parental involvement in their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States. In addition, the process of immigrants’ identity development contributes to understanding how immigrant parents use different strategies in that process to reach a balance between home and American cultural values. They have pride in maintaining their own culture and language, but also realize the need to adopt aspects of American cultural values in order to foster their children’s success.

In the following section, I will start the discussion with addressing the first ancillary question: how do society and school contexts impact immigrant parents’ identity development and their interactions with their 1.5-generation children? One major theme, which answers the first ancillary question, is immigrant parents’ illusion, confusion, and diffusion. Then, I will address the second ancillary question: what strategies do immigrant parents and their 1.5-
generation children develop and use to counter the negative effects of socioeconomic pressures in the United States? The major theme, which will be discussed to answer this ancillary question is immigrant parents’ resilience and endurance. Then, I will address the last ancillary question: how do immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation students develop positive or negative perspectives regarding the educational setting in the United States? There is also one major theme, which answers the third ancillary question: immigrant parents’ close-knit relationship. Finally, I will address the main research question: how do immigrant parents develop their identities to navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States? The themes that discuss the ancillary questions lead to a clear understanding of the main question and the findings relevant to its purpose. There is one major theme, which will be addressed to answer the main question, including: innovation identity and negotiation. Continuing chapter five, I will show the connection between the themes that emerged from the findings of this study and the relevant research literature. Chapter 5 will close with a discussion of some implications for policies and practices in this area, based on the study findings, as well as the limitations of the study and some recommendation for future research.

Discussion

Participants’ responses to the questions in the pre-interview sessions indicated that all participants came to the United States in the last twenty years. After the Iranian Revolution in 1979, a great number of Iranians emigrated from Iran to the United States as a result of the changes in Iranian government policy and social rules. Participants’ answers to identity demographic questions indicated that the reasons and the process of their immigration were complicated due to the governmental sociopolitical rules in Iran and exclusive immigration laws against Iranians after September 11th in the United States. Participants’ explanations regarding
the reasons for their immigration clearly indicate that mostly, Iranian immigrants’ enthusiasms for immigration to the U.S. were based on beliefs in greater freedom and opportunities for their children’s superior education, rather than having on better socioeconomic or employment status in the dreamland. Answering the research questions provides a rich understanding of participants’ lives before and after their immigration to the United States, as well as their identity development and the ways they navigated their 1.5-generation children’s education in the U.S. In this chapter, research questions will be answered by addressing the relevant themes, which emerged from the finding of this study. I start this section by answering the first ancillary research question.

**How do Society and School Contexts Impact Immigrant Parents’ Identity Development and their Interactions with their 1.5-generation Children?**

Findings of this multiple case study illustrate that participants experienced socioeconomic and academic pressures because of cultural, lingual, and educational differences between the two countries. In addition, most participants recalled the pressures of pervasive negative perspectives against their nationality in society and institutions, with Iranians often labeled as terrorists in the American media. Understanding participants’ backgrounds is influential in understanding their socioeconomic and academic status before their immigration, which might impact their interactions and social and academic expectations in the United States. Table four reviews participants’ responses to identity demographic questions in the pre-interview sessions. As table 4 makes clear, appears in the following table, all participants in this study were Iranian mothers of 1.5-generation children. Most participants were educated and their socioeconomic statuses (SES) in Iran were higher when compared to SES in the U.S. It is necessary to mention that,
during the pre-interview and interview sessions, all participants were able to communicate in English with different levels of English fluency.

Table 4

Participants’ identity demographic data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Gender &amp; nationality</th>
<th>SES &amp; employment status in Iran</th>
<th>Lower SES &amp; employment status in U.S.</th>
<th>Educational status in Iran</th>
<th>Fluent in English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afsoon</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Iranian</td>
<td>Middle Class</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>HS Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladan</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Iranian</td>
<td>Middle Class</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>AS Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilda</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Iranian</td>
<td>Upper Middle</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>BS Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elahe</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Iranian</td>
<td>Upper Class</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>BS Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nooshin</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Iranian</td>
<td>Upper Middle</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>MS Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roohi</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Iranian</td>
<td>Upper Middle</td>
<td>X X</td>
<td>BA Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soraya</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Iranian</td>
<td>Upper Middle</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>BS Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mina</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Iranian</td>
<td>Upper Class</td>
<td>X X</td>
<td>BS Degree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following section addresses one of the major themes and its relationship with the first ancillary question.

Immigrant parents’ illusion, confusion, and diffusion. Socioeconomic status of immigrant families is a major concern of newcomers after moving to the United States. Similar to other immigrants, Iranian immigrants’ social class and employment status are different before and after their immigration. Finding careers related to their knowledge and skills is one of the greatest challenges that Iranian immigrant parents face after arrival in the U.S. Iranian immigrants face many preconceived and discriminatory perspectives in both society and school
contexts. In particular, American society and schools have become more discriminatory regarding immigrants’ nationalities after September 11th, 2001.

The negative perspectives of dominant groups in society and schools toward Iranian immigrants notably affects Iranian immigrants who have migrated to the United States, especially after September 11th. In both social and academic contexts, Iranian immigrant families face numerous obstacles, which conflicts with their American dream. In addition to the emotional and financial struggles of the immigration process and leaving family, friends, and belongings behind, Iranian immigrants face an uphill battle when trying to find jobs in the U.S. comparable to what they had at home. Similarly, research shows that Arabs and Latino immigrants in the United States have hopes of achieving the American dreams, while recognizing a long journey ahead in the dreamland (Del Cid, 2011; Weaver, 2010).

Hilda and Nooshin explained that finding jobs relevant to their knowledge and skills was one of their major obstacles after moving to the United States. Hilda holds a bachelor’s degree and she was a manager in an Iranian company before moving to the U.S. Hilda received her American green card through a job offer from a company in the U.S., but she lost her job after moving to the U.S. Hilda stated, “I got a job offer, but because it was after September eleventh, then, everybody was laid off, and then, the job was no available for me anymore and…they didn’t give me any job.” Hilda was not able to find any job for a while, and she decided to move to the Southwest to find a job and pursue higher education.

Similarly, Nooshin holds a master’s degree, but she was not able to find a job for a long time after moving to the U.S. Nooshin also decided to move to the Southwest because of lower living costs and having a friend in this area. Hilda and Nooshin both pursued higher education in different areas of the medical field based on their friends’ advice. A majority of participants also
described their spouses’ challenges in finding jobs after their arrival. Soraya explained that, although her husband holds an advanced degree, he was not able to find a relevant job in the U.S. Consequently, he worked in a blue-collar job for a few months in the Southwest. Since Soraya had a stable job, she was able to support her family financially. Soraya’s husband pursued higher education to receive an advanced degree similar to what he earned in Iran.

As participants in this study reported, in addition to socioeconomic pressures such as finding jobs, Iranian immigrants often face unexpected cultural, lingual and educational contradictions after moving to the United States. By examining the pre-interview and interview data, it was apparent that participants’ visions regarding their lives in the United States were different than the reality they encountered after immigration. Participants explained their challenges in society and school since they were unfamiliar with American culture and language, particularly early on after their arrival. In this regard, Soraya stated that after immigrating to the United States, she was like a lost person in a country that she did not know anything about, and she was confused about American cultural norms and what is right or wrong. For example, although Soraya could speak English well, she was sometimes confused about the meaning of the same word in different contexts. She referenced the word “cool,” which has different meanings in different contexts. She quickly realized that it was not appropriate to use this word in her conversation with her son’s teacher. Soraya continued: “…If I want to speak in Farsi, I know how to talk with my friends, how to talk with my manager, how to talk with my son’s teacher…but here, especially at first, I had a problem.”

Most participants recalled their challenges regarding language barrier and emphasized the relationship between language fluency and individual’s self-confidence in society and schools. Relatedly, Elahe explained that she had issues in communication with non-Iranians at her work
place in the U.S.: “I have problem because sometimes I’m going to tell them something, I can
tell them, but I cannot explain as much good as I want.” Participants’ interviews show that
language barriers were one of the most common challenges faced by Iranian immigrant parents
and their families after their arrival, since language is so key to communication.

In addition to language differences, participants described their challenges regarding the
dissimilarities in cultural norms and school systems between Iran and the U.S. Hilda and Afsoon
stated that some cultural norms and behaviors in Iran might not be appropriate in the United
States, such as nudging or physical touch, which is a habitual behavior in Iranian’s informal
communications. As Hilda described, these kinds of cultural differences might cause issues in
individuals’ communication and interactions. An example of this was what Afsoon recalled as
her worst experience in her daughter’s school shortly after arrival. As Afsoon explained, her
daughter was suspended for a couple days from the elementary school since she was not able to
speak English, and she nudged other students to call them:

I remember the first years we came here, and my daughter, she can’t speak English and
she want to talk with somebody for, her friends in the class, and she touched them and
after two or three days, the principal calls us and call her and they say “Your daughter is
not friendly” … but my daughter is so cry and said “No, I want to call them, but I don’t
know how to call.”

This exemplifies what Nieto (2004) refers to as American schools’ one-size-fits-all
system, ignores minority students’ needs and barriers, pushing them into the melting pot.
Similarly, Hilda explained that her image regarding American schools was different than what
she experienced in the U.S.: “I thought that the education system should be much better and
much higher than what we had in Iran; but unfortunately, when we came, we saw, oh no, this is
not the case, always.” Hilda also declared that, after their arrival, she was confused about the
culture and academic expectations: “I always thought that interaction is very important, but
because I didn’t have a clear picture of the culture here, I didn’t know exactly to what extent I
can, you know, I can proceed.” Hilda described that American school system and structure were
unfamiliar for her; so, she was hesitant to interact with her son’s teachers. She continued, “When
I first came, I didn’t have that much relationship because I was confused about the whole picture
of the schools and what is going on…”

Two more participants also acknowledged their confusion regarding the American school
system after moving to the U.S. Laden and Roohi described the differences between their visions
of American education before immigration versus the reality and challenges their families faced
after immigration: Ladan explained: “I always was thinking everything is easy, but now, when
she is going to school, nothing is easy.” Ladan stated that her daughter also had different
imaginings about the American school system before coming to the U.S.: “In Iran, everybody
said it is so easy, and everybody took it easy, but when she moved here, she said no mom, it’s
hard…Yah, she thought it’s easy, but it’s not easy.” Similar to Ladan, Roohi’s image of what her
children’s education in the U.S. would be different from her experiences, and she was confused
about the reason. “Yah, at the beginning, I thought everything is easy. Children go to school,
then you get a tutor if they need that help…Sometimes I was confused, what is the problem with
them…”

**The same nationalities and alternative identities.** In the pre-interview sessions, all
participants except Mina identified as Iranian since they were born or grew up in Iran. Mina
emigrated with her ex-husband and her daughter to the U.S. about four years ago. Mina believes
Iranian means individuals who live in Iran, and American means people who live in the U.S.;
therefore, she self-identified as American even though she was born in Iran and grew up there. On the other hand, the majority of participants believed their 1.5-generation children would describe themselves as American, even though they all were born in Iran and then emigrated to the U.S.

It is important to note the fact that most parents identified themselves and their 1.5-generation children differently, because they grew up in different environments and followed different cultural values. Participants’ responses to identity demographic questions indicated that their 1.5-generation children prefer to adopt American culture and identify as American rather than Iranian. Table five illustrates participants’ responses regarding their 1.5-generation children’s background, language fluency, and how 1.5-generation children describe their identities.

Table 5

1.5-generation children’s identity demographic data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>1.5-generation children’s gender and their ages at the time of arrival</th>
<th>1.5-generation children’s described identity</th>
<th>Years of residency in the US</th>
<th>Language speaking fluency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child’s gender</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Iranian</td>
<td>American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afsoon</td>
<td>Girl</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladan</td>
<td>Girl</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilda</td>
<td>Boy</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elahe</td>
<td>Girl</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nooshin</td>
<td>Girl</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roohi</td>
<td>Boy</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soraya</td>
<td>Boy</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mina</td>
<td>Girl</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among participants, Elahe was the only parent who was born in the U.S. and immediately came back to Iran with her parents. Elahe expressed that she stayed her whole life in Iran and married there. Elahe’s parents are still living in Iran, but Elahe emigrated to the U.S.
with her husband and her daughter who was eleven at the time of their arrival. Elahe self-identified as Iranian, and she was the only parent who believes her daughter describes herself as Iranian rather than American. As data in Table 5 table shows, Elahe and her family have been in the U.S. for two years and the length of her residency in the U.S. has been less than all other participants in this study. On the other hand, Ladan’s daughter was twelve at the time of her arrival, and she has been in the U.S. for five years. As opposed to Elahe, Ladan identified her daughter as American. Ladan clarified, “…she is different. She is American. She is a real American… I think she feels she is American because she grew up here; she would like to be an American girl…”

Considering the data and the way that Elahe identified her daughter is the evidence of what Rogers (2010) explains about the relationship between diffusion and time. According to the author, different levels of uncertainty are involved in the process of diffusion, and time is an essential factor in this procedure. Consequently, the length of residency might be considered as the reason that Elahe believes her daughter describes herself as Iranian rather than American contrary to the other participants. With this consideration, the amount of the time that Iranian 1.5-generation children have been in the U.S. might influence the way they identify themselves after their immigration. This can open the door for future researchers to consider this factor as an assumption in their study or a focus in their research questions.

