

ABSTRACT

Title: AN EXAMINATION OF COLLECTIVIST
CULTURAL ORIENTATION AMONG MIDDLE
EASTERN COLLEGE STUDENTS OF
DIFFERENT GENDER, GENERATION
STATUS, AND ACADEMIC CLASS STANDING

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The purpose of this study was to examine the levels of collectivist cultural orientation among Middle Eastern college students of differing academic class levels, generation status, and gender. In Spring 2003 and 2004 semesters, Middle Eastern students from the University of Maryland ($N = 92$; 43 men, 49 women; average age of 20.7 years) completed the Middle Eastern Values Scale (MVS), a modified version of the Asian Values Scale (AVS), developed by the author. The overall results showed no significant differences ($p > .05$) for all three hypotheses, indicating that collectivist cultural orientation among Middle Eastern students does not differ by academic class level, generation status, and gender. This lack of findings may infer that a collectivist cultural orientation among the Middle Eastern students in this study is somewhat consistent, and is not shaped by gender roles, immigration status, and maturity during college.

AN EXAMINATION OF COLLECTIVIST CULTURAL ORIENTATION
AMONG MIDDLE EASTERN COLLEGE STUDENTS OF DIFFERENT
GENDER, GENERATION STATUS, AND ACADEMIC CLASS STANDING

by

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate my thesis to my loving parents, Shahrddad and Simin Shakibai, for all the sacrifices they have made throughout the years to help me get to where I am today.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables	v
Chapter I: Introduction.....	1
Statement of Problem.....	3
Definition of Terms.....	5
Significance of Study.....	7
Delimitations of Study.....	9
Chapter II: Literature Review	10
History and Demographics of Middle Easterners.....	11
Middle Eastern Cultural Values.....	13
Collectivist Cultures.....	17
Student Development Theories.....	22
Assimilation and Acculturation	28
Summary.....	42
Chapter III: Methodology	45
Participants.....	46
Measures	48
Procedure	50
Data Analysis.....	51
Limitations	52
Chapter IV: Results.....	54
Demographic Information for the Middle Eastern Student Respondents.....	54
Data Preparation Procedures.....	59
Results for the Research Questions.....	61
Ancillary Analyses.....	63
Chapter V: Summary and Discussions	64
Implications.....	69
Limitations	71
Future Research	74
Conclusions.....	75
Appendix A: Cover Letter and Middle Eastern Values Scale	77
References.....	84

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.0: Characteristics of the Middle Eastern sample	56
Table 4.1: Results of ANOVA for Middle Eastern collectivist cultural orientation by academic class level.....	61
Table 4.2: Results of t-test for Middle Eastern collectivist cultural orientation by generation status	62
Table 4.3: Results of t-test for Middle Eastern collectivist cultural orientation by gender	63

Chapter I

Introduction

During the 2000-2001 academic year, there were 547,867 international students enrolled at American colleges and universities, with Middle Eastern students making up seven percent of this total (Ibrahim, 2002). According to several colleges and universities in the Washington Metropolitan area, although the number of international students has remained steady this fall, the enrollment rate of students from Middle East has dropped (Ibrahim, 2002). For example, at American University, the number of Middle Eastern students has dropped from 100 to 70 (Ibrahim, 2002). According to the international student advisor at the University of Maryland, while the enrollment rate of foreign students has increased from 3,711 to 3,734, the number of Middle Eastern students at the University of Maryland has dropped from 250 to 239 (Ibrahim, 2002). At George Washington University, the number of students from Saudi Arabia has dropped from 127 to 94 (Ibrahim, 2002). Similarly, at the University of Arizona, while there has been an increase in the number of international students, the enrollment rate of students from Arab and Islamic countries has dropped from 263 to 203 (Ibrahim, 2002).

People of Middle Eastern descent, unlike the other distinct minority groups and ‘people of color’ in the United States, have been veiled underneath the “Caucasian label” for quite some time (Cainkar, 2002). It was not until after the terrorist attacks of September 11th, however, that this hidden identity became visible to the public eye, especially for Arabs living in the United States (Cainkar, 2002). According to the U.S. Census and most affirmative action forms, people from the Middle East are racially classified as White (Hassan, 2002). However, since the 1960s, Arabs and others from the

Middle East have been unofficially representing a distinct racial group by the U.S. government, especially since they associate Middle Easterners with terrorism and as threats to national security (Hassan, 2002). Regardless of being a U.S. citizen or a non-citizen, Middle Easterners are now subject to violence, discrimination, and insult by American society (Cainkar, 2002). According to the Chicago Commission on Human Relations, more than 100 hate crimes were reported against Arabs and Muslims in Chicago, along with others who were mistaken for them, following the events of September 11th (Cainkar, 2002). For example, a mob consisting of hundreds of White Americans surrounded the largest predominately Arab mosque in Chicago on September 12th, with some shouting “kill the Arabs” and some exhibiting weapons (Cainkar, 2002). Even though they are racially classified as White, Arabs have consistently been experiencing the same type of racism as other distinct minority groups (i.e., Blacks, Asians, and Latinos) (Hassan, 2002). Despite the fact that Middle Easterners are officially lumped into the White category, not only are Arabs “denied the rights of other recognized minorities,” but they are also “excluded from the racial privileges of the white majority” (Hassan, 2002).

Following the attacks of September 11th, many colleges and universities were struggling to find qualified professors to teach courses in Middle Eastern studies (Wilson, 2002). Unfortunately, it was the September 11th tragedy that brought about this “new-found” interest in Middle Eastern studies, a discipline that has been ignored for so long (Wilson, 2002). At most universities however, the hiring of faculty in Middle Eastern studies has been “crisis-driven” (Wilson, 2002). With the exception of a few well-known universities, the majority of institutions in the U.S. have offered very few resources

towards programs in Middle Eastern languages, cultures, and history. It has only been recently that university officials have realized that this is too important a problem to be ignored (Wilson, 2002).

Statement of Problem

In spite of the continuous increase in diversity on today's college campuses, student affairs professionals still have the tendency to depend on the traditional student development theories in developing programs and services, "based on assumptions that may not fit current student populations" (Kodama, McEwen, Liang, & Lee, 2002, p. 54). Thus, these theories, which are developed for White American students, are assumed to be valid for all students (Katz, 1987). Relying on the traditional student development theories, such as Chickering's (1969; Chickering & Reisser, 1993) psychosocial theory that puts great emphasis on students' individual interests and desires, may be inapplicable to students who come from collectivist cultures (Kodama et al., 2002). It should not be assumed, based on their classification as Caucasians, that Middle Eastern students have the same needs as White American students.

As emphasized by Triandis (1989), it is more likely for people from non-western cultures to possess a collective self because their child-rearing practices accentuate the in-group. According to Triandis (1989; Triandis, McCusker, & Hui, 1990), people in collectivist cultures portray emotional dependence, in-group solidarity and harmony, duties and obligations, behavior regulation by in-group norms, and family integrity.

While people in collectivist cultures hold to family values as a part of their culture, individualists highly value autonomy (Killen & Wainryb, 2000). For many White Americans in the United States, achieving individual goals and aspirations are often more

important than meeting family needs (Triandis, 1988). To most Middle Easterners, everything in their life evolves around the family (Harik & Marston, 1996). To Arabs for example, individual wishes and desires often play a secondary role to that of family, especially the elders, whereas for many individuals growing up in White American society, individualism is a highly cherished value (Marr, 1978).

As pointed out by Kodama, McEwen, Liang, and Lee (2002), “it is not appropriate to continue to view diverse populations all through the same lens and rely on traditional theories to explain their development” (p. 56). Iranian students, for example, are often faced with considerable amounts of pressure. A part of their pressure comes from cultural and social factors that conflict with the norm, which affects their performance and their ability to function effectively in their university setting (Zonis, 1978). Moreover, Iranian adolescents often experience conflict between their desires for independence and their strong sense of duty toward their parents (Jalali, 1996).

Additionally, Middle Eastern parents may have a tendency to be overly protective or controlling of their children. This dependence on parents and family members can prevent adolescents from “growing up” and accepting responsibility (Harik & Marston, 1996). Factors like the above, as exemplified by a collectivist cultural orientation, make it imperative that higher education staff members, including student affairs professionals, broaden their understanding of the perspectives that influence their students’ sense of self and their surroundings.

The purpose of this study is to examine the cultural collectivist orientation among Middle Eastern college students. More specifically, it will examine the following questions:

1. Does the level of collectivist cultural orientation among Middle Eastern students differ among varying academic class levels (i.e., Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior)?
2. Are there differences in collectivist cultural identity among Middle Eastern students of different generation statuses?
3. Do Middle Eastern students of differing genders exhibit different collectivist cultural identities?

Definition of Terms

Collectivist cultural identity. One's cultural identity consists of his or her sense of belonging to a particular culture or ethnic group (Lustig & Koester, 2000). According to Lustig and Koester, cultural identity is formed through:

A process that results from membership in a particular culture, and involves learning about and accepting the traditions, heritage, language, religion, ancestry, aesthetics, thinking patterns, and social structures of a culture. That is, people internalize the beliefs, values, and norms of their culture and identify with that culture as part of their self-concept. (p. 3)

People who possess a collectivist cultural identity self-identify in terms of their group membership (Triandis, 1995). Moreover, they lean toward interdependence and family integrity. For a person with a collectivist cultural identity, the needs of others come before his or her own needs. Additionally, a person with a collectivist cultural identity desires "security, social order, respect for tradition, and politeness" (p.74).

Middle Eastern students. The Middle East expands on the territories of Africa, Asia, and the European section of Turkey (Eickelman, 1989). For this reason, it is often difficult to

distinctly define this region of the world. Some scholars define the Middle East as the cultural region stretching from Morocco in the West, including the countries of North Africa, to Iran in the East (Harik & Marston, 1996). Other scholars extend their definition of the Middle East to include Afghanistan and Pakistan when certain features of the linguistic, religious, political, and historical complexities of the region are emphasized (Eickelman, 1989). Due to its rich diversity in culture and differences between the major languages however, the term “Middle East” is not as sharply defined as the term “North Africa,” which generally refers to Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya (Eickelman, 1989). Egypt on the other hand, is rarely included as part of North Africa according to some area scholars (Eickelman, 1989). The Middle East does not consist of one single culture, but rather contains a massive variety of subcultures that are differentiated by specific sets of values and ways of life (Pearson, 1975). The ethnic groups from the cultural region of the Middle East include Arabs, Iranians (Persians), Turks, Kurds, Armenians, Berbers, Africans, and others (Harik & Marston, 1996). These ethnic groups often share more cultural similarities than differences. For the purposes of this study, the term “Middle East” will be used to include Iranian (Persian) and Arab students from the following countries: Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Palestine, Syria, and Jordan. Additionally, Afghanistan will also be included in this definition rather than being a part of Asia due to the fact that many Afghans are Persian-speaking and similar to Iranians in terms of their culture and physical type (Pearson, 1975).

Generation status. The term “generation” is also defined differently to different people. For the purposes of this study, the term “first-generation” will refer to students who were

born in their country of origin. The term “second-generation” will refer to students who were born in the United States, with one or both of their parents born in their country of origin. The term “third-generation” will be used to include those students who were born in the United States and whose parents were also born here. And finally, those students who were born in the United States, along with their parents and grandparents, will be referred to as “fourth-generation” (Phinney & Flores, 2002).

Significance of Study

A study on the collectivist cultural orientation among Middle Eastern college students is important for several reasons. First, American culture is becoming more aware of the Middle Eastern culture, but there are still many gaps in our understanding. Middle Easterners are often grouped with other White/Caucasians for racial classification purposes, but there are distinct differences. Similar to Iranian families, the Arab community in the United States continues to be caught between the Western values in their surrounding environment and the conflicting Arab customs and traditions. One of these problems that student affairs practitioners need to be aware of includes generational conflict, such as when parents have difficulty instilling Arab cultural norms and their children have difficulty accepting their parents’ norms (Abudabbeh, 1996; Abudabbeh & Aseel, 1999). Another conflict is centered around gender issues, such as when women insist on changes in the way they are treated, as they see women in the United States and Western cultures being treated more equally (Abudabbeh, 1996; Abudabbeh & Aseel, 1999). Choosing a partner is often another existing struggle between choosing a partner whom the family wants and choosing someone one falls in love with as in the Western culture (Abudabbeh, 1996; Abuddabeh & Aseel, 1999). Thus, unawareness of Middle

Eastern students' needs could result in the misinterpretation of their silence, such as fear of challenging authority, fear of letting down parents, and so on. Therefore, an understanding of the Middle Eastern college students' culture will help student affairs professionals on how to better work with these students, particularly in academic advising and career counseling.

Second, student affairs administrators should take into consideration the role of family expectations and pressures (Kodama, McEwen, Liang, & Lee, 2002) and how familial interdependence affects these students. For example, the generation gap among parents who grew up in Iran and their children who grew up in the United States has widened. As a result, families express a great deal of conflict and ambivalence regarding adolescents and young adults, especially when it comes to their daughters' dating (Jalali, 1996). Moreover, this can lead to feelings of isolation and loneliness. Additionally, children's ability to cope with their new environment depends considerably on their parents' ability to adapt to their conflicting loyalties and anxiety. They may feel unaccepted and shy, avoid peer relationships or may develop problems in school (Jalali, 1996).

Finally, many of the traditional student development theories on college students are based on western cultural values and students who come from White, middle-class backgrounds (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). There is a very limited amount of research available on the applicability of these theories to other racial and ethnic groups (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). Consequently, this study will add to the theoretical understanding of the limitations of classic student development theory by

providing information that will both extend or revise developmental theory and be helpful to student affairs professionals.

Delimitations of Study

This study will examine the collectivist cultural orientation of Middle Eastern college students at one single university. As a result, the findings of this study may not be generalizable to the collectivist cultural identity of Middle Eastern college students at other universities or other regional areas of the United States. In addition, the term “Middle East” is very complex because of its diversity, making it difficult to label the various ethnic groups within that region of the globe as “Middle Eastern.” Therefore, while the countries of origin listed in the author’s definition fall within the Middle Eastern region, some individuals from those specific countries may not identify themselves as “Middle Eastern,” even though they share adequate cultural similarities.

