FAMILY SOCIALIZATION, CULTURAL IDENTITY FORMATION, AND
SPIRITUALITY AS PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR ARAB AMERICAN
ADOLESCENTS' PERCEIVED DISCRIMINATION AND ACCULTURATIVE STRESS

By

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This is dedicated to the ones whose

Love and support have always guided

My path:

My parents and grandmother (may God rest her soul).

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In our post 9/11 era, Arab Americans have become an increasingly more visible and significant minority in the United States (Amer & Bagasra, 2013; Selod, 2012). However, in contrast to this reality, there are very few empirical studies that focus on adolescents and youth of Arab descent who were raised in the United States, especially studies of cultural identity formation. In particular, more studies are needed to explore "theoretical models of ethnic [and cultural] identity development" in Arab American adolescents (Britto & Amer, 2007, p. 137). The majority of research on cultural identity development to date has focused on other people of color (Aboul-Enein & Aboul-Enein, 2010; Amer & Bagasra, 2013). Theoretical models of cultural identity development and their underlying assumptions are based on the results found in these studies. However, on official and government forms, including U.S. Census Bureau data, Arab Americans are considered to be White/Caucasian. Middle-Eastern/Arab Americans are not recognized as a distinct and official minority or ethnic group by the national demographic standards (Amer, 2014).

Thus, it is not clear how much data and research have included an Arab American sample. Many times this population is lost within the diffuse grouping of the White/Caucasian category (Amer, 2014; Awad, 2010; Brittingham & de la Cruz, 2005; Britto & Amer, 2007; de la Cruz & Brittingham, 2003). The fact that peoples of Middle Eastern and Arab descent are not considered to be a minority group by the United States government makes it difficult to record an accurate account of the bias that the community experiences, such as incidences of prejudice and discrimination. Hence, the statistics in the available literature tend to be conservative calculations because frequently Arab Americans are not

distinguishable within the diffuse White/Caucasian demographic criteria commonly used in research studies (Awad, 2010).

Arab American Community

An individual is considered "Arab" if he/she identifies as originating from one of the 22 countries that constitute the Arab League (see Figure 1-1). These countries are geographically found in northern Africa and southwestern Asia. Arabs began migrating to the United States in the late 1800s, but the greatest number of Arab migrants came to the United States during the 1960s and beyond. The most recent statistical data suggest the number of Americans of Arab descent as over one million to around four million persons. The majority of this population is reported to be fluent in English, educated with college degrees, and have an above average family median income (Arab American Institute [AAI], 2010; Arab American National Museum [AANM], 2010; Brittingham & de la Cruz, 2005; Britto & Amer, 2007; de la Cruz & Brittingham, 2003).

Figure 1-1. The Arab League of Nations (BBC News, 2011).

Individuals of Arab descent have immigrated to the United States over three distinct time periods: the late 1800s and early 1900s, after World War II, and the last 50 years. The

first period consisted mostly of individuals who had a background in farming and business,

primarily migrating to the United States from Lebanon and Syria in hopes of finding

economic stability. Individuals who migrated after World War II consisted mainly of peoples

who were displaced after the instability caused by that period's political climate. The last 50

years have shown an increase in the migration of individuals who are more educated as well

as individuals needing to relocate due to their countries being at war or experiencing political

instability (Amer, 2014; Awad, 2010; Faragallah, Schumm, & Webb, 1997). The number of

immigrants to the U.S. increased after many Arab countries experienced periods of great

political and economic unrest (Aboul-Enein & Aboul-Enein, 2010). Furthermore, the

majority of this community has immigrated somewhat recently to the United States (El-

Sayed, Tracy, Scarborough, & Galea, 2011).

The nations that make up the Arab League share many similar cultural features, but at

the same time they are distinct from each other:

> The 22 Arab countries (12 in Asia and 10 in Africa) are heterogeneous in their
> racial, cultural, religious, geographic and economic features, and represent a
> diverse group of individuals who differ in terms of their country of origin,
> generational and socioeconomic status. (Ahmed, Kia-Keating, & Tsai, 2011,
> p. 181)

People with origins in these Arab countries share common traditions, values, and behaviors

(Aboul-Enein & Aboul-Enein, 2010). Moreover, people who are grouped into a collective

Arab American group also share similar experiences of discrimination and feelings of

exclusion. However, some researchers warn against grouping cultural groups into one large

collective cultural group, such as grouping peoples originating from Arab nations into the

collective Arab American cultural group. These researchers do not group cultures into

collective homogenous communities, such as Middle Eastern or Arab Americans, but rather identify them based on their specific national origins (Meleis, Lipson, & Paul, 1992).

For example, Umaña-Taylor and Fine (2001) disapprove of using the collective group Latino Americans as a particular ethnic and cultural group. They explain that there are significant demographic differences among Latino American based on their national origins. Even though many Latino Americans speak the same language (i.e., Spanish), there are clear differences in the dialects and pronunciations of the language within the Latino nations. Another point of variation among Latino Americans is their national histories, particularly as they relate to their causes for immigration. One may also make these conclusions about the homogeneity of the Arab American community. Nevertheless, this study will use the collective cultural group of Arab Americans due to the practical and situational constraints of finding participants that originate only from specific Arab nations. This will be more feasible when recruiting participants, even though participants will still be asked to identify their nationalities. It is common to study the collective Arab American community given that the community shares many cultural characteristics including common traditions and values, cultural practices, migration histories, and social experiences (e.g., discrimination and other social stressors). A notable number of Arab Americans identify themselves as being a part of this collective community.

Many Arab Americans migrated to the United States as a nuclear family, which is typical of peoples migrating to another country (Rumbaut, 1997). There are four different ways immigrant families can acculturate to a new culture they encounter: integration (i.e., preserving their heritage culture while also embracing the host culture); separation (i.e., rejecting the host culture while retaining their heritage culture); marginalization (i.e.,

deciding to reject both their host and heritage cultures); and assimilation (i.e., letting go of their heritage culture in favor of adopting the host culture). People use these approaches to help them contend with tensions between their native culture and the new majority culture that they have joined (Berry, 1997; Britto & Amer, 2007). Since many parents of Arab American adolescents had to contend with acculturative stresses when they moved to the United States, the present study examines how their adolescents are affected by this process, including influences on their cultural identity development. The participants in this study were born in the United States or immigrated at 5 years of age or younger with their immigrant parents.

Many adolescents from minority cultures develop a level of biculturalism (Britto & Amer, 2007; LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993). Biculturalism is defined as the process by which persons develop an identity and a sense of belonging such that they identify relatively equally in their heritage culture and the majority culture. These individuals prefer adopting and engaging in the traditions and activities of both cultures (Basilio, Knight, O'Donnell, Roosa, Gonzales, Umaña-Taylor, & Torres, 2014). Moreover, most of the time the process of biculturalism has been found to occur on a continuum (Britto & Amer, 2007; LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993; Rumbaut, 1994). This means that each individual can have a different perception of biculturalism. For example, one person may identify more with his/her heritage culture than the majority culture. It is important to understand that he/she still has a strong affiliation with the majority culture, but he/she may have a stronger affiliation with the heritage culture. As adolescents engage in a dynamic, ongoing formation of their identities, different aspects of their identities develop to varying degrees (Britto & Amer, 2007).

Arab American Sociopolitical Stressors

Arab American adolescents engage in the process of identity development while having to deal with many stressors, including the risk factors of perceived discrimination and acculturative stress (Amer, 2014). Arab American adolescents face challenges that are different from the challenges faced by adolescents from other cultural and ethnic minority adolescents due to the increasing feelings of being ostracized and not included within the majority American culture in the post-9/11 era (Amer & Bagasra, 2013; Britto & Amer, 2007), such as the social stigma associated with being an Arab American, the fact that Arab is not a recognized ethnicity in national demographic categories, and the discrimination they face as a cultural group (Erickson & Al-Timimi, 2001).

After the attacks of September 11th many Middle-Eastern/Arab Americans have experienced increased profiling and discrimination. At least half of an Arab American sample of adolescents ($n = 61$), living in the Midwest, reported experiencing some form of discrimination, either personally or through someone they knew (Tabbah, Miranda, & Wheaton, 2012). Ethnic hate crimes and discrimination have had negative effects on Arab American adolescents and their families (Ibish, 2008). Awad (2010) found that of the Arab American participants ($n = 177$) in his study, "77% reported being subjected to offensive comments about their ethnic group" (p. 64). The repercussions of these aggressions can be significant for any community experiencing attacks on their cultural/ethnic background. Due to the gap in the literature, more studies need to explore how Arab American adolescents experience these offenses. For example, perceived discrimination has been found to be related to acculturation, both positively and negatively (Willems, 2013), and to be related to the stress caused by societal pressures to acculturate, defined as acculturative stress (Faur,

2008). Arab American individuals have reported experiencing significant acculturative stress (Amer, 2005; El-Sayed, Tracy, Scarborough, & Galea, 2011; Goforth, 2012; Wrobel, Farrag, & Hymes, 2009). In addition, feelings of distress increase as experiences of discrimination increase (Padela & Heisler, 2010; Rousseau, Hassan, Moreau, & Thombs, 2011). Researchers have concluded that Arab American adolescents also experience a heightened risk of experiencing discrimination and acculturative stress due to the current sociopolitical climate that perpetuates negative representations of individuals with an Arab background (Ahmed, Kia-Keating, & Tsai, 2011; Akram, 2002; Nassar-McMillan, Lambert, & Hakim-Larson, 2011; Padela & Heisler, 2010).

Perceived Discrimination

The categorizing of different cultural groups by a society leads to majority and minority statuses within the population that "ultimately result in status inequality" (Smith, 1991, p. 182). Tajfel and Turner (1986) emphasized the benefit of identifying with a group and feeling a sense of belonging. However, they also considered how negative associations to the group one has chosen to identify with may have an effect on identity development. "When a group identity is problematic, for example when a group is subject to discrimination or negative stereotyping, group members attempt to assert a positive conception of their group through reaffirmation and revitalization" (Roberts, Phinney, Masse, Chen, Roberts, & Romero, 1999, p. 305). Thus, individuals who experience this may compensate by reporting markedly strong and salient identities.

Discrimination "can take the form of both blatant (e.g., being called a derogatory name) and subtle (e.g., being stared at by security guards while shopping) behaviors that

permeate the daily lives of individuals" (Sellers & Shelton, 2003, p. 1079). Perceived

discrimination is defined as perceptions that a specific behavior is a "manifestation of a

negative attitude, judgment, or unfair treatment toward members of a group" (Pascoe &

Richman, 2009, p. 533). Namely, the intention of a discriminatory behavior is usually an

internal negative attitude or judgment that is not directly observable. This entails that an

action becomes *perceived* as discriminatory by the receiver of the action. For example,

sometimes individuals may experience subtle and frequently inadvertent forms of

discrimination called *microaggressions* or "subtle, innocuous, preconscious, or unconscious

degradations, and putdowns, often kinetic but capable of being verbal and/or kinetic" (Pierce,

1995, p. 281). Microaggressions can come in the form of microinsults (e.g., failure to

acknowledge a person; teasing), microassaults (e.g., making assumptions; being treated

differently), or microinvalidations (e.g., cultural groups that are overlooked in historical

texts; negating a cultural group's experiences) (Sue et al., 2007; Wong, Derthick, David,

Saw, & Okazaki, 2014). It can be observed that manifest forms of discrimination of

decreased in recent years, but many people of color frequently experience microaggressions

(Wong, Derthick, David, Saw, & Okazaki, 2014). Any form of discrimination can be very

stressful on a person, but it can be more stressful for adolescents who already have to deal

with many challenges and changes within themselves and their environment (Mena, Padilla,

& Maldonado, 1987). Conducting further research on perceived discrimination, especially in

the form of microaggressions, with different minority groups has been strongly encouraged

(Wong, Derthick, David, Saw, & Okazaki, 2014). Moreover, most studies have found that

gender does not have an effect on the likelihood of someone reporting perceived

discrimination experiences (Sellers & Shelton, 2003; Wong, Derthick, David, Saw, & Okazaki, 2014).

The literature has repeatedly shown that some Americans carry negative stereotypes associated with Arab Americans, leading to many experiences of discrimination in this population (e.g., Aboul-Enein & Aboul-Enein, 2010; Ajrouch, 2004; Awad, 2010; Britto, 2008; Britto & Amer, 2007; Nassar-McMillan, Lambert, & Hakim-Larson, 2011; Padela & Heisler, 2010). "When a tiny handful of fanatics launched terrorist attacks against our country on September 11, 2001, few large communities were more profoundly affected than the Arab Americans" (Ibish, 2008, p. 7). In mainstream culture, Arab Americans often are "invisible, misunderstood, negatively portrayed, and often vilified" (Ahmed, Kia-Keating, & Tsai, 2011, p. 181).

Arab Americans frequently experience challenges such as "hate crimes and discrimination, [the loss of] civil rights and liberties, and defamation" (Ibish, 2008, p. 3). There has been a documented increase in the number of hate crimes and reports of discrimination to civil rights groups and agencies in the years following the September 11th attacks. A report prepared by the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) that outlined these Arab American experiences illustrates how sometimes the discrimination reported by Arab Americans can be violent and cruel in nature. Examples include reports of cultural/ethnic and/or religious slurs, death threats, vandalism, physical attacks and assaults, verbal attacks and harassment, and other experiences of discrimination related to their cultural/religious background. One of the most common complaints is stereotyping, profiling, and discrimination during travel and airport transactions, including at border and security checkpoints. Civil rights groups and agencies also have reported the prevalent experiences of

discrimination that Arab American adolescents face, such as in the form of the aforementioned reports of discrimination in addition to physical and verbal bullying as well as educator bias and harassment (Ibish, 2008; Jamal & Naber, 2008). Discrimination may also be experienced implicitly by Arab American students when they feel excluded since their cultural and religious holidays are not recognized by their schools and many people around them (Ibish, 2008).

There has been an increase in the negative associations people make with Arab Americans due to the sociopolitical climate that is around us. "Within the year following 9/11, Human Rights Watch (2002) reported a 1,700% increase in reported hate and bias crimes against Arabs and Muslims" (Nassar-McMillan, Lambert, & Hakim-Larson, 2011, p. 39). Moreover, "the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reported a 1600% increase in hate crimes against these populations in the year after the events of September 11" (Padela & Heisler, 2010, p. 284). Arab Americans are frequently being stigmatized and vilified in the media, resulting in people thinking negatively whenever they encounter an Arab American. "Events following 9/11 including the War on Terror, the emergence of Homeland Security, the Patriot Act, as well as more micro-transformations such as heightened security at airports, have altered the lives of" (p. 863) Arab Americans as well as their fellow Americans (Ajrouch & Jamal, 2007).

Some authors have explained the heightened amount of prejudice against Arab Americans due to widespread misinformation about the culture and an increase in institutionalized discrimination, like prevalent incidents of racial profiling (Akram, 2002). For example, a popular, stereotypical role that Arabs often play in films and other forms of

media such as "television, magazines, radio, newspapers and websites" (Ibish, 2008, p. 4) is the role of a violent, angry, uncivilized, and destructive antagonist (Akram, 2002).

Arab Americans have experienced many forms of discrimination, ranging from physical to psychological attacks. Many of these attacks would be considered legally as hate crimes. Arab Americans living across the United States reported as many as 700 experiences of discrimination within the first few weeks after September 11, 2001. Some of these reports involved violent attacks, workplace discrimination, and racial profiling in airports (Awad, 2010). Zogby's (2002) study found that a third of the 505 Arab Americans participants reported experiencing discrimination related to their having an Arab background while a fourth reported knowing about other Arab Americans who have been discriminated against. Moreover, Moradi and Hasan (2004) found that over half of their 108 Arab American participants reported that they have been treated unfairly due to their Arab background. They also found that over forty percent of the participants reported that they have been insulted by others because of their Arab descent. Unfortunately, feelings of discrimination have been reported by Arab Americans for many years. Arab American participants in a study conducted prior to 9/11 reported that they feel like they have a lower status than "other Americans" (Faragallah, Schumm, & Webb, 1997).

Arab Americans have the challenge of interacting with people in a society which has adopted very negative stereotypes about Arab populations. "Anti-Arab sentiment in the United States has been particularly heightened by political events in recent decades" (Wrobel, Farrag, & Hymes, 2009, p. 277). This leads to experiences of intense discrimination that some believe is tolerated more than discrimination against other minorities (Faragallah, Schumm, & Webb, 1997). Arab Americans experience a "large degree of hostility from

many individuals in the dominant culture…[and they] may perceive themselves as threatened or treated unfairly by those in the mainstream group, and thus may feel less inclined to identify with that group" (Wrobel, Farrag, & Hymes, 2009, p. 275-276).

During adolescence, an individual who has been classified into a minority group begins to become more aware of implicit forms of rejection and discrimination directed at that group (Marks, Patton, & García Coll, 2011; Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004). Adolescence is a time when individuals experience new social encounters, both positive and negative, resulting in more social independence but also a higher awareness of discrimination. Cognitively, adolescents also begin to think and perceive people and situations in the environment in more multidimensional ways and are better able to self-reflect on their emerging identity, helping them to cope with positive as well as negative social encounters (Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004).

Studying experiences of discrimination during adolescence is important because individuals this age are particularly sensitive to and concerned with group dynamics and attitudes. This sensitivity and concern are integral components to adolescence, and they inevitably are affected by the stage's other developmental factors (Chavous, Bernat, Schmeelk-Cone, Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, & Zimmerman, 2003; Stein, Kiang, Supple, & Gonzalez, 2014). Adolescents may experience discrimination or a sense of not belonging in many different social contexts. One of these contexts is within their schools, where they may experience perceived discrimination from peers and classmates, teachers, and other school personnel (Goodenow & Grady, 1993).

Because adolescents begin to interact more with people from diverse backgrounds and are increasingly aware that their cultural history may involve a history of discrimination, they are likely to have an increased exposure to discrimination (Phinney, 1996). Culture and "ethnicity influence psychological development most directly through race/ethnicity-related social situations and psychological processes, such as stereotypes, experiences of ethnic discrimination, ethnic identity, and ethnic socialization" (Eccles, Wong, & Peck, 2006, p. 408). Adolescents' perceptions and attitudes about their self-identified cultures impact how they experience emotionally charged and personal experiences like prejudice and discrimination (Marks, Patton, & García Coll, 2011; Stein, Kiang, Supple, & Gonzalez, 2014). When having to deal with discrimination, "members of minority groups face a choice between accepting the majority views of them (which are usually negative) or rejecting these views in search of their own identity" (Kakhnovets & Wolf, 2011, p. 502).

Perceived discrimination and cultural identity. Raman (2006) stated that including perceived discrimination in the study of cultural identity is essential. In a study of the identity development of a culturally diverse group of adolescents whose parents were immigrants, Rumbaut (1994) explored the relationship between identity formation and discrimination. He found that individuals who reported experiencing discrimination were less likely to report being American as part of their identity. Adolescents who reported that they expect others to discriminate against them regardless of their degree of acculturation also identified strongly to their parents' native culture.