During the interview sessions, Hilda and Roohi explained that because they have been in the U.S. for a long time, they picked up some aspects of American culture. Roohi said that, although she has lived in the United States for a long time, she follows both Iranian and American cultures, and she is still more Iranian than American. Similarly, Hilda self-identified as Iranian in the pre-interview session, but later in the interview session, she explained that, after
living for a long time in the United States, she describes herself as American, too: “After living here for fourteen years, I consider myself American because over the time, I take some of those cultures and values and I respect… the differences. I think that some of those differences is very important to me.” Interestingly, Mina self-identified American in the pre-interview session, and later she continued: “…I kind of can consider myself as an American completely, because I’m in the process to be citizen…if I’ll be citizen, I will be American like as, Iranian-American. Yes, I’m living here. It’s my new land; it’s my new life.”

**Shifting power and immigrants’ parental involvement.** Power and authority are important factors in relationships between teachers, peers, and parents in Iran and the U.S. Most participants explained that parents and teachers have less power in the United States compared to Iran since children’s perspectives are valued differently in both countries. Hilda commented that, in Iran, individuals are not free to express themselves and disagree with parents and teachers; whereas, in the U.S., which people freely speak and express their feelings. She reiterated that, in the United States, children are valued differently than in Iran:

> In our country, people sacrifice for the family. Like, we never said anything against our parents… But here, people think differently. I think children, you know, they express themselves freely. If they disagree, they express it, and the relationship is a little bit harder. You don’t have that authority here.

Hilda also described that students in Iran respect their teachers differently, and teachers have more authority compared to the U.S. Following American culture results in changing behaviors and attitudes of Iranian 1.5-generation children in the U.S. As a result, the standards and strategies that Iranian immigrants used in Iran might not work in their parenting in America. Roohi noted that parenting is different in Iran as children are taught to respect and listen to their
parents, which is different than American culture. Soraya also believes that since her son followed American culture, the cultural differences between them influenced her son’s attitudes and behavior since moving to the United States. She clarified that her son’s attitude towards his parents would be different if they were in Iran: “…I don’t think he would have this attitude if we were in Iran, because we are not familiar with their culture, we have accent in English…”

Likewise, Nooshin discussed that cultural differences cause a distance between immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children since immigrant children believe their parents have a different culture than their peers; therefore, their 1.5-generation children prefer to spend more time with their peers rather than spending time with parents. Similarly, Roohi described that she could not control her children’s behavior when they were in high school since they wanted to follow their non-Iranian school friends. She continued: “…when the kids were teenager, and I went through a really difficult time that time, and I had really hard time…maybe they thought that time, they saw themselves as they are American and I am, you know, old fashion…”

A majority of participants mentioned that 1.5-generation children in the United States have more authority at home and school, and they are raised independently compared to Iran. As participants explained, language barriers and unfamiliarity with the American educational system are two important reasons that Iranian parents could not help their children and monitor their assignments as they did in Iran. As Ladan explained, she was not able to help her daughter with her homework in the U.S. as she did in Iran because of the language barrier: “I couldn’t help her or…have a discipline with her because she is really good to study, and she doesn’t need. I couldn’t help her anymore.” Ladan emphasized that her daughter is more independent and responsible in the United States compared to Iran. Similarly, Afsoon believes that language barrier influences her parenting in the U.S. She clarified, “I think if I am staying in my country, I
can help her more, because in here, it’s little bit different, and hard for me…because my English is not good, that’s why I can’t help too much…” In this regard, Roohi explained that it might be beneficial for children to be independent in the U.S, but sometimes they choose the wrong way because they do not listen to their parents as they do in Iran.

Hilda highlighted the strong power of teachers in Iranian schools, and clarified that teachers in Iran have full authority, their words come first at school, and students have to follow their teachers’ standards in the exact ways their teachers want. She also expressed that her children should use their background knowledge and experiences which they learned from parents and be independent in order to be successful in the United States: “At one point I say, okay, we taught them the values, we taught them how to be independent adult, so it’s time for them to get independent and use those experience and backgrounds towards whatever they want to pursue.” In this example, Hilda emphasized the importance of funds of knowledge in children’s success. It also refers to what Yosso (2005) explains about familial culture and the network between the members of the family.

Elahe, Afsoon, and Roohi expressed that their children’s behavior and attitudes in Iran were based on what they learned from their parents. Elahe expressed that her daughter completely accepted everything that her parents told her. Afsoon also described raising children in the United States as different than in Iran: “In here, they value them, their kids, and you can’t say something… they don’t like it. That’s why you have to always be careful what you say, what you’re doing with the kids.” Interestingly, Roohi recalled on an example about a time that her daughter came home from elementary school and told her: “…you can’t yell at me, here is a free country.” As it is apparent, Iranian immigrant parents do not have the same authority here that they had in power in Iran, and their 1.5-generation children have more authority at home and
school compared to Iran. Elahe also emphasized that she tried to teach her daughter Iranian cultural values to increase her self-efficacy and remind her daughter to work harder at school to achieve her academic goals. What Elahe described strongly manifests the importance of aspiration capital, which means immigrants’ hopes and dreams for their future in the United States (Yosso, 2005).

Most participants explained that one of the positive aspects of the American school system is teaching students to be independent. They also emphasized the importance of monitoring children’s social and academic behaviors, as well as reminding their children of the value of education in Iranian culture. In this way, Iranian immigrant parents let their children be independent, which is a positive aspect of American culture, while they ask their children to respect and follow Iranian educational values and expectations. Iranian 1.5-generation children aspire to be independent, based on what they learn from the American school system, while they value education and respect their parents’ academic expectations at home. Figure 4 illustrates the process of illusion, confusion, and diffusion for Iranian immigrants.

![Figure 4. Illusion, confusion, and diffusion](image-url)
Understanding the differences between American and Iranian school systems and adapting to the positive aspects of American culture influences the perspectives of Iranian immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children about the American educational system. Answering the second ancillary question provides a scaffold to understand Iranian immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children’s perspectives about American’s educational system. I will continue this section by answering the second ancillary question and addressing the emergent theme relevant to this research question.

**How do Immigrant Parents and their 1.5-generation Students Develop Positive or Negative Perspectives Regarding the Educational Setting in the United States?**

Participants’ responses to the pre-interview questions indicated that they all had strong relationships with their relatives and friends in Iran and in the United States. As mentioned, all participants reported that having family or friends in the southwest United States was one of the reasons that they moved to this area. As participants’ profiles in chapter four demonstrated, most participants sought advice from their Iranian friends or their family who lived in the Southwest to choose the neighborhood where they wanted to live, based on qualified schools for their children in that area. Hilda explained that family’s standards and neighborhood are influential in children’s academic achievements. She emphasized the importance of family and neighborhood in children’s education: “…It depends on what family you come from, definitely. But the area we live in, everybody is educated, everybody cares about their children; so, their values are similar.” Similarly, Soraya expressed the role of familial and social networks in choosing a good neighborhood and qualified school, which resulted in her son’s academic success. She clarified: …we had a family in school district, and he told us schools are based on ranking, it shows that how successful are children in those schools. In ranking with other states, or
other schools. So, there are some criteria that make these schools good. You know, I think it’s based on their educational environment and the rate of the succeed of them in comparison with other schools, and probably their teachers’ achievements… So, that’s how we chose it; based on their national ranking.

Soraya reflected that, after a few years, she was able to understand the differences between different schools, since her son’s teachers were very supportive and they helped him to achieve his academic goals. She believed that choosing a good neighborhood and good school was a key in her son’s academic achievements. She explained that her language challenges were the reason for miscommunications with teachers, even though they were very supportive.

Roohi also explained that her husband’s friend, who lived in the Southwest helped them to find a house in a neighborhood with qualified schools. Roohi declared that since she has been a staff member in different schools in the Southwest, she was aware that schools’ support and their students’ aspirations for education vary between schools. On the other hand, Elahe stated that her daughter’s school was her major focus and she was searching for a qualified school for almost two years before moving to the U.S.: “…when we decided to come to the United States, …the only thing that we first checked was the school grades. And then, we find her school is one of the fifty best schools in the whole United States…” Most participants explained that they lived in good neighborhoods with qualified schools.

Nooshin and Elahe explained that they lived in good neighborhoods and their children’s schools were considered as the best schools in Iran. These findings strongly suggest that participants’ pre-immigration lifestyles influenced their decisions about choosing neighborhoods based on the quality of schools. Participants’ close-relationships with their families and friends helped them to choose qualified schools. In this regard, Yosso (2005) explained the importance
of familial capital and social capital, which refers to the influence of family and community networks on minorities’ achievements in the U.S. As participants explained, choosing good neighborhoods and qualified schools through social network and community supports provided more opportunities for their 1.5-generation children to achieve educational success. Nooshin and Soraya emphasized that choosing qualified schools with caring teachers resulted in their 1.5-generation children’s academic progress, and they are currently socially and academically successful.

**Communication as a key factor in immigrants’ success.** Soraya described the importance of “emotional bond” as an inspiration for her son to learn English quickly. She felt that having Iranian family and friends when they arrived in the southwest U.S. facilitated her son achieve near-native English fluency. As she explained, in the beginning, her son was not able to speak English and spoke only Farsi, but one of his cousins was able to translate for him and other children between English and Farsi. Soraya believes this was the initial driver for her son’s self-efficacy in interacting with non-Iranians and starting to communicate with other children. Soraya emphasized the importance of having emotional bonds as stimulation for newcomers to learn English and understand everything around them.

Participants’ responses indicated that they were aware of the relationships between language fluency and their 1.5-generation children’s academic success. A majority of participants explained that their 1.5-generation children experienced many difficulties around language barriers when they first arrived. Iranian parents also emphasized that English fluency was influential in their children’s communications with their non-Iranian peers and teachers at school. Learning English also resulted in increasing their children’s self-efficacy and academic achievements since they were able to understand different subjects and earn better grades.
Iranian immigrant parents who participated in this study claimed they had high academic expectations for their 1.5- generation children because education and academic success are highly valued in Iranian culture, especially among the middle and upper classes. Thus, in addition to school’s teachers’ and peers’ pressures to conform to the melting pot, Iranian 1.5-generation children were under pressures from their parents to demonstrate their accomplishments at school and earn good grades as they did in Iran. Consequently, learning English was the first step for their success and the key factor to overcome these pressures. However, as data shows, Iranian 1.5-generation children learned English quickly in response to teachers’ and peers’ pressures at school, as well as their parents’ expectations at home, in order to be accepted in both places. Figure 5 illustrates the pressures of home and school on Iranian 1.5-generation children for English acquisition in order to be accepted by teachers, peers and their parents.

![Figure 5. Iranian 1.5-generation children’s pressures for learning English](image)

Participant’s responses to the interview questions indicated that Iranian parents’ academic expectations were not matched with teachers’ expectations, and parents expected their 1.5-generation children to work harder in order to be successful at school and earn better grades. The findings of this study indicated that Iranian immigrants’ pre-immigration lifestyles and
educational background influenced their post-immigration’s lifestyles, as well as social and academic performance after their arrival in the U.S. As participants explained, also other factors, such as discrimination in society and schools influenced 1.5-generation children’s social and academic performances.

Adaptation and alternative perspectives. Most participants reported that their expectations of the American educational system before moving to the U.S. were much higher than what they actually experienced after arriving in the U.S. Hilda highlighted Iranians’ high standards for the curriculum as well as the highly competitive approaches to learning, particularly in science and math. As a result, 1.5-generation children often are academically far ahead of their classmates in the U.S. Hilda continued, noting that parents might have different perspectives about the American school system upon arrival, but that communication with teachers can change parents’ perspectives, helping them to better understand the American school system. She noted, “At first, I was afraid of getting involved, but later on, I realized that every single thing that you do, they really appreciate it, and so it changed my way of looking at the whole thing…” She explained that from the time she was more involved in her son’s school, she was better able to understand the American school system and change her perspectives about the educational system in the U.S. She believes this resulted in improving her son’s self-efficacy. She added:

I didn’t know, you know, what do I have to expect, what is the differences, but as my son started going to higher levels of education, like when he was in fourth and fifth grade, I started, you know, changing my attitude towards that school, and not being afraid of going, and asking questions and be part of the you know, activities that is going on. Because that’s, I thought, first it’s important in my son’s self-esteem. If I am
participating, he feels better. When I’m there, he feels prouder and he thinks that I want it to be a good example.

Relatedly, Afsoon explained that her daughter was more interested in going to school since she learned English and she was able to communicate with peers and teachers. Afsoon and her daughter experienced the challenge of language barriers when her daughter was suspended at school. Afsoon stated that after a short time, her daughter learned English quickly, was better able to communicate with her peers and teachers, and now has a positive attitude regarding American schools.