Chapter II

Literature Review

This chapter reviews related literature on this topic. First, the chapter begins with a brief overview of the history and demographics of Middle Eastern immigrants. Then related literature on Middle Eastern cultural values, both theoretical and empirical, will be examined. This portion of the chapter will consist of three sections. The first section will begin with literature on Middle Eastern cultures, both the Iranian and Arab societies, and their proclivity toward collectivism. Since there are no previous empirical research or studies available on the collectivist cultural identity of Middle Eastern students, this part of the review will be guided more from a theoretical perspective. Additionally, a general overview of collectivist cultures will be provided through some empirical research on the collectivist cultural identities of other ethnic groups, such as Asian Pacific Americans.

The second section of the literature review will focus on student development theories in the western tradition. The works of Chickering's (1969; Chickering & Reisser, 1993) psychosocial theory, Perry's (1970) cognitive-structural theory, and Kohlberg's (1971) theory of moral development will be discussed. These theories will be compared and contrasted with current knowledge about collectivist cultural identities.

Finally, the third section of the literature review will examine assimilation and acculturation in relation to Middle Easterners and other ethnic groups who possess a collectivist cultural identity. This section will first begin with a definition of acculturation, followed by a theoretical background, which will focus on the sociology and psychology of how subsequent generations lose cultural values of their ethnic group, leading into what is known about the acculturation of Arabs and Iranians, and ending

with empirical research and studies of acculturation on Arabs and Iranians. As a final note, a review of literature on other ethnic groups from collectivist cultures is provided due to the limited information known about the Middle Eastern population on this topic.

History and Demographics of Middle Easterners

The first wave of Arab American immigrants came to the U.S. between 1890 and 1940 from regions that were part of the Ottoman Empire (Abudabbeh, 1996). This group of immigrants was mainly made up of merchants and farmers who immigrated for economic reasons. Ninety percent of these immigrants were Christians, originating from regions that are known today as Syria and Lebanon (Abudabbeh, 1996). What differentiated this group of immigrants from others were their independent lifestyle and the fact that they chose to be peddlers (Abudabbeh, 1996). Furthermore, these immigrants were wealthier than those Arabs who worked in mines and factories and earned an average of 600 dollars a year (Abudabbeh, 1996). In addition, this group of Arabs assimilated to American culture with much more ease (Abudabbeh, 1996; Abudabbeh & Aseel, 1999). The second wave of Arab immigrants, who came after World War II, are the same groups that still continue to migrate to the United States in the present, and they come from all over the Arab world-- from regions of post-European migration and from ruler Arab nations. These immigrants come to the U.S. to pursue college education. They migrated for a variety of reasons, such as political changes, civil war, and seeking a better life (Abudabbeh, 1996). The difference between this second wave and the first wave of Arab immigrants is that this group came to the U.S. with an "Arab identity," including the practice of traditions and customs, that "affected either a hyphenated identity as an Arab American or an alienation from the majority of the society" (Abudabbeh, 1996, p.

335). Furthermore, this group of immigrants was predominately Muslims. Today, the Arab American population in the United States is estimated to be about three million people (Abudabbeh, 1996).

Most of the Iranian families in the United States are first-generation immigrants and have many of the same attributes as families in their homeland (Jalali, 1996). However, as Jalali (1996) points out, it should not be assumed that all Iranians identify with each other's experience, such as financial circumstances. There have been three waves of Iranian immigrants to the United States. The first wave, which took place from 1950 to 1970, consisted of immigrants who were from large Iranian cities and who were familiar with the Western culture, highly educated, wealthy, and part of the elite and professional middle-class groups (Jalali, 1996). The immigrants in this first wave were engineers, doctors, dentists, teachers or scientists, and adapted to the American culture with ease (Baldwin, 1963). The second wave of Iranian immigrants, who came to the U.S. between 1970 and 1978, were made up of different social classes who had become wealthy during this time period of rapid economic growth. Like the first wave, they too were financially well off, city oriented and consisted of professionals who had numerous opportunities for employment and were often able to maintain the same social class as the one they had in Iran (Jalali, 1996). However, some of these Iranians were less Westernized and more entrenched in their cultural traditions (Bill, 1973). Moreover, they were less prepared to deal with cultural change. According to the National Science Foundation (1973), although economics was still a major factor for this group's immigration, they also came for professional possibilities and to provide opportunities for their children, or for political reasons, such as opposition to the ruling political regime

(Jalali, 1996). The Iranians in this group were scattered all over the United States, especially the Northern, Eastern, and West Coast urban regions. The third wave of Iranian immigration took place between 1978 and 1984. This group, who were more diverse in terms of education and age, came immediately before and after the Iranian revolution. Their main reasons for migrating were for personal, economic, or political security (Jalali, 1996). These immigrants differed from the first two waves in that many of them were forced to flee Iran and had experienced cultural shock, alienation, frustration, and depression in adjusting to life in the United States (Jalali, 1996). Additionally, many of these Iranians had lost their social positions and power and could not practice their professions and their strong ties to Iran had made them disinclined to settle and acculturate (Jalali, 1996). Since 1984, an even more diverse group of Iranian immigrants have been coming to the United States (Jalali, 1996).

Middle Eastern Cultural Values

While I recognize that much of this section on Middle Eastern cultural values will be characterized by generalizations, I also acknowledge the fact that people of certain backgrounds tend to conform to certain generalizations about their ancestries.

Hui and Triandis (1986) define collectivism as “a cluster of attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors toward a wide variety of people” (p. 240). The authors view this “cluster” under the following seven categories: (1) concern by a person about the effects of actions or decisions on others, (2) sharing of material benefits, (3) sharing of nonmaterial resources, (4) willingness of the person to accept the opinions and views of others, (5) concern about self-presentation and loss of face, (6) belief in the correspondence of own outcomes with the outcomes of others, and (7) feeling of involvement in and contribution

to the lives of others (Hui & Triandis, 1986, p. 225). According to Triandis (1994), people from collectivist cultures view themselves as part of a group, such as a family. Moreover, collectivists feel their interdependence with members of the group in addition to putting their personal goals second to those of the group (Triandis, 1994).

Correspondingly, a person from the Middle East often identifies with his or her family (Harik & Marston, 1996). Most Middle Eastern families do not consist of just the father and the mother, but also grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, and wives and children of the married sons (Pearson, 1975). Whereas people from individualistic cultures may consider themselves to be autonomous, independent of groups, and believe that they can do whatever they want to do (Triandis, 1994), the extended family is the basic social unit of traditional Middle Eastern society (Marr, 1978). Individuals within this extended family are expected to help each other and often times sacrifice their individual wishes for the welfare of the entire group, such as forsaking an education to run the family store if there is no one else available to do so (Pearson, 1975). This falls under the notion of collectivism, in which children from collectivist cultures are raised around obedience, reliability, duty, cleanliness, and order (Triandis, 1994). By contrast, children from individualistic cultures are raised under the influence of creativity, self-reliance, independence, and freedom to make their own choices (Triandis, 1994).

For many Iranians, the family makes up the basic social unit (Moss & Wilson, 1992). Furthermore, the family and family relationships dominate the individual's whole life, and more often than not, individuals rely on family connections for position, security, influence and power (Gable, 1959). In Iran, whether living in a rural village or

in a large city, a person's status rests on that of his or her family (Moss & Wilson, 1992; Jalali, 1996).

Similarly, the Arab culture is often a group-oriented society rather than an individualistic one (Marr, 1978). Most Arab adolescents are raised on the philosophy of dependency (Cowan, 1978). While growing up in an Arab society, individuals become dependent on the family for support to a much higher degree than individuals growing up in the United States (Marr, 1978). In Iraq, the family consists of the father, mother, and their unmarried children, along with the families of their married sons (Moss & Wilson, 1992). People from the State of Qatar highly value the cultural traditions and authoritarianism of their extended family in their individual lives (Kamal, 1983). Among the Saudi Arabians, generosity, caring for relatives, and honor to the family are the primary cultural values (Moss & Wilson, 1992). According to the traditional codes of family and honor, both Arab men and women are expected to contribute to the support and maintenance of the family unit. Above the fulfillment of individual wishes and self-satisfaction, both Arab parents and children's primary commitment is to the happiness and good of the family as a whole (Abudabbeh & Aseel, 1999). By contrast, people from individualistic cultures often value independence and autonomy (Hui & Triandis, 1986). Most often, Middle Easterners believe that if the family changes significantly, then the whole social order will be in danger (Harik & Marston, 1996).

People from collectivist cultures value interdependence (Hui & Triandis, 1986) and are usually more concerned about "acting appropriately" rather than doing whatever they want to do (Triandis, 1994). Additionally, an individual's inappropriate behavior or failure is perceived as a disgrace to his or her family (Hui & Triandis, 1986). Many of the

Iranian and Arabs' beliefs are centered around politeness, a collective self-restraint, and the willingness to coexist with others, regardless of whether they share the same general assumptions or not (Eickelman, 1989). Most Iranians value self-sacrifice and unselfish behavior (Zonis, 1978). In Iranian culture, the notion of respect, which oversees interpersonal relationships, determines differential behavior towards others based on age, social class, and gender (Jalali, 1996). For example, there is a high level of expectation for women to hold on to this value by being obedient and respectful to their husband, fathers, and authority figures. Also, people of a lower social status are expected to show politeness and respect to those of a higher status, regardless of whether or not they may feel some resentment and hostility toward them (Jalali, 1996). The self is presented in a notion of etiquette, in which seeking direct, significant encounters in a political and social world is considered to be disrespectful (Eickelman, 1989).

A common characteristic of individuals within collectivist cultures is their concern with gaining approval from their group (Hui & Triandis, 1986). Individuals who fail to gain the approval of their group end up feeling shameful (Hui & Triandis, 1986). Within the Middle Eastern culture, one's appearance in the eyes of one's peers is most important. However, it is even more important how one behaves outside of the relevant group (Marr, 1978). For example, Arabs who come from conservative, religious, and strict societies may adopt many of the American Western habits and customs while living in the U.S., but once they return home, they can comfortably fall back into their old ways because it appears respectful in the eyes of the group. According to Marr (1978), this notion of "face" is more highly valued than consistency. On the contrary, in individualistic cultures, people may not care about the loss of face because their

perceived acceptance by certain groups is not a major aspect of their life (Hui & Triandis, 1986).

Collectivist Cultures

Only a few studies have looked at the collectivism of Middle Easterners, all of which have been conducted overseas. In a study conducted between 1995 and 1996, Buda and Elsayed-Elkhouly (1998) examined cultural differences between Arab and American business managers using Wagner's (1995) Individualism-Collectivism instrument. The sample included 224 managers from major cities in Egypt, 75 of whom were females, 107 managers from the Gulf States of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates, all of whom were males, and 102 managers from the United States (East Coast region), 55 of whom were females. The findings indicated that the United States managers scored significantly higher on the individualism scale than both the Egyptians and the Gulf States Arabs (Buda & Elsayed-Elkhouly, 1998). Additionally, the Arab participants were found to be more significantly collective than the American participants. Within the Arab participants, however, the Gulf-State Arabs were significantly more collective than the Egyptians (Buda & Elsayed-Elkhouly, 1998).

This study, however, was limited to adults. Since most of the previous studies on collectivism-individualism constructs tended to distinguish Western societies as individualistic and Eastern societies as collectivist, Sagy, Orr, Bar-On, and Awwad (2001) addressed this with their study on collectivism-individualism by examining two national regional groups (Jewish-Israeli and Arab-Palestinians) that live in the same geographical region, but represent different socio-historical, cultural, and political conditions. During the 1994-1995 academic year, data were collected from 1,190 tenth

grade Palestinian students (males and females) from private and public high schools in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem, and 1,144 Israeli tenth grade students (males and females) from 311 secular high schools and 184 religious (non-orthodox) high schools (Sagy et al., 1998). Results indicated that both groups emphasized greater value to their collectivist in-groups, such as family, friends, country, and ethnic groups. Both groups placed primacy on family values, with the Jewish students having a higher score. However, there were some clear distinctions between the Israeli and Palestinian students concerning collectivism-individualism (Sagy et al., 1998). The authors stated that the Palestinian students ascribed more importance to most of the in-group values (e.g. own country, nationality, ethnicity) than the Israeli students did (Sagy et al., 1998). Although Sagy et al.'s (1998) study did examine the individualism-collectivism of Israelis and Palestinians, it did not address the college student population and was limited to only high school students. Another major limitation of this study was that it was conducted in the Middle East.

Ayyash-Abdo in 2001 studied the individualistic and collectivistic orientations of 517 (137 males and 380 females) college students in Lebanon, to examine if these students varied in the languages they spoke, their gender, and their religious affiliations. The subjects in the study were undergraduate psychology students who attended the Lebanese American University, Arab University, Lebanese University, Kaslik University or Saint Joseph University. The average age of the participants was twenty. Results showed that 27.9 percent of the Lebanese subjects were individualistic while 67.3 percent were collectivist (Ayyad-Abdo, 2001). Within the collectivist group, 25 percent were males and 75 percent were females. Additionally, the females had a higher score on both

the individualistic oriented attitude items and the collectivist items; however, this scale had a low Cronbach alpha (.53), making the findings vulnerable in reliability. Males, on the other hand, had a higher score on both the social and individualistic values items (Ayyad-Abdo, 2001). This study was limited to the Lebanese population in Lebanon, the majority of whom were females.

Most of the research on individualism-collectivism has tended to focus on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. A number of these studies have focused on the independent versus the interdependent self-construals. Singelis (1994) defines the independent self-construal as “a bounded, unitary, stable self that is separate from social context” (p. 581). An independent self-construal is composed of (a) internal abilities, thoughts, and feelings, (b) being unique and expressing the self, (c) realizing internal attributes and promoting one’s own goals, and (d) being direct in communication (Singelis, 1994, p. 581). On the other hand, an interdependent self-construal is defined as “a flexible, variable self that emphasizes (a) external, public features such as statuses, roles and relationships, (b) belonging and fitting in, (c) occupying one’s proper place and engaging in appropriate action, and (d) being indirect in communication” (Singelis, 1994, p. 581).