Cultural identity formation can be an "experience salient for ethnic minority adolescents who navigate adversities such as discrimination and acculturative stress, during a critical period of development in understanding and acceptance of their cultural heritage"

(Ahmed, Kia-Keating, & Tsai, 2011, p. 183). In a study conducted on African American adolescents, Eccles, Wong, and Peck (2006) found that an adolescent with a positive and salient ethnic identity also is more likely to have less experiences of discrimination. Cultural identity formation also may serve a protective role by helping an individual experience a level of connectedness in the face of experiences of feeling marginalized and discriminated against (Awad, 2010).

Many researchers expect cultural or ethnic identity formation to help individuals face discrimination and rejection. Having a salient cultural or ethnic identity may buffer the distress associated with perceived discrimination (Pascoe & Richman, 2009; Schmitt, Branscombe, Postmes, & Garcia, 2014; Williams, Aiyer, Durkee, & Tolan, 2014). For example, Smith and Silva (2011) believe that "in the face of opposition and marginalization, a strong ethnic identity helps individuals recognize positive virtues about their own ethnic group, minimizing effects of denigrating beliefs perpetuated in society" (p. 42). In addition, "those individuals who have stronger ethnic identities may be more successful in protecting themselves from internalizing negative messages coming from the oppressing group" since they can use "ethnic identity as a shield against racism or other methods of discrimination from the majority society" (Kakhnovets & Wolf, 2011, p. 502). It is possible that cultural/ethic identity formation can serve as a "shield" because it may help individuals develop sense of belonging and increase their sense of security and self-worth, which in turn will help them deal with negative experiences like discrimination.

Developing a cultural or ethnic identity can be seen as a buffer against experiences of racism or discrimination in ethnic or cultural minority groups (Stein, Kiang, Supple, & Gonzalez, 2014; Williams, Aiyer, Durkee, & Tolan, 2014). One possible interpretation of the

link between lower levels of perceived discrimination and stronger identifications with a

cultural or ethnic identity is that an adolescent may be more aware of a threat of

discrimination, which may make the experience less stressful and significant (Eccles, Wong,

& Peck, 2006). However, a negative relationship has also been found between ethnic or

cultural identity and discrimination such that the stronger one's cultural or ethnic identity, the

more discrimination one reports. This relationship has been explained by the fact that when

one has a stronger cultural or ethnic identity, the more one is aware of and cognizant of

ethnicity and culture and, in turn, any discrimination against his/her culture or ethnicity

(Chae, Kelly, Brown, & Bolden, 2004). Some studies have shown that people who have

stronger ethnic or cultural identities report more discrimination since they are more aware of

their culture and ethnicity within their social context (Schmitt, Branscombe, Postmes, &

Garcia, 2014; Smith & Silva, 2011).

Branscombe, Schmitt, and Harvey (1999) proposed a hypothesis called the rejection-

identification model which states that the more experiences of discrimination an ethnic

minority person experiences the more in-group identification he/she will report. This can be

explained by the likelihood that individuals with stronger ethnic minority identities have

more external and evident displays of their ethnicity (e.g., through clothing, language, etc.),

which in turn increases the likelihood of someone recognizing his/her ethnicity and

discriminating against it.

In studies with adolescents from minority groups other than Arab Americans, a

relationship between high amounts of discrimination and negative outcomes, such as low

self-esteem and reduced academic achievement and motivation, has been found (Wong,

Derthick, David, Saw, & Okazaki, 2014). Other studies with minority adolescents have found

group identification, usually ethnic or cultural identification, is related to fewer experiences of perceived discrimination (Chavous, Bernat, Schmeelk-Cone, Caldwell, Kohn-Wood & Zimmerman, 2003; Padela & Heisler, 2010). One study found that African American adolescents with high group connectedness were more likely to perceive less discrimination and report better psychological and social outcomes, such as higher academic achievement. The authors did not find any significant differences between male and female participants. These findings suggest that cultural or ethnic identity formation is a protective factor that helps adolescents deal with experiences of discrimination and other adversities as barriers to appropriate development. The authors suggest that identity formation is viewed as a motivating factor because strong group pride seems to increase one's positive self-perception and foster feelings of empowerment (Chavous, Bernat, Schmeelk-Cone, Caldwell, Kohn-Wood & Zimmerman, 2003).

Chavira and Phinney (1991) explored the relationship between ethnic identity and experiences of discrimination in a group of self-identified Hispanic adolescents who had experienced discrimination and stereotyping. They found that the adolescents coped with discrimination and stereotyping in four different ways: "assert—affirming confidence in self or pride in group; discuss—explaining why it is inaccurate or wrong; disprove—proving negative images wrong; and ignore—having no outward response" (p. 226). Most of the time participants opted to "discuss" when they experienced discrimination while they opted to "disprove" stereotypes. Individuals with stronger ethnic identities reported being better able to cope with discrimination. The level of identification with one's heritage culture is influenced by one's experiences of discrimination in relation to his/her heritage culture by the dominant culture (Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, & Senécal, 1997).

Arab Americans and perceived discrimination. Although Arab Americans are frequently targeted and may experience particularly high amounts of discrimination, prejudice and discrimination have not been explored within the context of the Arab American adolescent experience (Awad & Martinez, 2011; Padela & Heisler, 2010). The relationship between cultural identity and perceived discrimination for Arab Americans is of interest because of the implications that perceived discrimination may have on how one chooses to self-identify.

Rousseau, Hassan, Moreau, and Thombs (2011) explored perceived discrimination in a cross-sectional study of two samples of Arab and Haitian immigrants. The data collected for the first sample was taken during a period pre-9/11 and the data collected for the second sample was taken during a period post-9/11. The researchers of this study found a significant and notable increase in perceived discrimination in the sample of Arab immigrants, with no significant difference found between men and women. This is an empirical piece of evidence for the increase in perceived discrimination among Arabs in our post-9/11 era.

Awad (2010) conducted a study that included 177 adolescent and adult participants who identified having Arab or Middle Eastern descent. In general, the participants reported a strong affirmation of their ethnic identities. Awad examined the relationships between acculturation, perceived discrimination, and ethnic identity and found that Arab/Middle Eastern Americans who reported less immersion into the majority culture and stronger ethnic identities also reported more experiences of discrimination. About 77% of the sample reported hearing offensive statements related to them being of Arab descent; however, the younger participants reported experiencing more discrimination than the older participants. Awad did not find that gender had an effect on any of the relationships he found in his study.

Young Arab Americans have also reported experiencing discrimination, bullying, and feelings of being excluded at school (Amer, 2014; Britto, 2008).

Nassar-McMillan, Lambert, and Hakim-Larson (2011) explored the perceived discrimination of a diverse group of 1,513 Arab Americans. They found that most of the sample reported at least one experience of perceived discrimination since 9/11 occurred. Nassar-McMillan et al. also found that participants who reported higher importance of ethnic identity reported more experiences of perceived discrimination. In another study with a sample of 1,016 Arab American individuals, more perceived discrimination related to their culture/ethnicity and targeted towards themselves or their family was associated with negative outcomes, such as higher levels of psychological distress, feeling less happy, and worse reports on health (Padela & Heisler, 2010).

Regardless of gender, more experiences of perceived discrimination have been associated with worse physical ($r = -0.15$) and mental health outcomes ($r = -0.2$) in several studies (Pascoe & Richman, 2009; Schmitt, Branscombe, Postmes, & Garcia, 2014; Wong, Derthick, David, Saw, & Okazaki, 2014). One study explored the health of a sample of Arab Americans, and the authors' conclusions confirmed this link within an Arab American sample. The authors did not find any significant differences between male and female participants (Padela & Heisler, 2010). Research on the negative effects of perceived discrimination has revealed that adolescents who experience discrimination develop internalized prejudice and discriminatory attitudes towards their own cultural group, and in turn themselves, as well as preferences towards other cultural groups (Branch & Newcombe, 1986). Indeed, "some Arab-American students seem to have internalized negative self-images about Arabs" (Ibish, 2008, p. 48). Discrimination can lead to psychological distress

and possible psychopathology in adolescent populations, especially for Arab American adolescents.

Since Arab Americans are frequently targeted and discriminated against by others in society, they may be more likely to disavow their Arab descent and origins and be more likely to identify with a stronger American identity. However, other studies have shown that some Arab Americans are more likely to compensate for these feelings of being discriminated against by identifying more strongly with their Arabic culture and distancing themselves from the dominant culture; while other studies found that they may choose to have a bicultural identity as a way of displaying their right to choose to identify with both cultures. These divergent findings encourage the need to further study the nature of this interesting relationship between cultural identity and perceived discrimination (Amer & Bagasra, 2013; Ajrouch & Jamal, 2007).

Arab Americans' experiences of discrimination have been associated with negative functioning as well as negative social and psychological outcomes (Faragallah, Schumm, & Webb, 1997). One study of Arab American college students found that degree of ethnic identity had a moderating effect on the relationship between perceived discrimination and psychological well-being (measured by levels of self-esteem and depressive symptoms). This effect suggested that the relationship between psychological well-being and perceived discrimination was strongest among the Arab American students' who reported lower degrees of ethnic identity (Fakih, 2014). Furthermore, some studies show an inverse relationship between strong ethnic or cultural identity and reported experiences of perceived discrimination, whereas other studies show a positive relationship between the two constructs, citing a possible increased sensitivity to discrimination in individuals who

identify highly with their culture or ethnicity (Sellers & Shelton, 2003; Willems, 2013). The psychological literature has presented mixed findings on whether or not identifying as bicultural can be a protective factor when dealing with distressful circumstances, such as discrimination and acculturative stress (Castillo, Conoley, & Brossart, 2004; Schmitt, Branscombe, Postmes, & Garcia, 2014). "Group identification, then, either exacerbates or buffers discrimination effects" (Chavous, Bernat, Schmeelk-Cone, Caldwell, Kohn-Wood & Zimmerman, 2003, p. 1078). There many possible interpretations of these contrasting findings. One possible interpretation is that there are other confounding variables, possibly such as familial factors and/or individual resiliency factors, which are influencing the relationship between ethnic/cultural identity development and perceived discrimination experiences. More research needs to be conducted that tries to better understand how the constructs relate to each other.

Acculturation

Acculturation is an ongoing process when two groups of peoples interact in some way. According to Berry (2005), "Acculturation is a process of cultural and psychological changes that involve various forms of mutual accommodation, leading to some longer-term psychological and sociocultural adaptations between both groups" (p. 699). Born (1970) defined acculturation as

> The total adaptive process that occurs in cultural patterning and value systems, group alignments, systems of control, social organization and economy, and in the psychological structures and functions of individuals, as adaptations are made to the changing conditions of existence created by the impact of populations and their cultures upon each other. (p. 530)

However, the process of incorporating a new culture into one's experience of oneself is a process that is much more complicated than what has been previously proposed (Ajrouch & Jamal, 2007).

Gordon (1964) proposed a unidirectional model of acculturation based on the assumption that one's heritage culture and mainstream American culture are inversely related such that the less strongly one identifies with one's heritage culture the stronger one identifies with the mainstream American culture. This occurs "along a single continuum over the course of time" as the individual leaves behind parts of his/her heritage culture in lieu of adopting parts of the mainstream culture (Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, 2000, p. 49). In fact this unidirectional model of acculturation considers biculturalism to be a transitory state that needs to conclude with achieving full assimilation (Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, & Senécal, 1997). Based on the unidirectional model, one is assumed to eventually assimilate completely into the mainstream culture. "Implicitly, the assimilation model does situate immigrant groups within the lower echelons of the social hierarchy found in most stratified societies" (Bourhis , Moïse, Perreault, & Senécal, 1997, p. 376).

Many previous researchers supported this unidirectional mode of acculturation, assuming that the goal of acculturation is complete assimilation (Berry, 2005; Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, & Senécal, 1997; Miller, 2010). However, recent researchers have realized that this goal does not encompass the acculturative processes of many cultural groups and have proposed a bidirectional and multidimensional process that seems to better account for the process of acculturation. Berry (2005) described a process that is multifaceted and involves change when two different cultures meet in a person's life. Level of acculturation is determined by how much the person immerses within the surrounding dominant culture and

adopts parts of it as well as how much the individual chooses to retain parts of his/her

minority culture. *Assimilation* occurs when a person decides to completely immerse oneself

within the surrounding dominant culture. On the other hand, *separation* occurs when

individuals choose to have no immersion within the surrounding dominant culture and

completely retain his/her minority culture. *Integration* happens when an individual chooses

to immerse him/herself within both the dominant and minority cultures. Finally, Berry

proposes that the fourth process that an individual can use to navigate between two different

cultures is *marginalization*. This happens when an individual chooses to neither immerse

within the surrounding dominant culture nor within the minority culture (Awad, 2010).

"Acculturation is therefore a dynamic process that affects both (or many) groups

simultaneously" (Raman, 2006, p. 231).

Berry (2005), a Canadian psychologist, introduced a unique acculturation process

called *integration* that essentially occurs when:

> When there is an interest in both maintaining one's heritage culture while in
> daily interactions with other groups, integration is the option. In this case,
> there is some degree of cultural integrity maintained, and at the same time
> seeking, as a member of an ethnocultural group, to participate as an integral
> part of the larger social network… integration involves the selective adoption
> of new behaviors from the larger society, and retention of valued features of
> one's heritage culture (p. 705, 708).

Berry and colleagues (2005) conducted a study with over 5,000 immigrant youth and found

that the majority of them reported experiencing a bidirectional model of acculturation, and

specifically achieving integration. They also concluded that the acculturative process of

integration is the least stressful process. It can be assumed that this bidirectional model of

acculturation can be used to understand an individual's multicultural experience (i.e., when

an individual experiences and embraces more than two cultures). Namely, an individual is

able to identify with components of more than one heritage culture while also identifying with components of the mainstream culture.

A bidirectional model of acculturation is based on the assumption that one's heritage culture and mainstream American culture are independent of each other. This allows for the possibility of attaining a bicultural identity that embraces both cultures since individuals are not assumed to be obligated to leave behind or adopt a specific culture. Hence, this model of acculturation is based on the following two assumptions:

> First, the model presupposes that individuals differ in the extent to which self-identity includes culturally based values, attitudes, and behaviors. Culture may play a large role in the identities of some individuals, whereas others may base their identity more on factors such as occupation or religion. Second, individuals are capable of having multiple cultural identities, each of which may independently vary in strength. (Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, 2000, p. 50)

This bidirectional model does not assume a desire and need for assimilation. It is now thought that assimilation may actually have a negative effect on psychological outcomes over time and generations (Ahmed, Kia-Keating, & Tsai, 2011).

Ryder, Alden, and Paulhus's (2000) study supports these conclusions when comparing the two models of acculturation. They found that a unidirectional model of acculturation is not the best way of explaining that aspect of cultural identity development. Their research supports that a more bidirectional model of acculturation is more valid and useful way of explaining cultural identity development. Thus, using a bidirectional model of acculturation to assess cultural identity can be very useful since essentially "acculturation involves alterations in the individual's sense of self" (p. 49). Alterations essentially occur not only with people's perceptions of the mainstream culture, but also how they contend with the parts of their heritage cultures that live within themselves. A bidirectional model implies that

individuals may find continuing to identify with their heritage culture as positive and valid experiences. Ryder, Alden, and Paulhus concluded that "it does not seem to be the case that the old cultural identity necessarily diminishes while the new one grows; rather, the two identities can vary independently" (p. 63).

Moreover, this bidirectional model of acculturation is based on the idea that "rather than being in opposition with each other along a single dimension, the immigrant and host community [i.e., mainstream culture] identities are shaped as distinct processes that develop separately along orthogonal dimensions" (Bourhis , Moïse, Perreault, & Senécal, 1997, p. 376). Research has confirmed that a bidirectional model of acculturation is a more reliable and accurate description of the acculturation process, especially within countries that have histories of large immigrant communities (Miller, 2010). People are more likely to integrate when acculturating to a different culture in comparison to assimilating to a different culture. For example, studies conducted with Canadians from Lebanese backgrounds showed that these individuals preferred integration as an acculturative process (Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, & Senécal, 1997). This finding illustrates how cultural context and the cultural values embraced within the mainstream culture affects a person's acculturation process.

Therefore, acculturations occur whenever there are intercultural interactions. Consequently an individual is forced to consider whether or not his/her heritage culture is valuable and the benefit of intercultural contact. Sometimes intercultural interactions can lead to divergence or cultural conflicts and stress instead of more adaptive responses like negotiation and integration. "One of the most obvious and frequently reported consequences of acculturation is societal disintegration, which can result in personal crisis" (Williams & Berry, 1991, p. 634) which is what frequently happens when a person experiences

acculturative stress. Acculturative stress happens when "individuals understand that they are facing problems resulting from intercultural contact that cannot be dealt with easily or quickly by simply adjusting or assimilating to them" (Berry, 2005, p. 708). They experience high amounts of intercultural conflicts (i.e., conflicting messages from their two self-identified cultures) that are perceived as problematic and stressful.

Acculturative Stress

Acculturative stress is the feeling of "tension between adhering to cultural traditions and meeting mainstream cultural expectations in order to belong" (Ahmed, Kia-Keating, & Tsai, 2011, p. 182). Because minority cultures are often rejected by the majority culture (Born, 1970), a person usually experiences acculturative stress in response to feeling pressured by the dominant culture to conform to the norms of the dominant culture (Chavez, Moran, Reid, & Lopez, 1997). Adolescents who experience a culture different from the dominant culture while trying to live within the dominant culture may experience feelings of confusion and ambivalence displayed in the form of stress.

Acculturative stress measures the degree of negative effects on the individual during the process of acculturation (Berry, 1970). Based on his research, Berry concluded that integrating the cultures in one's life leads to the ability to cope with stressors, including acculturative stress. Acculturative stress essentially defines the conflict that occurs during acculturation when a person desires to "resolve or minimize their cultural differences" (Mena, Padilla, & Maldonado, 1987, p. 208). It is determined by the numbers of stressors that an individual experiences as well as their type (Chavez, Moran, Reid, & Lopez, 1997).

Acculturative stress includes the sometimes difficult adjustment that comes with experiencing a new culture that may have different expectations and demands for social norms, relationships, social roles, cues, and behaviors (Padilla, Wagatsuma, & Lindholm, 1985). People who are from cultures that are different from a dominant culture in a society often are subjected to pressures to conform to the dominant culture when expectations are placed on individuals to adopt to majority values, behaviors, and traditions, causing acculturative stress. It can be especially difficult for a person to avoid acculturative stress when they feel segregated and excluded by the dominant culture. It is also difficult to avoid it when a person feels a push by others in society to assimilate. Constraints or challenges posed by the dominant culture can lead an individual to experience acculturative stress (Berry, 2005).