Teachers’ attitudes and perspectives about minority groups influence their interactions with immigrant children and affect children’s academic achievements. Elahe explained that upgrading her daughter’s math class to two levels higher than where she started benefitted influenced her daughter’s self-confidence at school, and as a result, her daughter was encouraged to work harder in order to be successful at school. Elahe recalled her positive experience and how it changed her perspectives after meeting her daughter’s teacher:

Once I went to see them; at the beginning, it was a bad experience, but at the end, it was good. Because the teacher told me “Okay, you are too much caring about your daughter...you have to accept that she is a child...she’s always waiting for someone to help her.” And that was true. At the beginning was not a good experience, but when I got home and think about that, it was a really good experience.

Elahe explained that in American school system, they use different strategies to give children enough confidence to believe that they can do anything. She declared that her daughter is independent now, and has a positive attitude about American educational system. Participants’ explanations were the evidence of what Rogers states about communication. As Rogers clarified,
“communication is a process in which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding” (2010, p. 11). As described, it is clear that communication with school staff and parental involvement were the key factors in changing perspectives of Iranian immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children in the U.S.

The alternation of immigrants’ perspectives about the American school system was a remarkable and unexpected finding which opens our eyes to the importance of different variables in society and school that influence immigrant parents’ and their 1.5-generation children’s perspectives about the American school system. Findings indicated that most immigrant parents had positive perspectives about the educational system before coming to the United States, but language barriers and lack of communication, as well as different school system resulted in changing their perspectives.

Consequently, differences and confusion resulted in developing their negative perspectives about the American school system initially after their arrival in the U.S. However, upon learning more English, further communication and greater understanding of the school’s system and expectations, their perspectives again changed, this time in a positive direction. This adaptation to the new educational system was accomplished without losing their high academic expectations. Parents were able to understand and accept the differences between American and Iranian school systems and expectations, maintaining the positive aspects of both cultures. Acceptance of the differences and maintaining their own cultural and lingual values were the key factors in changing the perspectives of Iranian immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children and, ultimately, having positive perspectives about the American educational system.

In this regard, Chrispeels and Rivero (2001) explain the important role of minority groups’ parental involvement in their children’s academic success. The authors also note the
mismatch between minority parents’ expectations and those of the school due to cultural
differences in both settings. Educators often ignore the role of immigrant parents in their
children’s education and they are not welcoming of immigrant parents. Tinkler (2002) clarifies
that teachers and school staff should facilitate parental involvement in school programs by
providing a positive environment and by welcoming minority parents.

What Strategies Do Immigrant Parents and Their 1.5-Generation Children Develop and
Use to Counter the Negative Effects of Socioeconomic Pressures in the United States?

The socioeconomic status of immigrant families is one of the major concerns of
newcomers after moving to the United States. As participants described, finding careers related
to their knowledge and skills were the foremost obstacles that Iranian immigrant parents faced
after arrival in the U.S. It is clear that American society and schools have become more
discriminatory against certain immigrants’ nationalities after the events that took place on
September 11th, 2001. Inequality and negative perspectives of dominant groups toward Iranian
immigrants influences both the social and academic outcome of immigrants.

Similar to other immigrants, Iranian families are the victims of racism in American
society and schools. As Lee (2012) states, neoliberalism is the new form of racism, which serves
as a barely disguised tool of social injustice to segregate cultures and languages. The negative
consequences of neoliberalism such as ignoring immigrants’ knowledge and skills and offering
poorly paid jobs to professional immigrants impacts their social and economic status as well as
their children’s education in the United States. The findings of this study illustrated that
difficulty finding jobs due to discrimination against Iranians in the U.S. influenced their families’
emotional bonds and consequently, their children’s education. On the other hand, due to the
pervasive social and academic obstacles, immigrant parents pro-actively navigate their children’
social and academic outcomes while also desiring adaptation without full assimilation by valuing both cultures in the U.S.

**Resilience and endurance.** As determined by the findings from interviews, most participants were aware that Iranian and American language fluency are the prerequisites in understanding the cultures of both countries, as well as their differences. Most participants reported their desire to learn English in order to understand American culture, while they insisted on maintaining Iranian culture and language at home. All participants in this study declared that they speak Farsi at home and use different strategies to teach and maintain different aspects of Iranian cultural values with their 1.5-generation children. For example, Elahe emphasized that, most of the time, when she talks to her daughter, she tries to recall some memories from Iran regarding their Iranian cultural norms and values, which are different from American culture. Elahe stated that she reminds her daughter daily, “We are Iranian and we have different cultural values.” The strategy that Elahe uses to convey feeling and sensitivity to Iranian culture and language supports what Yosso (2005) refers to as familial capital, which is an important aspect of immigrant’s cultural wealth. As Yosso explains, minority families in the United States carry a sense of cultural memory and intuition to value their cultural norms.

Likewise, Nooshin and Soraya use similar strategies, such as watching TV shows and movies with their 1.5-generation children at home. Nooshin stated:

In our house, we try to be Iranian. We sometimes even watch Iranian films, movies, listen to Iranian music, because I don’t want my kids to forget about all the culture and everything that we have…I want them to be an American because they want to live here for the rest of their lives, and they need to know how to be American, the
culture, the interactions, and everything. But I don’t want them to forget about their motherland…

In this regard, Soraya also explained that she watches TV shows and movies with her son at home, and if they do not understand the meaning of one word, they try to find its meaning and translation in both Farsi and English dictionaries. Similarly, Roohi also explained that when her children use English words in their conversation at home, Roohi translates it immediately to Farsi in order to teach and remind them to speak Farsi.

In addition to the emotional and financial struggles of the immigration process and leaving belongings behind, Iranian immigrants face adverse situations and perceptions when seeking jobs in the U.S. Hilda and Nooshin explained that finding careers relevant to their knowledge and skills were their major obstacles after moving to the United States. Hilda holds a bachelor’s degree and she was a manager in an Iranian company before moving to the U.S. She received her American green card through a job offer from a company in the U.S., but she lost her job after moving to the U.S. Hilda stated, “I got a job offer, but because it was after September 11th, then, everybody was laid off, and then, the job was no available for me anymore and…they didn’t give me any job.” Consequently, Hilda was not able to find any job for a while, and she decided to move to the Southwest to find a job; later, she pursued higher education in this area.

Likewise, Nooshin holds a master’s degree, but she was not able to find a job for a long time after moving to the eastern U.S. Nooshin also decided to move to the Southwest because of lower living costs and having a friend in this area. Hilda and Nooshin both pursued higher education in different majors in the medical field based on their friends’ advices in the Southwest. These examples illustrate the importance of social networks and what Yosso (2005) 

205
refers to as societal cultural wealth of immigrants’ community in the U.S. A majority of participants described their spouses’ challenges in finding jobs after their arrival.

Soraya also explained that her husband holds an advanced degree in a medical field in Iran with accompanying high income, but he was not able to find a similar job in the U.S.; consequently, he worked in a blue-collar job for a few months in the Southwest. Since Soraya had a stable job, she was able to support her family financially, and help her husband to pursue higher education and receive an advanced degree and career similar to what he earned in Iran. As Hilda, Nooshin, and Soraya discussed, they used and developed the strategies of resilience and endurance, which refers to their positive resistance against socioeconomic and academic challenges they faced in American society and schools.

In addition to their economic and academic challenges, Iranian immigrants experience xenophobia and persecution against their nationality in particular here. As data shows, a majority of participants recalled their families’ experiences regarding discrimination in the U.S. For instance, Soraya described that her son experienced discriminatory attitudes and behaviors from his friends as they made jokes about his accent and labeled his family as terrorists. Although Soraya’s son was emotionally affected by his friends’ negative attitudes, he decided to resist positively and keep his friendships with his friends at school. He told Soraya that his friends were just joking around and “they don’t sacrifice him” anymore. It is clear that discrimination in not a pleasant feeling for an immigrant child, but Soraya’s son decided to stay strong for his social and academic goals as he positively resisted his friends’ negative attitudes. In this regard, Roohi also recalled her experience in the work place: “…because of my heavy accent, they’re wondered to know where I am from, and at the beginning it was hard for me to describe that… but right now, I make it as a fun, and say fun stuff to them…”
In addition, Hilda also described that her son experienced discrimination a few times. This influenced Hilda and her son emotionally, especially when his peers teased him and marked him as a terrorist. Hilda described that her son had a positive attitude at the time, even though his friends had negative, stereotyped attitudes against his nationality. Soraya continued:

I wanted to guide him, but when I told him, okay, this is the way you have to do it, that was very interesting to me. He came and told me, his answer was: “Mom, maybe we are mistaking. Maybe they didn’t mean it. Maybe they were busy. Maybe they were upset from somewhere else.” So, he was so positive even about the negative stuff. Then, I thought to myself, it’s not my place to step in and try to force the negativity into his thought.

In these examples, Iranian Immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children experienced different kinds of discrimination after moving to the United States, but they used the strategy of positive resistance against all these challenges. Although positive resistance against discrimination is not an easy reaction, some immigrants choose to be strong and positive instead of giving up academically and behaving negatively. As Soraya and Hilda explained later, their 1.5-generation children have positive relationships with their non-Iranian friends in the U.S., and they are successful in their schools. What participants explained about the strategy of positive resistance is similar to what Yosso (2005) refers to as resistance capital. As Yosso mentioned, minority groups use positive attitudes against their challenges regarding inequality in society and school. As participants in this study explained, instead of giving up when they suffered from inequality, they tried being strong and achieving their goals. Using this strategy helps immigrant families to do well in the U.S. and achieve their social and academic goals.

This study suggests that there is a relationship between perceived injustice in American society and the mobility of Iranian immigrants in the United States. Those Iranian immigrants
who experience inequality and discrimination are more likely to get ahead in American society and schools. Mahdi (1998) states that Iranian immigrants are often subjected to prejudicial perspectives because of hostile relationships between Iran and the United States. In this regard, Mostofi (2003) explains that the image of “whiteness” has its roots in discrimination, and racialization has been standard procedure in policy and practice against immigrant groups in the U.S. The author argues that Middle Eastern immigrants including Iranian 1.5-generation children have been victims of some kinds of discrimination and prejudice in American society and schools (Mostofi, 2003).

There are different forms of racism and neo-liberalism in American society and schools, which impact immigrants’ social and academic status in the United States. Most newcomers including Latino immigrants face different kinds of inequality, and those with lower socio-economic status are less empowered to achieve their American dreams. These groups of immigrants are mostly affected by the conflict between laws and the ways that laws are ignored in American society (Del Cid, 2011). Likewise, Weaver (2010) explains that pre-existing racial and ethnic conflicts, government policies, and labor market influence immigrants’ adaptation and assimilation. The existence of discrimination and anti-immigration views towards immigrants in the U.S. impacts their hopes on achieving to their American dreams. The author explains that after September 11th, the discriminatory atmosphere against Middle Eastern immigrants is increasing in American society and schools. Similar to Iranian immigrants, Arab immigrants are the victims of racial and ethnic discrimination in American society and schools (Weaver, 2010).

**Mothers as the backbone of the households.** One unexpected finding in this research was about participants’ gender, as they were all females. Although there was not any restriction concerning the gender of participants, all participants in this study were Iranian immigrant
mothers of 1.5-generation children. At the time of recruiting participants, Iranian parents including fathers and mothers were invited to participate in this study, but surprisingly, all participants who agreed to participate in this study were mothers. Participants’ spouses refused to participate in this study since they believed their wives were more knowledgeable about and involved in their children’s education.

Culturally, parents’ responsibilities and the ways they are involved in raising their children in Iran are different than in the U.S. In Iran, mothers are more involved in their children’s social and academic performances, and fathers are more responsible to provide for their families’ needs and support them financially. Traditionally, Iranian mothers are responsible for taking care of their children at home and monitoring their behaviors, homework, and academic performances. The gender of participants in this study was evidence of how Iranian immigrant parents maintain their cultural norms and support their families in the United States. Although all Iranian mothers in this study claimed that they support their families financially, they also explained their responsibilities for taking care of their children at home as well as monitoring their children’s social and academic performances in the U.S.

One of the positive aspects of freedom in the United States is individual’s self-confidence, especially for female immigrants. Traditionally, men have more authority in Iran compared to women, and their word comes first in their households. Culturally and legally, the degree of freedom is different for men and women in Iranian society and institutions, and moving to the United States results in women having more authority and self-sufficiency. Participants’ explanations about their post-immigration lives in the U.S. indicated that Iranian immigrant mothers play important roles in supporting their spouses and children to overcome social and academic challenges in the U.S. Iranian mothers who participated in this study
explained their responsibilities, such as taking care of their children and providing a warm atmosphere for dialogue between parents and children.