Singelis (1994) conducted a study on the independent and interdependent self-construals by developing a 24-item Self-Construal Scale to measure these two dimensions of the self. The Self-Construal Scale (SCS) was developed from the initial 45-item SCS, which consisted of a second part that included four scenarios, illustrating brief social conversations. Each of these scenarios or situations included a short description of the people, a description of the setting of the interaction, and a verbatim

dialogue containing an exchange of greetings, a request, and a reply (Singelis, 1994). The subjects were asked two questions to assess their perception of the degree to which the situation had influenced the informer's reply to a request. Singelis's (1994) sample consisted of 364 (57% females, 43% males) under-graduate college students at the University of Hawaii. The mean age of the participants was 21.63. These students included eight African Americans, 49 Caucasians, 43 Chinese, 32 Filipino, 26 Hawaiian or part Hawaiian, 122 Japanese, 13 Korean, two Samoan, 20 mixed, and 43 who fell under the "other" category. The Asian American students (combined Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and Filipino ethnic groups) were compared to the Caucasian American students in order to test the construct validity (Singelis, 1994). Results indicated that Asian Americans were more interdependent than the Caucasian Americans. Thus, the Caucasian participants scored higher on the independent dimension than the Asian Americans. For the predictive validity, it was revealed that Asian Americans and those with higher interdependent scores seemed to ascribe more influence to a situation, in which respondents were presented with scenarios describing a conversation between two persons, than Caucasian Americans (Singelis, 1994). As pointed out by the author, the results are less generalizable within the United States since African Americans and Hispanic Americans were absent from the sample.

Another study of self-construal by Kashima, Yamaguchi, Kim, Choi, Gelfand, and Yuki (1995) attempted to examine similarities and differences among men and women from five cultures. The participants from all five cultures were college students in introductory psychology courses in universities in Australia, USA, Hawaii, Japan, and Korea (Kashima et al., 1995). The USA sample was drawn from University of Illinois at

Urbana-Champaign. The authors used five questionnaires in this study with one of them being a demographic questionnaire, and the other four were drawn from Yamaguchi's (1994) Collectivism Scale, Hamaguchi's (1997) Kanjin-shugi Scale (a Japanese scale), Allocentrism Scale, and the Friendship Scale (Kashima et al., 1995). Results from this study indicated that the differences that emerged between the five cultures had to do with the extent to which people perceived themselves as "acting" as independent agents (Kashima et al., 1995). On the other hand, the gender differences that existed between the five cultures were related to the extent to which people regarded themselves as emotionally related to others (Kashima et al., 1995). American women scored the highest on relatedness, followed by Australian women, Korean women, Hawaiian women, Korean men, Hawaiian men, Australian men, and American men. Although both the men and women in Japan scored the lowest in this area, women's scores were still relatively higher than the men (Kashima et al., 1995).

Gender is another factor that affects the individual's individualistic and collectivistic orientations. In most Middle Eastern societies, men have more choices than women do and therefore have greater individualistic tendencies (Ayyash-Abdo, 2001). Barry, Elliott, and Evans (2002) examined the relationship between the self-construal and ethnic identity of male Arabic immigrants concerning their acculturation to the American culture using the Male Arabic Ethnic Identity Measure (MAEIM). Their sample consisted of 115 male Arabic immigrants. Results indicated that the male Arabs with a strong sense of ethnic identity were more likely to have an interdependent than an independent self-construal. The authors found a negative relationship between length of residence in the United States and ethnic identity. This study was only limited to the experiences of male

Arabic immigrants and excluded Arabic females. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to the entire Arabic immigrant community.

Student Development Theories

There has been very little research done on the developmental processes for students who come from different cultural backgrounds (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). Thus, the research findings from the traditional student development theories are all based on small, homogeneous samples (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998) and therefore prevent generalization to students from collectivist cultures and other ethnic backgrounds.

Nevitt Sanford defines student development as increasing differentiation and integration, in addition to the organization of increasing complexity (Evans, Forney & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). According to Sanford, in order for development to occur, there needs to be a balance of challenge and support present in the college environment, in which development is encouraged by offering students challenges, on top of offering adequate support for students to confront those challenges (Evans, Forney & Guido-DiBrito).

Psychosocial Development

Psychosocial development theory is about the content of development, focusing on what the student is thinking rather than how they are thinking (Evans, Forney & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). Furthermore, psychosocial development also deals with the issues that emerge out of the individual and what the environment is stimulating. In other words, the student is negotiating what is happening within his or herself (internally) with what is going on around him or her (externally) (Evans, Forney & Guido-DiBrito, 1998).

Student affairs practitioners often use Chickering's psychosocial theory in their work with college students (Kodama, McEwen, Liang, & Lee, 2002). Chickering's (1969; Chickering & Reisser, 1993) model is presented through seven vectors that consist of the major concerns, challenges, and preoccupations of college: Developing Competence, Managing Emotions, Developing Autonomy, Developing Mature Interpersonal Relationships, Developing Identity, Developing Purpose, and Developing Integrity. Chickering's (1969; Chickering & Reisser, 1993) vectors are not seen in stages, but rather they develop simultaneously, in which all the issues within the vectors can be dealt with at any time and in no particular order.

The development of traditional psychosocial theory is based on American western values, such as individualism, independence, and self-exploration (Kodama, McEwen, Liang, & Lee, 2002). When taking into account the development of students from other racial and ethnic backgrounds, the role of cultural awareness should be considered (McEwen, Roper, Bryant, & Langa, 1990). For instance, in Middle Eastern cultures, placing the needs of the family above individual needs is a highly prized value (Harik & Marston, 1996). From an early age, White American children are conditioned to be independent and to openly express their own needs and desires (Carter & Cook, 1992). On the contrary, Arab children are expected to obey their parents' orders as opposed to exploring ideas or thoughts (Abudabbeh, 1996). Within Iranian families, individual needs and aspirations play a secondary role to the family expectations (Ansari, 1988).

Chickering (1969; Chickering & Reisser, 1993) mentions three areas of major concern for college students in his vector III, developing autonomy: developing emotional independence, instrumental independence, and recognition and acceptance of

interdependence. Thus, this vector can be problematic when applying to Middle Eastern students. In many instances, young adults (both men and women) from the Middle East are expected to live with their parents or family members until they get married (Harik & Marston, 1996). For example, an Arab student who comes to America to attend college or who goes away to school may experience homesickness and loneliness because he or she is not surrounded by family members (Marr, 1978). Additionally, an Arab college student may experience terrible guilt for leaving his or her home for academic reasons (Cowan, 1978). Therefore, that need for autonomy and independence, along with separation from parents, as suggested by Chickering (1969) may not be applicable to Middle Eastern students.

Chickering's (1969; Chickering & Reisser, 1993) vector IV, developing mature interpersonal relationships is also problematic for Middle Eastern students. In this vector, Chickering refers to the notion of moving away from dependence towards interdependence, in addition to choosing nurturing relationships (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Mistrust of all authority and hierarchy systems is a common cultural value among Iranian students (Zonis, 1978). For the most part, Iranians disclose their "inner" self to a small circle of family and friends whom they trust (Eickelman, 1989). In the eyes of the public, they often maintain a "proper public face" and hold their true feelings in check in order to protect the "inner" self.

Furthermore, in his vector VIII, developing integrity, Chickering (Chickering & Reisser, 1993) asserts the notion of increasing one's congruence in order to make personal values consistent with one's social behavior. Since, in Middle Eastern cultures, life evolves around the family (Harik & Marston, 1996), this may be difficult to achieve.

Iranian students for example, often struggle with trying to balance their cultural and family norms with those of the American western culture (Jalali, 1996). Similarly, Arab students also face the same struggles. Thus, Chickering's psychosocial theory cannot be applicable to students who are from collectivist cultural backgrounds in which much of life evolves around the family.

Cognitive Development

In the cognitive-structural theory, development is a little less embedded in the social context. Cognitive development theory focuses on how students think (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). Perry's (1970) theory of Intellectual and Ethical Development examines the cognitive-structural development of college students. By contrast to Chickering's psychosocial theory, in cognitive-structural theory, one cannot skip stages, or what Perry refers to as "positions" (Perry, 1970). The positions become increasingly more complex and they go from concrete to abstract. The structures in Perry's theory include dualism (Positions 1 and 2), multiplicity (Positions 3 and 4), relativism (Positions 5 and 6), and commitment in relativism (Positions 7, 8, and 9). Perry (1970) believes that the real development takes place in between positions. According to Perry, most first-year students enter college at Position 2-3 and leave college ending at Position 3-4.

In Perry's theory of Intellectual and Ethical development, his descriptions of the various stages are primarily based on White, traditionally aged, male college students at Harvard in the 1960s (Perry, 1970) and may not be generalizable to other non-dominant groups, such as Middle Eastern students. Moreover, little attention has been given to environmental influences, such as challenge and support, the size of the institution,

student-faculty relationships, and the curriculum, to name a few (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). Middle Eastern students attending college in 2002 are faced with very different developmental challenges than White students who attended Harvard in 1960.

Moral Development

Kohlberg's (1971) stages of moral development, which focuses on how people make moral judgments, is an influential theoretical framework often used by student affairs practitioners (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). According to Kohlberg (1971), moral development occurs through six stages that are grouped into three levels. Level I, *preconventional*, in whom the individual is more self-focused, consist of two stages. The first stage, *heteronomous morality*, is centered on avoiding punishment or breaking any rules. In stage two, *individualistic, instrumental morality*, the individual is focused on fulfilling self-satisfaction and needs (Kohlberg, 1971). Kohlberg's (1971) level II, *conventional*, focuses on not so much what one does, but understanding the reason behind it. This level consists of stages three and four. The third stage, *interpersonal normative morality*, is centered on maintaining a "good person" image, and gaining approval from others. Stage four, *social system morality*, emphasizes doing the right thing in order to fulfill one's obligations (Kohlberg, 1971). At Kohlberg's (1971) level III, *postconventional or principled*, individuals make an effort to define moral values and principles by separating themselves from rules and expectations of others. Furthermore, decisions at this level are made based on self-chosen principles. Level III also consists of two stages. At stage five, *human rights and social welfare morality*, rightness of laws and social systems is a matter of personal values and opinion. Individuals at this stage believe that there is a social contract into which they freely enter

and while a wide range of values and opinions exist, individuals want to make certain of the welfare of all groups (Kohlberg, 1971). Additionally, making agreements and being dependent on them are a part of the moral obligation and social relationships. At stage six, *morality of universalizable, reversible, and prescriptive general ethical principles*, morality consists of equally considering the points of view of all individuals involved in a moral situation. Individuals at this stage abide by universal ethical principles that are self-chosen. These principles include justice, equality of human rights, and respect for the dignity of human beings as individuals (Kohlberg, 1971). Moreover, individuals are expected to act based on a sense of personal commitment to these universal ethical principles.

Similar to Chickering's psychosocial theory and Perry's cognitive theory, Kohlberg's theory is also male-centered and reflects individualism (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). His theory of moral reasoning is centered on the assumption that people are autonomous and that morality is individualistic (Triandis, 1994). Also, Kohlberg's theory suggests that chosen values, such as individual property, human life, and individual conscience refer to individuals (Triandis, 1994). Additionally, morality, based on Kohlberg's theory, consists of values that are often held by men. These values include autonomy and rationality (Triandis, 1994). On the other hand, Kohlberg's moral reasoning does not emphasize love, attachment, belonging, emotional security, and caring, which are values most often held by women (Triandis, 1994). Thus, Kohlberg's theory reflects the western male culture, in which the "individual is at the center of stage" (Triandis, 1994, p.55). This could be problematic for Middle Eastern college students

from collectivist cultures. According to Triandis (1994), collectivist cultures place more emphasis on norms, customs, the group, and culture.

The traditional student development theorists, such as Chickering, Perry, and Kohlberg, all suggest that the highest ideal in psychosocial, cognitive, and moral development is autonomy and individualism. Additionally, the development process of college students is assumed to be the same for every individual in any culture (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). Therefore, I have included this section on student development theories to juxtapose Middle Eastern students' collectivist identities with psychosocial, cognitive, and moral aspects of their identities that are developing during the college years. Thus, junior and senior undergraduate Middle Eastern students may exhibit weaker collectivist identities than freshmen and sophomores.

Assimilation and Acculturation

Acculturation and assimilation refer to the change of the individual's cultural patterns to those of the host society (Gordon, 1964, as cited in Mashayekhi, 1992). Ghaffarian (1989) refers to acculturation as the process of adapting and adjusting to a culture different from the individual's original culture. Park and Burgess (1921, as cited in Mashayekhi, 1992), define assimilation as the process in which an individual or group becomes a part of the sociocultural host society by minimizing cultural differences.

In their model, Berry and Kim (1988) identify four modes of acculturation: (1) assimilation, (2) integration, (3) separation, and (4) marginalization. In the first mode, *assimilation*, the individual abandons his or her cultural identity and moves towards the dominant culture. According to Berry and Kim (1988), this takes place when the non-dominant group is taken into the dominant society. The second mode of acculturation,

integration, is when the individual maintains his or her cultural identity while at the same time, moves toward becoming an integral part of the mainstream. The outcome of this mode results in several ethnic groups cooperating within the larger society, forming a montage. The third mode, *separation*, takes place when an individual may voluntarily choose to withdraw from the larger society and fully retain his or her cultural identity without any participation in the dominant culture. Finally, in *marginalization*, the fourth mode of acculturation, the individual loses his or her original culture while at the same time does not enter the larger or mainstream culture. In most cases, this choice is accompanied by confusion and anxiety. Not only will the individual psychologically be out of contact with the new culture, but he or she will also be psychologically withdrawn from his or her culture of origin (Berry & Kim, 1988). According to Berry and Kim (1988), the way in which an individual or group chooses a mode of acculturation depends on how the individual values his or her own culture and how much of this culture should be retained. Additionally, the individual or groups' choice is also dependent on whether or not a positive relationship with the host culture is sought (Berry & Kim, 1998).