Due to pervasive negative perceptions, Arab Americans may experience high degrees of acculturative stress. El-Sayed, Tracy, Scarborough, and Galea (2011) recently conducted a study of Arab Americans and they suggested that they are exposed to significant amounts of acculturative stress and discrimination. Some studies have examined the role of acculturation in the experiences of Arab Americans, but very few have examined the role of acculturative stress (Awad, 2010). Moreover, an increase in the social marginalization of Arab Americans has been observed in the past decade which likely has increased the amount of acculturative stress that Arab American adolescents experience (Aboul-Enein & Aboul-Enein, 2010; Amer & Bagasra, 2013). Acculturative stress is an important construct to explore due to its associations with negative personal and social outcomes (El-Sayed, Tracy, Scarborough, & Galea, 2011; Faragallah, Schumm, & Webb, 1997; Meleis, Lipson, & Paul, 1992). In one study, acculturative stress was shown to have an effect specifically on one's self concept, for

both males and females (Padilla, Wagatsuma, & Lindholm, 1985). Acculturative stress has also been found to be related to identity formation such that having a difficult time developing an identity is related to experiencing more acculturative stress (Born, 1970).

Because Arab American youth may hear conflicting messages at home and at school, they frequently have a hard time positioning themselves in this type of complicated environment (Ajrouch, 2004; Britto, 2008; Britto & Amer, 2007). This means that it is likely that Arab American youth are at risk to having this affect their psychological well being and experience feelings of psychological stress. One of these stressors could be acculturative stress (Amer & Bagasra, 2013; Britto, 2008).

Cultural identity and acculturative stress. Ethnic identity has been found to be strongly associated with acculturation (Meleis, Lipson, & Paul, 1992). For example, Rayle and Myers (2004) found a significant relationship between the ethnic identity and the acculturative process of a group of high school students from minority group backgrounds (r = -0.59). Many researchers also have demonstrated the relationship between identity and acculturative stress (e.g., Faragallah, Schumm, & Webb, 1997; Padilla, Alvarez, & Lindholm, 1986; Padilla, Wagatsuma, & Lindholm, 1985; Wrobel, Farrag, & Hymes, 2009). In particular, a relationship also has been found between being confused about one's identity and experiencing acculturative stress. This study reported that gender did not have an effect on acculturative stress (Hovey & King, 1996).

Nevertheless, individuals with a bicultural identity report better adjustment than individuals without a bicultural identity in large societies with histories of immigrant communities. Bicultural individuals have "cognitive and affective processes that allow an

individual to withstand the negative impact of acculturative stress" (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993, p. 400). Elucidating these unique processes should be a task of future researchers in order to better understand how biculturalism can be adaptive. Since developing a bicultural identity entails undergoing a process of negotiation and integration of two cultures, it can be expected that people who identify as bicultural experience less acculturative stress. Research has supported this conclusion since people who report integrating into a different culture also report less acculturative stress (Berry, 2005; Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, & Senécal, 1997; Lee & Padilla, 2014; Williams & Berry, 1991). For example, self-identified bicultural Mexican American females reported experiencing less distress, which was linked to their comfort and acceptance with parts of the mainstream American culture (Castillo, Conoley, & Brossart, 2004). Although Berry (2005) proposed a model of acculturation in which cultural identity is one of the predictors of acculturative stress and may act as a protective factor, he did not predict *how* cultural identity may be related to discrimination and acculturative stress.

Moreover, in a multicultural group of individuals, a relationship was found that showed older age at immigration being related to more acculturative stress. A relationship also was found between stronger identification with one's heritage culture and greater amounts of acculturative stress, with gender showing no effect on these relationships (Mena, Padilla, & Maldonado, 1987). Another study conducted by Meleis, Lipson, and Paul (1992) reported that ethnic identity had a strong influence on the health outcomes, including levels of stress, of their Middle Eastern American participants. Gender was not shown to have an effect on participants' ethnic identity descriptions. They found that stronger identification with their Middle Eastern heritage culture was associated with worse health outcomes. The

authors believed that a bicultural identity within the Middle Eastern American group is associated with less stress and better outcomes. Cultural identity development is seen as an internal coping mechanism that reduces or removes the negative effects of acculturative stressors because the cultural identity development process frequently entails contending with intercultural conflicts which result in acculturative stress (Mena, Padilla, & Maldonado, 1987).

Individuals from families who recently immigrated report experiencing more stress than individuals who have not been directly related to a recent immigration experience. Thus, family members who are recent immigrants may be more susceptible to having a difficult time forming their identities because they report more experiences of identity crises, regardless of gender (Padilla, Alvarez, & Lindholm, 1986). The development of an identity is considered complicated for adolescents whose parents are immigrants because of the fact that they have to deal with the dominant society's expectations, which causes acculturative stress (Rumbaut, 1994). Identity development is a complex and multidimensional process that may become even more complicated and conflictual for Arab American youth who usually live in a social and political environment that is not very accepting. When an adolescent is placed in an environment where he/she does not feel safe, welcome, or supported, due to experiences of discrimination and stress, he/she is likely to experience detrimental effects on his/her psychological and social development (Akram, 2002; Eccles, Wong, & Peck, 2006). When he/she is associated with a cultural group that is at risk for experiencing discrimination, acculturative stress naturally increases. Discrimination and acculturative stress can have significant harmful effects on an adolescent's psychological health and well being, especially for cultural minority adolescents (Ahmed, Kia-Keating, & Tsai, 2011).

Adolescent Identity Development

Through identity formation "individuals seek to organize and understand themselves in relation to others and to their experiences" (Poll & Smith, 2003, p. 132). Adolescence is a particularly important time for identity formation since during adolescence a person's relationship with his/her family transforms into a relationship where the adolescent is more independent, leading to adolescents' exploring who they are, their roles, and how to position themselves within the world. A process emerges by which adolescents decide what identities they would like to embody and which ones should be rejected (Ajrouch, 2004). Although identity seems to stay fairly stable over one's lifetime, adolescence is the time when the exploration of one's identity reaches its peak (Awad, 2010).

Adolescence is a time of cognitive maturation and significant life experiences (Branch, 2001). During this time, "identity goes through an important formative process and is strongly influenced by experiences and interactions in and with American society" (Malin, 2011, p. 56). This population goes through an important, and sometimes challenging, process of understanding themselves. "Adolescents in the process of constructing and crystallizing a social identity, are challenged to incorporate what is 'out there' into what is 'in here,' often in dissonant social contexts" (Rumbaut, 1994, p. 749).

Adolescence is essentially a time of exploration and contemplation. People at this age try to understand everything around them by trying to find answers to important questions:

> Adolescents face multiple questions that confront them about existence, such as, Who am I? What is my purpose in life? And Is there a God? These kinds of questions serve as catalysts for adolescent pursuits for deeper meaning of themselves and the world around them (Markstrom, 1999, p. 205).

Erikson (1968) asserted that the identity formation that occurs during adolescence provides a foundation for an individual's continual growth and self-understanding.

Marcia (1966) described four statuses of identity development during adolescence based on a person's experiences of crisis or feelings of commitment: identity achievement, identity diffusion, identity moratorium, and identity foreclosure. He explained, "Crisis refers to the adolescent's period of engagement in choosing among meaningful alternatives; commitment refers to the degree of personal investment the individual exhibits" (p. 551). Identity achievement occurs after adolescents have explored their options, experienced a crisis, and subsequently feel committed to an identity. Adolescents experience identity diffusion when they are still not committed to an identity even though they may have experienced an identity crisis. Identity moratorium occurs when they desire but struggle to make any commitment to an identity during a time of crisis. Finally, adolescents experience identity foreclosure when they are committed to an identity without ever experiencing any crisis. Marcia stated that an individual can reach any of the four different identity statuses, either interpersonally or ideologically. However, Marcia focused the development of identity in the dimensions of occupation and ideology. The study of cultural identity did not become prevalent until many years after Marcia's study.

Cultural Identity

Erikson (1968) emphasized the importance of the influence of culture on identity formation. He asserted that his theory of "identity and identity crisis was inspired by 'the experience of emigration, immigration, and Americanization,' in a country 'which attempts to make a super-identity of all the identities imported by its constituent immigrants"

(Rumbaut, 1994, p. 753). Erikson believed that a strong identity entailed a cohesive identity that includes the acceptance and integration of many different components and dimensions:

> Erikson (1950, 1963, 1968, 1975) suggested that although ego identity formation during adolescence and young adulthood provides an initial psychosocial structure for continuity in adult life, a person's sense of identity can be revised and transformed through ongoing experience and shifting contextual and historical circumstances. (Kiesling, Sorell, Montgomery, & Colwell, 2006, p. 1270)

Erikson was one of the first theorists to propose the central feature of development as the interrelationship of the person and culture. Thus, the individual's psyche is created and shaped within the values, conditions, and sensibilities of a specific cultural context. He believed that the exploration that occurs during childhood and adolescence is a way in which cultures are preserved. He added a psychosocial element to development by including a cultural context (Mitchell & Black, 1995). Erikson insisted that culture and the individual interpenetrate and generate each other. He grounded his theory of identity in the concept of cultural identity by taking into account cultural and historical contexts of identity and personality (Deaux & Stewart, 2001). He identified identity development as a struggle to find one's place in a cultural and historical context. Erikson's fifth stage in his psychosocial stages of development focused on this struggle, ego identity versus role confusion (Mitchell & Black, 1995).

The crisis of ego identity versus role confusion in this Eriksonian stage occurs during the adolescent years of about 12 to 18. Ego identity forms from the comparison of how one sees oneself to how significant others assume one to be. It is a sense of coherent individuality that allows one to resolve conflicts and tensions adaptively. When adolescents cannot identify themselves and are unable to perceive themselves as productive members of society

or their culture, they suffer role confusion. Fidelity is the ego strength that can develop during this stage, which is the ability to learn to be committed to an ideological viewpoint. If fidelity does not develop, then the adolescent suffers from a weak ego, a confusion of values, and/or not feeling as though he/she belongs to a culture or group (Engler, 2006). It also has been noted that "identity will vary with age; younger adolescents would be expected to have a less clear and committed sense of their ethnicity than would older adolescents" (Roberts, Phinney, Masse, Chen, Roberts, & Romero, 1999, p. 303).

Based on Marcia's theory of identity formation, Phinney (1989, 1996) theorized that ethnic or cultural identity develops from a diffused sense of self (i.e., when adolescents have not explored their ethnicities because they are not interested in this) to a sense of self that is considered to be achieved and differentiated. Phinney believed that adolescents usually begin the process of developing an ethnic or cultural identity by not even examining the idea of an ethnic or cultural identity different from the dominant culture; that is they prefer the dominant culture. This is the result of the adolescent being uninterested in exploration of cultures or adopting others' points of view. Following this disinterest in exploration, Phinney (1990) considered the next step to be an active and intense exploration and desire to find self understanding "through activities such as reading, talking to people, going to ethnic museums, and participating actively in cultural events" (p. 503). However, it is important to note that this does not imply the adoption of these dimensions since the adolescent may choose to identify more with the dominant culture. Finally, after this desire to find meaning Phinney believes the adolescent will have developed a clear and confident identity: they develop a "deeper understanding and appreciation of their ethnicity—that is, ethnic identity achievement or internalization" (p. 503).

Growing up in an environment surrounded by different cultures introduces an adolescent to the different identities he/she might like to embrace (Branch, 2001). Social identity theory proposes that individuals choose a group or culture to identify with based on sharing common experiences and characteristics (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). The theory asserts that cultural identity development has both a social and affective dimension: persons choose to socially identify with a cultural group and usually develop affective associations to this group. "According to the theory, simply being a member of a group provides individuals with a sense of belonging that contributes to a positive self-concept" (Phinney, 1990, p. 501).

This reality is true for many adolescents growing up in the United States. A significant number of youth adolescents have grown up in homes where their parents are immigrants, who hold strong cultural ties to their native culture. The current generation of youth in America is considered to be the most diverse group in the history of the country. One statistical report found that over thirty percent of youth in America have parents who are immigrants (Rodriguez, Schwartz, & Whitbourne, 2010). "In the United States, not only is one in five children (approximately 14.8 million) of foreign-born parentage, but the number of children of foreign-born parentage is also growing at a faster rate than that of children of native-born parentage" (Aroian, 2006, p. 15).

In his book *A Nation of Immigrants*, President John F. Kennedy described America and the American identity as dependent on immigration, which he believed was a process rather than a conclusion (Deaux, 2011; Faragallah, Schumm, & Webb, 1997). The migration of peoples throughout history has lead to developments, socially and individually, due to the amalgamation that is involved in the process. There is a reciprocal process that occurs between the individual and the culture (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993). "Migration

and globalization have created significant economic, organizational, health and social-psychological change; and this pace of change has occurred at unprecedented levels in the past few decades" (Raman, 2006, p. 231). When parents decide to migrate they usually bring with them their children and these children have to deal with and develop within these unprecedented changes. This makes the need for the exploration of cultural identity particularly important during our present-day world.

Developing an American identity is a unique experience for an immigrant because culture is a very intricate and heterogeneous construct (Roberts, Phinney, Masse, Chen, Roberts, & Romero, 1999). "Not everyone in the country has had the same experience, nor have their families participated in the same way in the events of history" of the early American settlers in developing their American identity (Deaux, 2011, p. 70). Immigrants and their families' experiences of discrimination and exclusion can make the development of an American identity difficult. In general, it seems that most "Americans are ambivalent about national identity…This is especially true in minority and urban youth populations" (Malin, 2011, p. 54). Many adolescents that come from a minority background have many ambivalent feelings about an American identity or identifying with the mainstream culture (Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997). Hence, as a minority community, for Arab Americans developing their identities can be an especially confusing process.

Each individual experiences his/her culture in a unique way. This may include feeling confused or conflicted, committed, uninterested, and/or positively emotionally connected to their culture. Developing an Arab American identity can be a challenging experience for adolescent due to our current sociopolitical circumstances. This may because they "find themselves caught between American and Arab societies that seem to be drifting inexorably

apart and sinking ever deeper into patterns of mutual hostility, recrimination, and violence"
(Ibish, 2008, p. 8). These conflicted "attitudes and behaviors change over time and have
important implications for the ways in which [Arab American] individuals live their lives,
interact with people from other groups, and view society as a whole" (Phinney, 1996, p. 144).

It is important not to make generalizations about an individual's cultural identity. Just
because a person has an Arab ancestry does not signify that he/she identifies with the Arabic
culture and considers being Arab as a part of his/her cultural identity (Awad & Ladhani,
2007). Nevertheless, "not acknowledging one's heritage…does not diminish the fact that it
has had a profound effect in shaping one's life" (Branch, 2001, p. 423). Hence, even though
an adolescent does not report having a strong cultural identity this does not mean that his/her
heritage culture does not play a significant role in the adolescent's life. Identity formation is
a "dynamic, changing over time and context," process that includes much "decision making
and self-evaluation" especially when having to navigate between different cultures (Phinney,
1990, p. 502).

Research on many cultural groups suggests that males and females have different
identity development experiences (Phinney, 1990; Rumbaut, 1994). Nevertheless, it can be
concluded, from the limited literature available on Arab American youth, that it is unclear
whether males and females experience a similar process of cultural identity formation. One
factor contributing to these inconclusive results is that most studies have a disproportionately
higher number of female participants. One study that used Arab American adult participants
found significant differences in the degrees of Arab identity in males and females (Amer &
Hovey, 2007), while other studies with the same population did not find any significant
differences (Ajrouch & Jamal, 2007; Awad, 2010; Britto & Amer, 2007). Ajrouch (2004)

suggests that female and male Arab American adolescents may have different cultural identity development experiences. However, due to the study's small sample size it is difficult to generalize this finding. Furthermore, in a meta-analysis on the effects of ethnic identity formation, gender was found to not have a significant effect on study results (Smith & Silva, 2011).

Regardless of gender, developing a cultural identity is difficult for individuals that are associated with a culture that is not viewed favorably in society. There are "complexities, enigmas, contradictions, paradoxes, and felt sense of entrapment that are endemic in the cultural process and the search for a positive cultural identity" (Pinderhughes, 2010, p. 447). Some studies have reported that an "ethnic group with lower status in society is related to a poorer self-concept" in its members (Phinney, 1990, p. 501). However, many times individuals can compensate for this negative association by developing pride for their cultural group and emphasizing their cultural group's distinctiveness. Cultural identity can be viewed as the product of one's "need to assert oneself in the face of threats to one's identity" (Phinney, 1990, p. 499). Identifying with one's heritage culture has shown to be psychologically beneficial in several studies (El-Sayed, Tracy, Scarborough, & Galea, 2011; Juang & Syed, 2008; Phinney, 1990). Positive ethnic/cultural identity has been identified to be a possible protective factor against negative psychosocial outcomes (El-Sayed, Tracy, Scarborough, & Galea, 2011). Phinney (1990) asserts that the development of an ethnic or cultural identity can be beneficial in solving the following two dilemmas that most adolescents from ethnic minorities face: "(a) cultural differences between their own group and the dominant group and (b) the lower or disparaged status of their group in society" (p. 503).

One's identity has many different dimensions and components (MacDonald, 2009). Cultural identity is one important dimension in a person's identity. Cultural identity is viewed as "a critical component of the self-concept" (Roberts, Phinney, Masse, Chen, Roberts, & Romero, 1999, p. 301). Cultural identity differs from one person to the next since each person chooses to what degree he/she identifies with a given culture (Aboul-Enein & Aboul-Enein, 2010). Identifying with a culture usually includes some, if not all, of the following factors on a multidimensional continuum:

> (a) possess a strong personal identity, (b) have knowledge of and facility with the beliefs and values of the culture, (c) display sensitivity to the affective processes of the culture, (d) communicate clearly in the language of the given cultural group, (e) perform socially sanctioned behavior, (f) maintain active social relations within the cultural group, and (g) negotiate the institutional structures of that culture. (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993, p. 396)

Cultural identity usually entails one's identification of "cultural aspects of ethnic identity: for example, language, behavior, values, and knowledge of ethnic group history" (Phinney, 1990, p. 501). Thus, identifying with more than one culture can be a complex and extensive process.

Sometimes one of the most salient dimensions of one's identity is ethnicity or culture. Cultural identity can be defined as "a multidimensional construct referring to a developing sense of self as a member of one or more groups" (Britto & Amer, 2007, p. 138). The following definition of cultural identity helps illustrate the complexity of it:

> Descriptions of ethnic [or cultural] identity include elements such as ethnic self-identification; affective components such as a sense of belonging, pride, and affirmation; cognitive components such as knowledge of history and traditions; value orientations such as individualism or collectivism; and differences in components of ethnic identity related to age, phenotype, and context. (Smith & Silva, 2011, p. 42)

Cultural identity, in comparison to ethnic identity, encompasses a wider definition of this dimension of one's identity since it includes the role of national, cultural, and ethnic identities. Cultural identity focuses on the sense of belonging to a group, which has common history, ancestry, and traditions. Cultural identity, like other dimensions of identity, seems to develop gradually from a more diffuse sense of self to a more coherent awareness of oneself (Britto & Amer, 2007).