Immigrant mothers in this study also described that they used different strategies to encourage their spouses and children to stay strong against all challenges and keep moving forward despite all socioeconomic and academic difficulties. For instance, Soraya described that since her husband was not able to find a relevant job similar to his job in Iran, Soraya decided to work and support her family emotionally and financially for a few years as her husband pursued higher education in the U.S. What Soraya did illustrate that Iranian women do not see themselves as less than men in the United States, despite all negative perspectives about Iranian women’s abilities in both countries. On the other hand, Iranian immigrant mothers were able to manage and handle all challenges in their families. Both Nooshin and Hilda described themselves as role models for their children, since they attended higher education in the U.S. in spite of all the challenges they faced after immigrating. In addition, Nooshin explained that most Iranian children are very successful in American schools, and they also serve as good role models for one another, particularly when they live in the same community.

There is a negative perspective about Iranian women in the U.S. that holds they are not strongly involved in society and institutions, but findings indicated that Iranian mothers of this study were mostly educated and they were involved inside and outside of their houses before and after their immigration to the U.S. Another example in this regard was Nooshin who pursued her master’s degree in the United States, while supporting her children emotionally and financially with all the challenges in her family. Nooshin’s husband was not able to find a job in the U.S. and he went back to Iran; as Nooshin described, the resulting emotional challenges in their house influenced her children’s academic outcomes. In addition to work inside and outside of her house
to provide her family’s needs, Nooshin tried to provide supportive emotional bonds, guiding her children, and helping them to reach their academic goals. Nooshin explained that the level of academic expectations has been very high in their house, and as a result, her 1.5-generation daughter is currently attending advanced classes in high school and she is very successful academically.

Elahe also explained that her husband was not able to find a job related to his knowledge and skills in the United States, and he was not happy about the situation; so, he wanted to come back to Iran. Elahe continued, she talked to her husband to convince him to stay in the U.S. because of their daughter: “…my daughter gets mad. I don’t know why. She says, “No, you just made me come to the United States to forget all of my friends in Iran, and right now, you’re asking me to do it again, and I’m not going to do that.” Elahe explained that she talks all the time with her husband and her daughter to support them and help them to stay strong against all the challenges.

Relatedly, Mina explained that, after moving to the United States with her ex-husband and her daughter, she divorced and is currently, going to college and taking care of her 1.5-generation daughter. This is a lot to handle for a newcomer in the United States. All these examples show the authority and power of Iranian immigrant mothers and their strong involvement in their families’ adaptation to the new environment. Participants’ descriptions illustrate that Iranian immigrant mothers are the backbone of their families in the United States; this is in contrast to the dominant group’s deficit thinking regarding Iranian females and their powers in their households. The ways that Elahe, Nooshin, Soraya, and Mina, as well as other participants in this study, managed their families’ challenges were clear evidence of how immigrant mothers benefit from their increased authority and freedom in the U.S. Iranian
immigrant mothers in this study were able to deal with post-immigration challenges and support their familial values despite social and academic difficulties.

It is important to mention that this does not mean that immigrant fathers do less than their wives, or that their efforts are not valuable. It is clear that immigrant fathers also face significant financial challenges since they are not able to find jobs related to their knowledge and skills. Immigrant fathers often have to work very hard in low-income jobs to support their families in the U.S. It is apparent that, for immigrant parents, it might take a few years to pursue an advanced degree or reach a desirable socioeconomic and employment status similar to their previous situations in their home countries. Iranian fathers and mothers, like all other immigrant parents, desire the best lifestyles and future for their families, especially their children in the U.S.

As participants explained, most of them had high-income jobs in Iran and their socioeconomic and employment statuses were higher there than their situations in the U.S. As participants reported, difficulty in finding suitable careers and language barriers were the most common reasons that fathers of households were unhappy about their situations after moving to the U.S. Since all participants in this study were Iranian immigrant mothers, there is a lack of first-hand information about the challenges that Iranian immigrant fathers experienced after moving to the United States. This can open the door for future research and the researchers who are interested to study a parallel subject in comparing and contrasting the challenges faced by immigrant fathers versus mothers before and after moving to the United States.

**How Do Immigrant Parents Develop Their Identities to Navigate Their 1.5-Generation Children’s Education in the United States?**

Participants’ interviews exemplified their illusion, confusion, and diffusion regarding the differences in culture, language, and the educational system in the U.S. As a result of
communication with non-Iranians in the U.S., participants realized the differences between Iranian and American cultures and school systems. Furthermore, participants explained the process of their adaptation to the new environment as they used some strategies to deal with the differences in society and schools and sought to value both American and Iranian cultural norms. This process of adaptation exemplifies what Rogers (2010) posits about communication, diffusion and innovation as different stages of individual’s adaptation to the new environment.

As Rogers (2010) explains, diffusion happens as individuals communicate with members of the social system over time, and consequently, based on individuals’ background, they accept or reject to adapt innovation. Individuals might have positive or negative attitudes towards innovation, and data illustrates that Iranian immigrant families mostly tended to have positive attitudes in this regard. Figure 6 illustrates Iranian immigrants’ identity development as very similar to what Rogers (2010) refers to as communication, diffusion, and innovation.

![Diagram](image)

*Figure 6. Adaptation and identity: Communication, diffusion, and innovation (Rogers, 2010).*

Iranian immigrants’ communication with non-Iranians, such as their co-workers and their children’s teachers and peers, resulted in gradually learning American language and culture, while they tended to maintain Iranian culture and language as well. Iranian immigrant parents
and their 1.5-generation children, who faced difficult barriers including, stifling discrimination against them in American society and schools, were inclined to choose the strategy of resilience and endurance against a discriminatory system in the U.S. in order to adapt to the new environment and achieve their goals. Resilience and developing identities helped Iranian immigrant parents to negotiate with their 1.5-generation children and navigate their social and academic performances in the U.S. The following sections address this process to better understand the identity development of 1.5-generation children and their parents, and the way that immigrant parents and their children balanced their expectations and values in the dreamland.

1.5-generation children’s identity development. Answering the ancillary questions by relevant themes led to understanding that language and culture play important roles in individual’s identities. As participants explained, learning English and following the American culture were key in the identity development of Iranian 1.5-generation children in the U.S. Participants reported that, teachers, peers and the school environment were the most influential factors in changing their 1.5-generation children’s behaviors and attitudes after their arrival. This resulted in experiencing conflicts between home and school cultures and alternating between two worlds as they were under pressures from both environments. Figure 7 shows the alternating between two worlds (home and school) in the U.S.
As data showed, the 1.5-generation children experienced the negative effects of language barriers at the beginning of their arrival, recognizing that their resistance to accept American culture and language resulted in teachers’ and peers’ formal and informal rejection. Immigrant children’s identities gradually shifted from their original cultures and languages to the dominant capital values, and the speed of this process differed depending on students’ and parents’ mobility.

The school culture and environment encourages students to reconstruct their identities based on American capital culture and values, which are considered the best. As a result, immigrant students learn that their success in the future is based on their distance from their background cultures and languages and integration into the language and culture of the dominant group (Nieto, 2004). In the American educational system, assimilation to the dominant culture and language defines students’ success, and academic assessments are based on this success.

It appears that the 1.5-generation children often alternate between two different cultures and languages under the pressures of shifting between home and school environments. Hilda explained that the ways immigrant children trade their culture and language with American culture depends on the strategies their parents use to stress their cultural values at home. She emphasized that children’s friends and the school environment play important roles in cultural differences between immigrant children and their parents.

Figure 7. The alternating between two worlds of home and school in the U.S.
According to Awokoya (2012), dissimilarity between culture, language and values at home and school place immigrant children in an unjustified position, having to act differently based on the values of those two settings. Since 1.5-generation children tend to follow American culture and language, the way they behave and interact at home is gradually influenced by the American values they learn in schools. Alternating between home and school culture affects 1.5-generation children’s interactions with their parents, peers and teachers; therefore, they develop a new form of moderate identity as a middle ground between native and American culture and language. The 1.5-generation’s moderate identity is not fixed; parents’ ideologies, lifestyles, religion, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status also play important roles in how 1.5-generation students develop and maintain their moderate identities. Figure 8 shows this process of developing identity for 1.5-generation students.

![Diagram of 1.5-generation identity development](image)

*Figure 8. The process of 1.5-generation identity development (Awokoya, 2012; Ramirez, 1974).*

Developing the moderate identity of 1.5-generation students is about striking a balance between home and school cultures and values in order to be accepted in both settings. As a result, the 1.5-generation’s moderate identities swing between home and school values based on their intersectionalities and relationships with school and family members. The process of
shaping identities for 1.5-generation students is very complex, and different factors and incidents at home and school might change the direction of this process.

As mentioned, some factors such as the time of immigrants’ residency in the United States might be influential in this alteration. The 1.5-generation students are often confused about how to balance their moderate identities between home and school. As Awokoya (2012) explains, some immigrant parents believe that close relationships between 1.5-generation children and their American friends results in losing parental control and a shift in children’s beliefs and habits toward American values.

In this regard, Elahe and Afsoon described their cultural conflicts with their 1.5-generation children since their children follow American culture. Elahe reported that she had to remind her daughter consistently about their Iranian cultural norms and values, which are different from American culture. She said, “…most of the time, her friends has sleep party in each other friends’ houses, but I really, I cannot accept when I don’t know their family, let my daughter go to their house…there are some differences between us.”

Likewise, Afsoon explained that living in the U.S. is not easy for Iranian immigrant parents since their children grow up in a different culture and they want to follow their non-Iranian friends. In this regard, those immigrant students who cut off their home culture and language, yet are not fully accepted by teachers and peers, are at risk of diminishing their sense of self-efficacy and dropping out of school. Therefore, immigrant parents have important roles and responsibilities in understanding and helping of their 1.5-generation children navigate their social and academic struggles.

**Immigrant parents’ identity development.** Participants’ responses to the interview questions indicated that, in addition to 1.5-generation children, immigrant parents also go
through the unnoticed process of identity development after moving to the United States. Communication, diffusion and innovation (Rogers, 2010) were common and important factors that influenced immigrant parents’ identity development. Participants explained that they were able to recognize the cultural differences between them and their 1.5-generation children, who desired to follow American culture and language. This recognition by Iranian immigrant parents resulted in using different strategies for acceptance and acculturation without full assimilation. Iranian immigrant parents taught their children to value both Iranian and American cultures and languages since they are Iranians, and they live in the United States.

While immigrant children struggle to develop their identities between two worlds (home and school), their parents undergo the indiscernible and intricate process of reconstructing their own identities. The process of identity renovation by immigrant parents is often unconscious and unnoticed, hidden behind their unheard voices. Immigrant parents as diaspora outcasts encounter economic and social barriers and struggle to reconstruct middle ground identities in order to be accepted by both their original and American communities. The ways that immigrant parents develop their identities and communicate with their children impact their 1.5-generation children’s social and academic performances in the U.S.

As mentioned in chapter two, Ramirez (1974) explains that individual’s culture is a complex system, which includes culture of liberation (inner values) and culture of survival (developed values based on socioeconomic forces). Immigrant parents’ identities are tied to their native cultures and languages and inner values, and immigrant parents often prefer to hold onto their native beliefs and behaviors as their inner identities. On the other hand, immigrant parents are forced to develop their survival identities with the goal of being accepted by dominant groups in
society and schools; resistance to this process equates to denial by dominant groups in society and schools.

Similar to other immigrants in the U.S., Iranian immigrants forge a new form of identity and try to blend into mainstream to benefit from liberal society and hide from discrimination and prejudice in American society (Mostofi, 2003). The author discusses that Iranian 1.5-generation children feel prejudice since they experience different kinds of discrimination by peers. Likewise, Mahdi (1998) states that the new form of identity in Iranian immigrant children is subjected to the contrary claims of both American and Iranian cultures and social contexts.

Similarly, Pham (2012) explains that Vietnamese Immigrant parents are less able to adapt and assimilate to the American culture compared to their immigrant children. Shifting between two cultures is quite difficult for this group of immigrant parents. Both parents and 1.5-generation children face difficulties and inner conflicts for acculturation and assimilation to American groups. Vietnamese 1.5 generation children struggle because of the cultural and language obstacles as well as creating a balance between home and American culture. Similar to Iranian parents, Vietnamese parents use their own strategies of parental involvement, while trying to understand their children’s needs and unique challenges (Pham, 2012).

In this regard, Jones (1997) discusses the role of immigrant parents in their children’s education. The author emphasizes immigrant parents’ relationships with the school, as well as the relationships with their own children can impact their children’s educational performance. In addition, other factors such as parents’ educational level, income, and occupational status can also influence children’s educational outcomes (Jones, 1997).

Learning English language and American culture is necessary for social relationships at work, and immigrant parents voluntarily or involuntarily experience the process of developing a
survival identity by combining both Iranian and American language and culture. As a result, immigrant parents adapt and innovate to the new environment by considering the differences between both cultures and languages and using a positive resistance strategy (Rogers, 2010). Immigrant parents construct their new form of identity while struggling between the two worlds of native and dominant cultures, values, and languages. This study found that immigrant parents constructed Innovated Identities, as a middle ground between their liberation (ethnic) and survival (national) identities. Drawing on the work of Ramirez regarding different kinds of cultural identity (1974), Awokoya’s study on 1.5-generation students (2012), and Rogers (2010) theories of communication, diffusion, and innovation; this study suggests a three-fold identity development process by immigrant parents including a liberated identity, a survival identity, and an innovated identity as middle ground. Figure 9 illustrates the process of immigrant parents’ identity development, similar to identity development of their 1.5-generatio children in the U.S.