Although Arabs have been migrating to the United States since about 1854, there is little research available on factors related to acculturation among Arab immigrants (Miller, 1976). Similarly, a very limited amount of studies have been conducted on the assimilation and acculturation of Iranian immigrants, and the ones that have been done, include many limitations. One major limitation is that most of the studies have been conducted in the state of California and Los Angeles area in California. The following studies will be grouped into four clusters. The first group of studies is conducted on the Middle Eastern population in general and with no respect to age. The second group of

studies has been conducted on Middle Eastern college students. The third set of studies will focus on Middle Eastern women. Finally, the last group of studies will focus on the acculturation and assimilation of other ethnic groups.

Faragallah, Schumm, and Webb (1997) conducted an exploratory study on Arab American immigrants' family life satisfaction and satisfaction with life in the United States, hypothesizing that these variables were indicators of successfully adapting to immigration. Their sample consisted of 39 Arab American households from Kansas, Missouri, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, California, Florida, and the Maryland suburbs of Washington, D.C., in which at least one of the adults in the household had immigrated to the United States from an Arabic country (Faragallah, Schumm, & Webb, 1997). Their findings indicated that family satisfaction decreased with longer duration of residence; family life satisfaction appeared to be higher for immigrants who arrived when they were older; and, if the immigrant had not been back to his or her country of origin within the recent years, then acculturation levels appeared to be greater. Results also showed that education, economic, or political reasons were indicators of Arab immigrants' emigration. In addition to having a nonrandom, small sized sample, 52% of the respondents were Egyptian and less than 10% were from Jordan, Yemen, Morocco, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, and Libya. Thus, the sample size was too small for the findings to differentiate cross-national acculturation (Faragallah, Schumm, & Webb, 1997). Another limitation for the purposes of this study was that there were no college students included in the sample.

Ansari, in 1977, studied the first generation of Iranian professional middle-class immigrants in the United States. Out of the 98 participants, 70 were from New York,

twenty from New Jersey, and eight from Pennsylvania. Over half the participants were over thirty years of age and had been in the United States for over five years. Eighty percent of these participants had arrived in the U.S. as sole members of their families (Ansari, 1977). Contrary to Iranian students, the results from this study indicated that the professional immigrants exhibit a high degree of independence in interpersonal relationships with one another (Ansari, 1977). The respondents perceived themselves as an isolated and disintegrated group rather than a national community and lived as individuals. These individuals were physically and socially isolated and did not portray any type of group unity. The author reported that this first generation of Iranian professional immigrants was very similar to the third generation of American ethnic groups (Ansari, 1977). Moreover, the findings suggested that the Iranian migration did not result in the formation of group community.

In a 1996 study, Kohbod examined the interrelationship of acculturation of 80 adult Iranian immigrants from four religious groups: Muslim, Christian, Jewish, and Baha'i, with an overrepresentation of males in the sample. These were immigrants who have been coming to the United States since 1978, and varied in age, from 35 to 65. The subjects in the study were drawn from San Jose, California and the San Francisco Bay areas using referential sampling, in which participants were obtained through other participants (Kohbod, 1996). From these participants, 66% had obtained college degrees and 41% had achieved a graduate education. The study revealed that the two factors that helped ease their contact with the new culture were the American media and their familiarity with the English language (Kohbod, 1996). Most of these participants felt accepted by the Americans and considered themselves as part of the middle-class and

although most of the subjects considered Iran to be their homeland, the majority intended on staying in the U.S. permanently (Kohbod, 1996).

Another interesting study (Sharghi, 1996) sought to compare the self-image of first-generation Iranian-American adolescents with Offer's (1988) normative American sample to determine whether or not growing up with two cultures deters the development of self-image. The respondents consisted of 150 first-generation Iranian-American adolescents, ages 13 to 18, from the Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. metropolitan areas, and were divided evenly between males and females. The majority of the respondents identified as Iranian rather than Iranian-American or American. Offer's 129-item Self-Image Questionnaire (QSIQ) was used, with .90 reliability in accordance with the Cronbach coefficient alpha (Sharghi, 1996). The twelve areas included (1) emotional tone, (2) impulse control, (3) mental health, (4) social functioning, (5) family functioning, (6) vocational attitudes, (7) self-confidence, (8) self-reliance, (9) body image, (10) sexuality, (11) ethical values, and (12) idealism. Results showed that the respondents scored lower than the normative sample on all of the QSIQ subscales. Once again, this sample was only limited to Iranian adolescents and excluded college students.

Mashayekhi (1992) examined the sociocultural factors involved in the process of acculturation of Iranians in California. His sample consisted of 50 males and 47 females, ages 16 to 65, who came to the United States after the 1979 Iranian revolution and who had lived in California for at least three years (Mashayekhi, 1992). Results showed that acculturation levels were significantly higher for those with college degrees than those with no college degrees; acculturation was significantly higher for those whose jobs were related to their education and profession than those subjects whose jobs were not related

to their education and profession. The greater the length of stay in the United States, the higher the level of acculturation, and those who attended school in the U.S. had significantly higher acculturation than those who attended school in Iran (Mashayekhi, 1992). In addition, a negative correlation was found between age at the time of arrival and acculturation, indicating that the lower the age was at the time of arrival in the United States, the higher the level of acculturation seemed to be (Mashayekhi, 1992). One interesting finding that came out of this study was that males had more conflicts with their parents than females. This type of conflict included things such as “staying out too late” (Mashayekhi, 1992).

A study performed by Kamal and Maruyama (1990) examined the attitudes and adjustment of Arab students from the State of Qatar, located along the western coast of the Persian Gulf, during the spring of 1982 at colleges and universities in the United States. From their 47% response rate, 92% of the participants were males, 83% were undergraduates, half of the participants were engineering majors, and the distribution of time spent in the United States varied from one-fifth of the sample being here for over four years to the rest from “less than one” to “three to four” years (Kamal, & Maruyama, 1990). The authors summarized that Qatari students’ indirect contact with Americans and time spent in the U.S. appeared to have very little impact on attitudes. Furthermore, although contact between Qatari students and Americans increased, and Qatari students’ liking for Americans improved, it did not increase their liking for American government (Kamal & Maruyama, 1990). Additionally, the authors also indicated that contact did not result in Qatari students replacing their new values with the old ones. These findings however, cannot be assumed to be true for females since the majority of the sample

consisted of males. Also, the authors did not indicate the regional areas where the Qatari participants attended college or what types of institutions were represented in the sample.

In 1987, Gilanshah examined 108 members of an Iranian-American community, ages 17 to 57, in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul. The majority of the respondents were full-time, undergraduate college students majoring in the sciences, whose families joined them later. Moreover, the number of male students was higher than the female students due to Iran's traditional norms at the time, in which there was more of a likelihood for males to come to the United States for higher education than females. Gilanshah (1987) used a mixed method approach for the purposes of studying a community and therefore had designed a questionnaire to collect the quantitative data, such as demographic information and an attitudes scale. Findings from this study indicated the following: females were more pro-community oriented than males, students had a stronger community orientation than non-students, and younger persons proved to be more community oriented than older persons (Gilanshah, 1987). Additionally, the majority of the respondents from this sample had plans to return to Iran and had no intentions of becoming a United States citizen. This study had many limitations, including obtaining a sample of Iranians through friendship networks and other methodological problems. However, Gilanshah's (1987) findings seem reasonable given that the purpose of the quantitative piece, as she argues, "was to examine the potential for community formation among the members of the population, which she argues, in theory, could be expected to be so inclined, gathering a sample by way of friendship networks could prove to be an advantage" (p. 119). Furthermore, some of the methodological

problems were as a result of the hostage crisis and tension that resulted from the revolution in Iran at the time of her study.

In her study on Iranian college students, Ghaffarian (1987) examined male and female Iranian immigrants and their acculturation to the American culture. Her sample consisted of 51 females and 59 males from various colleges in the Los Angeles area. Results showed that Iranian males scored higher on the acculturation scale than the females, indicating a greater acceptance of the American cultural values and behaviors (Ghaffarian, 1987). As far as attitudes towards family and raising children were concerned, there was no significant difference between the males and females. In terms of women's roles however, there was a significant difference between the sexes, in which males held their traditional values of wanting to remain superior to women. By contrast, Iranian females held more western views that would provide a sense of freedom and equality. These findings indicated some discrepancies in which the values of both the males and females were contrary to their behaviors (Ghaffarian, 1978). Although Ghaffarian's (1978) study did examine the acculturation of Iranian college students to American culture, it did not address the level of collectivist cultural orientation among the participants and how that is influenced by the individual's academic class level or generation status. In addition, the sample was limited to the Los Angeles area.

A very limited but slowly growing number of studies have looked at Middle Eastern women in terms of their acculturation to the United States. Most of these studies however, include mainly older women and exclude college students. Hanassab and Tidwell (1989) point out the frequently reoccurring generation gap that exists between parents and children. Their study consisted of eight young Iranian women, ages 16 to 26,

who have been in the United States for eight years or more, examining the emotional effects caused by conflict between the values of their parents and those of mainstream America. All of the subjects had migrated to the United States with their parents during the time of the revolution in Iran and were living with their parents at the time of the study. One of these young Iranians was in high school, three at California State University, and four at the University of California. The subjects were divided into two categories depending on their interview responses. The first category was “liberal,” referring to the participants who portrayed more of the mainstream American values in their dress codes, speech, mannerism, educational interests, and life goals. The second category, “traditional,” consisted of those participants who were oriented around the cultural and social values of Iran that were brought with them to America (Hanassab & Tidwell, 1989).

As asserted by Hanassab and Tidwell (1989), the young women in their study felt confused, lost and “torn between their parents’ cultures and the mainstream culture to which they are constantly exposed” (p. 118). Due to their cultural background and their present social environment, the respondents felt that they were being pulled in two opposite directions. Results indicated that the women who felt torn between their own culture and those of mainstream America were the ones who had not yet developed a self identity within either culture. Furthermore, Hanassab and Tidwell (1989) argue that although all young adults are faced with the challenge of establishing themselves, this challenge becomes a much more difficult task for those who are raised within foreign cultures and often become “immersed in the confusion of Western urban life” (p. 119). One reason for this sense of confusion is that those in favor of assimilation to the

mainstream culture will then have to deal with the aftermath of disloyalty and fear of abandoning their own culture (Hanassab & Tidwell, 1989). On the other hand, if young adults decide to maintain their own cultural identity, they still have to deal with the pressures of assimilation.

In another study in 1991, Hanassab studied the acculturation of 77 young Iranian women in Los Angeles and their attitudes toward sex roles and intimate relationships. Results indicated a positive correlation between acculturation and the length of time the person had been away from Iran. The Iranian women's acculturation levels were related to an increased level of exposure with the Western culture. Results also showed a significant negative relationship between acculturation and the individual's age at the time of departure from Iran, indicating that the younger the Iranian woman was when she first left Iran, the more acculturated she tended to be and the more liberal her attitudes were with regard to sex roles and intimate relationships (Hanassab, 1991).

Arab society has high expectations on an Arab woman to fulfill her role as a wife and a mother, which is considered far more important of a role than anything else outside the home (Abudabbeh & Aseel, 1999). Arab immigrant women have a hard time trying to balance the values of their cultural heritage with those of the new society. On one hand, they are trying to retain their Arabic traditions and values to be the caring mother and wife, while on the other hand, they want to be independent Western women who strive to prove their ability and create an identity while competing with men in the workplace (Meleis, 1991).

Ayyad, in 1992, examined the relationship between sex role behavior and mode of acculturation among 100 Arabic immigrant women, ages 18 and older, who were

California residents and had been living in the United States for at least two years. These women represented the following countries of origin: Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Palestine, and North Africa, with the majority of the sample from Palestine (Ayyad, 1992). About 54% of the sample was classified as being in the integration mode of acculturation in which they maintained their cultural identity while moving toward becoming an essential part of the mainstream society (Ayyad, 1992). Arabic women immigrating to the United States experience conflict between the demands from their Arabic culture to maintain their traditional roles and values and the demands of the American society to assimilate into the new culture (Ayyad, 1992). Interestingly enough, results indicated that only one woman out of the one hundred in the sample was classified as assimilated, or in other words, completely giving up her Arabic culture and accepting the new culture. Other findings specified that Arabic women retained their cultural values, especially when related to marital relationships and sexual behaviors (Ayyad, 1992). Furthermore, results indicated that the higher the level of acculturation of Arabic women into American culture, the greater the change in sex role behavior appeared to be.

In a 1994 study of 95 Iranian Jewish immigrant women living in the United States using the Short Acculturation Scale, the Personal Attributes Questionnaire, and the Adult Self Expression Scale, Sazan found a significant positive relationship, indicating that women who interact more with American friends, attend more American social gatherings, and/or prefer more interactions with Americans, are more assertive than those who interact with Iranians. Moreover, this higher level of involvement with American friends and social gatherings is associated with higher scores in specific types of assertive behaviors, such as standing up for one's rights, asking for favors, and refusing requests

(Sazan, 1994). The ages of these women ranged from 18 to 75, with 72% of the women being married. Out of the 95 participants, 51 lived in New York, 23 were from the San Francisco Bay area, and 21 were from Southern California (Sazan, 1994). However, a significant negative relationship was found between age and assertiveness. Findings suggest that more social involvement with American culture may lead to departure from the cultural norm of respect, and as a result, leading into becoming more assertive (Sazan, 1994). In regards to gender roles, the results showed a negative relationship between femininity and assertiveness, which was based on the Iranian cultural values that impose passivity, obedience, and non-assertiveness for women (Sazan, 1994). However, there were moderate and low reliabilities found for the two subscales of the gender role instrument used for this study and therefore, these findings may be limited.

More recently, Ziabakhsh (2000) conducted a study on the relationship between the self and the acculturative patterns of 55 Iranian immigrant women living in Los Angeles, using the Acculturative Attitude Survey. The participants were between 20 and 68 years old, with the average age of the sample being 42.40 years. Out of the 55 women in the sample, 30 were first-generation and 25 were what the author refers to as “between first and second-generation,” meaning that they migrated to North America as teenagers or young adults, but do not qualify as second-generation due to their experiences and time spent in Iran (Ziabakhsh, 2000). Forty percent of the women in the study were on green cards and the mean length of residence outside of Iran was 12.2 years (Ziabakhsh, 2000). The author points out that the first-generation immigrants have a harder time integrating or assimilating than later generations. The results from the Acculturative Attitude Survey showed that Iranian women had a significant high score on the

integration scale than other scales, indicating that these women had the desire to maintain their ethnic identity while establishing intercultural contact (Ziabakhsh, 2000). Although many of the women in the sample wanted to change, such as seeking liberation, they also had a great desire to remain the same in other cultural aspects of their lives, such as maintaining their traditions and family ties (Ziabakhsh, 2000). Moreover, these Iranian women wanted to adopt certain traits from the American culture, such as “openness” and “straightforwardness,” but at the same time, they wanted to keep certain Iranian traits as well, such as “family closeness” and “traditional values” (Ziabackhsh, 2000).