Even though Phinney (1992) focused on the study of ethnic identity in adolescence, many researchers believe that ethnic and cultural identity share similar processes of development. "Bill Cross has cogently stated that 'racial, ethnic, and cultural identity overlap at the level of *lived experience* to the point that there is little reason to associate each construct with a distinct identity constellation" (Smith & Silva, 2011, p. 43). Phinney believes that ethnic identity includes three components, in addition to self-identification and self-labeling:

> (a) affirmation and belonging (sense of group membership and attitudes toward the individual's group); (b) ethnic identity achievement (the extent to which a person has achieved a secure and confident sense of his or her ethnicity); and (c) ethnic behaviors (activities associated with group membership). (Roberts, Phinney, Masse, Chen, Roberts & Romero, 1999, p. 302)

Hence, many times one can find culture and ethnicity used interchangeably within articles. Cultural and ethnic identity overlap in many areas and many researchers do not distinguish between the two.

Bicultural identity. As aforementioned, individuals can identify being a part of two different cultures when they are born in a different culture from the one that they are being raised in by achieving a form of biculturalism. This seems to be the common circumstance

for many Arab American youth (Awad, 2010; Britto & Amer, 2007). It can be described as having more than one cultural identification and loyalty, "DuBois (1961) labeled *double-consciousness,* or the simultaneous awareness of oneself as being a member and an alien of two or more cultures" (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993, p. 395). Many researchers suggest the need for the study of whether or not a bicultural identity can serve as adaptive to an adolescent's development (Basilio, Knight, O'Donnell, Roosa, Gonzales, Umaña-Taylor, & Torres, 2014; Phinney, 1990). Miller (2010) concurs with the idea that people are capable of achieving a bicultural identity, which happens when "individuals can internalize and maintain adherence to their culture of origin (enculturation) and to a second culture (acculturation) without losing ties to either" (p. 179).

For example, adolescents who identify as bicultural frequently report complex, dynamic, and distinct affective associations to their self-identified cultures (Marks, Patton, & García Coll, 2011). A bicultural identity allows for one to achieve the beneficial psychological trait of *allocentrism,* which is "an individual's ability to take a multiplicity of ethnic perspectives, without necessarily attaching any negative or positive value judgments regarding them" (Smith, 1991, p. 184). A bicultural identity allows for a person to be more flexible and adaptable in his/her environment (Wrobel, Farrag, & Hymes, 2009). Since "bicultural individuals possess multiple cognitive networks of cultural frames of reference" (Marks, Patton, & García Coll, 2011, p. 272) it would be fascinating to explore how they process and respond to stressors in their life.

LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton (1993) reviewed the literature on the construct of biculturalism. Some researchers assumed that identifying with two different cultures can have negative consequences like feelings of conflict and confusion. However, finding and

engaging with others who also have bicultural identities and not internalizing negative

associations and conflicts to one's culture can buffer these risks. Some literature has

illustrated the positive effects of attaining a bicultural identity (Basilio, Knight, O'Donnell,

Roosa, Gonzales, Umaña-Taylor, & Torres, 2014; Berry, 2005; Britto & Amer, 2007;

Golden, 1987; Mullender & Miller, 1985; Palleja, 1987). They found that it is important to

appreciate a different model of cultural acquisition that is not linear in nature. The authors

proposed the "alternation model" where a bicultural identity is formed when one gains:

> competence [and a sense of belonging] within two cultures without losing his
> or her cultural identity or having to choose one culture over the other… the
> alternation model of second-culture acquisition assumes that it is possible for
> an individual to know and understand two different cultures. It also supposes
> that an individual can alter his or her behavior to fit a particular social context.
> (pgs. 395, 399)

Much of the research has concluded that developing a bicultural identity may be the most

adaptable and functional way to manage living within two different cultural experiences,

especially for adolescents. Since research has shown inconsistent results on the benefit of

developing a bicultural identity, more studies need to be conducted that explore this

phenomenon (Basilio, Knight, O'Donnell, Roosa, Gonzales, Umaña-Taylor, & Torres, 2014;

Rodriguez, Schwartz, & Whitbourne, 2010).

 "Faced with unique conflicts, often with clear markers of difference that do not allow

the identity to become optional, and with different avenues toward assimilation and

barricades against assimilation, these models of ethnicity [and culture] have not been

effectively adapted to" the development of Arab American youth (Britto, 2008, p. 855). This

suggests that Arab American youth are likely to experience a complicated identity formation

process (Amer, 2014). It will be fascinating to explore Arab American youth's sense of their

American identity in the face of the sociopolitical challenges they encounter in a country where many American youth question their sense of American identity. "Virtually every study of U.S. youth during the past decade has found large pockets of cynicism, disengagement, apathy, or ignorance regarding the American tradition" (Damon, 2011, p. 52).

Phinney (1990) believes that it is especially important to explore cultural identity formation when the adolescent's ethnic group is "at best poorly represented (politically, economically, and in the media) and…at worst discriminated against or even attacked verbally and physically" (p. 499). Because of the current societal climate that can be condemnatory of Arabs, adolescents with Arab backgrounds may struggle to develop a cultural identity in the face of occasionally traumatic experiences related to their culture. This struggle may include feelings of ambivalence and shame (Pinderhughes, 2010).

Cultural Identity, Perceived Discrimination, and Acculturative Stress

Based on the studies mentioned below, cultural identity formation has been found to be related to experiences of perceived discrimination and acculturative stress in Arab American adolescents. For example, a negative relationship has been found between different cultural factors, like ethnic identity, and distress, with female Arab American adolescents reporting stronger ethnic identities than males. This entails that the stronger an individual's cultural identity, the less stress they experience (Ahmed, Kia-Keating, & Tsai, 2011). "In the face of opposition and marginalization, a strong ethnic identity helps individuals recognize positive virtues about their own ethnic group, minimizing effects of denigrating beliefs perpetuated in society" (Smith & Silva, 2011, p. 42). Experiences of discrimination were also

found to be related to Arab American adolescents' reports of self-concept (Tabbah, Miranda, & Wheaton, 2012). Individuals of ethnic and cultural minorities, like Arab Americans, can use their cultural identities as a way to position themselves in the environments in which they live and function (Branch, 2001). It helps an individual organize his/her world and his/her place in the environment (Watt, Robinson, & Lupton-Smith, 2002). People's identity development is used as a kind of guide to their worlds. A cultural identity shapes one's worldview and behaviors and is sometimes viewed as a type of coping mechanism and cognitive heuristic making it an important part of one's identity (Smith & Silva, 2011).

Research has highlighted the important role that culture plays in an individual's identity development. Britto and Amer (2007) suggested a hypothesis of cultural identity development in Arab American individuals: "Moderate Bicultural identity, High Bicultural identity, and High Arab Cultural identity" (p. 145). These identities refer to the extent to which the individual identifies with and feels like he/she belongs in their American and Arabic cultures. Arab Americans who reported less immersion into the dominant culture also reported higher levels of discrimination. On the other hand, another study found that Arab Americans who reported the highest levels of immersion into the dominant culture also reported the highest levels of discrimination (Awad, 2010). Thus, there are inconsistent conclusions about the relationship between the level of immersion in and identification with the dominant culture and reported experiences of discrimination. This supports the need for new studies to further explore and identify this relationship.

Moreover, Arab American individuals who identify themselves as integrated and assimilated into American culture report less acculturative stress than individuals who felt separated or marginalized from American culture (Amer, 2005). Bicultural individuals, from

other minority cultures (such as Latino, Black, and Asian American individuals), report less distress (Calzada, Brotman, Huang, Bat-Chava, & Kingston, 2009). Identity development also has been found to moderate or decrease the negative effect of perceived discrimination on one's mental and physical health. However, the degree and intensity of one's identification could increase this negative effect. This relationship seems to be affected by the level of perceived discrimination and identity complexity (Fakih, 2014; Pascoe & Richman, 2009; Schmitt, Branscombe, Postmes, & Garcia, 2014). In a sample of Arab Americans higher levels of cultural identity have been related to more experiences of discrimination. However, the development of cultural identity may also be viewed as a protective factor against the distress that Arab Americans experience from discrimination because it increases their self-esteem and wellbeing and promotes feelings of belonging (Awad, 2010). This is another example of the inconsistencies in the relationship between cultural identity formation and perceived discrimination, which further supports the benefit of this proposed study.

Rumbaut (1994) conducted a study of the identity development of a culturally diverse group of adolescents who have parents whom are immigrants. He considered the effect of living within a cultural enclave on the cultural identity development of an adolescent. Rumbaut deemed that it may be easier for these adolescents to identify with their parents' native culture, especially when that culture is being discriminated against within larger society. His results supported this because these adolescents were found to be significantly more likely to identify with their parents' native culture. He also found that Gordon's (1964) unidirectional model of acculturation did not explain the identity development of the diverse group of participants; rather the adolescents reported a complex path of acculturation.

Rumbaut also found that close to half of the adolescents reported a type of bicultural identity. His results illustrated that adolescents who reported this type of identity structure identified almost equally with their parent's native culture and mainstream American culture.

Dubow, Pargament, Boxer, and Tarakeshwar (2000) conducted a study that looked at the ethnic identity development of 75 Jewish American adolescents. They found that ethnic identity was related to ethnic-related stressors and coping mechanisms. The Jewish American adolescent sample reported tensions in having an ethnic identity that entails participating in Jewish or ethnic-specific activities that may conflict with participating in activities within the dominant culture. This affected the degree of ethnic identity they chose to embrace since adolescents have a desire to fit in with their peers. Dubow, Pargament, Boxer, and Tarakeshwar concluded that adolescents "more embedded within Judaism have a set of resources for coping that is more accessible and more compelling to them than do Jewish students who are less identified with their ethnicity" (p. 436).

Branch (2001) gathered data on a group of about 300 adolescents and young adults from diverse ethnic backgrounds. He studied their reports on ethnic identity and ego identity scales. He found that for some of the ethnic groups involved in the study there was an inverse relationship between ethnic and ego identity formations, while for other ethnic groups ethnic identity developed differently. This finding is evidence for the need for studies that explore ethnic and cultural identity formation in different ethnic groups.

Ajrouch (2004) conducted a study that explored the identity formation of second-generation Arab American adolescents. She found that many Arab Americans have difficulties with forming their cultural identity. The participants in her study reported feeling

conflicted about their affiliations to the "white" society and the Arab community making it difficult for them to pinpoint their cultural identity. Ajrouch found that "tensions arise between self-definitions and attributions of identity by family, peers, and the community or society, producing situations that are confirmed or contested" (p. 375). They seemed to have a hard time discerning their identities. This confusion in developing cultural identities was also found in a focus group of Arab adolescents living in ethnic enclaves (Kumar, Seay, & Karabenick, 2015). The identity exploration process that Arab American adolescents seem to experience is a fascinating process that needs to be further explored and researched (Amer, 2014).

Ajrouch and Jamal (2007) explored the cultural identity formation process in a sample of Arab Americans. They found three different forms of identity among their participants: individuals with a primarily Arab identity, individuals with a primarily Arab American identity, and individuals with a primarily "White" identity. The results showed that a newer Arab immigrant is less likely to report being American as a part of his/her identity. A relationship has been found that shows that the longer a Middle Eastern/Arab American has been living within the United States, the less he/she identifies with the heritage culture (Meleis, Lipson, & Paul, 1992). Ajrouch and Jamal concluded that by adopting a bicultural identity an adolescent welcomes the availability of more resources within his/her life: opportunities become available within both cultures rather than just one culture.

Rodriguez, Schwartz, and Whitbourne (2010) conducted a study on the development of an identity dimension of an American identity in a culturally diverse group of individuals. The participants collectively identified the following as components of an American identity: being an American citizen, being raised in America, as well as "patriotism, democracy,

freedom, capitalism, and individualism" (p. 340). They found individuals who were considered to be a part of a minority considered themselves less American than individuals who were considered "White" ($\eta^2 = 0.33$). These individuals also reported that they feel like they are not considered by others in society as American, even when they have an American citizenship. Rodriguez, Schwartz, and Whitbourne (2010) also found that some individuals who are considered to come from a minority had a hard time consolidating a kind of bicultural identity, especially if they had experienced discrimination. Individuals who had reported experiencing discrimination had a difficult time developing an American identity. Finally, Rodriguez, Schwartz, and Whitbourne found a strong relationship between a strong ethnic identity and strong personal identity, or sense of self.

Marks, Patton, and García Coll (2011) conducted a study that analyzed the identities of 84 adolescents, from diverse backgrounds including Arabic backgrounds, who described themselves as bicultural. They found that these adolescents reported multifaceted identities. The authors believe that adolescents who report a stronger bicultural identity are more likely to have reached Marcia's achieved identity stage. They noted that it is essential for these adolescents to develop strong and positive cultural identities in order for them to experience socially positive outcomes. It is possible that these social outcomes can include how they experience stressors like perceived discrimination and acculturative stress, as this study explores. Marks, Patton, and García Coll encouraged the exploration of the effects of cultural biases on identity development:

> As the United States has seen a recent, unprecedented increase in the number and cultural diversity of first- and second generation immigrant children and adolescents…understanding how positive ethnic identities are formed and maintained among bicultural and multicultural youth is of timely importance. (Marks, Patton, & García Coll, 2011, p. 271)

Since research has highlighted how "individuals with an achieved ego identity show a variety of psychological strengths" (Roberts, Phinney, Masse, Chen, Roberts, & Romero, 1999, p. 305), it would be important to explore how they deal with difficult stressors like acculturative stress and perceived discrimination. Phinney's (1990) literature review of ethnic identity in adolescents illustrated the inconsistent research on the relationship between ethnic identity and processes of acculturation, including acculturative stress. She found that some studies concluded that ethnic identity and processes of acculturation are independent of each other while other studies found a relationship between them. Phinney recommended the need for more studies to explore the inconsistent results on this relationship. She also recommended the need for studies that explore the context of identity formation, including the familial context.

Smith and Silva (2011) conducted a meta-analysis of the relationship between ethnic identity and personal wellbeing, which was measured using levels of "self esteem, coping ability, symptoms of depression" (p. 44), among all ages of people of color within the United States. They found that there is a significant, modest positive relationship between these constructs, across the 184 studies they explored ($r = 0.17$). This entailed that the higher reports of ethnic identity are related to higher reports of personal wellbeing. The results indicated a much stronger positive relationship between ethnic identity and personal wellbeing in comparison to ethnic identity and distress or negative outcomes ($r = 0.08$). The relationship was shown to be strongest among adolescents and young adults ($r = 0.2$). This may suggest that ethnic identity has a positive effect on an adolescent's adjustment, which may entail that it may help an adolescent cope better with stressors in one's life such as perceived discrimination and acculturative stress. Smith and Silva concluded by emphasizing

the need for more studies on identity formation, especially studies that explore mediating and moderating factors like socialization and discrimination. Moreover, Rayle and Myers (2004) found that developing an ethnic identity has been found to be associated with overall wellness in a minority group of adolescents.

It is important to consider how cultural identity formation is a process that is unique to each individual. Because of this consideration, many researchers have encouraged the study of cultural identity formation in a diverse sample of adolescents, especially the cultural groups that have not been extensively studied (Phinney, 1992), such as Arab American adolescents (Abbassi-Zoabi, 2013). Phinney encouraged the study of ethnic minorities' perceptions of their own development rather than the study of the dominant groups in society's perceptions of ethnic minorities. She believed that there was a need for more studies that explore a personal account of the development of adolescents from ethnic minorities (Phinney, 1990). Moreover, in their article, Roberts, Phinney, Masse, Chen, Roberts, and Romero (1999) promote the study of how identity is related to factors such as socialization and the effects of other individuals' perceptions about one's cultural group. There is an evident "need for further research on the identity development of Arab Americans" (Nassar-McMillan, Lambert, & Hakim-Larson, 2011, p. 46), particularly Arab American youth (Amer, 2014).

Effects of Spirituality on Development

Many researchers have found that "spirituality and religion are essential to psychological identity and development" (Tummala-Narra, 2009, p. 85). Even though spirituality is a complex construct, it can be identified and studied (MacDonald, 2000). There

are several different definitions of spirituality since it can be a very abstract as well as complex construct (Hall & Breland-Noble, 2011). To be able to reliably explore the concept of spirituality, researchers need first be able to understand and define the abstract construct. Many different definitions have been given for spirituality. One example is that spirituality is "an experientially grounded sense of connection with, or participatory consciousness of, the 'sacred,' 'transcendent,' 'numinous' or some form of higher power or intelligence (Elkins, 1990; Grof & Grof, 1990)" (MacDonald, 2009, p. 87). Another definition of spirituality is that it is "the extent to which a person experiences and acknowledges the reality of the numinous or transcendent either or both as something that exists separately from the person and/or aids the person in ascribing meaning to existence" (MacDonald, 2009, p. 87). Spirituality is a complex experience and perception that needs to be consciously maintained. Spirituality can become a part of one's sense of self when one incorporates their subjective experiences of or their associations to a transcendent being into their sense of self (MacDonald, 2009). Experiences of spirituality include "a wide range of idiosyncratic personal experiences (of nature, love, exhilaration)" (Wink & Dillon, 2002, p. 80).

A spiritual experience is considered to be different from a religious experience since religion tends to be considered a socially learned and interpreted experience that includes group engagement while spirituality is usually a personal and idiosyncratic experience (King & Roeser, 2009). Religiosity and spirituality can be viewed as related but different since spirituality entails an internal, subjective experience (Elkins, Hedstrom, Hughes, Leaf, & Saunders, 1988). Hence, it can be said that when exploring an individual's sense of self or identity it would be more fruitful to explore its relationship to spirituality rather than religion (MacDonald, 2009). Religion and spirituality can be very important and influential parts of

an individual's life (Erikson, 1996). "Religiousness and spirituality are constructs that overlap in the United States and are very similar, but not identical" (King & Roeser, 2009, p. 441). However, spirituality goes beyond one's religion since it "is characterized by a subjective experience that transcends religious affiliation" (Chae, Kelly, Brown, & Bolden, 2004, p. 17).

"Spirituality is a human phenomenon and exists, at least potentially, in all persons" (Elkins, Hedstrom, Hughes, Leaf, & Saunders, 1988, p. 8). However, spirituality is a different experience for each culture and specifically for each individual (Erikson, 1996; MacDonald, Freidman, Brewczynski, Holland, Salagmae, Mohan, Gubrij, & Cheong, 2015). For example, females, in comparison to males, tend to report higher levels of religiosity (King & Roeser, 2009). Even though spirituality is a personal experience, one cannot deny the effects that context and culture have on the development of spirituality. "The content of one's sense of spiritual self is individual, whereas the structure is inherently social and thus inevitably local and historically specific" (Kiesling, Sorell, Montgomery, & Colwell, 2006, p. 1270). There seems to be a relationship between culture and religion in all cultures, especially within the Arabic culture where the two are very much intertwined. In the Arabic culture, spirituality and religion are highly intertwined (Abi-Hashem, 2014; Ajrouch & Jamal, 2007). Spirituality is considered to be an important component of cultural or ethnic identity such that considering one and not the other would not provide an accurate understanding of an individual. Culture and spirituality are interconnected in many cultures, especially within the Arab American culture (Abi-Hashem, 2014; Amer, 2014; Juang & Syed, 2008).