![Figure 9. The process of Iranian immigrant parents’ identity development](image)

**Navigating the American educational system.** Conflict in culture and language can significantly influence communications between immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children and create an undesirable split between them. The 1.5-generation children use different strategies to strike a balance between their native culture and language at home and American
culture and language at school. The data illustrates that 1.5-generation children’s age and the years of their residency in the United States are influential in this process.

This research suggested that Iranian immigrant parents undergo the process of developing their identities in order to navigate their children’s education after arrival in the U.S. At this point, immigrant parents’ “innovated identities” play an important role in their interactions with 1.5-generation children and their academic achievement. The ways that immigrant parents build and construct their innovated identities are based on their perspectives about their native versus the dominant culture and the barriers they faced in the dreamland. Some parents are eager to learn American culture and language faster than others; while different variables, such as their backgrounds, English fluency, the reasons that they migrated, and their communication and socioeconomic status in the U.S. influence how they construct their innovated identities.

In a mostly unconscious process, immigrant parents, as well as their 1.5-generation children, develop their unique middle ground identities to achieve a balance between home and American culture and language. The negotiation between immigrant parents’ innovated identities and the 1.5-generation’s moderate identities, and the impact of that negotiation on 1.5-generation students’ achievement goes largely unnoticed—hence the focus of this study.

In this study, participants’ responses regarding their relationships with their children indicated that, in order to create a balance between home and school cultures, immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children negotiate their cultural norms and expectations, while still attempting to value American and Iranian cultural and educational expectations. Most parents described their desires to learn about American culture and understand the cultural and educational differences and have closer relationships with their 1.5-generation children. In this regard, Hilda explained that she was able to adapt to the new environment in the U.S. and
negotiate with her 1.5-generation child to achieve a balance between their cultural and academic expectations. Hilda clarified:

Over the past fourteen years, although it was hard for me, I tried to adapt myself little by little. I couldn’t change over the night, of course, but you know, over time I said, okay, I can sacrifice some, and they have to sacrifice some of their values too. So, we discussed it. We tried to come to a point of agreement together, and I think that was about it.

Relatedly, Roohi also explained that, cultural differences between her and her 1.5-generation children resulted in increasing the gap between them. Roohi emphasized that after a while, this gap started to decrease and recently, she has a close relationship with her daughter. Roohi stated:

…they have different culture from me...But right now, when they grow up, they come back to me more than when they were young…I don’t know what is this, what I can call this, we are gonna be in the middle, we find something.

Directly or indirectly, Hilda and Roohi revealed the process of negotiation between them and their 1.5-generation children. What Afsoon, Hilda, and Roohi explained, each one is the evident of negotiation between immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children. The process of identity development of Iranian immigrant children and their parents and the negotiation between them are complicated. Figure 10 illustrates this process to better understanding of identity development of Iranian immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children and the way they negotiate and navigate social and academic outcomes.
Among these participants, Roohi and Hilda have been American residents longer than other parents in this study. Interestingly, both Roohi and Hilda claimed that their 1.5-generation children recently showed their interests in learning more about Iranian culture and language. Hilda said that her 1.5-generation son was not interested in learning Iranian cultural values after they arrived in the U.S., but as her son grew up, he gradually became more interested in understanding different aspects of his home culture and also wanted to visit Iran. Similarly,
Roohi reported that her children have recently closer relationships with their parents as they grew up. Both Hilda and Roohi explained that they noticed their 1.5-generation’s recent wave of interest in learning about home culture and having closer relationships with parents.

According to Ramirez (1974), individual’s identity is not fixed and it changes over time. As Hilda and Roohi described, they recognized the increasing gap in their relationships with their 1.5-generation children after immigration. Later in both cases, their 1.5-generation children showed their interest in having closer relationships with their parents and learning more about Iranian culture and history. The 1.5-generation children’s alternations and changing levels of interests in learning about home culture is based on the length of their residency in the United States, and also on their parents’ desire to maintain the Iranian culture and language at home. Hilda and Roohi have been in the United States longer than other participants of this study and they both value and maintain Iranian culture and language at home. The findings of this study support what Awokoya (2012) reports regarding the identity development of Nigerian 1.5-generation children in the United States. Similarly, Iranian 1.5-generation children develop their identities in the United States. In addition, this study focused on the process of immigrant parents’ identity development and the strategies they used to communicate with their 1.5-generation children and navigate their education in the U.S. Understanding the process of immigrant parents’ identity development and their interactions with their 1.5-generation children helps teachers and policymakers realize the importance of immigrants’ parental involvement in their children’s education in the United States.

Immigrant parents are more concerned about the cultural and lingual differences and maintaining their native culture and language compared to their 1.5-generation children; consequently, it is more difficult for immigrant parents to adapt to the new social and academic
environments in the U.S. In this regard, Mina explained that the differences between two cultures and values are more noticeable for her, compared to her daughter, after their arrival. She continued:

Actually the difference for me is more than her, and she doesn’t feel more differences because she’s growing up here, but I grew up there. But fortunately, I could, you know, manage and myself be kind of a part of this community and this country really fast, but sometimes it’s really hard…

Mina also explained that after realizing the increasing gap between her and her 1.5-generation child, she tried the strategy of changing herself instead of changing her daughter:

Actually before, I tried to change her to be like as me, and I tried, and it was my problem with her, but recently, I found that I was wrong, and I should not change this relationship. Just I should be match with her…

Mina described that, by using this strategy, she noticed improvement in her daughter’s academic achievement and self-efficacy. Likewise, a majority of participants explained that they use different strategies to understand their 1.5-generation children, negotiate with them, and navigate their academic achievements in the United States. Different cases in this study include informative data, which illustrates various approaches that Iranian immigrant parents of 1.5-generation children use to navigate their children’s education in the U.S. For instance, Nooshin described that she had certain cultural expectations for her children’s education in the United States: “… I have told them, you need to be, in a way that never, ever have a detention or warning… so, whatever rules and regulations you have at school…you need to accept them, you need to agree, and follow.”
Nooshin wants her daughter to follow the rules and regulation in American schools, similar to the way they did in Iranian schools. This illustrates that the lifestyles of immigrants before immigration impact their post-immigration expectations. Nooshin also explained that her children are successful socially and academically, “I think it’s not too difficult for them to be successful. And mostly, they have good role models around them, their Iranian peers, and they see them and want to be like them.” Nooshin clarified that, being successful is “not even a should. It’s a must” for her children. As participants described, having high academic standards and educated role models among family and friends, monitoring children’s behaviors and academic performances, and developing strong relationships with 1.5-generation children and their teachers were some of the strategies used by immigrant parents to be involved and navigating their 1.5-generation children’s educational experiences in the U.S. Despite deficit thinking models of dominant groups about immigrants’ parental involvement, this study supports the important role of immigrant parents’ leadership as they guide their 1.5-generation children and the importance of resilience and endurance in the process of adaptation without full assimilation.

**Implications and Recommendations**

The topic of immigrant children’s education in the U.S. has been an ongoing discussion recent decades. This study provides many examples highlighting the importance of immigrants’ parental involvement in their 1.5-generation children’s academic achievement, and sheds light on the misconceptions about that. In this regard, the following section addresses the implications and recommendations of the study to review and rethink monolingual and monocultural policies and practices in American society and schools. As Nieto (1999) states, it is important to raise individual and collective consciousness to reduce social and academic gaps between majority
and minority groups. This level of awareness requires understanding about existing racism and oppression and bridging knowledge to action in order to overcome barriers (Freire, 2000). It is hoped that the recommendations of this study can contribute to changing the one-size-fits-all policies and practices in American society and schools and involve immigrant parents as leaders in directing immigrant children’s education in the United States.

**Policy**

There are many general negative perspectives regarding immigrant families in American society and schools, which are formulated by racism and neoliberalism. As Yosso (2005) reports, Critical Race Theory posits that race and racism are rooted in American history and are an everlasting part of society and institutions’ functions. Increasing discriminatory policies and practices against immigrants in the U.S. have resulted in cumulative social injustice and academic gaps between majority groups and immigrants in the United States. The findings of this study confirm that there are many aspects of social and academic prejudice and inequality against Iranian immigrants in the U.S. that need to be examined and reconsidered. As findings of this research demonstrate, rising negative perspectives against Iranian immigrants in society and schools, particularly after September 11th, created many socioeconomic and academic obstacles for and pressures upon Iranian immigrant parents and their children in the dreamland.

Dominant groups often ignore the abilities, skills, and background knowledge of Iranian immigrants and, as a result, skilled and professional Iranians are not able to get suitable jobs in the United States. On the other hand, participants in this study explained that their 1.5-generation children faced stifling racism and discrimination at school on the part of their teachers and peers, which affected their self-efficacy and identity development. Monolingual and monocultural policy in American society and schools force Iranian immigrant children to follow American
culture, shift their identities towards American cultural norms, and ignore their native culture and language. Del Cid (2011) explains that acculturation of immigrant children can lead to conflict between immigrant parents and their children. According to the author, Portes and Rumbaut (2001) state that the loss of immigrant culture happens for both immigrant parents and their children at different rates. Similarly, Iranian 1.5-generation children face many difficulties as a result of conflicts between their home and school’s culture and language forcing them to find a balance between these two settings.

This research aimed to provide adequate evidence to counter myths and negative perspectives about Iranian immigrants, and hopes to bring changes in the policies against this marginalized group in the United States. There is much to learn from the different strategies utilized by Iranian immigrants to overcome various socioeconomic and academic barriers and to achieve in American society and schools. For instance, as findings of this study show, Iranian immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children use different forms of cultural wealth as the strategy of resilience against discriminatory policies. Similar to what Yosso (2005) explains about other immigrant groups in the U.S., Iranian immigrant families use different forms of their own cultural models and cultural wealth to adapt to American society and schools without full assimilation. Similar to what Yosso (2005) explains, this study demonstrated that Iranian immigrant families use six forms of cultural wealth including aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and positive resistance capitals to overcome social and academic barriers in the United States. This study found that Iranian parents and their 1.5-generation children use these forms of capital as tools of resilience and endurance against monolingual and monocultural capitals to achieve in American society and schools.
**Funds of Knowledge.** Understanding the history and background knowledge of immigrants’ households can help individuals in American society and schools build a more positive perception of these households as cultural and cognitive resources. According to Moll and his colleagues (1992), understanding households’ funds of knowledge, including their skills, abilities, ideas, practices, and their academic knowledge, might help policymakers and teachers bridge immigrant students’ potential and abilities to classroom practices. It also might be beneficial in training and preparing teachers to adapt their classroom instruction, focusing more on students’ funds of knowledge and considering students as active rather than passive learners. As Gonzalez et al. (1993) explain, teachers should be more practice-oriented and include their students’ background knowledge in their classroom practices.

**Parental Involvement.** Immigrant children’s education is one of the major issues in the American education system, and teachers often have negative perspectives about immigrants’ parental involvement in their children’s education. Language barriers and unfamiliarity with the American school system are the most important reasons that immigrant parents do not desire to participate in their children’s school programs. Consequently, a lack of adequate relationships exists between teachers and immigrant parents in the U.S., which results in disconnecting home and school cultures, languages, and academic expectations. In this regard, Chrispeels and Rivero (2001) describe the common myths about minority groups’ parental involvement and the conflicts between teachers’ perceptions and minority parents’ understandings about the meaning of parental involvement. Bridging home and school by increasing the relationships between teachers and immigrant parents result in changing teachers’ perceptions about minority parents. This also helps teachers to consider immigrant parents as powerful resources in their children’s academic achievements. As participants of this study explained, affirming the relationships
between teachers, immigrant parents, and their 1.5-generation children can diminish the gaps between teachers and parents’ academic expectations.

**Practice**

One of the major benefits of storytelling by marginalized groups is to amplify their voices and bring about changes in practice. Increasing racism and neoliberalism in society and schools result in ignoring the knowledge and skills of immigrants in the U.S. more than ever. During the last decades, many professional immigrants emigrated to the U.S. for different reasons, but they were not able to find jobs related to their background knowledge and skills. Consequently, they had to work in low-paid jobs or start over in their education in the U.S. to overcome the barriers that neoliberalism and racism create for them here. As findings of this study show, immigrants’ socioeconomic status affects their 1.5-geneeration children’s academic performances. There is hope that, instead of ignoring the knowledge and skills of professional and educated immigrants, policymakers could focus on policies that empower inclusion rather than exclusion in the U.S.

The knowledge and skills of professional immigrants should not be evaluated by their nationalities, and it is hoped that policymakers review and renovate the policies that ignore human rights and justice in U.S. society and institutions.