A limited, but growing amount of attention has recently been given to the acculturation of Asian Americans and other ethnic minority groups. In 2001, Kim, Yang, Atkinson, Wolfe, and Hong examined the similarities and differences between Asian American college students from four ethnic groups (Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, and Korean American) on their adherence to the six value dimensions identified by Kim, Atkinson, and Yang (1999) in a previous study. The six value dimensions reported by Kim et al. (1999, as cited in Kim et al., 2001) are collectivism, conformity to norms, emotional self-control, family recognition through achievement, filial piety, and humility. The descriptions of the six value dimensions are as follows: 1) *collectivism* refers to the importance of thinking about one’s group before oneself, considering the needs of others before considering one’s own needs, and viewing one’s achievement as the family’s achievement; 2) *conformity to norms* is the importance of conforming to familial and social expectations and following the role expectations (gender, family hierarchy) of one’s family; 3) *emotional self-control* refers to the importance of having the ability to control one’s emotion; 4) *family recognition through achievement* refers to the

importance of not bringing shame to the family by avoiding occupational or educational failures and by achieving academically; 5) *filial piety* refers to the importance of taking care of one's parents when the parents becomes unable to take care of themselves and knowing that elders have more wisdom than younger people; and 6) *humility* refers to the importance of being humble, not being boastful, and having modesty (Kim et al., 2001, p.347).

In their previous study, Kim, Atkinson, and Yang (1999) found that values acculturation, which was measured by the Asians Values Scale (AVS), did not differ significantly across the first three generations since immigration. On the other hand, there was a significant difference in behavioral acculturation across the three generations. In their 2001 study, Kim, Yang, Atkinson, Wolfe, and Hong used the Asians Values Scale (AVS) data for the four largest ethnic groups. The AVS is a 36-item instrument designed to assess adherence to Asian cultural values supported more strongly by Asian Americans than by European Americans (Kim et al., 2001). Based on the results from an exploratory factor analysis, Kim et al. (1999) indicated that 24 items of the AVS fell under the six Asian values dimensions. However, only 22 items of the AVS were used in their 2001 study since two of those items were found to be unstable. The participants were from five universities, consisting of California State University, two University of California campuses, one private university in California, and one university in Hawaii (Kim et al., 2001). The four ethnic groups of Asian American college students were made up of 205 Chinese American, 118 Filipino American, 131 Japanese American, and 116 Korean Americans, which a gender breakdown of 225 men and 345 women. Furthermore, the sample included 142 first-year students, 92 sophomores, 117 juniors, 159 seniors, and 58

graduate students. Additionally, the sample was composed of 217 first-generation students, 216 second-generation, 39 third-generation, 59 fourth-generation, 25 fifth-generation, and 3 sixth-generation Asian American students (Kim et al., 2001). Results from this study indicated that Filipino Americans showed less adherence to *emotional self-control* than all three Asian American groups, less adherence to *family recognition through achievement* and *filial piety* than Japanese and Korean Americans, less adherence to *conformity to norms* than Chinese and Japanese Americans, and less adherence to *collectivism* than Japanese Americans (Kim et al., 2001). The findings also revealed that Japanese Americans scored higher on most of the Asian value dimensions than the other Asian American ethnic groups.

Summary

Based on the review of past research and literature, the following can be suggested in regards to the collectivist cultural identities among Middle Easterners. First, it is known that Middle Easterners identify with their families, which usually makes up the basic social unit and often times, this can include the extended family as well. Second, Middle Easterners often feel a sense of duty, obligation and loyalty to their parents. Likewise, Middle Eastern women also feel a sense of obedience and respect towards their husbands and it is usually an expectation for the wives to obey their husbands. Next, Middle Easterners value interdependence rather than independence, and they are to be polite and respectful towards their elders. Furthermore, one's appearance and self-presentation in the eyes of one's peers is also important within Middle Eastern communities. Based on what is known from previous literature on collectivism among Middle Eastern communities, it can be suspected that Middle Eastern students are also

likely to have collectivist cultural orientations in which they place primary value on their family and parents' needs and wishes as opposed to abiding by their individual wishes.

A compilation of findings from literature on collectivism among Middle Easterners suggests that Middle Easterners are more collective than Americans and that they often place value on collectivist in-groups, such as family, friends, country, and ethnic group. Previous literature also suggests that Middle Eastern women tend to be more collective than Middle Eastern men and that Arab men tend to have a stronger sense of ethnic identity than White American men.

Traditional developmental literature on Chickering's psychosocial theory, Perry's cognitive theory, and Kohlberg's moral reasoning theory all suggest that, as students mature, they think, feel and act in ways that are more autonomous, independent, and individualistic. Thus, it can be assumed based on this literature that Middle Eastern students of different academic class levels will have different levels of collectivist cultural identity. As students progress from their freshman year of college towards their senior year, they may become less dependent on their parents for support, money, encouragement, etc., and begin to take more responsibilities and make more autonomous and individualistic personal and vocational decisions. Thus a Middle Eastern student who is a senior may possess a lower degree of collectivist cultural orientation than a Middle Eastern student who is an incoming freshman.

Similarly, it can be inferred that Middle Eastern students of different generation status have different levels of collectivist cultural identity. A review of previous literature suggests that the greater the length of residence was for Middle Easterners, the more accepted they felt in the U.S. and the more they accepted themselves as part of the

western or U.S. culture. In other words, the lower the age was at the time of arrival in the U.S., the higher the level of acculturation seemed to be. A review of past literature also indicated that first-generation Middle Easterners have a harder time adjusting and assimilating to the American or western culture than the later generations.

Correspondingly, Middle Eastern students of different genders may also have different levels of collectivist cultural orientation. Findings from previous literature has showed that Middle Eastern men possess a higher level of acculturation and show a greater acceptance towards to the western cultural values and behaviors than Middle Eastern women. Some studies have indicated however, that women's acculturation levels are related to the increased level of exposure with the western culture. In other words, the younger the women were when they left their country, the more acculturated they tended to be and the more liberal their attitudes were. While some Middle Eastern women may have the desire to hold more liberal values and behaviors like most American women do, many still have the desire to maintain their ethnic identity, their traditions, and family ties. Therefore, Middle Eastern college women may have higher levels of collectivist cultural identities than Middle Eastern college men.

This concludes the literature review section of this thesis. Based on the gaps found in the literature review, I wish to investigate collectivist cultural orientation among Middle Eastern students of differing academic class level, generation status, and gender. The next chapter will discuss the methods that will be undertaken in order to carry out this study.

Chapter III

Methodology

This chapter explains the methods that were used in carrying out the study. The main purpose of the study was to examine the collectivist cultural orientation among Middle Eastern college students. For that reason, three sub-questions were asked to help support the main research question. A hypothesis was generated for each sub-question based on previous literature cited. These hypotheses were tested for statistical significance set at $p < .05$.

Hypothesis 1

For the first sub-question, which examined the level of collectivist cultural orientation among Middle Eastern students of differing academic class levels (i.e., Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior), it was hypothesized that Juniors and Seniors exhibit a lower degree of collectivist cultural identity than first-years and sophomores.

Hypothesis 2

For the second sub-question, which examined differences among Middle Eastern students of varying generation statuses and their collectivist cultural identity, it was hypothesized that the further away from the immigrant generation a Middle Eastern student is, the less likely he or she would exhibit a strong collectivist cultural identity.

Hypothesis 3

And finally, for the third sub-question, which examined whether or not Middle Eastern students of differing genders exhibit different collectivist cultural identities, it was hypothesized that Middle Eastern men manifest a lower level of collectivist cultural identity than women.

This study utilized a non-experimental, comparative research design, which examined the differences between two or more groups on a variable. The dependent variable in this study was the collectivist cultural orientation and the three independent variables were academic class level, generation status, and gender. Therefore, this study investigated whether collectivist cultural orientation differed by academic class level, generation status, and gender.

Participants

This study was conducted at the University of Maryland at College Park, a public Research-Extensive University located on the East Coast. The total student enrollment at this institution was 34,160, with an undergraduate student population of 25,099. Middle Eastern students ($N=92$) were recruited to participate in this study. These students' country of origin included Iran, Palestine, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. The aim of the sampling strategy was to obtain an even number of male and female participants. The population academic class level ranged from Freshmen to Seniors. Another aim of the sampling strategy was to obtain participants who consisted of first-generation, second-generation, third-generation, and fourth-generation Middle Eastern college students.

For the purpose of this study, a non-probability sampling strategy was utilized, in which those subjects who were accessible and represented certain types of characteristics (Middle Eastern, academic class level, generation status) were surveyed. Due to the fact that Middle Eastern students are racially classified as White, and that many Middle Eastern students mark "White" as their race, it was difficult to use probability sampling because it was almost impossible to identify Middle Eastern students from the larger student enrollment at the institution. Thus, another strategy was to actually identify

Middle Eastern students through their student organizations. Therefore, to best address the intended population of this research, a purposeful sampling strategy (also known as purposive or judgmental sampling) was used since a specific student population was being targeted. In this case, Middle Eastern (i.e., Iranians, Arabs) college students were selected. Students from the Middle Eastern region were identified through participation and/or membership in existing Middle Eastern campus club organizations: Iranian Student Foundation (ISF), Organization of Arab Students, Students for Justice in Palestine, Baha'i Club, Muslim Women of Maryland, and the Muslim Student Association. By using a purposeful sampling strategy, not only was the receipt of the needed information assured, but also the participants had the qualities that were sought for this study. Moreover, this approach assured a high participation rate and was less time consuming because targeting the specific clubs sped the rate in which Middle Eastern students on this campus were located. However, not all Middle Eastern students join or become members of their campus organizations. For this reason, in addition to using a purposeful sampling technique to identify the Middle Eastern students through their campus organizations, a snowball sampling strategy was also used. Snowball sampling is a technique in which the sample is chosen based on participant referrals. In other words, a previous group or individual names future potential participants. The researcher used this technique by developing a profile of the attributes that were sought and asked the participants if they knew of other Middle Eastern students on campus who were not members of their organization, but who fitted the profile or had the attributes, and would be willing to complete the survey. About 10 Middle Eastern student participants were obtained using the snowball sampling technique.

Measures

A demographic questionnaire was created to collect information on Middle Eastern students. Participants were asked about their ethnic group, country of origin, religion, generation status, current age, number of years they have lived in the U.S., academic class level, gender, intended major, home state, parents' level of education, and how they self-identify. In addition, a Middle Eastern Values Scale was created for this study. This scale was a modified version of the Asian Values Scale (AVS), designed by Kim, Atkinson, and Yang (1999). The AVS is a 36-item questionnaire that was originally designed to assess adherence to Asian cultural values, using a 7-point Likert type scale, with "1" having the least adherence (Strongly Disagree) and "7" having the greatest adherence (Strongly Agree). Additionally, a "4" represents those who "Neither Agree or Disagree." The instrument has an equal number of statements expressing both positive and negative feelings. The statements reflect six constructs related to collectivism: conformity to norms, emotional self-control, family recognition through achievement, filial piety, humility, and collectivism itself. The AVS coefficient alphas range from .81 to .82 and a 2-week coefficient stability of .83 was found in reliability studies. Concurrent validity for the AVS was found in confirmatory factor analysis (Kim et al., 1999).

The AVS did not have subscales due to the low reliabilities reported for each of the six constructs mentioned above, from .38 for filial piety to .77 for conformity to norms (Kim, Yang, Atkinson, Wolfe, & Hong, 2001). This was due to the fairly small number of items for each value dimension (e.g., family recognition through achievement, emotional self-control, and humility only has three items) (Kim et al., 2001). Instead, it

was recommended by Kim, Atkinson, and Yang (1999) that the total score be used, which ranged from 1 to 7, with 1 indicating least adherence to Asian values and 7 indicating greatest adherence to Asian values. However, the AVS scale divided into six factors and Kim, Yang, Atkinson, and Wolfe (2001) were able to separately examine each of the six factors: collectivism, conformity to norms, emotional self-control, family recognition through achievement, filial piety, and humility through the use of structured means analysis, which provides a comparison of factor means while controlling for measurement error and between-groups variability in the measurement model. Based on results from their previous study, Kim, Atkinson and Yang indicated that only 24 of the 36 items of the AVS encumbered onto the six Asian value dimensions. For the purpose of this study, all of the six value dimensions were used.

Initially, the AVS was selected for this study because it has been tested for reliability and validity, and the Asian value statements were identified from review of literature, a nationwide survey of Asian American psychologists, and focus group discussions with Asian American psychology doctoral students (Kim, Yang, Atkinson, Wolfe, & Hong, 2001). Additionally, Middle Eastern scales and other instruments that were used in previous studies of Middle Easterners indicated low reliability and validity. Besides, most of the previous studies excluded college students whereas Kim, Atkinson, and Yang's (1999) scale was used in studies conducted on various college student populations, albeit Asian Americans.

Since prior literature on the Asian American population that come from collectivist cultures showed similarities to the Middle Eastern collectivist culture, all 36 items were used from the Asian Values Scale (AVS). The items on the questionnaire

however, did not specifically mention Asian Americans, so therefore none of the items were changed or altered. The only modification made to the instrument was the title, which was changed from Asian Values Scale (AVS) to Middle Eastern Values Scale (MVS). The following two sample items from the instrument reflected collectivism: “One should consider the needs of others before considering one’s own needs” and “One’s achievements should be viewed as family’s achievements.” Some of the other items on the instrument that fell under one of the remaining constructs, conformity to norms, emotional self-control, family recognition through achievement, filial piety, and humility included: “The worse thing one can do is to bring disgrace to one’s family reputation,” “Parental love should be implicitly understood and not openly expressed,” “Occupational failure does not bring shame to the family,” (reverse coded) “One’s family need not be the main source of trust and dependence,” (reverse coded) and “One should be humble and modest.”