Spirituality and religion play an important role in the Arabic culture: "Among the various Arab populations spirituality is fundamental" (Hall & Breland-Noble, 2011, p. 155). It would be fair to state that for Arab Americans "their ethnic heritage and tradition are deeply intertwined with their spiritual belief system" (Chae, Kelly, Brown, & Bolden, 2004, p. 16). Religious beliefs have been found to have an effect on Arab American adolescents' views on identity formation (Ajrouch, 2004).

Since many Arab American adolescents may grow up in a home where they or their parents are immigrants, they may understand firsthand the stress that comes with the immigration process. Spirituality has been viewed as a way to experience comfort and connection through the stressful parts of immigration (Hall & Livingston, 2006). Thus, Arab American adolescents may have grown up with spirituality within their home, which will likely influence the development of spirituality within their individual lives (Juang & Syed, 2008).

"Spirituality for Arab families may contain coping mechanisms that enable them to confront and overcome the many challenges of daily life" (Hall & Livingston, 2006, p. 141). It has been noted that spirituality has become especially important for Arab Americans in our post-9/11 era, since they have been experiencing high amounts of stress (Hall & Livingston, 2006). Hence, the coping mechanisms that spirituality may provide in Arab American culture can likely promote wellness and positive outcomes (Hall & Breland-Noble, 2011).

Adolescent Spirituality

Many researchers have determined that spirituality can play an important role in people's lives, and it can play a particularly important role in adolescents' lives (Juang &

Syed, 2008; Roehlkepartain, Benson, & Scales, 2011). For example, Kim and Esquivel

(2011) reveal:

> Theologians and psychologists have identified adolescence as a period of 'spiritual awakening' characterized by an existential search for meaning, an enhanced capacity for spiritual experiences, and a process of challenging traditional religious values…and this exploratory search provides a pathway for internalizing self-adopted spiritual and religious convictions and thus plays a role in identity formation. (p. 756)

Kim and Esquivel emphasize the role of spirituality in adolescence as well as the possible

existential component to spirituality, even though other research does not support these

conclusions. Nevertheless, epidemiological studies have shown that the majority of

adolescents, living within the United States and specifically living within the Midwest,

identify themselves with a specific religion and spirituality plays a role in their life (King &

Roeser, 2009).

Spirituality sometimes helps adolescents face situations that may seem unexplainable

and hurtful. For example, when they are faced with a stressful situation they may view it as a

spiritual challenge and an opportunity to learn and grow (King & Roeser, 2009). Depending

on how spirituality is measured and defined (e.g., sometimes researchers confound

spirituality with well-being), researchers have concluded different results (Koenig, 2008;

Migdal & MacDonald, 2013). Higher levels of spirituality are associated with positive

outcomes, such as physical, social, and emotional wellness, in a group of adolescents

identified as coming from a minority ethnicity. The measure of spirituality in this study was

based on both individual and organizational experiences of spirituality (Rayle & Myers,

2004). Chae, Kelly, Brown, and Bolden (2004) consider spirituality to serve as a buffer

against sociopolitical stressors, which may include perceived discrimination and

acculturative stress. Spirituality may help people deal with difficult experiences and it can be viewed as a form of coping mechanism (Chae, Kelly, Brown, & Bolden, 2004; Houskamp, Fisher, & Stuber, 2004). Spirituality can be a strategy that one uses to deal with oppression or prejudice by others in society (Hayward & Krause, 2015; Tummala-Narra, 2009). It is thought that the process of searching for meaning, which is considered by some researchers to be a component of spirituality, can be a buffer against experiences of discrimination for minority and immigrant adolescents. Past research reveals that adolescent females, in comparison to adolescent males, are more likely to report that religion plays an important role in their lives and report more religious experiences (King & Roeser, 2009).

Thus, spirituality can be an important source of resiliency for adolescents as they struggle through internal and external challenges "because spiritual values serve to maintain an optimistic outlook on life and even help one to find meaning in adverse [and stressful] situations" like perceived discrimination and acculturative stress (Kim & Esquivel, 2011, p. 757). Some researchers predict stronger levels of spirituality for individuals who experience perceived discrimination related to their belief systems. This could be an applicable assumption for Arab American adolescents who are discriminated against because of their relation to Islamic beliefs (Amer, 2014; Juang & Syed, 2008). "Spirituality not only helps youth cope with adversity but also promotes their mental health and well-being" by serving as a protective factor and buffer in their lives (Kim & Esquivel, 2011, p. 755).

Spirituality has been shown to have a positive effect on a person's life experiences and overall psychological and physical health; increase life satisfaction; enhance a person's ability to cope; and promote "positive psychological attitudes" (Kass, Friedman, Leserman, Zuttermeister, & Benson, 1991, p. 209) similarly for both males and females. These positive

effects have been found to be true in adolescent populations, with female adolescents reporting higher levels of religiosity than male adolescents (Kim & Esquivel, 2011).

Developing a level of spirituality as well as the process of searching for meaning in one's life can be related to a person experiencing a sense of purpose, which also is how a person can experience developing a cultural identity (Kim & Esquivel, 2011). The relationship between identity and spirituality has been documented in studies for many years, as early as within the works of Erikson and Maslow. Erikson (1966) was one of the first psychologists to promote the understanding and study of identity formation and he also was very interested in understanding people's levels of spirituality and their influence on identity development. He was intrigued with studying the lives of historical spiritual and religious leaders and the roles that identity and spirituality played in their lives (Kiesling, Sorell, Montgomery, & Colwell, 2006).

Adolescent spirituality and cultural identity. The link between spirituality and cultural or ethnic identity has also been confirmed in studies involving adolescent participants (Roehlkepartain, Benson, & Scales, 2011). Considering an adolescent's cultural experiences with his/her spiritual understanding enriches the study of spirituality's developmental role. The study of adolescents' spirituality shows that with the higher levels of spirituality that they reported the more positive outcomes they reported. This supports the suggestion that spirituality can act as a buffer and moderate a person's response to stressful experiences, such as acculturative stress and perceived discrimination (MacDonald, 2009; Roehlkepartain, Benson, & Scales, 2011). Rayle and Myers (2004) found a significant relationship between the ethnic identity and the level of spirituality of a group of high school students from minority group backgrounds ($r = 0.15$).

However, only in the last couple of decades have researchers become increasingly interested in understanding the relationship between identity and spirituality (MacDonald, 2009). Spirituality has been found to be a salient and frequently positive developmental task across different cultures and traditions (Roehlkepartain, Benson, & Scales, 2011). Ethnic minority groups have reported a stronger association between spirituality and ethnic identity in comparison to Caucasians. For example, with a large, diverse sample, Chae, Kelly, Brown, and Bolden (2004) found a significant positive relationship between a measure of ethnic identity and a measure of intrinsic spirituality such that more ethnic identity is associated with higher levels of spirituality. Thus, spirituality seems to be directly linked to ethnicity such that spirituality can be an experience unique to peoples of different ethnicities (Chae, Kelly, Brown, & Bolden, 2004; MacDonald, 2009; Roehlkepartain, Benson, & Scales, 2011).

Moreover, Kakhnovets and Wolf (2011) found a relationship between ethnic or cultural identity and spirituality in a group of 300 Jewish individuals. They found a positive association such that Jewish individuals with stronger ethnic identity also reported higher levels of spirituality. Other studies have found that a person's ethnicity to be related to the level of spirituality in samples of ethnic and cultural minorities (Juang & Syed, 2008; Kiesling, Sorell, Montgomery, & Colwell, 2008).

A few studies have found that spirituality can be an important component of identity development in the experiences of adolescents (Kiesling, Sorell, Montgomery, & Colwell, 2008). Nevertheless, more studies are needed that explore spiritual development in adolescence (Houskamp, Fisher, & Stuber, 2004; Kim & Esquivel, 2011), especially minority and immigrant adolescents (Juang & Syed, 2008; King & Roeser, 2009). There seems to be a "recent lack of attention to religious and spiritual development during childhood and

adolescence" in the psychological research (King & Roeser, 2009, p. 435). Roehlkepartain, Benson, and Scales (2011) supported the need for more research on spiritual development during adolescence.

In a study conducted by Ahmed, Kia-Keating, and Tsai (2011) with 240 Arab American adolescents, higher ethnic identity and more reliance on religion in coping (which included spiritual components such as sense of connection and pursuing meaning) was associated with less psychological distress. The authors discovered that female Arab American adolescents reported significantly higher levels of religious support. They also found a strong positive association between discrimination and acculturative stress, "socio-cultural adversities," and psychological distress. Developing a salient cultural identity and having spirituality as a resource to help one cope can both be promotive as well as protective factors for Arab American adolescent who face the risk of dealing with the sociopolitical stressors of acculturative stress and perceived discrimination. "Promotive factors protect children and adolescents from environmental or constitutional risks by counteracting the effects of psychosocial threats…[and] protective factors serve as buffers so that the relation between risks and problematic developmental outcomes are attenuated" (Eccles, Wong, & Peck, 2006, p. 409). Ahmed, Kia-Keating, and Tsai (2011) describe these two promotive factors as assets rather than simply buffers (i.e., protective factors) due to their positive influence on psychological outcomes within Arab American adolescents. Thus, spirituality can have a positive effect on or serve as a possible protective factor for the way in which people experience stress and discrimination. Spirituality also has been found to be a protective factor and promoter of resilience during adolescence (Hill, 2007; Kim & Esquivel, 2011; Mason, 2012; Muench, 2012). Spirituality has been found to particularly help Arab

American individuals cope with the social pressures and biases they occasionally experience (Charani, 2005; Hall & Breland-Noble, 2011; Hall & Livingston, 2006; Kilpatrick & Holland, 1990).

Hence, spirituality has been found to be related to cultural identity formation. A relationship between cultural identity and spirituality has been found in several studies (Chae, Kelly, Brown, & Bolden, 2004; Kakhnovets, 2006; Kakhnovets & Wolf, 2011). Spirituality has been theorized to help Arab Americans during the process of identity formation (Ajrouch & Jamal, 2007; Hall & Breland-Noble, 2011).

Surprisingly, not many studies have assessed the experiences of spirituality within cultural minority groups, especially Arab Americans, even though spirituality is documented to be an integral part of many cultures. Research has not extensively explored the specific effect spirituality can have on the development of cultural identity and its effects on the development of adolescents. It has been suggested that more studies be conducted that explore this interesting relationship between spirituality and cultural identity (Chae, Kelly, Brown, & Bolden, 2004; Roehlkepartain, Benson, & Scales, 2011). Furthermore, Juang and Syed (2008) believe "it would be productive to examine how different areas [of identity formation] potentially influence and define one another" (p. 271). The relationship between spirituality and cultural identity is a relationship between two different areas that should be examined.

Family Cultural Socialization

When exploring cultural identity formation, an important contextual factor is socialization (Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004). Family ethnic or cultural socialization can be

understood as the communicative process that families use, both implicitly and explicitly, to teach children about a culture or ethnicity (Brittian, Umaña-Taylor, & Derlan, 2013). Belonging to a particular cultural group is often not an active choice one makes, but rather one inherits a cultural group and relates to it through personal representational and emotional bonds (Smith, 1991). "Identity is not a static entity within the individual, but a dynamic and evolving understanding of self that takes shape and is reshaped through interaction with and participation in social institutions and activities" (Malin, 2011, p. 56). When an adolescent lives within an area where his/her cultural group has established institutions, it becomes easier for the adolescent to develop a strong and consistent cultural identity since these institutions play a role of cultural socialization (Smith, 1991).

Cultural and ethnic socialization experiences can come in a variety of forms, outside of the family structure, such as "education in ethnic studies, intensive language courses, heritage/homeland tours, and study-abroad experiences" (Baden, Treweeke, & Ahluwalia, 2012, p. 390). Even though being socialized to one's heritage culture can be a lifelong process and can occur in various contexts, many researchers consider family cultural and ethnic socialization as the most important introduction and experience of one's heritage culture. Some individuals may identify as having more than one heritage culture; however, research has focused on understanding the socialization to what can be considered to be an individual's primary heritage culture (Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004). Family cultural socialization is likely especially significant in adolescent development since adolescents sometimes do not yet have the agency and level of independence to seek out other socialization experiences.

Moreover, Erikson (1968) emphasized the important role that the family plays in identity development. He believed that identity develops through:

> Interaction with others – first with family members (mainly parents) and subsequently, with members in the community and larger society. Erikson stressed the primary role of parents in shaping children's identity, initially through identification and modeling and then, in adolescence and later life through supporting, challenging, accepting, or protesting their child's developing identity. (Juang & Syed, 2010, p. 348)

The family plays a very important role in the identity development of an adolescent (Juang & Syed, 2010). Family is almost always the context in which an adolescent chooses his/her self-identification since "family is a key context in which young people learn about culture and ethnicity" (Brittian, Umaña-Taylor, & Derlan, 2013, p. 178).

Many times family cultural socialization happens when adolescents witness their immigrant parents' close ties to their county of origin's culture (Ajrouch, 2004). Familial cultural socialization can be displayed in many different forms, both overtly and covertly. For example, the family may overtly have educational-like discussions about their culture and the family may also covertly decorate the home with cultural symbols and artifacts. A family overtly culturally socializes by "purposefully and directly attempting to teach adolescents about their ethnicity [or culture] (e.g., buying books about the native country and requiring adolescents to read them)" (Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004, p. 40).

Family cultural socialization can be considered a measure of how the adolescent has been socialized to his/her cultural background, which can be through:

> language, friendship, social organizations, religion, cultural traditions, politics,…ethnic music, songs, dances, and dress; newspapers, periodicals, books, and literature; food or cooking; entertainment (movies, radio, TV plays, sports, etc.); traditional celebrations; traditional family roles, values, and names; visits to and continued interest in the homeland; the practice of

endogamy or opposition to mixed marriages; and knowledge about ethnic
culture or history. (Phinney, 1990, p. 505-506)

One important part of the family cultural socialization process is developing "cultural

knowledge, or knowledge of significant historical events and popular culture that may be

related to awareness of culturally-specific standards of behavior" (Calzada, Brotman, Huang,

Bat-Chava, & Kingston, 2009, p. 516).

Family cultural socialization can also come in the form of immigrant parents

exposing their children to their native language (e.g., Arabic) and using it at home; frequently

exposing them to Arab television and other media outlets; and keeping strong ties to their

extended families who live in their native countries (Blume & De Reus, 2009; Britto &

Amer, 2007). A relationship has been found between language and cultural identity

formation (Rumbaut, 1994). A link between media and television viewing and cultural

identity formation as well as a relationship between keeping strong extended family ties with

cultural identity have both been previously explored and supported (Blume & De Reus, 2009;

Huntemann & Morgan, 2001).

Many familial processes influence the family cultural socialization of an adolescent,

such as "characteristics of family background, including the generation of migration to this

country; acculturation, ethnic [or cultural] identity, language and cultural knowledge of the

parents…[and] status relationships within families, familial interdependence, and family

size" (Knight, Bernal, Garza, Cota, & Ocampo, 1993, p. 100, 102). An important part of

family cultural socialization is learning the language of the primary heritage culture in an

individual's life. This can be adaptive because it can facilitate familial closeness and

relationships with individuals who share a heritage culture (Park, 2007). "Adolescents from

immigrant families must acquire their ethnic heritage and heritage language primarily from their familial context and, to some extent, from their family's ethnocultural networks" (Park, 2007, p. 405).

Families socialize about culture by conveying "messages about ethnic pride, cultural history, heritage, and diversity" (Robbins, Szapocznik, Mayorga, Dillon, Burns, & Feaster, 2007, p. 313) and sometimes they include teaching their children about the potential for bias or discrimination. "Socialization can occur in many ways, not simply through learning by observation, imitation and reinforcement" (Siegal & Aboud, 2005, p. 2270).

Individuals who live within multiple cultures "constantly interpret the encountered symbols and negotiate their identities within their environments" (Cheng & Kuo, 2000, p. 464), that usually come through family socialization messages. Thus, cultural identity formation usually consists of at least these two steps: family cultural socialization messages and the adolescent's negotiation and interpretation of these messages. One way parents can socialize their child about a culture is by describing their opinions of a culture to the adolescent, which consequently usually affects the adolescent's opinion of the culture (Fuligni, 1998). An adolescent's experience of family socialization to a culture shapes the affective associations that develop in relation to that culture (Marks, Patton, & García Coll, 2011). Both the family and the adolescent shape the identity that the adolescent eventually chooses since it is usually based on his/her own impressions as well as the different environmental influences around him/her. This process can be described as a two way mechanism of cultural socialization (Cheng & Kuo, 2000).

Family cultural socialization processes can differ from one culture to the next. Almost every individual is connected in some way to *a* family, even when he/she is not connected to his/her immediate birth family (e.g., individuals can form strong connections to any family that cares for them). Social groups or cultures vary on the degree of importance they place on family and familial processes (Scabini & Manzi, 2011). Thus, the context of the family significantly shapes an individual's adjustment and immigrant experience, whether that is when one is a young immigrant him/herself or is being raised by parents who are immigrants. This is likely to, in turn, affect how one begins to identify and conceptualize him/herself. Sociological theory recognizes the complex and important familial processes that are related to an adolescent's development, like socialization and acculturative or cultural adaption processes (Rumbaut & Portes, 2001). Familial processes and interactions are thought to be very dynamic and multidimensional. These processes are especially significant for an Arab American adolescent since family plays a central and valuable role in the Arabic culture (Britto & Amer, 2007).

Family Cultural Socialization and Cultural Identity

An adolescent's family has significant effects on the identity that he/she develops, including the kind of cultural identity the adolescent chooses to have when he/she struggles to find an identity (Sabatier, 2008; Scabini & Manzi, 2011). Research has shown a relationship between ethnic or cultural identity and family ethnic/cultural socialization, with it frequently being a positive relationship (Gartner, Kiang, & Supple, 2014). In the study conducted by Brittian, Umaña-Taylor, and Derlan, (2013), they found a significant positive relationship between family ethnic socialization and ethnic identity exploration ($r = 0.51$) and resolution ($r = 0.42$) in a diverse group of biracial college students.

Rumbaut (1994) found a significant relationship between parental cultural socialization and cultural identity formation. Phinney (1992) found a relationship between parental socialization practices and ethnic identity in a large, diverse sample of high school students. In a study conducted by Umaña-Taylor and Fine (2004), a positive relationship was found between ethnic identity achievement and familial ethnic socialization in a group of Mexican-origin adolescents living within the United States. Park (2007) explored family cultural socialization in a group of Korean American adolescents. She found a relationship between ethnic identity and family cultural socialization within this cultural group.