Unfamiliarity with the American educational system and lack of English fluency are major factors for miscommunication between immigrant parents and teachers. Offering the best facilities and a warm environment for the first visit of parents to schools is an important step towards engaging immigrant parents in positive school participation. Parental involvement is a tool for teachers and school staff to understand the social and academic barriers faced by immigrant families that influence their 1.5-generation children’s academic performance.
Zarate (2007) emphasizes the need to provide facilities and workshops at school to train immigrant parents to become the key advocates for their children’s achievements. Teachers should bridge cultural and lingual values between home and school. This can be crucial in motivating immigrant parents to communicate with school’s staff and bond in their academic expectations. Schools can be mirrors of home and community culture and language in formal and informal discussions. Once immigrant parents feel that they are welcomed and valued by school staff, they are more engaged in participating in their children’s education (Guerra & Valverde, 2007). Connecting home and school by valuing immigrants’ culture and language results in dispelling the myths regarding immigrants’ parental involvement and develops strong relationships between immigrant parents, teachers and 1.5-generation children.

**Future Research**

The lived experiences of immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children in the United States are viewed as less valuable for research. Consequently, the role of immigrant parents in their children’s education is not defined adequately. This study provided knowledge about the experiences of Iranian immigrant parents of 1.5-generation children in the United States; therefore, the findings and suggestions of this study can serve as a useful base for future research to replicate with different ethnic groups or gender of participants. This study can also provide a reference point for future studies to compare different immigrant groups with various socioeconomic and academic statuses in the U.S. Certainly future researchers can use this study as baseline to compare Iranian immigrant parents from different communities in the Southwest or from different geographic locations in the United States.
Limitations

The participants for this study included eight Iranian immigrant parents of 1.5-generation children living in the southwest United States. One of the limitations of this study was small sample size. The second limitation of this study was regarding the gender of participants. Although there were not any restrictions on gender when recruiting the participants, Iranian immigrant fathers did not offer to participate in this study, because traditionally, Iranian mothers are more involved in their children’s social and academic performances.

One of the possible limitations of this study might be the role of the researcher as insider, because she is an Iranian mother of 1.5-generation children in the same community. Although in some qualitative research being insider researcher can be considered a limitation of the study, in this multiple case study, the insider position of the researcher was, in fact, the strength of the study. Familiarity with Iranian language and cultural norms helped the researcher to foster a bond with the participants. Being able to translate the pre-interview questions into Farsi, as the researcher (Appendix H) was one of the benefits of having the researcher as an insider in this study.

Conclusion

Dominant groups often ignore the importance of immigrants’ parental involvement in educational settings, and there is less attention in the research regarding the barriers that immigrant families face in the United States. This research aimed to amplify the voices of immigrant families, while informing policymakers and educators about the racial issues and barriers that immigrant families face in society and the school system. The data of this research provides several examples regarding different strategies that Iranian immigrant parents use to contribute to their children’s social and academic performance. It also indicates that Iranian
immigrants develop a sense of unique identity by valuing both Iranian and American cultures and languages, while they show significant resistance regarding racial discrimination with their high rate of mobility.

This research found that these Iranian immigrant parents developed their identities and used different strategies to navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States. In addition, this study supports the contention that immigrants’ parental involvement and close relationships between immigrant parents, 1.5- generation children, and teachers facilitate sharing knowledge, experiences, and expectations between home and schools; and consequently, increasing 1.5-generation’s children’s academic success in the U.S.

This study suggests that policymakers, teachers, and school staff need to pay attention to the value of immigrants’ background knowledge and experiences to understand their cultural and lingual tenets and expectations. Finally, it is hoped that the findings of this study help teachers and policymakers to view immigrant parents as a source of leadership in their children’s academic success.
APPENDIX A: INVITATION FLYER

INVITATION FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

Co-navigating the U.S. educational system: A multiple case study of the social and academic pressures experienced by Iranian immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation immigrant children

Are you willing to share your experiences as an Iranian immigrant parent?

Criteria:
• Self-identify as an Iranian immigrant parent
• Have at least one child who was brought to the United States between the ages of 6-12 years old (referred to as 1.5-generation)
• Immigrated to the United States in the last three decades

Time Commitment:
• Pre-interview: Less than one hour
• Interview: Approximately an hour
• Location: A public place such as Starbucks, the library, or any public place that you (the participant) prefer for the pre-interview and interview.

Confidentiality:
• Participation in this study is voluntary, and participants may withdraw at any time and for any reason. I will not share the original data with anyone else, and I will ask participants to choose a pseudonym.

Compensation:
• I will pay for food and soft drinks during the pre-interview and interview sessions up to 15 dollars

Researcher’s contact information:
Shahla Fayazpour
Cell: (702) 321-1602
fayazpou@unlv.nevada.edu

About the Researcher:
My name is Shahla Fayazpour, and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. As part of the requirements for my PhD program, I am conducting a research study, which will yield data to be included in my dissertation. I, Shahla Fayazpour, as the researcher of this study, and Dr. Christine Clark, the Principal Investigator of this study, will research the social and academic experiences of Iranian immigrant parents and the ways that they navigate their children’s education in the United States.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please email me at fayazpou@unlv.nevada.edu, and I will send you detailed information about my research and the consent form that you have to sign in order to participate.

Thank you so much for considering this request, and please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Shahla Fayazpour

Principal Investigator’s contact information:
Dr. Christine Clark
Cell: (702) 985-6979
chris.clark.unlv@me.com
APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT INVITATION FOR PRE-INTERVIEW

Dear Iranian Parent,

I hope you are doing well. Thank you for accepting my invitation to participate in this study. I am starting to schedule participants in this study for the pre-interviews during December 2016, and I appreciate if you set the time and location for the pre-interview meeting. The pre-interview meeting will take less than one hour, and it can be done at any public place such as Starbucks or the library. Attached is the consent form for my research study. Please read the consent form carefully, and voice any questions or concern you may have. I will bring two copies of the consent form to our pre-interview meeting, and we will discuss it before we start the pre-interview. You will have enough time to ask any questions you may have about the research and consent form in the pre-interview meeting before deciding whether to participate in the study or signing the consent form. Please let me know your availability and your choice of public location. I look forward to meeting you soon.

Best,
Shahla Fayazpour
APPENDIX C: UNLV INFORMED CONSENT FORM

UNLV
INFORMED CONSENT
Department of Teaching and Learning

TITLE OF STUDY: Co-navigating the U.S. educational system: A multiple case study of the social and academic pressures experienced by Iranian immigrant parents and their 1.5 - generation immigrant children

INVESTIGATOR(S): Shahla Fayazpour and Dr. Christine Clark. For questions or concerns about the study, you may contact Shahla Fayazpour at (702) 321-1602 or fayazpou@unlv.nevada.com or call Dr. Christine Clark at (702) 985-6979 or (chris.clark.unlv@me.com).

For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted, contact the UNLV Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects at 702-895-2794, toll free at 877-895-2794 or via email at IRB@unlv.edu.

Purpose of the Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to explore and identify if cultural, socioeconomic, and academic factors influence Iranian immigrant parents, their identity development, their interactions with their children, and the way they navigate their children’s education in the United States. The purpose of this study is a greater understanding of identity development of Iranian immigrant parent(s) who came to the U.S. in the last three decades with at least one child with the age between 6-12 years old at the time that they moved to the U.S. (This child is called a1.5-generation child in the literature). This study will lead to some insight of answering research questions including how identity development of Iranian immigrant parents of 1.5-generation children is influenced by other socioeconomic and academic variables in the United States. More specifically, this research explores how these influences could impact the general education of 1.5-generation Iranian immigrant students in the American educational system. Therefore, the focus of this study is to explore how Iranian immigrant parents of 1.5 generation children develop their identity; if and how any social, economic, and educational variables influence their identity developments; and how Iranian immigrant parents navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States.

Participants

You are being asked to participate in the study because you moved to the U.S. with at least one child with the age between 6-12 years old at the time you moved to the U.S. I want to learn more about how you as an Iranian immigrant parent have made connections to your children and have influenced their education after you migrated from Iran to the U.S. I want to know if social and academic pressures in society and school influence your interactions with your children and the way you navigate your children’s education in the United States.

Procedures

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to sign the consent form and meet the researcher (Shahla Fayazpour) during a pre-interview session (approximately less than one hour) and interview session (for a minimum of one hour). I will audio record the interviews. You will choose a different name other than your own, so that nobody can identify you in this study. We will meet at a public place such as Starbucks Café, or the library, and the time and location of the interview will be based on your schedule, and additionally I will pay for a meal up to $15.00 for each participant in each meeting.

#810340-1 Exempted: 04-29-2016
I will record and review the interviews in order to analyze data. During the interview sections, I will ask interview questions regarding your background culture and language and your experiences as an immigrant parent in the U.S. For example; I will ask you if your culture and language have played any roles in your interactions with your children after you moved to the U.S. or, if your children have experienced any social and academic struggles in the United States.

**Benefits of Participation**
There may not be direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. However, I hope this proposed research can help teachers and policymakers better understand the impact of immigrant parental involvement in students' social and academic achievements. This study also might inform immigrant parents regarding their identity development and if other socioeconomic variables impact their children's education in the United States. It might also help other immigrant students and their parents talk about their social and cultural identity development and amplify their voices.

**Risks of Participation**
There are not any serious risks for this study. One risk is that we will be talking about culture, language, religion, and your challenges and difficulties in interactions with friends, teachers, and your children, and you might become emotional after speaking about these topics. The second risk is that you might become tired or bored while answering questions. In these situations, we can stop the questioning without any consequences. I will not share your name or other information with others.

**Cost /Compensation**
Aside from your time, there are no costs for taking part in this study (a total of less than two hours for each participant). Participants will not pay for any costs before, during, or after participation in this study, and Shahla Fayazpour as the researcher of this study will pay for any costs including food and soft drinks (up to $15.00 for each participant in each meeting) during the pre-interview and interview meetings in a public place such as Starbucks or the library. Participants will choose the location and the time for each meeting, including the pre-interview and interview meetings.

**Confidentiality**
All information gathered in this study will be kept as confidential as possible. No reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you, the participant, to this study. I will not share the original data with anyone else other than my supervisor. All records will be stored in a locked facility at UNLV for 3 years after completion of this study. After the storage time, the information gathered will be shredded and destroyed. Participants will be asked to identify a pseudonym at the beginning of the interview, which will be used in the study to ensure they are not identifiable. If the participants do not want to pick a pseudonym for themselves, the researcher will pick one for them. Research records will be stored securely and only the researcher associated with this project will have access to the records. People who will have access to your information include the Principal Investigators, and research study personnel. Information about you and related to this study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted or required by law.
TITLE OF STUDY: Co-navigating the U.S. educational system: A multiple case study of the social and academic pressures experienced by Iranian immigrant parents and their 1.5 - generation immigrant children

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. You may withdraw at any time without negative repercussions to your relationship with the researcher. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or any time during the research study. Remember, being in this study is up to you and no one will be upset if you don’t want to participate or even if you change your mind later and want to stop. You can ask any questions that you have about the study. If you have a question later that you didn’t think of now, you can call me at (702) 321-1602 or email me (fayazpou@unlv.nevada.edu.), or contact Dr. Christine Clark at (702) 985-6979 or email her (chris.clark.unlv@me.com).

Participant Consent:

I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I have been able to ask questions about the research study. I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this form has been given to me.

_________________________________________  __________________________
Signature of Participant                     Date

_________________________________________
Participant Name (Please Print)

Since you will be voice recorded during the interview, please sign and print your name and date as your agreement to be recorded during the interviews for the purpose of this study.

I agree to be audio taped for the purpose of this research study.

_________________________________________  __________________________
Signature of Participant                     Date

_________________________________________
Participant Name (Please Print)
APPENDIX D: PRE-INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Pre-interview Questions:

1. Are you Iranian?

2. Did you come to the United States before or after the Revolution?

3. When did you first immigrate to the U.S.?

4. Did you emigrate directly from Iran? If not, where did you go before coming to the United States? Why? For how long? When did you come to the United States?

5. How long have you been in Las Vegas? Have you lived elsewhere in the United States? If so, where and for how long?

6. How frequently (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.), if at all, do you visit Iran?

7. How frequently (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.), if at all, do you have contact with relatives in Iran?

8. Do you have 1.5-generation immigrant children? If so, how many? Ages? How old were they when they came to the United States?

9. How frequently (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.) do you interact (in person, by phone, social media, other way) with Iranians in the United States/Las Vegas?

10. How frequently (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.) do you interact (in person, by phone, social media, other way) with non-Iranians in the United States/Las Vegas?

11. How would you describe your socioeconomic status in Iran (e.g., working class, middle class, upper middle class, upper class)?

12. Can you explain what factors you used to assess this status (e.g., income, possessions (e.g., car, house, etc.), neighborhood, savings, discretionary spending (e.g., vacation, etc.), other factors)?
13. How would you describe your socioeconomic status in the United States (e.g., working class, middle class, upper middle class, upper class)?