Procedure

In carrying out the research design, several procedures were used. First, Middle Eastern male and female college students were recruited from the Iranian Student Foundation (ISF), Organization of Arab Students, Students for Justice in Palestine, Baha’i Club, Muslim Women of Maryland, and Muslim Student Association during the Spring 2003 and Spring 2004 semesters, in attempts to obtain student participation. During their organization meetings, Middle Eastern students were asked to participate in a study on the collectivist cultural identity of Middle Eastern students. Those agreeing to participate were informed that they would be completing a brief questionnaire and were assured of the confidentiality of their responses. There was a cover letter attached to each

questionnaire describing the purpose of the study. The cover letter also provided participants with the length of time it would take to complete the survey, the benefits, and guarantee of confidentiality, and the fact that the investigation would be risk-free. Next, the participants completed the Middle Eastern Values Scale, followed by the demographics section at the end of the survey. Upon handing in the questionnaire, students were asked, if they wished, to address a stamped envelope with other Middle Eastern students' addresses that they knew of, and who fit the attributes that were sought for this study. The envelope consisted of an introductory letter requesting their participation in the study and blank questionnaires. A return pre-paid postage envelope was also included with this packet. If students did not know the addresses of other students they identified but wished for the investigator to contact these students, then a separate sheet was provided for them to write down students' names or any other contact information, such as email or phone number. Completion and return of the questionnaire assumed that the student consented to participate. The participants were not forced to participate in the survey during their club meetings, nor were they forced to give out names of additional Middle Eastern students for the purposes of snowball sampling. The responses were coded and scores were obtained for each section of the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

Once all the data were collected, a reliability analysis was undertaken to judge the internal consistency of the recommended global score suggested by Kim et al. (2001). To test the first hypothesis, that Junior and Senior Middle Eastern students exhibit a lower degree of collectivist cultural identity than first-years and sophomores, an ANOVA was conducted.

To test the second hypothesis, that the further away from the immigrant generation a Middle Eastern student was, the less likely that he or she would exhibit a strong collectivist cultural identity, a *t*-test was conducted since most of the respondents of the survey came from one of two backgrounds: first or second generation. The questionnaires were completed by mostly first and second-generation students.

Finally, for the third hypothesis, that Middle Eastern men have a tendency to adapt to the western culture more quickly than women, a *t*-test was calculated since it involved looking at the differences in means of two groups.

Limitations

One of the more salient limitations of the present study was the use of purposeful sampling. This type of sampling strategy was not representative of the entire population, thus, making it difficult to generalize to other students who are of Middle Eastern descent. Furthermore, the results depended on the unique characteristics of the sample and there was a greater likelihood of error. In addition, using this approach introduced potential bias in that those students who joined their group's campus organizations might be at different stages in their own development and, again, generalization may not be possible to other, non-participating Middle Eastern students.

The use of the snowball sampling strategy also imposed a limitation to the study in that the Middle Eastern students who were members of their organizations did not know of any other Middle Easterners who were not members of their organizations. Also, when using the snowball sampling technique, the researcher had no control over the environment in which the data was collected.

In addition, the time period in which the data was collected imposed a

great threat to the internal validity of this study. At the time, the United States was undergoing war with Iraq, which may have had a great impact in the way the student participants responded to the items on the questionnaire. If data had been collected a couple of months earlier, the responses may have been different.

Summary

This chapter has explained the methods used in this quantitative study of the collectivist cultural orientation among Middle Eastern college students. The next chapter will present the results obtained with these methods.

Chapter IV

Results

This chapter presents the results obtained from the current study. It is organized into three parts. Part one of the chapter gives general descriptive and demographic information about the Middle Eastern student respondents. Part two presents the inferential results from the data analysis. Part three presents the ancillary analyses.

Demographic Information for the Middle Eastern Student Respondents

The sample consisted of Middle Eastern college students ($N = 92$) from the University of Maryland at College Park, a public Research-Extensive University located on the East Coast. Of the 92 students who participated, 43 (46.7%) were male and 49 (53.3%) were female, and they ranged in age from 18 to 29 years with a mean of 20.7 years. The student participants were from the following countries of origin: 19 (20.7%) Egypt, 48 (52.2%) Iran, 20 (21.7%) Palestine, 2 (2.2%) Saudi Arabia, 1 (1.1%) Syria, 1 (1.1%) Yemen, 1 (1.1%) Lebanon, and 1 (1.1%) Other. The academic class level of the participants was as follows: 21 (22.8%) first year students, 20 (21.7%) sophomores, 25 (27.2%) juniors, 21 (22.8%) seniors, and 5 (5.4%) graduate students. Most of the students began attending University of Maryland in the years 2000 ($n = 20$, 21.7%), 2001 ($n = 22$, 23.9%), and 2002 ($n = 20$, 21.7%). More than 70% of the participants (73.9%) reported that they resided in Maryland prior to attending college. Additionally, 50% ($n = 46$) of the students indicated that they currently lived at home with their parents, followed by 25 (27.2%) whom reported living in an off-campus apartment/house, and 21 students (22.8%) reported living on campus.

The racial/ethnic makeup of the sample (self-reported) was as follows: 50 (54.3%) White, 2 (2.2%) Asian or Pacific Islander, 1 (1.1%) African American/Black, 34 (37.0%) “Race not included,” and 5 (5.4%) Multi-racial or Multi-ethnic. With respect to ethnicity, when participants were asked on the demographic section of the survey how they self-identify, 4 participants (4.3%) identified themselves as American, 6 (6.5%) as Arab, 21 (22.8%) as Arab American, 7 (7.6%) as Egyptian, 25 (27.2%) as Iranian, 5 (5.4%) as Palestinian, 1 (1.1%) as Persian, 13 (14.1%) as Iranian American, and 1 (1.1%) as Lebanese American. Nine of the respondents self-identified as Other, reporting responses such as “Middle Eastern,” “Human” or identifying with their religion (e.g. Muslim). From the 92 respondents, 73.9% ($n = 68$) were Muslim, followed by 8 (8.7%) Christian, 6 (6.5%) Baha’i, 4 (4.3%) Zoroastrian, 1 (1.1%) Agnostic, 1 (1.1%) Atheist, and 1 (1.1%) Catholic. A total of 3 (3.3%) respondents claimed that they followed no organized religion.

In terms of generation status, 52 individuals (56.6% of the sample) identified themselves as first-generation immigrants (born outside of the U.S.), followed by 36 (39.1%) second-generation (they were born in the U.S., but at least one parent was not), and 4 (4.3 %) third-generation (either or both of their parents, including themselves, were born in the U.S.). Among the students who were first-generation, 26 (28.3%) were a foreign born, naturalized citizen, 17 (18.5%) were a foreign born, resident alien/permanent resident, and 9 (9.8%) were on a student visa. There were no fourth-generation student participants. Among the first-generation students, the length of residency in the U.S. ranged from 1 to 19 years, with a mean of 9.7 years.

The participants self-reported a total of 22 academic fields of study as their current or intended majors. From the sample the most popular majors indicated were 13 (14.2%) were Biology, followed by 10 (10.9%) in Electrical Engineering, 8 (8.7%) in Computer Engineering, 8 (8.7%) in Business, 6 (6.5%) in Chemistry, and 6 (6.5%) in Computer Science. The participants were also asked about their parents' level of education. The highest level of education completed by their father or male guardian was as follows: 43 (46.7%) Masters degree, 26 (28.3%) Doctorate or professional degree (JD, MD, PhD), 16 (17.4%) Bachelors degree, and 7 (7.6%) High school or less. The highest level of education completed by their mother or female guardian was as follows: 37 (40.2%) Bachelors degree, 22 (23.9%) Masters degree, 10 (10.9%) High school or less, 9 (9.8%) Doctorate or professional degree (JD, MD, PhD), 7 (7.6%) Associates degree, 6 (6.5%) Some college, and 1 (1.1%) Other.

Table 4.0
Characteristics of the Middle Eastern Sample

Gender	<i>n</i>	%	Country of origin	<i>n</i>	%
Male	43	46.7	Egypt	19	20.7
Female	49	53.3	Iran	48	52.2
			Palestine	20	21.7
			Saudi Arabia	2	2.2
			Syria	1	1.1
			Yemen	1	1.1
			Lebanon	1	1.1
			Other	1	1.1
Age	<i>n</i>	%	Class level	<i>n</i>	%
18	12	13.0	Freshman	21	22.8
19	20	21.7	Sophomore	20	21.7
20	21	22.8	Junior	25	27.2
21	12	13.0	Senior	21	22.8
22	10	10.9	Graduate	5	5.4
23	9	9.8			
24	1	1.1			
25	2	2.2			
26	1	1.1			
27	1	1.1			
28	2	2.2			
29	1	1.1			

Table 4.0
 Characteristics of the Middle Eastern Sample

Year began attending UMCP			Religion		
	<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%
1998	2	2.2	Muslim	68	73.9
1999	11	12.0	Baha'i	6	6.5
2000	20	21.7	Christian	8	8.7
2001	22	23.9	Zoroastrian	4	4.3
2002	20	21.7	Other	6	6.5
2003	16	17.4			
State			Racial/ethnic background		
	<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%
CA	2	2.2	African American/ Black	1	1.1
DC	1	1.1	Asian or Pacific Islander	2	2.2
FL	1	1.1	White/Caucasian	50	54.3
MD	68	73.9	Multi-racial or Multi-ethnic	5	5.4
NJ	3	3.3	Race not included	34	37.0
NY	2	2.2			
VA	5	5.4			
Current Residence			Self-identity		
	<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%
Residence hall or campus	21	22.8	American	4	4.3
Apartment/house off campus	25	27.2	Arab	6	6.5
With parents	46	50.0	Arab American	21	22.8
Generation Status			Egyptian	7	7.6
	<i>n</i>	%	Iranian	25	27.2
First generation (naturalized citizen)	26	28.3	Iranian American	13	14.1
First generation (resident alien)	17	18.5	Lebanese American	1	1.1
First generation (student visa)	9	9.8	Palestinian	5	5.4
Second generation	36	39.1	Persian	1	1.1
Third generation	4	4.3	Other	9	9.8

Table 4.0
 Characteristics of the Middle Eastern Sample

Number of years living in the U.S.	<i>n</i>	%
1	1	1.1
3	1	1.1
4	10	10.9
5	3	3.3
6	1	1.1
7	3	3.3
8	2	2.2
9	2	2.2
10	4	4.3
11	4	4.3
12	5	5.4
13	4	4.3
14	1	1.1
15	2	2.2
16	3	3.3
17	3	3.3
18	1	1.1
19	1	1.1

Intended major	<i>n</i>	%
Biology	13	14.2
Electrical Engineering	10	10.9
Computer Engineering	8	8.7
Business	8	8.7
Chemistry	6	6.5
Computer Science	6	6.5

Highest level of Education (Father/male guardian)	<i>n</i>	%
Doctorate or professional degree (JD, MD, PhD)	26	28.3
Masters degree	43	46.7
Bachelors degree	16	17.4
High school or less	7	7.6

Table 4.0
Characteristics of the Middle Eastern Sample

Highest level of Education (Mother/female guardian)	<i>n</i>	%
Doctorate or professional degree (JD, MD, PhD)	9	9.8
Masters degree	22	23.9
Bachelors degree	37	40.2
Associates degree	7	7.6
Some college	6	6.5
High school or less	10	10.9
Other	1	1.1

The demographics from the Middle Eastern sample are illustrated in Table 4.0.

Data Preparation Procedures

To begin the data analysis procedure, the researcher first performed data clean-up to make sure that all of the variables were coded correctly. The researcher accomplished this task by running frequencies on all of the pertinent variables: academic class level, generation status, gender, and all of the questions that measured collectivist cultural orientation. Since some cases were too small, a number of provisions had to be made. Given that there were only 5 (5.4%) graduate student participants in the current study, the researcher had to eliminate graduate students from the academic class level variable (item #47 on the MVS questionnaire) of the analysis. In addition, some provisions also had to be made in regards to the generation status variable (item #51 on the MVS

questionnaire). On item #51, the first choice, “Your grandparents, parents, and you were born in the U.S.,” indicated a fourth generation status. However, this choice was eliminated from the analysis since there were no fourth generation student participants. Moreover, the second choice, “Either or both of your parents and yourself were born in the U.S.,” indicated a third generation status. This choice was also eliminated from the analysis since there were only four (4.3%) third generation student respondents. Additionally, there were three choices that fell under first generation status: choice #4, “You are a foreign born, naturalized citizen,” choice #5, “You are a foreign born, resident alien/permanent resident,” and choice #6, “You are on student visa.” The sixth choice was also eliminated because the cases were too small (9.8%). Thus, the researcher combined choices 4 and 5 since they both indicated a first generation status. Overall, choices 1, 2, and 6 were eliminated; choices 4 and 5 were combined and recoded as the first choice to become “first generation” and choice 3 was recoded as the second choice as “second generation.”

Finally, as specified by Kim et al. (2001), the following items on the MVS needed to be reverse scored: #1, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 18, 20, 24, 27, 28, 31, 32, 34, 35, and 36. To reverse the score, choice 1 (Strongly Disagree) from the 7-point Likert scale was changed to 7 (Strongly Agree); choice 2 (Moderately Disagree) was changed to 6 (Moderately Agree); choice 3 (Mildly Disagree) was changed to 5 (Mildly Agree); choice 4 (Neither Disagree or Agree) remained as 4, choice 5 was changed to 3; choice 6 was changed to 2; and choice 7 was changed to 1.

Once the data clean-up was completed, the researcher performed reliability tests using Cronbach alpha to assess the internal consistency of the global scale, as

recommended by Kim et al. (2001). The result from the reliability analysis that was run on items 1 through 36 revealed a high score ($\alpha = .898$). Thus, it would appear that adapting the Kim et al. (2001) Asian Values Scale for Middle Eastern students is effective, given the consistency with which the Middle Eastern students in this study responded to the 36 items on the adapted survey instrument.