Hence, a positive relationship between family ethnic socialization and adolescent exploration of culture or ethnicity and subsequently coming to a salient identity formation has been found in previous research. The relationship between these two constructs seems to be because "parents serve as an important ecological resource by teaching their children about cultural values and practices, and thereby spark the process of exploring and coming to terms with what it means to be a member of an ethnic [or cultural] group" (Brittian, Umaña-Taylor, & Derlan, 2013, p. 183-184). This same relationship between family ethnic socialization and ethnic identity was also found in the Umaña-Taylor, Yazedjian, and Bámaca-Gómez (2004) study on the development of a diverse group of adolescents. Furthermore, the study by Umaña-Taylor, Bhanot, and Shin (2006) that explored the ethnic identity development of five different ethnic minority groups concluded with a similar relationship between family ethnic socialization and ethnic identity formation.

Phinney and Chavira (1995) explored the ethnic identity development, ethnic socialization, and experiences of discrimination of a diverse group of ethnic minority adolescents. Their results suggest that adolescents who have experienced high amounts of

discrimination, such as Arab American adolescents, also experience more cultural or ethnic socialization from their families. The adolescents also actively try to cope with experiences of discrimination. However, Phinney and Chavira found that family ethnic socialization did not have a significant effect on the adolescents' development. They also reported that gender does not have a significant effect on parents' ethnic socialization practices. This is contrary to the above mentioned studies. This inconsistency in study outcomes suggests the need for more studies that explore how family cultural socialization influences the cultural identity of adolescents.

A review article of seven different studies that explored the relationship between family cultural socialization, ethnic identity, and psychological outcomes in different groups of ethnic minority adolescents found that family cultural socialization consistently predicted ethnic identity across the studies. Moreover, ethnic identity played a mediating role between family cultural socialization and psychological outcomes (Rodriguez, Umaña-Taylor, Smith, & Johnson, 2009). Umaña-Taylor, Zeiders, and Updegraff (2013) also found that family socialization processes are what drives and predicts ethnic identity for adolescents whose parents are immigrants in a sample of Mexican-origin adolescents. The authors found a strong positive relationship between family ethnic socialization and ethnic identity in youth with immigrant parents in comparison to youth whose parents were born in the United States. They found that the gender of the adolescent did not have an effect on their experiences of family ethnic socialization.

When adolescents are able to successfully negotiate the family cultural socialization messages they receive, they will be more able to develop a bicultural and adaptive identity. In circumstances where individuals identify with more than two cultures, they will be able to

develop an even more complex multicultural identity (Park, 2007). A similar relationship

between family cultural socialization and ethnic identity was found in a large, diverse sample

of college students for whom higher levels of family cultural socialization was associated

with higher levels of ethnic identity exploration, $\eta^2_p = 0.17$, and commitment, $\eta^2_p = 0.11$. This

relationship was found to be stronger for female students. The authors of this study also

reported that generally families tend to socialize their daughters more than their sons in order

to ensure expected cultural preservation (Juang & Syed, 2010). Knight, Bernal, Garza, Cota,

and Ocampo (1993) as well as Knight, Berkel, Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales, Ettekal, Jaconis,

and Boyd (2011) both found a similar link between these two constructs in their studies with

Mexican American adolescents.

Arab American Family Cultural Socialization

Arabic cultures place a high degree of importance on the family and encourage family

interdependence and integrity (Aboul-Enein & Aboul-Enein, 2010; Awad, 2010; Willems,

2013). "The family is the central structure of Arabic culture and [it] plays a critical role in

Arab social organization and in their individual and collective identity" (Erickson & Al-

Timimi, 2001, p. 313). Since "Arab Americans are more collectivist and family-centered in

their orientation" (Hall & Livingston, 2006, p. 145), families play an essential role in the

lives of Arab American adolescent identity development. The majority of socialization that

occurs in a child's life, especially for Arab American children and adolescents, occurs in

families (Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004). Families are the first places that children who were

born in the United States to Arab immigrants or who immigrated with their parents at an

early age will experience and learn about their Arab heritage culture.

In Arab American samples, family functioning, as well as social support, is related to less acculturative stress (Amer, 2005). High Bicultural individuals report significantly more extended family living with them in the United States ($d = 0.39$). Thus, their families may support them and nurture their identity development (Britto & Amer, 2007). In a sample of Arab American college students, many of the students reported high levels of social support in the form of socially interacting with other Arab American students as being positive experiences (Shammas, 2009). In another sample of Arab American college students, family ethnic socialization had a significant positive association with ethnic identity exploration and affirmation (Fakih, 2014). It has been theorized that "a well functioning immigrant family can serve as a critical buffer for adolescents against acculturative stress associated with adapting to two cultures" (Britto & Amer, 2007, p. 139).

Family cultural socialization could be a pathway through which Arab American adolescents initiate their cultural identity formation. Family cultural socialization "refers to the [familial] process of socialization into and maintenance of the norms of one's indigenous culture, including its salient ideas, concepts, and values" (Kim, Ahn, & Lam, 2009, p. 26). Family cultural socialization has been found to play an important role in an adolescent's development of a cultural identity (Baden, Treweeke, & Ahluwalia, 2012; Ferrera, 2011; Nagao, 1998; Park, 2007; Sabatier, 2008; Smith, 2011). Specific factors in family cultural socialization like the use of Arabic language and Arabic television viewing have been found to be related to cultural identification in Arab American individuals (Amer, 2005; Blume & De Reus, 2009).

Britto and Amer (2007) conducted a unique study that explored the cultural identity patterns of second-generation Arab American youth, aged 18 to 25. Their sample included

youth that were either born in the United States or immigrated with their families at an early age. They found that the participants in their study fell into the three different distinct cultural identity groups mentioned above: High Bicultural, Moderate Bicultural, and High Arab Cultural. In addition, Britto and Amer identified differences between the groups in their levels of family functioning. Arab American adolescents in the Moderate Bicultural group reported more family acculturative stressors ($eM = 1.30$; $d = 0.29$) and less family support ($d = 0.48$). They did not find that gender had a significant effect on these results. Their results help illustrate the important role the family plays in Arab American adolescents' development of cultural identity, which has been supported by other research (Amer, 2014).

Chapter 2- Rationale for the Study

Although acculturative stress and the acculturation process have not been extensively studied within the Arab American population, many Arab Americans have reported feeling like they do not belong in the United States (Ahmed, Kia-Keating, & Tsai, 2011; Faragallah, Schumm, & Webb, 1997; Ibish, 2008). These experiences may affect their identity formation and the degree of acculturative stress they may experience. Researchers also have suggested that the acculturation process may be particularly difficult for peoples of Arab origins, meaning that they probably experience a high risk for acculturative stress due to the sociopolitical pressures they experience (Britto & Amer, 2007; Faragallah, Schumm, & Webb, 1997; Ibish, 2008). Although developing a strong cultural identity has been shown to be related to lower levels of acculturative stress in different cultural groups (Miller, 2010), it still needs to be investigated in relation to Arab Americans. Moreover, not many studies explore the family cultural socialization processes and cultural identity formation in Arab American adolescents. The majority of the studies that are available explore the development of Latino and Asian American youth.

Acculturation is much more widely studied in comparison to family ethnic or cultural socialization even though it is an equally important phenomenon to study (Park, 2007). There is a lack of studies on "familial transmission of culturally related values, even though such values guide behavior in a wide range of contexts and are considered prime targets in the socialization of cultural orientation" (Knight, Berkel, Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales, Ettekal, Jaconis, & Boyd, 2011, p. 914).

Studying cultural identity is "important in understanding whether and the ways in which ethnic [and cultural] group membership might increase or decrease the vulnerability of adolescents to emotional and behavioral problems" (Roberts, Phinney, Masse, Chen, Roberts, & Romero, 1999, p. 319). Since identity development, and the factors affecting it, are important to understand in society, it should be studied across all cultures. Hence, this study explores cultural identity rather than ethnic identity because it allows for the study of *bicultural* identities. The study of ethnic identity implicitly entails that an individual identifies with one particular socially labeled ethnicity. On the other hand, "cultural identity incorporates diversity and pluralism; an implication is that there are a number of different 'selves' at different levels and their true psychological integration will lead to better psychological functioning" (Raman, 2006, p. 231).

Understanding the development of biculturalism within Arab American adolescents is an important part of this study. Biculturalism describes a potential conclusion to the process of acquiring and internalizing the characteristics of more than one culture. It occurs when an individual is able to incorporate and integrate a similar sense of cultural identity in two distinct cultures by understanding, valuing, and identifying with both cultures nearly equally. Past research concluded that attaining a sense of biculturalism may lead to negative psychological consequences such as distress while other studies suggested that it may lead to positive adjustment (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993). These inconsistencies support the need for studies that further explore the process of biculturalism, especially since this identity development process has not been well studied (Rodriguez, Schwartz, & Whitbourne, 2010). This study focuses on understanding how developing a sense of

biculturalism predicts the levels of acculturative stress and perceived discrimination that an Arab American adolescent reports to be experiencing.

In addition, spirituality has been found to be related to adolescent development, including cultural identity development (Kim & Esquivel, 2011; Roehlkepartain, Benson, & Scales, 2011). This study assesses how spirituality may help Arab American adolescents manage dealing with perceived discrimination and acculturative stress since past research supports that overall spirituality helps individuals cope with stressors (Chae, Kelly, Brown, & Bolden, 2004; Houskamp, Fisher, & Stuber, 2004; Rayle & Myers, 2004). Since it has been suggested that spirituality is related to cultural identity development, this study predicts that an adolescent's level of overall spirituality will have an effect on not only how they manage stressors but also their cultural identity development. These explorations fill part of the gap in the literature on spiritual development within different cultural contexts, such as Arab American culture (King & Roeser, 2009; Roehlkepartain, Benson, & Scales, 2011).

This study makes a significant contribution to the scientific literature because it fills several gaps in the research. Current research has rarely explored the identity development, perceptions, and experiences of Arab American adolescents. Family cultural socialization, spirituality, discrimination, and acculturative stress also may play an influential role in adolescent cultural identity development. Results of this study can be useful for clinicians working with Arab American youth; research on adolescents from other minority backgrounds has already led to the development of specific interventions targeting self development and awareness, which have helped reduce stressors like discrimination and acculturative stress. Because Arab Americans are one of least studied minority populations within the United States, many misunderstandings between clinicians and their Arab

American clientele have been reported (Aboul-Enein & Aboul-Enein, 2010). Elucidating whether there are connections between these constructs with Arab American adolescents could contribute to development of useful and appropriate interventions for this population. Moreover, the level of emotional adjustment in an Arab American adolescent may affect his/her prognosis and treatment outcomes.

Culturally and linguistically appropriate mental health guidelines are necessary and have been encouraged (Aboul-Enein & Aboul-Enein, 2010). With the new knowledge that this study provides, current interventions can be modified accordingly or new culturally sensitive interventions can be developed that target the identity development in this population. Therefore, this study can help mental health professionals determine interventions that not only target the dynamic process of identity development, but also consider the role of the Arabic culture. "With an ever-growing and culturally diverse population of ethnic minorities in the United States, the need for a culturally competent healthcare system is imperative" (Aboul-Enein & Aboul-Enein, 2010, p. 21).

Therefore, this study explores factors related to the cultural identity formation of Arab American adolescents. Specifically, the study examines whether Arab American adolescents' ratings of their family cultural socialization is related to their cultural identity formation and, in turn, whether participants' cultural identity formation is related to their experiences of perceived discrimination and acculturative stress. The study also investigates whether the latter relationship is moderated by levels of overall spirituality (see Figure 2-1). In other words, the study addresses the following research questions: a) Does family cultural socialization lead to cultural identity formation?; b) Does cultural identity formation serve as a protective factor from sociopolitical stressors, such as perceived discrimination and

acculturative stress?; and c) Does the adolescent's overall spirituality buffer his/her

experiences of these tensions?
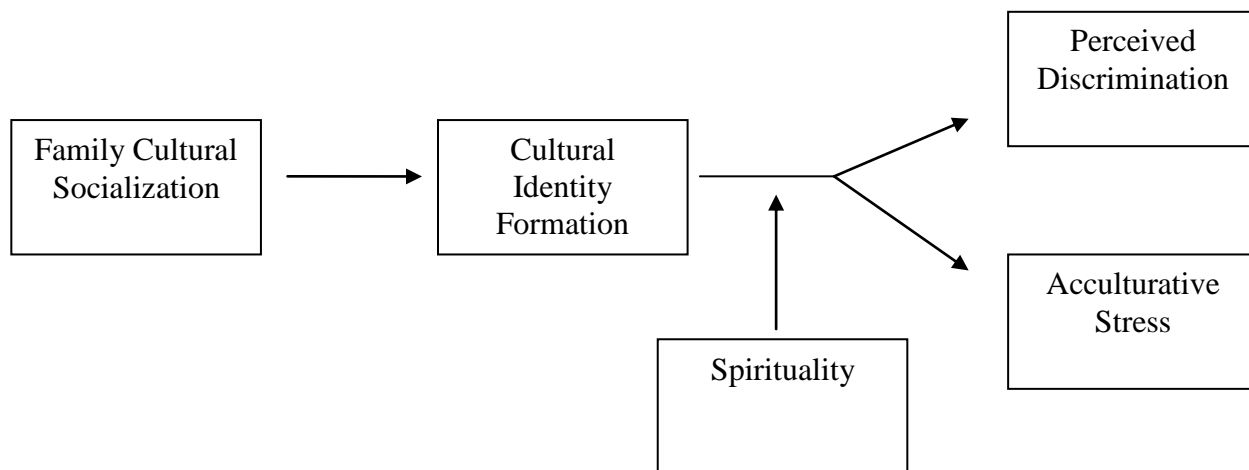
Figure 2-1. This figure shows a diagram of the study's conceptual model.

Hypotheses

1. Arab American adolescents who score higher on Family Cultural Socialization will
   score higher on Arab Cultural Identity.

2. Arab American adolescents who score higher on Bicultural Identity will report lower
   levels of Perceived Discrimination.

3. Arab American adolescents who score higher on Bicultural Identity will report lower
   levels of Acculturative Stress.

4. Arab American adolescents who score higher on Bicultural Identity *and* higher on
   overall Spirituality will report lower levels of Perceived Discrimination.

5. Arab American adolescents who score higher on Bicultural Identity *and* higher on overall Spirituality will report lower levels of Acculturative Stress.

Chapter 3- Method

Participants

This study recruited a total of 105 Arab American female and male adolescents, between the ages of 14 and 18 years living in southeastern Michigan. Michigan is one of the states with the largest Arab American populations within the United States, and the southeastern region of Michigan has the largest concentration of Arab Americans in the state. Ethnic enclaves "characterized by high ethnic density, maintain a cultural distinction from surrounding contexts where ethnic inhabitants may be more likely to maintain many cultural features" (El-Sayed, Tracy, Scarborough, & Galea, 2011, p. 2). Because of the many Arab American ethnic enclaves around the southeastern Michigan area, Arab American adolescents living in this area may have a unique experience of cultural identity development (Ajrouch, 2004; Britto & Amer, 2007; Kumar, Seay, & Karabenick, 2015).

Participants were recruited from seven different local youth community organizations that cater mostly to Arab American adolescents in metropolitan cities with a large population of Arab Americans. Any high school student interested in participating was allowed to participate with two inclusion criteria, as follows: a) The adolescent must have known how to read and understand the English language; and b) The adolescent must have been born within the United States to Arab immigrant families or have immigrated at 5 years of age or younger. The latter criterion is based on the finding that there is an inverse link between how long a person has lived within the United States and the salience of the person's cultural identity. Britto and Amer (2007) found no significant difference between Arab American adolescents who were born in the United States and Arab American adolescents who

immigrated at the age of five or younger on their reports of cultural identity. Only data from individuals who identified as having an Arab background was analyzed.

Based on a power analysis conducted, a sample of at least 90 participants was needed for an effect size of $f^2 = 0.15$, which is a medium effect size for a linear multiple regression model with three predictors. The study also used an Alpha value of at least a 0.05. Thus, the power of the study is estimated to be about 0.95. The researcher made extensive efforts to recruit as many participants as possible.

Data were collected from a total of 105 adolescents self-identified as having an Arab background. Twelve participants were excluded from the analyses conducted because of excessive missing responses (i.e., more than 30% of questionnaire responses missing). A total of 93 participants were used in the analyses, 52 males and 41 females, who ranged in age from 12 to 19 years old ($M= 15.71$). Specifically, the females ranged in age from 13 to 18 years ($M= 15.55$) and the males, from 12 to 19 years old ($M= 15.83$). The school grade that they were in ranged from 9th to 12th grade ($M= 10.5$). The participants self-identified the following races: Arab/Middle Eastern (51%), Caucasian/White (33.3%), and the rest of the participants did not self-identify with a specific race. The adolescents identified the following countries as their parents' countries of origin: Yemen (31.9%), Lebanon (30.8%), Syria (13.5%), Iraq (7.7%), Egypt (6.6%), Palestine (4.5%), and other countries (5.5%) from the Middle Eastern region (i.e., one participant with Saudi Arabian origins and the rest did not identify a specific Middle Eastern country). The participants self-identified with the same ethnicities as their parent's countries of origin. Ninety-six percent of participants identified themselves as Muslim and four percent identified themselves as Christian.

Measures

        Standard Demographics Questionnaire. Participants were asked to provide answers to basic demographic questions about race, ethnicity, age, gender, marital status, place of birth, religious affiliation, number of years they have lived in the United States, location of residence, parental country of origin, income level, and education level. Based on their knowledge, the participants were also asked to answer these same questions about their parents. The questions were open-ended to allow participants the freedom to self-identify as they wish (see Appendix A).

        Everyday Discrimination Scale (ED). The ED has nine items with one follow-up question (see Appendix A). The items ask about self-reported experiences of perceived discrimination, including microaggression experiences. These questions are rated by the frequency of these experiences (almost every day; at least once a week; a few times a month; a few times a year; less than once a year; or never). An example of one of the questions that is on the scale is: "You are treated with less respect than other people are." The follow-up question asks about what the individual believes is the reason for these unfair experiences (Williams, Yu, Jackson, & Anderson, 1997). This qualitative data was used to help describe the sample (see Discussion chapter). The ED has been reported to have moderate reliability, at about 0.7, and adequate validity. It also has been used with many different cultures and it has been shown to be appropriate for the usage with adolescent samples (Krieger, Smith, Naishadham, Hartman, & Barbeau, 2005; Seaton, Caldwell, Sellers, & Jackson, 2008).

        Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress (SAFE). The SAFE measures the amounts of stress one experiences in the acculturative process in

four different contexts: social, attitudinal, familial and environmental, and it identifies

acculturative stressors. The scale of 60 items was originally created by Padilla (1985). Then

it was shortened by Mena et al. (1987) to only 26 items and further edited by Hovey and

King (1996) into only 16 items that are rated on a 4-point Likert scale (from "strongly

agree" to "strongly disagree"). Individuals are asked whether or not they have experienced a

particular stressor and to consequently rate the level of stress it caused if they did experience

it (see Appendix A). The SAFE has been reported to have satisfactory internal consistency

reliability, at about 0.8, and acceptable validity with many different cultures and adolescent

populations. Examples of questions that are on the scale are: a) "I feel uncomfortable when

others make jokes about Arabic culture"; b) "I get pressure from others to become a part of

the American culture" (Hovey & King , 1996).

Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA). Adolescents' cultural identity on

dimensions such as values, relationships, and traditions will be assessed using the Vancouver

Index of Acuulturation. The VIA is a 20-item questionnaire that is rated on a 9-point Likert

rating scale (see Appendix A). The authors of this measure developed a version that can be

used with individuals living within the United States (Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, 2000). Half

of the items assess an individual's relation to their heritage culture (e.g., "I often participate

in Arab cultural traditions") while the other half of the items assesses an individual's relation

to the majority American culture (e.g., "I have friends who are mainstream American"). This

taps into the level of affiliation the adolescent feels to both cultures as well as identifying

bicultural identity. A mean subscale score is calculated for both of these subscales. Attaining

a high mean subscale score (i.e., a score of 6-9) on *both* subscales suggests achieving a

Bicultural Identity (Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, 2000). The VIA was modified by listing

Arabic culture as a heritage culture and American culture as the majority culture on the

questionnaire. These modifications to the scale were modeled based on the recommendations

suggested in the Britto and Amer (2007) study on Arab American youth as well as the

encouragement of Ryder, Alden, and Paulhus (2000) to change the cultural descriptors with

the appropriate cultures being researched. The VIA has been reported to have satisfactory

reliability, at about 0.8, and acceptable validity with many different cultures. It is intended to

be given to adolescents and young adults (Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, 2000).

   Expressions of Spirituality Inventory- Revised (ESI-R). The ESI-R is a

multidimensional measure of spirituality that taps into five dimensions of spirituality (see

Appendix A). It explores an individual's cognitive and affective ("spiritual beliefs about the

existence of the transcendent and its relevance to self and day-to-day life"), experiential

("spiritual experience"), existential ("sense of meaning and purpose and of being able to cope

with the existential uncertainties of life, such as the meaning of death"), paranormal ("beliefs

in the possibility that parapsychological phenomena are real"), and religious ("beliefs in the

existence of a higher power/intelligence and behavioral practices consistent with religious

traditions such as prayer and meditation, similar to the well-known notion of intrinsic

religious orientation") spirituality (MacDonald, 2009, p. 89). The ESI-R has 30 items that are

rated on a 5-point Likert scale (from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree"). The ESI-R has

been reported to have good inter-item consistency, about 0.9, and adequate validity. It also

has been used cross-culturally. An example of one of the questions that is on the scale is: "I

believe that attention to one's spiritual growth is important" (MacDonald, 2000).

   Family Ethnic Socialization Measure (FESM). The FESM measures overt and

covert family ethnic or cultural socialization methods (see Appendix A). It has 12 items that

are rated on a 5-point Likert scale (from "not at all" to "very much"). The FESM has been

reported to have satisfactory validity and reliability, at around 0.8. The scale has been

primarily used with Latino American adolescent populations. Due to the scarcity of studies

on Arab American adolescents and consequently applicable psychometric measures, this

measure was used. Examples of questions that are on the scale are: "My family teaches me

about our family's ethnic/cultural background" and "Our home is decorated with things that

reflect my ethnic/cultural background." Higher scores on this measure indicate higher levels

of familial ethnic or cultural socialization (Umaña-Taylor, 2001; Umaña-Taylor & Fine,

2001, 2004). After participants completed the scale, they were asked an open-ended question:

"What has your family taught you about Arabic culture?" to qualitatively explore family

cultural socialization. This qualitative data was used to help describe the sample (see

Discussion chapter).

Procedures

Firstly, it is important to note that the literature acknowledges that there are many

barriers in recruiting Arab American study participants (Amer, 2014). This study used paper

and pencil questionnaires as well as accessible Internet survey methods since the adolescent

generation often stays connected through frequent use of the Internet (Joinson, 1999). It was

thought that online access would notably decrease the potential fears of not having complete

anonymity and privacy, a concern that has been connected with completing questionnaires in

a classroom setting in the presence of the adolescents' peers and teachers, as well as an

unknown researcher. In general, people have reported that they feel less socially anxious and

feel less of a need to be socially desirable when they are completing surveys online (Joinson,

1999). Providing the questionnaires online also is a method that can be less costly, more

efficient, and more environmentally friendly (Britto & Amer, 2007). Questionnaires were also provided in hard copy format for adolescents who wished to complete them in that format and/or who did not have available computer access. This helped reduce the exclusion of individuals who experience barriers to computer access due to factors such as socioeconomic circumstances. The majority of participants, about 73%, completed the questionnaires in hard copy format.

The researcher went to seven different local youth community organizations and asked high school adolescents if they were interested in being a part of a study looking at their experiences growing up in the United States. When interested participants indicted a desire to complete the questionnaires online, they were asked to provide parental contact information. After parents were directly contacted (i.e., via telephone or email), the researcher sent parents or legal guardians an informed consent form approved by the Institutional Review Board. After the parent's signed consent was returned, the researcher provided participants who had obtained parental consent the link to an informed assent form and the online questionnaires. When an interested participant expressed a desire to complete the questionnaires and assent form by hand, a hard copy packet was provided. Before completing the hard copy of the questionnaires, these participants returned signed parental consent forms to the researcher. After completing an informed assent form that assures anonymity and confidentiality, all participants were asked to provide demographic information and fill out self-report measures about their experiences of discrimination, experiences of acculturative stress, cultural identities, levels of spirituality, and family cultural socialization processes. Consent and assent forms provided an overview of the study and described the study's possible risks and benefits. As an incentive to encourage

participation, upon completion of the questionnaires, all participants were entered in the raffle of a $50 gift card that can be used at a local shopping center. This method has been encouraged in the study of minority adolescent populations (Cauce, Ryan, & Grove, 1998).

Following the informed assent but before the measures, a brief introduction was provided to individuals completing the study on the online portal and in the hard copy packets. This introduction stated that the researcher is interested in learning about the student's life: what his/her life is like, who he/she is, and how he/she has become who he/she is. At the beginning of each measure, each student was given a brief introduction to the type of questions that would be asked and then asked whether or not he/she would like to proceed. Participants were also informed about the gift card raffle at the end of the questionnaires. The same introductions and descriptions were provided within the hard copy packets and the online portal (see Appendix A). When meeting with interested participants, the researcher also ensured the youth as well as parents of the conscious efforts to keep all data results confidential and anonymous. Participants were also asked to complete the questionnaires privately as well as honestly.

To protect confidential information, all participants were assigned identification numbers and the names of participants were not associated with their identification numbers. All data collected is being kept in an encoded file on a private computer that only the researcher can access. The data collected in paper copy format is being kept in a private storage area that only the researcher can access.

The benefits of this study are several, including that participants may have found the questions stimulating and interesting. Participants are also helping to expand the available

research on Arab American adolescents and their experiences with different sociopolitical stressors. The risks of this study were minimal because it employed only self-report survey measures. However, if participants felt any discomfort answering personal questions and providing any of the requested information, a reminder was placed before each measure that gave participants the option to stop answering the questions at any time (see Appendix A).

Chapter 4- Results

Research Design

The study utilized a non-experimental, correlational design to test a directional model in which adolescent cultural identity was hypothesized to mediate the relationship between the predictor variable of family cultural socialization and the dependent variables of acculturative stress and perceived discrimination. The study also examined the role of spirituality as a possible moderator of the relationship between cultural identity and the outcome variables (see Figure 4-1).
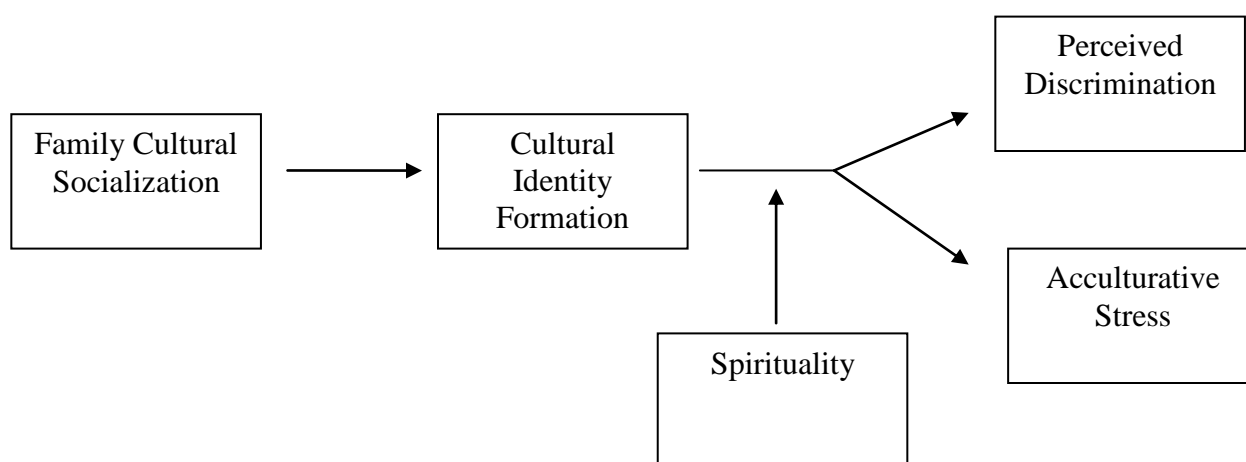
Figure 4-1. *Depiction of full conceptual model that was tested*

Preliminary analyses

The original sample was composed 105 participants. After cleaning the data and excluding 12 participants with excessive missing responses (i.e., more than 30% of questionnaire items missing responses), questionnaire scores were calculated as per the test authors and descriptive statistics were computed (see Table 1). The final sample used for

analyses was 93 participants, 52 males and 41 females (see Method chapter for detailed

sample description).

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for all Main Quantitative Variables

Variable	Mean	SD	Min.	Max
Age	15.71	1.38	12	19
Grade (in years)	10.5	1.13	8	12
Total Everyday Discrimination (ED)	19.53	9.01	9	50
Total Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress (SAFE)	34.91	6.69	20	49
Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA) Arab Identity Subscale	7.09	1.24	3.7	9
VIA American Identity Subscale	6.18	1.25	3.1	8.6
Expressions of Spirituality Inventory (ESI-R) Total Scores	68.78	13.24	37	101
ESI-R Cognitive Orientation toward Spirituality (COS)	16.33	5.41	4	25
ESI-R Experiential/Phenomenological Dimension (EPD)	10.82	4.89	0	24
ESI-R Existential Well-Being (EWB)	14.52	5.02	2	24
ESI-R Paranormal Beliefs (PAR)	8.69	5.13	0	22
ESI-R Religiousness (REL)	18.24	3.63	10	24
Total Family Ethnic Socialization Measure (FESM)	48.15	8.56	25	60
VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	44.38	13.5	14.57	77.4
Interaction total ESI-R & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction	808.72	315.03	1048.32	1609.92
Interaction ESI-R COS & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction	718.4	346.45	161.28	1609.92

Interaction ESI-R EWB Dimension & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction	657.25	331.05	48.8	1548
Interaction ESI-R REL Dimension & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction	808.72	315.03	259	1609.92

In addition, the presence of a Bicultural Identity was calculated using two methods in order to fully explore the construct. A binary variable was calculated such that individuals who scored high on both Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA) American and Arab Identity subscales were assigned a score of one while others were assigned a score of zero (which will be referred to as binary Bicultural Identity in the text). Individuals who scored higher than the mean were deemed to be high subscale scorers. An interaction variable was also calculated such that each participant's VIA American and Arab Identity subscales were multiplied to calculate an interaction effect (which will be referred to as interaction Bicultural Identity in the text). Moreover, univariate and multivariate distributional properties of all variables were examined to determine that the data met the assumptions of normality and linearity required for correlational and regression based statistical analyses.

In order to assess how psychometrically sound the study instruments were, inter-item reliability coefficient scores were calculated for all five study questionnaires. The Everyday Discrimination (ED), Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA), and Family Ethnic Socialization Measure (FESM) scales were all found to demonstrate good reliability with a Cronbach's Alphas of .88, .84, and .89, respectively. The Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress (SAFE) and Expressions of Spirituality Inventory-Revised (ESI-R), based on the total questionnaire, were both found to be adequately reliable with the sample with a Cronbach's Alpha of .73 and .75 respectively. Since the ESI-R was

not constructed for the use of its total score, the ESI-R dimension subscales' reliabilities were also calculated and they produced moderate to strong reliability coefficients with the following Cronbach's Alphas: Cognitive Orientation towards Spirituality (COS), .85; Experiential/Phenomenological Dimension (EPD), .72; Existential Well-being (EWB), .80; Paranormal Beliefs (PAR), .65; and Religiousness (REL), .60. The VIA Identity subscales produced satisfactory reliability coefficients with the following Cronbach's Alphas: American Identity, .76, and Arab Identity, .81.

Correlations between study variables. Pearson correlations using two-tailed significance tests, were conducted among the variables of interest and the demographic variables, the outcome variables, and the hypothesized mediating and moderating variables (see Tables 2-5). There were a few interesting correlations found between the demographic variables and some of the main study variables: grade level and age, $r = .83, p < .001$; gender and VIA American Identity subscale scores, $r = .21, p < .05$; and grade and VIA Arab Identity subscale scores, $r = - .23, p < .05$ (see Table 2).

Table 2

Product-Moment Correlations between Demographic Variables and all Main Variables

Variable	Gender	Age	Grade
Gender		.09	.08
Grade		**.83**	
Total ED Scores	.10	.10	.04
Total SAFE Scores	-.10	.12	.02
VIA Arab Identity Subscale	-.11	-.11	-.23
VIA American Identity Subscale	.21	.15	.03

Total ESI-R Scores	.00	.09	.05
ESI-R COS	-.16	.14	.09
ESI-R EPD	.15	.15	.07
ESI-R EWB	.04	-.17	-.17
ESI-R PAR	.05	.05	.06
ESI-R REL	-.11	.00	.00
Total FESM Scores	-.08	-.03	*-.21*
VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	.07	.05	-.11
VIA Binary Bicultural Identity	*.20*	.16	.06
Total ESI-R Scores & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction	.06	.07	-.07
ESI-R COS & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction	-.07	.13	-.02
ESI-R EWB & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction	.06	-.08	-.16
ESI-R REL & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction	.00	.04	-.10

Note. This table summarizes Pearson correlations (two-tailed significance tests) conducted. Gender was coded as follows: females = 1 & males = 2. The following are the abbreviations used above: ED = Everyday Discrimination scale, SAFE = Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress scale, VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale, ESI-R = Expressions of Spirituality Inventory- Revised scale, FESM = Family Ethnic Socialization Measure, ESI-R COG= Cognitive Orientation towards Spirituality, ESI-R EPD = Experiential/Phenomenological, ESI-R EWB = Existential Well-being, ESI-R PAR = Paranormal Beliefs, & ESI-R REL = Religiousness (*italicized* = *p*-value trending towards significance; underlined = *p* < .05; **bolded** = *p* < .001).

Other statistically significant associations were found between some main study variables and total SAFE as well as total ED scores: total ED scores and total SAFE scores, *r* = .36, *p* < .001; ESI-R EPD scores and total ED scores, *r* = .24, *p* < .05; ESI-R EWB scores and total SAFE scores, *r* = - .49, *p* < .001; ESI-R EWB scores and total ED scores, *r* = - .37, *p* < .001; ESI-R PAR scores and total SAFE scores, *r* = .27, *p* < .05; interaction between ESI-R EWB scores and VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores interaction and total ED scores, *r* = -.26, *p* < .05; and interaction between ESI-R EWB scores and VIA Arab and

American Identity subscale scores interaction and total SAFE scores, $r = -.43$, $p < .001$ (see

Table 3).

Table 3

Product-Moment Correlations between ED and SAFE and all Main Variables

Variable	Total ED Scores	Total SAFE Scores
Total ED Scores		**.36**
VIA Arab Identity Subscale	.06	-.08
VIA American Identity Subscale	-.01	-.14
Total ESI-R Scores	.11	.13
ESI-R COS	.17	*.21*
ESI-R EPD	.24	.24
ESI-R EWB	**-.37**	**-.49**
ESI-R PAR	.13	.27
ESI-R REL	*.20*	.12
Total FESM Scores	*.19*	*.18*
VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	.02	-.12
VIA Binary Bicultural Identity	-.06	-.01
Total ESI-R Scores & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction	.08	-.05
ESI-R COS & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction	.14	.07
ESI-R EWB & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction	-.26	**-.43**
ESI-R REL & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction	.13	-.04

Note. This table summarizes Pearson correlations (two-tailed significance tests) conducted. The following are the abbreviations used above: ED = Everyday Discrimination scale, SAFE = Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress scale, VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale, ESI-R = Expressions of Spirituality Inventory-

Revised scale, FESM = Family Ethnic Socialization Measure, ESI-R COG= Cognitive Orientation towards Spirituality, ESI-R EPD = Experiential/Phenomenological, ESI-R EWB = Existential Well-being, ESI-R PAR = Paranormal Beliefs, & ESI-R REL = Religiousness (*italicized* = p-value trending towards significance; <u>underlined</u> = $p < .05$; **bolded** = $p < .001$).

When correlations were calculated for the ESI-R total scores and dimension scores, several statistically significant correlations were found: ESI-R EWB scores and VIA Arab Identity subscale scores, $r = .34$, $p < .001$; ESI-R PAR scores and VIA Arab Identity subscale scores, $r = -.24$, $p < .05$; ESI-R REL scores and VIA Arab Identity subscale scores, $r = .25$, $p < .05$; ESI-R EPD and ESI-R COS scores, $r = .38$, $p < .001$; ESI-R REL scores and ESI-R COS scores, $r = .72$, $p < .001$; ESI-R EPD scores and ESI-R EWB scores, $r = -.37$, $p < .001$; ESI-R EPD scores and ESI-R PAR scores, $r = .64$, $p < .001$; ESI-R PAR scores and ESI-R EWB scores, $r = -.47$, $p < .001$; total FESM scores and ESI-R REL scores, $r = .32$, $p < .001$; and ESI-R EWB scores and VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores interaction, $r = .22$, $p < .05$ (see Table 4).

Moreover, many statistically significant association were found between the study's identity and spirituality interaction variables and many main study variables: interaction between ESI-R COS scores and VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores interaction and ESI-R EPD scores, $r = .24$, $p < .05$; interaction between ESI-R COS scores and VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores interaction and ESI-R REL scores, $r = .61$, $p < .001$; interaction between ESI-R EWB scores and VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores interaction and ESI-R EPD scores, $r = -.27$, $p < .05$; interaction between ESI-R EWB scores and VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores interaction and ESI-R PAR scores, $r = -.34$, $p < .001$; interaction between ESI-R REL scores and VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores interaction and ESI-R COS scores, $r = .39$, $p < .001$; and

interaction between ESI-R REL scores and VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores

interaction and ESI-R EWB scores, $r = .22$, $p < .05$ (see Table 4).