14. Can you explain what factors you used to assess this status (e.g., income, possessions (e.g., car, house, etc.), neighborhood, savings, discretionary spending (e.g., vacation, etc.), other factors)?

15. How would you describe your English language proficiency (e.g., native fluency, near native fluency, fluent no accent, fluent with accent, somewhat fluent, not very fluent, not fluent at all, no English)?

16. How would you describe your spouse’s English language proficiency (e.g., native fluency, near native fluency, fluent no accent, fluent with accent, somewhat fluent, not very fluent, not fluent at all, no English)?

17. How would you describe your children’s English language proficiency (e.g., native fluency, near native fluency, fluent no accent, fluent with accent, somewhat fluent, not very fluent, not fluent at all, no English)?

18. How would you describe your employment status (occupation) in Iran (e.g., blue collar, pink collar, white collar, etc.)?

19. Can you explain what factors you used to assess this status (e.g., wage/salary, position title, position responsibilities, other factors)?

20. How would you describe your spouse’s employment status (occupation) in Iran (e.g., blue collar, pink collar, white collar, etc.)?

21. Can you explain what factors you used to assess this status (e.g., wage/salary, position title, position responsibilities, other factors)?
22. How would you describe your employment status (occupation) in the United States (e.g., blue collar, pink collar, white collar, etc.)?

23. Can you explain what factors you used to assess this status (e.g., wage/salary, position title, position responsibilities, other factors)?

24. How would you describe your spouse’s employment status (occupation) in the United States (e.g., blue collar, pink collar, white collar, etc.)?

25. Can you explain what factors you used to assess this status (e.g., wage/salary, position title, position responsibilities, other factors)?

26. How far did you go in school in Iran?

27. Have you pursued education in the United States? If so, please describe your academic pursuits here.

28. How far did your spouse go in school in Iran?

29. Has your spouse pursued education in the United States? If so, please describe your spouse’s academic pursuits here.

30. Anything else you want to share?
Pre-interview Questions with Farsi Translation:

1) Are you Iranian?

آیا شما ایرانی هستید؟

2) Did you come to the United States before or after the Revolution?

آیا شما قبل یا بعد از انقلاب ایران به آمریکا مهاجرت کرده اید؟

3) When did you first immigrate to the U.S.?

در چه تاریخ و زمانی برای اولین بار به آمریکا مهاجرت کرده اید؟

4) Did you immigrate directly from Iran? If not, where did you go before coming to the United States? Why? For how long? When did you come to the United States?

آیا مستقیماً از ایران به آمریکا مهاجرت کرده اید؟ و یا ابتدا به کشور دیگری رفتید به آمریکا چه مدت زمان در آن کشور اقامت داشته اید؟

5) How long have you been in Las Vegas? Have you lived elsewhere in the United States? If so, where and for how long?

چه مدت است که در لاس وگاس زندگی می کنید؟ آیا در آمریکا در شهر دیگری هم زندگی کرده اید؟ برای چه مدت؟

6) How frequently (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.), if at all, do you visit Iran?

بعد از مهاجرت هرچند وقت به ایران سفر می کنید؟ (سالیانه، ماهیانه)؟

7) How frequently (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.), if at all, do you have contact with relatives in Iran?

هرچند وقت یکبار با بستگان خود در ایران تماس برقرار می کنید (روزانه، هفته‌گی، ماهیانه و غیره)؟

8) Do you have 1.5 generation immigrant children? If so, how many? Ages? How old were they when they came to United States?

آیا در زمان مهاجرت فرزندان شما بین سنین ۶ تا ۱۲ سال بوذهند (نسل مهاجر ۵.۰) چند چه می‌باشد و در چه سنینی؟
9) How frequently (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.) do you interact (in person, by phone, social media, other way) with Iranians in the United States/Las Vegas?

یکبار چند وقت با دوستان ایرانی مقیم آمریکا و لاس وگاس تماس برقرار می‌کنید (سالیانه، ماهیانه، هفتگی و غیره) و نحوه تماس شما چگونه است (ایمیل، نامه، تلفن و غیره)؟

10) How frequently (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.) do you interact (in person, by phone, social media, other way) with non-Iranians in the United States/Las Vegas?

یکبار چند وقت با دوستان غیر ایرانی مقیم آمریکا و لاس وگاس تماس دارید؟ و تماس شما به چه طریقی است (ایمیل، نامه، تلفن و غیره)؟

11) How would you describe your socioeconomic status in Iran? (e.g., working class, middle class, upper middle class, upper class)

وضعیت مالی، طبقاتی، اجتماعی خود در ایران را توضیح دهید (طبقه ضعیف، متوسط، متوسط در سطح بالا و مرفه) از نظر خودتان خود را در چه طبقه بندی اجتماعی قرار می‌دهید (مرفه، متوسط و غیره)

12) Can you explain what factors you used to assess this status? (e.g., income, possessions (e.g., car, house, etc.), neighborhood, savings, discretionary spending (e.g., vacation, etc.), other factors)

توضیح بدهید با توجه به چه عوامل خاص شغلی، خود را در طبقه بندی شغلی بالا قرار داده اید، برای مثال میزان دارایی، مالکیت ملکی و اتومبیل، محل زندگی و پس انداز مالی، رفتن به سفر تفریحی و یا عوامل دیگر؟

13) How would you describe your socioeconomic status in the United States? (e.g., working class, middle class, upper middle class, upper class)

وضعیت مالی، طبقاتی، اجتماعی خود در ایران را توضیح دهید (طبقه ضعیف، متوسط، متوسط در سطح بالا و مرفه) از نظر خودتان خود را در چه طبقه بندی اجتماعی قرار می‌دهید (مرفه، متوسط و غیره)

14) Can you explain what factors you used to assess this status? (e.g., income, possessions (e.g., car, house, etc.), neighborhood, savings, discretionary spending (e.g., vacation, etc.), other factors)

توضیح بدهید با توجه به چه عوامل خاص شغلی، خود را در طبقه بندی شغلی بالا قرار داده اید، برای مثال میزان دارایی، مالکیت ملکی و اتومبیل، محل زندگی و پس انداز مالی، رفتن به سفر تفریحی و یا عوامل دیگر؟

15) How would you describe your English language proficiency (e.g., native
fluency, near native fluency, fluent no accent, fluent with accent, somewhat fluent, not very fluent, not fluent at all, no English)

16) How would you describe your spouse’s English language proficiency (e.g., native fluency, near native fluency, fluent no accent, fluent with accent, somewhat fluent, not very fluent, not fluent at all, no English)

17) How would you describe your children’s English language proficiency (e.g., native fluency, near native fluency, fluent no accent, fluent with accent, somewhat fluent, not very fluent, not fluent at all, no English)

18) How would you describe your employment status (occupation) in Iran? (e.g., blue collar, pink collar, white collar, etc.)

19) Can you explain what factors you used to assess this status? (e.g., wage/salary, position title, position responsibilities, other factors)

20) How would you describe your spouse’s employment status (occupation) in Iran? (e.g., blue collar, pink collar, white collar, etc.)

21) Can you explain what factors you used to assess this status? (e.g., wage/salary, position title, position responsibilities, other factors)
توضیح بدهید با توجه به چه عوامل خاص شغلی، همسر خود را در طبقه بندی شغلی بالا قرار داده اید، برای مثال نوع شغل، میزان درآمد، رتبه شغلی و میزان مسئولیت و یا عوامل دیگر؟

22) How would you describe your employment status (occupation) in the United States? (e.g., blue collar, pink collar, white collar, etc.)

وضعیت شغلی فعلی خود را در آمریکا چگونه ارزیابی می کنید؟ آیا شما به مشاغل کارمندی مشغول هستید (منظور دکتر، مهندس، مشاغل دفتری) و یا مشاغل خدماتی و سرویس دهی و فروش مثل تعمیرکاران و فروشنده‌های مغازه و یا مشاغل کارگری مثل کارگر کارخانه، کارگران شهرداری‌ها، کارگران ساختمانی و کارگران فنی؟

23) Can you explain what factors you used to assess this status? (e.g., wage/salary, position title, position responsibilities, other factors)

توضیح بدهید با توجه به چه عوامل خاص شغلی، ایشان را در طبقه بندی شغلی بالا قرار داده اید، برای مثال نوع شغل، میزان درآمد، رتبه شغلی و میزان مسئولیت و یا عوامل دیگر؟

24) How would you describe your spouse’s employment status (occupation) in the United States? (e.g., blue collar, pink collar, white collar, etc.)

توضیح بدهید با توجه به چه عوامل خاص شغلی، خود را در طبقه بندی شغلی بالا قرار داده اید، برای مثال نوع شغل، میزان درآمد، رتبه شغلی و میزان مسئولیت و یا عوامل دیگر؟

25) Can you explain what factors you used to assess this status? (e.g., wage/salary, position title, position responsibilities, other factors)

توضیح بدهید با توجه به چه عوامل خاص شغلی، ایشان را در طبقه بندی شغلی بالا قرار داده اید، برای مثال نوع شغل، میزان درآمد، رتبه شغلی و میزان مسئولیت و یا عوامل دیگر؟

26) How far did you go in school in Iran?

تا چه مقطع تحصیلی در ایران تحصیل نموده اید؟

27) Have you pursued education in the United States? If so, please describe your academic pursuits here.

آیا به‌دنبال ادامه تحصیل در آمریکا بوده اید؟ اگر جواب شما مثبت است برای چه مقطع تحصیلی اقدام کرده اید؟

28) How far did your spouse go in school in Iran?

همسر شما تا چه مقطع تحصیلی در ایران تحصیل نموده اند؟
29) Has your spouse pursued education in the United States? If so, please describe your spouse’s academic pursuits here.

آیا همسر شما بدنبال ادامه تحصیل در آمریکا بوده اند؟ لطفا در مورد ادامه تحصیل همسر خود توضیح دهید.

30) Anything else you want to share?

آیا مایل هستید در مورد مهاجرت و مسائل مربوط به آن توضیحات بیشتری ارائه نمایید؟
Dear Iranian Participant,

Thank you for being interested in participating in this research. I appreciate the time you spent in the pre-interview. You are eligible to participate in the next interview. The second session will be approximately one hour, and as a participant, you can choose the location and the time of the interview. You may choose the same public café where we met for the pre-interview, or another public café that would be more convenient for you. I (Shahla Fayazpour) will pay for the food and soft drinks during our meeting. Please reply to this email and confirm the time and location for the second interview. If you have any questions about this study or the interview, please feel free to contact me at fayazpou@unlv.nevada.edu. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Shahla Fayazpour
APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions—

How do immigrant parents develop their identity to navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States?

1. What does it mean to you to be Iranian? Do you consider yourself Iranian? Why/why not?
2. What does it meant to you to be American? Do you consider yourself American? Why/why not?
5. If you see a difference in how you identify and how your children identify, what factors do you think have brought about those differences (e.g., age, gender, language, country, school, religion, other factors)
6. How do you feel about these differences?
7. Have these differences affected your relationship with your children? If so, in what ways?
8. If you could change your relationship with your children, what would you change? Why?
9. Have you thought about how you could change your relationship with your children, what would you change? If so, what approaches have you considered?
10. Have you tried these approaches? If so, how did they work? If not, why not?
11. Please describe your experiences interacting with your children’s teachers/other school personnel in Iran.
12. Please describe your experiences interacting with your children’s teachers/other school personnel in the United States.

13. What would you say are the best things about your children’s educational experiences in Iran? Why?

14. What would you say are the worst things about your children’s educational experiences in Iran? Why?

15. What would you say are the best things about your children’s educational experiences in the United States? Why?

16. What would you say are the worst things about your children’s educational experiences in the United States? Why?

17. How, if at all, have you changed as a result of interacting with your children’s teachers/other school personnel in the United States?

18. How, if at all, have your children changed as a result of interacting with their teachers/other school personnel in the United States?

19. How, if at all, has your relationship with your children changed since moving to the United States?

20. If there had been a change, what factors do you think are the most influential in bringing about this change? (e.g., school, teachers, peers, media, other factors).

How do society and school contexts impact immigrant parents’ identity development and their interactions with their 1.5-generation children?
1. How, if at all, has your relationship with your children’s teachers changed overtime in the United States? If there was a change, what factors do you think were the most influential in bringing about this change?

2. Have you ever considered yourself different from other parents in your children’s school? If yes, in which ways?

3. How, if at all, would you describe the roles of culture and language in your interactions with your co-workers?

4. How, if at all, would you describe the roles of culture and language in your relationship with your children’s teachers?

5. How do you think your children would describe the roles of culture and language in their relationship with their teachers in the United States?

6. How do you think your children would describe the roles of culture and language in their relationship with their peers in the United States?

7. Have you ever felt that your Iranian culture was a barrier to your success in the United States? If so, in what ways?

8. Have your children ever expressed feeling that their Iranian culture was a barrier to their success in the United States? If so, in what ways?