The next step taken by the researcher was to create a scale for the collectivist cultural orientation. This was completed through summing the responses to the questions that formed the scale. In other words, scores from the first 36 items on the MVS were added together to obtain the total score. Finally, as recommended by Kim et al. (2001), the sum of all 36 items was divided by 36 in order to get a score between 1 and 7.

Results for the Research Questions

Subsequently, the researcher conducted analyses for the three research questions. To examine the level of collectivist cultural orientation among Middle Eastern students of differing academic class levels (i.e., Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior), a One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted, with the academic class levels serving as the independent variables and collectivist cultural orientation serving as the dependent variable. As shown in Table 4.1 below, the results indicated no significant difference, $F = .32, df = 3, p = .81 (p > .05)$.

Table 4.1
Results of ANOVA for Middle Eastern collectivist cultural orientation by academic class level

Class level	<i>n</i>	Mean	Std. Dev.	<i>F-statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig
Freshman	21	4.84	0.47	0.32	3	.81
Sophomore	20	4.64	0.79			
Junior	25	4.74	0.68			
Senior	21	4.75	0.69			

Thus, the results from the ANOVA did not support the first hypothesis, suggesting that Junior and Senior Middle Eastern students do not exhibit a lower degree of collectivist cultural orientation than first-years and sophomores.

To test the second hypothesis, a two-tailed *t*-test was calculated to examine the relationship between generation status and Middle Eastern students' collectivist cultural identity, with generation status serving as the independent variable and collectivist cultural orientation serving as the dependent variable. For this analysis, a *t*-test was conducted since only first and second-generation student participants were used. As presented in Table 4.2, the results demonstrated no significant difference, $t = .92$, $df = 77$, $p = .36$ ($p > .05$).

Table 4.2
Results of *t*-test for Middle Eastern collectivist cultural orientation by generation status

Generation status	<i>n</i>	Mean	Std. Dev.	<i>t</i> -statistic	<i>df</i>	Sig
First generation (nat or perm res)	43	4.78	0.66	0.92	77	.36
Second generation (born in U.S.)	36	4.66	0.55			

Consequently, the results suggested that Middle Eastern students of differing generation status do not have different levels of collectivist cultural orientation. In other words, first generation students were not more likely to exhibit a stronger collectivist cultural identity than second generation students.

Finally, to test the third hypothesis, a two-tailed *t*-test was used to examine whether or not Middle Eastern students of different genders exhibit different collectivist

cultural identities. For this analysis, gender served as the independent variable and collectivist cultural orientation served as the dependent variable. Contrary to the researcher’s expectations, the results of the t-test on the present data revealed that there was no significant difference, $t = .69$, $df = 90$, $p = .49$. As illustrated in Table 4.3, the results indicated no significant difference between Middle Eastern students’ gender and their collectivist cultural orientation, $p > .05$.

Table 4.3
Results of *t*-test for Middle Eastern collectivist cultural orientation by gender

Gender	<i>n</i>	Mean	Std. Dev.	<i>t</i> -statistic	<i>df</i>	Sig
Male	43	4.74	0.62	0.69	90	.49
Female	49	4.67	0.74			

Ancillary Analyses

The following data represents the results obtained from items #37-46 on the Middle Eastern Values Scale (MVS). For all questions, the response scale ranged from one to seven, with one signifying “strongly disagree; four equaling “neither agree nor disagree; and seven representing “strongly agree.” For item #37, “Many Middle Eastern students feel like they do not ‘fit in’ on this campus,” the results indicated a mean score of 4.24 and a standard deviation of 1.57. For item #38, “Most students at this University have values and attitudes different from my own, the results revealed a mean score of 5.79 and a standard deviation of 1.30. For item #39, “My social interactions on this campus are largely confined to students of my race/ethnicity,” the mean score was 3.63 and the standard deviation was 2.02. For item #40, “I feel rejected by students on this campus whose race/ethnicity is different from my own,” the results indicated a mean

score of 2.70 and a standard deviation of 1.50. For item #41, “Sometimes I hesitate to talk in class because I feel my comments are not respected or value,” the mean score was 3.25 and the standard deviation was 1.94. For item #42, “I am concerned about my personal safety on campus,” the mean score was 2.91 and the standard deviation was 1.66. For item #43, “In my experience, my campus seems supportive of Middle Eastern students,” the results revealed a mean score of 3.59 and a standard deviation of 1.33. For item #44, “I feel a sense of belonging to my ethnic group,” the mean score was 5.63 and the standard deviation was 1.37. For item #45, “In general, I have felt comfortable as a Middle Eastern student on this campus,” the results indicated a mean score of 5.07 and a standard deviation of 1.44. And finally, for item #46, “Right now, I feel comfortable as a Middle Eastern student on this campus,” the results indicated a mean score of 4.80 and a standard deviation of 1.63.

This concludes the summary of the results from the methodology used in the current study. The next chapter will discuss the interpretations and implications of the findings.

Chapter V

Summary and Discussions

The purpose of this study was to examine the collectivist cultural orientation among Middle Eastern college students. The research questions addressed by the author were:

1. Does the level of collectivist cultural orientation among Middle Eastern students differ among varying academic class levels (i.e., Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior)?
2. Are there differences in collectivist cultural identity among Middle Eastern students of different generation statuses?
3. Do Middle Eastern students of differing genders exhibit different collectivist cultural identities?

The results from this non-experimental, comparative research study found no significant differences in Middle Eastern students' collectivist cultural identities by academic class standing, generation status, and gender. Regarding the first hypothesis, there were no significant differences found between Freshmen, Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors. The results from the second hypothesis indicated that the collectivist cultural orientation of Middle Eastern students did not differ by first or second generation status. Finally, the results from the third hypothesis showed no significant difference between Middle Eastern students' gender and their collectivist cultural orientation. Overall, the results from this study suggest that the salience of collectivism among Middle Eastern students is not related to gender roles, generation status in the U.S., and general maturity.

Although there is little research available on Middle Eastern cultures, particularly Middle Eastern college students, one common theme among Middle Eastern cultural values is that Middle Easterners often identify with their family (Harik & Marston, 1996). For both Iranians and Arabs, the family makes up the basic social unit (Jalali, 1996; Marr, 1978; Moss & Wilson, 1992). Thus, an individual's entire life can be ruled by the family and family relationships (Gable, 1959). The results from the current study may indicate that other factors, such as the impact of family and family relationships, are stronger than gender roles, time spent in the U.S., and standard maturity, since none of these factors appear to differentiate collectivism among the Middle Eastern student participants.

The findings from the first hypothesis revealed that Junior and Senior Middle Eastern students do not exhibit a lower level of collectivist cultural orientation than Freshmen and Sophomores. Given the lack of significant difference among the Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior Middle Eastern student participants, it can be inferred that the salience of cultural collectivism does not wane as students progress through their time in college. Although previous research on collectivist cultures and Middle Eastern cultural values points out that collectivist cultures view themselves as part of a group or family whereas individualistic cultures are autonomous, independent of groups, and feel that they have the freedom to make their own choices and decisions (Triandis, 1994), the results from the first hypothesis lacks applicability to previous research due to the limitation of this finding. The researcher did not follow the same students through all four years of their college education and only looked at four different sets of students (1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th year students) and made this inference.

The second research question looked at the relationship between generation status and Middle Eastern students' collectivist cultural identities, and found that there was no difference in the cultural collectivist identity of first and second generation students. A limitation of the sample is that there was not much variation in generation status because all of the participants were first and second generation immigrants. Even though second generation students were born in the United States, their parents' upbringing and cultural influence plays a primary role as shown through the results. These findings are consistent with Berry and Kim's (1988) third mode of acculturation, separation, in which an individual may voluntarily choose to withdraw from the larger society, and fully retain his or her cultural identity without any participation in the dominant culture.

In relation to the current study, however, it is possible that, within the university setting, these Middle Eastern students are in the second mode of acculturation, or what Berry and Kim (1988) refer to as integration, in which these students maintain their cultural identity while at the same time, they may move towards becoming an integral part of the mainstream. Conversely, given the findings of this study, even if these students do possibly become a part of the mainstream culture, it seems that their cultural backgrounds will still play a primary role. As stated by Kim, Yang, Atkinson, Wolfe, and Hong (2001), it may be that, in an effort to maintain a sense of connection with their countries of origin upon immigration, immigrants hold on to their home-grown cultural values, thus maintaining a set of cultural norms for a longer period of time. In reference to the current study, this seems to hold true for both the first and second generation Middle Eastern students. By contrast to this study's results, other previous research has shown that the greater the length of residence was for Middle Eastern immigrants, the

more they accepted themselves as part of the mainstream culture (Mashayekhi, 1992). Similarly, results from Hanassab's (1991) study demonstrated that the younger the Middle Easterner was at the time of arrival to the United States, the higher the level of acculturation seemed to be, or in other words, the higher the chances of adopting and adapting to the mainstream culture were.

One unexpected finding that emerged was in regards to gender differences. The third research question examined whether or not Middle Eastern students of differing genders exhibit different collectivist cultural identities. Contrary to prediction, Middle Eastern men did not exhibit a lower level of collectivist cultural identity than Middle Eastern women. This study's findings contradict the results from Ghaffarian's (1987) study on the acculturation of Iranians, which indicated a significant difference between the two genders. Ghaffarian's results revealed that males possessed a higher level of acculturation and western cultural values than their female counterparts. Another study (Hanassab, 1991) conducted on Iranian women indicated that the younger the Iranian woman was when she first left Iran, the more acculturated she tended to be and the more permissive she became. This did not seem to be the case with the Iranian student participants from the current study. For both the Arabs and the Iranians in this study, neither gender nor generation status played a major role in their levels of collectivist cultural orientation. However, other previous literature did show that Middle Eastern women retain their cultural values and ethnic identities after immigrating to the United States (Ayyad, 1992; Ziabakhshi, 2000).

Implications

The current study reveals some important theoretical and practical implications. First, contrary to the traditional student development theories, such as Chickering's (1969; Chickering & Reisser, 1993) psychosocial theory, Perry's (1970) cognitive theory, and Kohlberg's (1971) moral reasoning theory that emphasize individualism, this study's findings indicate a strong collectivist cultural orientation among Middle Eastern college students as evidenced by their scores. For the first hypothesis, there were no significant differences found between First-years, Sophomores, Juniors, Seniors. This finding contradicts the traditional student development theories that insinuate students becoming more autonomous, independent, and individualistic as they mature and advance from Freshman year to Senior year.

Chickering (1969; Chickering & Reisser, 1993) emphasizes the need for developing autonomy as a major area of concern for college students, along with a need for independence and separation from parents, suggesting that students become less dependent on their parents as they mature. Furthermore, Chickering (1969; Chickering & Reisser, 1993) also places emphasis on developing mature interpersonal relationships and the notion of moving away from dependence towards interdependence. The results from this study do not show support for Chickering's concepts. The fact that there were no significant differences found between Middle Eastern college students' academic class levels, generation status, and gender and their levels of collectivist cultural identities, illustrates a level of consistency with previous literature on collectivist cultures and Middle Eastern cultural values. Most Arab adolescents are raised on the values of dependency (Cowan, 1978). While growing up, Arab adolescents become dependent on

the family for support (Marr, 1978), which falls in contradiction with Chickering's notion of becoming interdependent and relying less on parents. That same concept of dependency on parents and family is also a primary cultural value for Iranian adolescents (Jalali, 1996). Previous literature has also shown that both men and women from most Middle Eastern cultures are expected to live with their parents or family members until they get married (Harik & Marston, 1996). This may be the reason why the majority of the student participants from the current study chose to attend college in their home state of Maryland, close to home. Additionally, a lot of these students reported living at home with their parents. It is possible that they are still very dependent on their parents for support and perhaps even feel an obligation to their family to stay close to home. Thus, Chickering's concept of autonomy and separation from parents does not hold true for Middle Eastern college students.

Similarly, Kohlberg's theory of moral reasoning is based on the assumptions that people are autonomous and that morality is individualistic (Kohlberg 1971; Triandis, 1994). In Kohlberg's stages of moral development, individuals at level III, or post conventional stage, attempt to delineate moral values and principles by separating themselves from the rules and expectations of others. More specifically, decisions at this level are based on self-chosen principles (Kohlberg). As pointed out by the findings of this study, as well as previous literature, a common characteristic of collectivist cultures is gaining the approval of family (Hui & Triandis, 1986). For Iranians, a person's status is based on that of his or her family (Moss & Wilson, 1992; Jalali, 1996). Additionally, within Arab cultures, the primary commitment is to the happiness and well being of the family as a whole (Abudabbeh & Aseel, 1999). Therefore, in accordance with Kohlberg's

theory, if Middle Eastern students were to separate themselves from the rules and expectations of the family, in essence it is possible that they would be disobeying their family and disrespecting them. The findings from this study have demonstrated the strong influence of cultural background and upbringing. Thus, student affairs professionals should take into consideration that these theories may not be applicable to Middle Eastern college students.

Second, although the findings from the present study did not support the hypotheses, student affairs practitioners may find the lack of significance useful in their work. It is important for student affairs practitioners to become aware of common characteristics of individuals within collectivist cultures, in addition to Middle Eastern cultural values, when working with Middle Eastern students. For example, understanding a Middle Eastern student's concern for gaining the approval of family members or trying to fulfill parental expectations and how this may impact the student's decision making, career choice or perhaps even in counseling.

The third implication from this study is based on the utility of the adapted Asian Values Scale (AVS) instrument in measuring the collectivist orientations of Middle Eastern Students. The high reliability of the AVS score ($\alpha = .898$) for the Middle Eastern sample indicates that the AVS scale, developed by Kim et al. (2001), is highly applicable to Middle Eastern students.