9. How do you feel about your children’s interaction with their non-Iranian peers in the United States?

10. How do you feel about your children’s interaction with their Iranian peers in the United States?

11. Have your children ever discussed their social/academic success or failure with you? If yes, how did you handle it?
12. What is your best experience living in the United States?

13. What is your worst experience living in the United States?

What strategies do immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children develop and use to counter the negative effects of sociocultural pressures in the United States?

1. How did you feel about the time you spent with your family in Iran?

2. How do you feel about the time you spend with your family in the United States?

3. Do you expect your children to learn and maintain a connection to Iranian cultural practices? Why? Or why not?

4. Do you expect your children to learn and maintain fluency in Farsi language? Why? Or why not?

5. What, if anything, do you notice about how non-Iranian interact with you in the United States? Do you notice anything in their interaction that could be related to your nationality and/or religion? If so, what?

6. Have you noticed any changes in your cultural and religious values and/or practices since coming to the United States? If so, what?

7. How, if at all, is your parenting and relationship with your children different in Iran and in the United States?

8. How would you describe the discipline practices you use to encourage your children to pursue their educational goals?

9. How would you describe your responsibilities as an Iranian parent in the United States?

10. What, if any, kinds of educational/learning activities have your children been engaged in before or after school or during the summer in the United States?
11. What, if any, strategies have you used to help your children to succeed academically or socially?

12. Describe your role as an Iranian parent in your children’s academic success or failure?

13. What standards have you set for your children’s behavior including for their school performance?

14. How, if at all, do you see your standards as similar to or different from non-Iranian parents?

15. How, if at all, have your standards changed as a result of your interaction with your children’s teachers?

16. How, if at all, have your standards changed as a result of your interaction with your children’s peers?

How do immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation students develop positive or negative perspectives regarding the educational setting in the United States?

1. What does “being successful” in terms of school, mean to you?

2. What does “being successful” in terms of career, mean to you?

3. Are you aware of any stereotypes about Iranians in the United States? If so, what are they?

4. Have you seen evidence that these stereotypes impact how your children have been viewed or treated by teachers?

5. How, if at all, does being an Iranian immigrant influence your attitudes about your children’s education and your expectations for their academic success?
6. Think about your own social and economic status in the United States. Based on that status, what are your hopes and fears for your children’s education?

7. Have you noticed any changes in your attitudes towards your children’s academic success since coming to the United States? If so, what are they?

8. Can you recall any significant events that have impacted your children’s academic success/failure in the United States?

9. Have your children ever expressed a desire to change their academic/professional goals since coming to the United States?

10. What, if any, roles did their teachers play in these changes?

11. What, if any, roles did their peers play in these changes?

12. What, if any, roles did you play in these changes?

13. What were your expectations of the American educational system before coming to the United States? What are your expectations of the American educational system now?

14. How would you describe your children’s perceptions of the American educational system?
APPENDIX G: IRB APPROVAL

UNLV Social/Behavioral IRB - Exempt Review
Exempt Notice

DATE: April 29, 2016
TO: Christine Clark
FROM: Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects
PROTOCOL TITLE: [810340-1] Co-Navigating the U.S. Educational System: A Multiple Case Study of the Social and Academic Pressures Experienced by Iranian Immigrant Parents and their 1.5 Generation Immigrant Children
ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS
EXEMPT DATE: April 29, 2016
REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category # 2

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this protocol. This memorandum is notification that the protocol referenced above has been reviewed as indicated in Federal regulatory statutes 45CFR46.101(b) and deemed exempt.

We will retain a copy of this correspondence with our records.

PLEASE NOTE:
Upon final determination of exempt status, the research team is responsible for conducting the research as stated in the exempt application reviewed by the ORI - HS and/or the IRB which shall include using the most recently submitted Informed Consent/Assent Forms (Information Sheet) and recruitment materials. The official versions of these forms are indicated by footer which contains the date exempted.

Any changes to the application may cause this protocol to require a different level of IRB review. Should any changes need to be made, please submit a Modification Form. When the above-referenced protocol has been completed, please submit a Continuing Review/Progress Completion report to notify ORI - HS of its closure.

If you have questions, please contact the Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects at IRB@unlv.edu or call 702-895-2794. Please include your protocol title and IRBNet ID in all correspondence.

Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects
4505 Maryland Parkway, Box 451047, Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-1047
(702) 895-2794, FAX: (702) 895-0805, IRB@unlv.edu

- 1 -

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### APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS Aligned WITH RESEARCH QUESTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Relevant Interview Questions</th>
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</table>
| **Aligned with Primary Research Question**: How do immigrant parents develop their identity to navigate their 1.5-generation children’s education in the United States? | - What does it mean to you to be Iranian? Do you consider yourself Iranian? Why/why not?  
- What does it mean to you to be American? Do you consider yourself American? Why/why not?  
- How do you think your children would describe themselves (their identities) in general? Nationality? Racially? Ethnically? Other identifiers?  
- If you see a difference in how you identify and how your children identify, what factors do you think have brought about those differences (e.g., age, gender, language, country, school, religion, other factors)  
- How do you feel about these differences?  
- Have these differences affected your relationship with your children? If so, in what ways?  
- If you could change your relationship with your children, what would you change? Why? |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Questions</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Have you thought about how you could change your relationship with your children, what would you change? If so, what approaches have you considered?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Have you tried these approaches? If so, how did they work? If not, why not?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Please describe your experiences interacting with your children’s teachers/other school personnel in Iran.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Please describe your experiences interacting with your children’s teachers/other school personnel in the United States.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What would you say are the best things about your children’s educational experiences in Iran? Why?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What would you say are the worst things about your children’s educational experiences in Iran? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What would you say are the best things about your children’s educational experiences in the United States? Why?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Aligned with first ancillary question: How do society and school contexts impact immigrant parents’ identity development and their interactions with their 1.5-generation children? | • What would you say are the worst things about your children’s educational experiences in the United States? Why?
• How, if at all, have you changed as a result of interacting with your children’s teachers/other school personnel in the United States?
• How, if at all, have your children changed as a result of interacting with their teachers/other school personnel in the United States?
• How, if at all, has your relationship with your children changed since moving to the United States?
• If there had been a change, what factors do you think are the most influential in bringing about this change? (e.g., school, teachers, peers, media, other factors)

| How, if at all, has your relationship with your children’s teachers changed overtime in the United States? If there was a change, what factors do you think were the most influential in bringing about this change? |
• Have you ever considered yourself different from other parents in your children’s school? If yes, in which ways?

• How, if at all, would you describe the roles of culture and language in your interactions with your co-workers?

• How, if at all, would you describe the roles of culture and language in your relationship with your children’s teachers?

• How do you think your children would describe the roles of culture and language in their relationship with their teachers in the United States?

• How do you think your children would describe the roles of culture and language in their relationship with their peers in the United States?

• Have you ever felt that your Iranian culture was a barrier to your success in the United States? If so, in what ways?

• Have your children ever expressed feeling that their Iranian culture was a barrier to their success in the United States? If so, in what ways?
<table>
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<tr>
<th>How do you feel about your children’s interaction with their non-Iranian peers in the United States?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do you feel about your children’s interaction with their Iranian peers in the United States?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have your children ever discussed their social/academic success or failure with you? If yes, how did you handle it?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is your best experience living in the United States?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is your worst experience living in the United States?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Aligned with second ancillary question:** What strategies do immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation children develop and use to counter the negative effects of sociocultural pressures in the United States?

- How did you feel about the time you spent with your family in Iran?
- How do you feel about the time you spend with your family in the United States?
- Do you expect your children to learn and maintain a connection to Iranian cultural practices? Why? Or why not?
- Do you expect your children to learn and maintain fluency in Farsi language? Why? Or why not?
What, if anything, do you notice about how non-Iranian interact with you in the United States? Do you notice anything in their interaction that could be related to your nationality and/or religion? If so, what?

Have you noticed any changes in your cultural and religious values and/or practices since coming to the United States? If so, what?

How, if at all, is your parenting and relationship with your children different in Iran and in the United States?

How would you describe the discipline practices you use to encourage your children to pursue their educational goals?

How would you describe your responsibilities as an Iranian parent in the United States?

What, if any, kinds of educational/learning activities have your children been engaged in before or after school or during the summer in the United States?

What, if any, strategies have you used to help your children to succeed academically or socially?
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<tr>
<th>Describe your role as an Iranian parent in your children’s academic success or failure?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What standards have you set for your children’s behavior including for their school performance?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How, if at all, do you see your standards as similar to or different from non-Iranian parents?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How, if at all, have your standards changed as a result of your interactions with your children’s teachers?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How, if at all, have your standards changed as a result of your interactions with your children’s peers?</td>
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</table>

**Aligned with third ancillary question:** How do immigrant parents and their 1.5-generation students develop positive or negative perspectives regarding the educational setting in the United States?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What does “being successful” in terms of school, mean to you?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What does “being successful” in terms of career, mean to you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you aware of any stereotypes about Iranians in the United States? If so, what are they?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you seen evidence that these stereotypes impact how your children have been viewed or treated by teachers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How, if at all, does being an Iranian immigrant influence your attitudes about your children’s...</td>
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<td>education and your expectations for their academic success?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Think about your own social and economic status in the United States. Based on</td>
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<tr>
<td>that status, what are your hopes and fears for your children’s education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have you noticed any changes in your attitudes towards your children’s academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>success since coming to the United States? If so, what are they?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Can you recall any significant events that have impacted your children’s academic</td>
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<tr>
<td>success/failure in the United States?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Have your children ever expressed a desire to change their academic/professional</td>
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<tr>
<td>goals since coming to the United States?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What, if any, roles did their teachers play in these changes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What, if any, roles did their peers play in these changes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What, if any, roles did you play in these changes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What were your expectations of the American educational system before coming to the United States? What are your expectations of the American educational system now?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
REFERENCES


http://www.truth-out.org/opinion/item/12126-can-democratic-education-survive-in-a-neoliberal-society


Weaver, K. (2010). Arab Americans and segmented assimilation: Looking beyond the theory to the reality in the Detroit metro area (Master's thesis).


CURRICULUM VITAE

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EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction
Cultural Studies, International Education, and Multicultural Education
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Enrolled 2013, anticipated completion Fall 2017
Dissertation Emphasis: Immigrants and Parental Involvement

Master of Education in Teaching and Learning
Emphasis: Teaching English as Second Language
University of Nevada, Las Vegas; Awarded December 2013

Bachelor of Arts in Translation
Shiraz Azad University, Shiraz, Iran; Awarded Spring 1996

LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION

Teaching Certification
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
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Substitute Teacher Certification
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Translation Certification
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Shiraz Azad University, Shiraz, Iran

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- Multicultural Education and International Studies (participated and presented in creation of Three Conference Lecture)
- Comparative studies of Female Oppression (presented and participated in the creation of four conference lectures and posters)
- School-To-Prison Pipeline and Policy in Education (Presented and participated in the Conference Lecture)
- Immigrants and Parental Involvement (Presented and Participated in creation of two conference)

273
- Teaching English as Second Language: Participated and presented in the creation of conference Poster
- Conducting Participant Interviews

Grant in Progress: Spencer Small Research Grant: Analyzing K-12 Language Needs and 1.5 Generation.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

**Teaching English as Foreign Language**  
Summer 1989- Fall 1996  
Teaching Children in Private Institutions  
Shiraz, Iran

**Teaching English as Foreign Language**  
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Teaching Adults in Private Institutions  
Shiraz, Iran

**Substitute Teacher K-12**  
Spring 2010-fall 2015  
Substitute Teacher in different in Elementary and secondary levels

**Teaching Assistant for Classroom Management**  
Spring 2013 –Spring 2014  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

**Teacher Assistant of Doctoral Seminar Class**  
Spring 2015  
Las Vegas, Nevada

**Teacher Assistant of Multicultural Education –Intern**  
Fall 2014  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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Spring 2013- Fall 2014  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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Online and Face to face Instructor  
Fall 2014 to Fall 2016  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
ACTIVITIES IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Member, National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME), 2014-Present

Member, Association of Teacher Education, 2015-Present

Member, American Education Research Association, 2015-present

Member of Clinical Fellows of Association of Teacher Education, 2015-Present

Member of Commission on Social Justice and access in Equitable Education in the Global Community at Association of Teacher Education (ATE) Conference, 2015-Present

Attended and volunteered as a reviewer for proposals at National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) Conference Fall 2014

Attended and Volunteered at Ethnographic and qualitative research (EQRC) Conference and American Association of Behavioral and Social Sciences (AABSS) Conference 2016.


Accepted as a Review for proposals at American Educational Research Association (AERA) Conference 2017

SCHOLARSHIPS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND AWARDS

Graduate Assistantship
Spring 2013 to Present
As part of financial package supporting Doctoral Study, Supplies, Stipend and tuition for more than 3 academic years with twenty hours per week work requirement for a 9-month Period. University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Associate of Teacher Education Conference Sponsorship Spring 2013, One time Award of $ 300


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