Limitations

Although the contributions of the current study are important, the generalizability of the findings is limited by several factors. First, the sample consisted of Middle Eastern students from a single university, and therefore, cannot be generalizable to all Middle

Eastern college students, especially those attending universities in other geographic regions of the country. Furthermore, the majority of the student participants reported residing in Maryland prior to attending the University of Maryland and many of the students are currently living at home with their parents. Second, the sample was based on convenience, due to the difficulty in identifying Middle Eastern students from the larger enrollment at the university. Therefore, purposeful sampling and snowball sampling strategies were used to recruit students, limiting generalizability of the results. The difficulty in obtaining the sample also serves as a significant limitation in this study. As the researcher mentioned earlier, since students of Middle Eastern descent often mark “White” or “Other” as their race, it is impossible to obtain a list of Middle Eastern students from the Registrar’s Office. More specifically, the Registrar’s Office has no way of knowing whether or not the students who mark “White” are White Americans, White Europeans, or of Middle Eastern descent. Additionally, these difficulties could have affected the results of this study. It is also possible that those students who were recruited through the use of the snowball sampling technique may have not felt as open and comfortable filling out the MVS survey in their home environment or in the presence of their parents.

The duration of the study is also a limitation since the study was conducted during two different periods of time. The data collection process took place during the Spring 2003 and Spring 2004 semesters. Additionally, analytical tests were not performed to test whether 2003 respondents differed significantly from 2004 respondents on their collectivist cultural orientation. Another limitation is that the researcher was unable to compare the mean scores from this study with the APA mean scores in Kim, Yang and

Atkinson, Wolfe and Hong's (2001) study since the mean scores for the APA's were not provided.

In addition, the lack of variation in student participants' country of origin may have affected the findings, which may have been due to the limitations in the study. The sample consisted of only Palestinian and Egyptian Arab student participants. Thus, the results may not be representative of all Arab students given that only Palestinian and Egyptian students made up the Arab portion of the sample. The responses from Arab students from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Jordan, and so forth may have differed from those Arab students who participated in the study. The results from this study also highlight the importance of recognizing and understanding within group differences. In other words, understanding Egyptian students will not automatically mean that one will understand Palestinian or Saudi Arabian students just because they come from a Middle Eastern background. Although it may be difficult to draw any conclusions due to the small number of participants in each subgroup, practitioners should not make assumptions about the levels of collectivist cultural orientation among Middle Eastern students of different genders, academic class levels and generation status.

Another limitation of the study may be that only Middle Eastern students who participated and/or were members of an existing Middle Eastern campus club organization were recruited. Again, the responses may have been quite different from those Middle Eastern students who were not members of their club organization. Although these particulars may limit the generalizability of these findings to a more general Middle Eastern college student population, the limitations of this study are a foundation for future research.

Future Research

One recommendation for future research is to conduct similar studies with possibly a larger sample of Middle Eastern students from a variety of colleges and universities across the United States to determine if the results reported from this study are useful. Since the regional area where the study was conducted consists of mainly first and second generation Middle Eastern immigrants, conducting a similar study at various geographical locations may provide a better chance for recruiting third and fourth generation Middle Eastern student participants. Thus, it will be interesting to see how the responses may differ between the third and fourth generation students and their first and second generation counterparts and whether or not the results are consistent with previous research studies on acculturation and assimilation.

Given that a lot of the Middle Eastern students' parents from the current study hold advanced degrees and/or their education exceeds college, and also taking into consideration that a lot of the students from the current sample self-reported majors in the computer science and engineering fields, another recommendation for future research is to conduct a study to examine parental influence on the career choice of Middle Eastern college students. Another suggestion is to conduct a study that examines the influence of collectivist cultural orientation on the career choices and/or career development of Middle Eastern college students. Perhaps it can even be taken a step further by comparing Middle Eastern college students to White American college students in regards to the impact of collectivist cultural orientation on their career choice.

Another future study can address how collectivist cultural orientation has an impact on Middle Eastern students using the counseling center or perhaps examining the

client and counselor relationship to determine if clients terminate counseling after one or two sessions or do they continue the full term of sessions. Also, regarding the demographics section of the Middle Eastern Values survey used for this study, almost all of the Middle Eastern student participants felt that most students at their university have values and attitudes that are different from their own. Therefore, student affairs practitioners may find it beneficial to conduct focus groups to learn more about the needs of Middle Eastern college students. Given the findings of this study, practitioners working with Middle Eastern students would also benefit from future research that examine within group differences among Middle Eastern students from various countries of origins. Furthermore, the researcher also recommends a future study that examines possible differences in collectivist cultural orientation among Middle Eastern students by different religious backgrounds. Due to the small number of students on campus and possible difficulties in recruiting students, focus groups may be the best way to go about conducting such a study. In addition, it may also be helpful to conduct similar studies that include Middle Eastern students who are not members of their club organizations to see if their responses are similar to those who are members of a Middle Eastern club. However, this may pose a challenge in terms of trying to recruit students.

Conclusions

In sum, the findings from the present study did not provide support for the hypotheses, implying that the level of collectivist cultural orientation is consistent among Middle Eastern college students, regardless of their academic class levels, generation status, and gender.

Despite the limitations of this study, the findings are important. Theoretically, this study's lack of significance is useful because it begins to examine the lack of applicability of the traditional student development theories to Middle Eastern college students. This study also begins to examine the characteristics of Middle Eastern college students and their cultural backgrounds and values. Practically, the findings demonstrate the strong impact of cultural background among these students and the importance of not making assumptions about Middle Eastern students in regards to their academic class levels, generation status, and gender. It is particularly important for student affairs practitioners to not pass judgment in their work with Middle Eastern students based on little knowledge of their cultural values and backgrounds.

Appendix A

Cover Letter and Middle Eastern Values Scale (MVS)

April 2003

Dear Student:

Thank you very much for taking part in this research to study Middle Eastern college students' cultural identity. Your responses will help contribute to the limited amount of literature that exists within the field of higher education and to provide professionals in the field with a better understanding of the Middle Eastern culture.

The enclosed Middle Eastern Values Scale (MVS) survey should only take 15 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary; you may withdraw without penalty at any time, and you should feel free to skip any questions that are uncomfortable for you to answer. All information collected in this study is confidential. The data you provide will be grouped with data others provide for reporting and presentation and your name will not be used.

This study is not designed to help you personally, but to help the investigator learn more about the influence of academic class level, generation status, and gender on the collectivist cultural identity of Middle Eastern college students. There is no known risk associated with this study.

Thank you for your time and responses. Your participation is greatly appreciated. While completing and returning your survey lets the investigator know that you have consented to participate in this study, if you have any questions about the study, please do not hesitate to contact me at Beloved11_f99@hotmail.com or (301) 405-8384. You can also contact my advisor, Dr. Karen Inkelas at ki21@umail.umd.edu or (301) 405-7998.

Sincerely,

Shadi Shakibai
Student Investigator
College Student Personnel Program
University of Maryland

Middle Eastern Values Scale

(MVS)

Replicated from the Asian Values Scale (AVS)

by

Bryan S. K. Kim

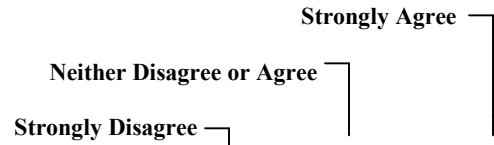
Donald R. Atkinson

Peggy H. Yang

Kim, B. S. K., Atkinson, D. R., & Yang, P. H. (1999). The Asian values scale: Development, factor analysis, validation, and reliability. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 46*, 342-352.

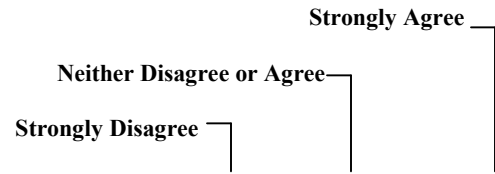
INSTRUCTIONS: Please use the scale below to indicate the extent to which you agree with the value expressed in each statement. Your responses will be treated as confidential. (Circle one response for each).

- 1 = Strongly Disagree**
- 2 = Moderately Disagree**
- 3 = Mildly Disagree**
- 4 = Neither Disagree or Agree**
- 5 = Mildly Agree**
- 6 = Moderately Agree**
- 7 = Strongly Agree**



- | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Educational failure does not bring shame to the family..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 2. | One should not deviate from familial and social norms..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 3. | Children should not place their parents in retirement homes..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 4. | One need not focus all energies on one's studies..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 5. | One should be discouraged from talking about one's accomplishments..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 6. | One should not be boastful..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 7. | Younger persons should be able to confront their elders..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8. | When one receives a gift, one should reciprocate with a gift of equal or greater value...1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 9. | One need not follow one's family's and the society's norms..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 10. | One need not achieve academically in order to make one's parents proud..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 11. | One need not minimize or depreciate one's own achievements..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 12. | One should consider the needs of others before considering one's own needs..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 13. | Educational and career achievements need not be one's top priority..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 14. | One should think about one's group before oneself..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 15. | One should be able to question a person in an authority position..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 16. | Modesty is an important quality for a person..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 17. | One's achievements should be viewed as family's achievements..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 18. | Elders may not have more wisdom than younger persons..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 19. | One should avoid bringing displeasure to one's ancestors..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 20. | One need not conform to one's family's and the society's expectations..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 21. | One should have sufficient inner resources to resolve emotional problems..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 22. | Parental love should be implicitly understood and not openly expressed..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 23. | The worst thing one can do is to bring disgrace to one's family reputation..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 24. | One need not remain reserved and tranquil..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Moderately Disagree
- 3 = Mildly Disagree
- 4 = Neither Agree or Disagree
- 5 = Mildly Agree
- 6 = Moderately Agree
- 7 = Strongly Agree



- 25. The ability to control one's emotions is a sign of strength.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 26. One should be humble and modest.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 27. Family's reputation is not the primary social concern.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 28. One need not be able to resolve psychological problems on one's own.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 29. Following familial and social expectations are important.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 30. One should not inconvenience others.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 31. Occupational failure does not bring shame to the family.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 32. One need not follow the role expectations (gender, family hierarchy) of one's family.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 33. One should not make waves.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 34. Children need not take care of their parents when the parents become unable to take care of themselves.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 35. One need not control one's expression of emotions.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 36. One's family need not be the main source of trust and dependence.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

Please use the same scale as above to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. (circle one for each item)

- 37. Many Middle Eastern students feel like they do not “fit in” on this campus.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 38. Most students at this University have values and attitudes different from my own.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 39. My social interactions on this campus are largely confined to students of my race/ethnicity.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 40. I feel rejected by students on this campus whose race/ethnicity is different from my own.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 41. Sometimes I hesitate to talk in class because I feel my comments are not respected or valued.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 42. I am concerned about my personal safety on campus.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 43. In my experience, my campus seems supportive of Middle Eastern students.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 44. I feel a sense of belonging to my ethnic group.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7

45. *In general*, I have felt comfortable as a Middle Eastern student on this campus.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7

46. *Right now*, I feel comfortable as a Middle Eastern student on this campus.....1 2 3 4 5 6 7

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

47. What is your current class level? (circle one)

- 1. First year
- 2. Sophomore
- 3. Junior
- 4. Senior
- 5. Graduate student
- 6. Other (please specify: _____)

48. What year did you begin attending the University of Maryland, College Park? (e.g., 1999 or 2002)

— — — —

49. What is your current or intended major? _____

50. Please indicate your gender: (circle one)

- 1. Male
- 2. Female

51. Please indicate your citizenship and/or generation status: (circle one)

- 1. Your grandparents, parents, and you were born in the U.S.
- 2. Either or both of your parents and yourself were born in the U.S.
- 3. You were born in the U.S., but at least one of your parents was not
- 4. You are a foreign born, naturalized citizen
- 5. You are a foreign born, resident alien/permanent resident
- 6. You are on a student visa

52. If you were not born in the U.S., how many years have you lived in the U.S.? _____

53. Please indicate your age: _____

54. Please indicate your racial/ethnic background: (circle all that apply)

- 1. African American/Black (not of Hispanic origin)
- 2. Asian or Pacific Islander (includes the Indian sub-continent)
- 3. American Indian or Alaskan Native
- 4. Hispanic/Latino (Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race)
- 5. White/Caucasian (Persons not of Hispanic origin, having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East)
- 6. Multi-racial or multi-ethnic (Please specify: _____)
- 7. Race not included above (Please specify: _____)

55. If you consider yourself to be of Middle Eastern ancestry, please indicate your country of origin: (circle all that apply)

- 1. Afghanistan
- 2. Bahrain
- 3. Egypt
- 4. Iran
- 5. Iraq
- 6. Jordan
- 7. Kuwait
- 8. Oman
- 9. Palestine
- 10. Qatar
- 11. Saudi Arabia
- 12. Syria
- 13. Yemen
- 14. Other (please specify: _____)
- 15. Not of Middle Eastern Ancestry

56. How do you self-identify? (circle one)

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 1. American | 4. _____ [your ethnicity] _____ (e.g., Iranian, Egyptian, Palestinian) |
| 2. Arab | 5. _____ [your ethnicity] _____ American (e.g., Iranian American) |
| 3. Arab American | 6. Other (please specify: _____) |

57. What is your religion? (circle one)

- | | | |
|-----------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Muslim | 3. Christian | 5. Jewish |
| 2. Baha'i | 4. Zoroastrian | 6. Other (please specify: _____) |

58. Which state (e.g., Florida) did you live in prior to attending college? _____

59. What is your current residence? (circle one)

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Residence hall or campus | 3. Apartment/House off-campus |
| 2. Fraternity/Sorority house | 4. With parents |

60. What is the highest level of education completed by your parents or guardian or by any other sibling? (circle one in each column)

	<u>Father or Male Guardian</u>	<u>Mother or Female Guardian</u>	<u>Any Older Sibling (Brother or Sister)</u>
Don't know.....	0.....	0.....	0.....
High school or less.....	1.....	1.....	1.....
Some college.....	2.....	2.....	2.....
Associates degree.....	3.....	3.....	3.....
Bachelors degree.....	4.....	4.....	4.....
Masters degree.....	5.....	5.....	5.....
Doctorate or professional degree (JD, MD, PhD).....	6.....	6.....	6.....
Other (please specify) _____	_____	_____	_____

61. What are your parents' current occupations?

Father (or male guardian): _____

Mother (or female guardian): _____

62. Please feel free to use the space below to communicate your thoughts about this study topic or this survey.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!
 Please return your completed survey to:
Shadi Shakibai
College of Education
CAPS Department
3214 Benjamin Building
College Park, MD 20742

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