Table 4

Product-Moment Correlations between ESI-R Scores and all Main Variables

Variable	Total ESI-R Scores	ESI-R COS	ESI-R EPD	ESI-R EWB	ESI-R PAR	ESI-R REL
VIA Arab Identity Subscale	.05	.05	-*.18*	**.34**	-.24	.25
VIA American Identity Subscale	.07	-.07	.07	.09	.12	-.05
ESI-R COS			**.38**	-.07	.17	**.72**
ESI-R EPD				**-.37**	**.64**	*.18*
ESI-R EWB					**-.47**	.10
ESI-R PAR						.07
Total FESM Scores	*.19*	.15	.11	.06	-.05	**.32**
VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	.08	-.01	-.04	.22	-.03	.11
VIA Binary Bicultural Identity	.06	-.09	-.01	.14	.00	.02
ESI-R COS & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction			.24	.08	.11	**.61**
ESI-R EWB & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction		-.07	-.27		**-.34**	.13
ESI-R REL & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction		**.39**	.07	.22	.01	

Note. This table summarizes Pearson correlations (two-tailed significance tests) conducted. The following are the abbreviations used above: VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale, ESI-R = Expressions of Spirituality Inventory- Revised scale, FESM = Family Ethnic Socialization Measure, ESI-R COG= Cognitive Orientation towards Spirituality, ESI-R EPD

= Experiential/Phenomenological, ESI-R EWB = Existential Well-being, ESI-R PAR = Paranormal Beliefs, & ESI-R REL = Religiousness (*italicized* = *p*-value trending towards significance; underlined = $p < .05$; **bolded** = $p < .001$).

Associations exploring family cultural socialization measure scores and cultural identity measure scores yielded several statistically significant associations: VIA American subscale scores and VIA Arab subscale scores, $r = .38$, $p < .001$; total FESM scores and VIA Arab Identity subscale scores, $r = .65$, $p < .001$; total FESM and VIA American Identity subscale scores, $r = .23$, $p < .05$; total FESM scores and VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores interaction, $r = .51$, $p < .001$; total FESM scores and VIA Binary Bicultural Identity scores, $r = .28$, $p < .001$; interaction between total ESI-R scores and VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores and total FESM scores, $r = .50$, $p < .001$; interaction between ESI-R COS scores and VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores interaction and total FESM scores, $r = .43$, $p < .001$; interaction between ESI-R EWB scores and VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores interaction and total FESM scores, $r = .32$, $p < .001$; and interaction between ESI-R REL scores and VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores interaction and total FESM scores, $r = .55$, $p < .001$ (see Table 5).

Table 5

Product-Moment Correlations between VIA and FESM Scores

Variable	VIA Arab Identity Subscale	VIA American Identity Subscale	VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	VIA Binary Bicultural Identity	Total FESM Scores
Total FESM Scores	**.65**	<u>.23</u>	**.51**	**.28**	
Total ESI-R Scores & VIA Arab and American					**.50**

Identity Interaction

ESI-R COS & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction	**.43**
ESI-R EWB & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction	**.32**
ESI-R REL & VIA Arab and American Identity Interaction	**.55**

Note. This table summarizes Pearson correlations (two-tailed significance tests) conducted. The following are the abbreviations used above: VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale, ESI-R = Expressions of Spirituality Inventory- Revised scale, FESM = Family Ethnic Socialization Measure, ESI-R COG= Cognitive Orientation towards Spirituality, ESI-R EPD = Experiential/Phenomenological, ESI-R EWB = Existential Well-being, ESI-R PAR = Paranormal Beliefs, & ESI-R REL = Religiousness (underlined = $p < .05$; **bolded** = $p < .001$).

Tests of hypotheses

A series of multiple regression models were tested wherein family cultural socialization was used as the predictor for the two outcome variables: perceived discrimination and acculturative stress. Cultural identity was examined as a mediator variable in the multiple regression models between family cultural socialization and perceived discrimination and acculturative stress. Level of spirituality was examined as a moderator variable of the relationships between cultural identity and the outcome variables of perceived discrimination and acculturative stress (Baron & Kenny, 1986). ANOVA analyses were conducted in order to assess if significant differences were found between male ($n = 52$) and female ($n = 41$) study participants among all main quantitative variables. The only significant differences were found on the VIA American Identity sub-scores, F $(1, 88) = 4.18$ ($p < 0.05$). Males, $M = 6.41$, $SD = 1.02$, were found to be more likely to have higher VIA American

Identity sub-scores than females, $M = 5.88$, $SD = 1.44$. Differences between males and females were trending towards significance for binary Bicultural Identity scores, $F (1, 88) = 3.62$ ($p = 0.06$), the interaction effect between binary Bicultural Identity scores and total ESI-R scores, $F (1, 84) = 3.63$ ($p = 0.06$), and the interaction effect between binary Bicultural Identity scores and ESI-R EWB scores, $F (1, 84) = 3.81$ ($p = 0.05$). Males were found to report bicultural identities more often and they had higher interaction effects between binary Bicultural Identity scores and total ESI-R scores as well as higher interaction effects between binary Bicultural Identity scores and ESI-R EWB dimension scores. In addition, when other demographic variables were found to have significant effects on the variables of interest, they were used as control variables (see Table 2).

Based on the study's structural model, the first hypothesis was that strength of identification with Arab heritage would be predicted by family cultural socialization. An initial standard multiple regression was performed between Arab Identity scores on the VIA scale as the dependent variable and total scores on the FESM scale as the independent variable (see Figure 4-2). Table 6 displays the correlations between the variables, the unstandardized regression coefficients (B), the standardized regression coefficients (β), the semipartial correlations (sr^2) and R, R^2, and adjusted R^2. The regression emerged significant, $F (1, 84) = 61.73$ ($p < .001$).
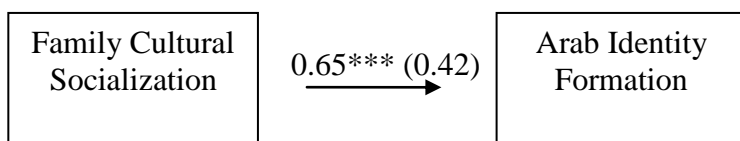
Figure 4-2. Graphic depiction of standard regression of family cultural socialization on Arab identity formation. Values reported reflect standardized beta and multiple R-squared, respectively. ***p<.001

Table 6

Standard regression of family cultural socialization on Arab identity formation

Variables	Total FESM Scores	*B*	β	*sr²* (unique)
Total FESM Scores		.94***	.65	.42
VIA Arab Identity Subscale	.65***	*Intercept = 2.56***		
R²	.42			
Adjusted *R²*	.42			
R	.65***			

Note. The following are the abbreviations used above: VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale and FESM = Family Ethnic Socialization Measure (* = *p*-value trending towards significance; ** = $p < 0.05$; *** = $p < 0.001$).

Total FESM scale scores significantly predicted Arab Identity scores on the VIA scale with about 42% of the variability in Arab Identity scores being explained by the relationship. This finding indicates that as levels of family cultural socialization increase, levels of Arab identity increase.

Since gender differences were found on the VIA American Identity subscale, gender was added to the forthcoming, relevant multiple regression analyses. However, when gender was added it did not have a significant effect on the analyses results. The second and third hypotheses were that individuals with a bicultural identity would report lower scores on the perceived discrimination and acculturative stress scales, respectively. Four standard multiple regressions were performed with total ED and total SAFE scale scores as the dependent variables and Arab American identity scores on the VIA scale as the independent variable.

Two different scores were used to represent the independent variable of Arab American

identity scores on the VIA scale: binary bicultural identity and Arab and American cultural

identity interaction variables (see Figure 4-3). Hence, two standard regressions were used to

test the second hypothesis and two standard regressions were used to test the third

hypothesis.

For the second hypothesis with perceived discrimination as the dependent variable,

Table 7 displays all relevant regression output (i.e., correlations between the variables,

unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients (B), the standardized regression

coefficients (β), the semipartial correlations (sr^2) and R, R^2, and adjusted R^2). The regression

using the binary Bicultural Identity variable was not significant ($F(1, 85) = 0.30$, $p > .05$).

The second regression using the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American

Identity subscale scores as the independent variable also emerged non-significant ($F(1, 85) =$

0.39, $p > .05$).

```
┌──────────────┐                          ┌──────────────┐
│  Bicultural  │                          │  Perceived   │
│   Identity   │      -0.06 (0.00)        │Discrimination│
│  Formation   │  ───────────────────▶    │              │
└──────────────┘                          └──────────────┘

┌──────────────┐      -0.01 (<0.00)       ┌──────────────┐
│  Bicultural  │  ───────────────────▶    │ Acculturative│
│   Identity   │                          │    Stress    │
│  Formation   │                          │              │
└──────────────┘                          └──────────────┘
```

Figure 4-3. Graphic depiction of standard regressions of bicultural identity on outcome
variables. Standardized beta coefficients (β), estimated from multiple regression analyses, are
placed next to the respective link and the respective R^2 is placed in parentheses beside it (* =
p-value trending towards significance; ** = $p < 0.05$; *** = $p < 0.001$).

Table 7.

Two standard regressions of binary bicultural identity on ED scores & Arab and American Identity Interaction on ED scores

Variables	VIA Binary Bicultural Identity	VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	*B*	β	*sr*^{2} (unique)
Total ED Scores	-.06	.02			
VIA Binary Bicultural Identity			-1.13	-.06	.00
			Intercept = 20.27***		
VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction			.01	.02	.00
			Intercept = 18.90***		
R^2	.00	< .00			
Adjusted R^2	-.01	-.01			
R	.06	.021			

Note. The following are the abbreviations used above: VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale and ED = Everyday Discrimination scale (* = *p*-value trending towards significance; ** = $p < 0.05$; *** = $p < 0.001$).

Total ED scale scores contributed, but not significantly, to the prediction of Arab American identity scores on the VIA scale, $sr^2 = 0.00$, for the Binary Bicultural Identity variable, and $sr^2 = .00$ for the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores. About less than 1% of the variability in total ED scores was predicted by

knowing a participant's Binary Bicultural Identity score. About less than 1% of the

variability in total ED scores was predicted by knowing a participant's interaction between

VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale score. Also, the correlation between

Binary Bicultural Identity score and total scores on the ED scale - 0.06 and the correlation

between the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores

and total scores on the ED scale was 0.021. This reveals that Arab Identity scores on the VIA

scale was found to have a negative as well as positive, but nonsignificant, contributions to the

regression. This finding suggests that as reports of perceived discrimination experiences

increase, levels of Arab American identity decrease, and the opposite also is true; however,

the correlation was not significant.

For the third hypothesis involving acculturative stress as the dependent variable,

Table 8 displays relevant regression output. For the standard regression using the binary

Bicultural Identity variable as the predictor, the analysis came out non-significant, $F(1, 87) =$

$0.02, p > .05$. The second regression using the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and

American Identity subscale scores as the independent variable, also was not significant, $F(1,$
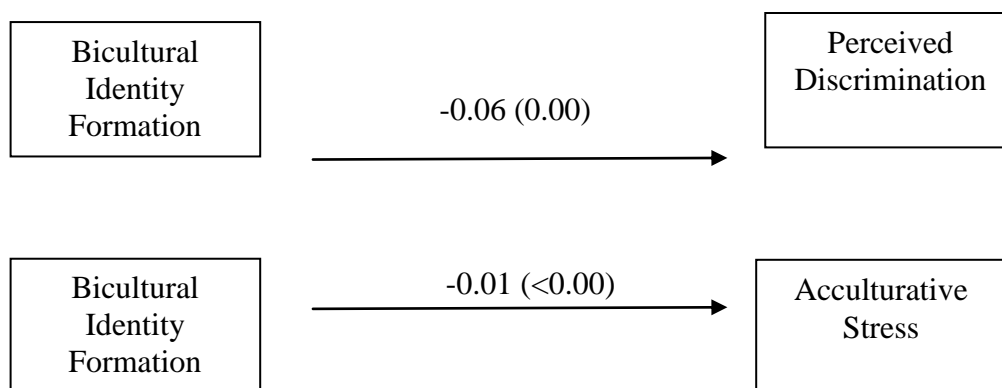
$87) = 1.31, p > .05$.

Table 8.

Two standard regressions of binary bicultural identity on SAFE scores & Arab and American Identity Interaction on SAFE scores

Variables	Total SAFE Scores	VIA Binary Bicultural Identity	VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	*B*	β	sr^2 (unique)
VIA Binary Bicultural Identity	- .01			- .18 *Intercept = 35.03****	-.01	.00
VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	-.12			- .06 *Intercept = 37.59****	-.12	- .01
R^2		< .00	.02			
Adjusted R^2		- .01	.00			
R		.01	.12			

Note. The following are the abbreviations used above: VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale and SAFE = Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress scale (* = *p*-value trending towards significance; ** = $p < 0.05$; *** = $p < 0.001$).

Total SAFE scale scores contributed, but not significantly, to the prediction of Arab American Identity scores on the VIA scale, $sr^2 = 0.00$ for the Binary Bicultural Identity variable and $sr^2 = 0.01$ for the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores. About less than 1% of the variability in total SAFE scores was predicted by knowing a participant's Binary Bicultural Identity score. About 2% of the variability in total SAFE scores was predicted by knowing a participant's interaction between VIA Arab

Identity and American Identity subscale score. Also, the correlation between Binary Bicultural Identity score and total scores on the SAFE scale was - 0.013, and the correlation between the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores and total scores on the SAFE scale was - 0.122. This reveals that Arab American Identity scores on the VIA scale was found to have a negative, but nonsignificant, contribution to the regression. This finding suggests that as reports of acculturative stress experiences increase, levels of Arab American identity decrease, and the opposite also is true; however, the correlation was not significant. Nevertheless, this relationship was in the predicted direction.

Post-hoc analyses were conducted due to the non-significant regressions found in relation to hypotheses two and three. In order to more fully explore the relationship between the presence of a bicultural identity and perceived discrimination as well as acculturative stress, hierarchical regressions were employed to determine if the addition of information regarding identity development improved prediction of perceived discrimination and acculturative stress experiences. Two hierarchical regressions were conducted with VIA Arab Identity subscale scores entered into the first step, VIA American Identity subscale scores entered into the second step, and the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores entered into the final step. Perceived discrimination and acculturative stress were the outcome variables in the respective analyses.

With perceived discrimination as the outcome variable, Table 9 displays the relevant output after entry of all three independent variables. The regression at each step and in total did not produce significant results. After step three, with all independent variables in the equation, $R = .073$, $F (3, 83) = 0.147$ ($p > .05$).

Table 9.

Hierarchical regression of VIA Arab identity scores, VIA American identity scores, and Arab and American identity interaction on ED scores

Variables	VIA Arab Identity	VIA American Identity	VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	B	β	sr^2 (incremental)
Total ED Scores	.06	-.01	.02			
VIA Arab Identity		.38***	.79***	.43 *Intercept= 16.47**	.06	.00
VIA American Identity			.86***	-.29 *Intercept = 17.49 ***	-.04	.00
VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction				- .12 *Intercept = 12.76*	-.17	.00
R^2	.00	.01	.01			
Adjusted R^2	-.01	-.02	-.03			
R	.06	.07	.07			

Note. The following are the abbreviations used above: VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale and ED = Everyday Discrimination scale (* = *p*-value trending towards significance; ** = $p < 0.05$; *** = $p < 0.001$).

After step one, with VIA Arab Identity subscale scores in the equation, $R^2 = 0.004$, F_{inc} (1, 85) = 0.3 ($p > 0.05$). After step two, with VIA American Identity subscale scores added to the prediction of perceived discrimination experiences by VIA Arab Identity subscale scores, $R^2 = 0.005$, F_{inc} (1, 84) = 0.12 ($p > 0.05$). Addition of VIA American Identity

subscale scores to the equation did not result in a significant increment in R^2. After step three, with the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores added to the prediction of perceived discrimination experiences by VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores, $R^2 = 0.005$, F_{inc} (1, 83) = 0.03 ($p > 0.05$). Addition of the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores to the equation did not reliability improve R^2

With acculturative stress as the outcome variable, Table 10 displays the relevant output after entry of all three independent variables. No aspect of the regression model came out statistically significant. After step three, with all independent variables in the equation, R = 0.201, F (3, 85) = 1.197 ($p > .05$).

After step one, with VIA Arab Identity subscale scores in the equation, $R^2 = 0.006$, F_{inc} (1, 87) = 0.558 ($p > 0.05$). After step two, with VIA American Identity subscale scores added to the prediction of acculturative stress experiences by VIA Arab Identity subscale scores, $R^2 = 0.021$, F_{inc} (1, 86) = 1.301 ($p > 0.05$). Addition of VIA American Identity subscale scores to the equation did not result in a significant increment in R^2. After step three, with the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores added to the prediction of acculturative stress experiences by VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores, $R^2 = 0.041$, F_{inc} (1, 85) = 1.71 ($p > 0.05$). Addition of the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores to the equation did not reliability improve R^2.

Table 10.

Hierarchical regression of VIA Arab identity scores, VIA American identity scores, and Arab and American identity interaction on SAFE scores

Variables	VIA Arab Identity	VIA American Identity	VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	B	β	sr^2 (incremental)
Total SAFE Scores	-.08	- .14	-.12			
VIA Arab Identity		.38***	.79***	- .43 *Intercept = 37.97****	-.08	.00
VIA American Identity			.86***	- .71 *Intercept = 40.41****	-.13	.02
VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction				.63 *Intercept = 66.07***	1.27	.02
R^2	.01	.02	.04			
Adjusted R^2	- .01	.00	.01			

Note. The following are the abbreviations used above: VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale and SAFE = Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress scale (* = p-value trending towards significance; ** = $p < 0.05$; *** = $p < 0.001$).

More post-hoc analyses were conducted to further explore the possible effects of having a bicultural identity by conducting a one-way ANOVA using three cultural groups as independent variables (i.e., individuals with low VIA Arab Identity subscale scores and low American Identity subscale scores, $n = 10$; high VIA Arab Identity subscale scores and low American Identity subscale scores, $n = 17$; and high VIA Arab Identity subscale scores and

high American Identity subscale scores, $n = 53$). Only two individuals fell into the group of

high VIA American Identity subscale scores and low VIA Arab Identity subscale scores;

thus, this group was excluded from analyses due to its extremely small size. Across all main

quantitative variables, the only significant differences found between the three groups was on

total FESM scores, F (2, 82) = 12.42 ($p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.23$). High Arab and low American

Identity VIA sub-score individuals as well as High Arab and High American Identity VIA

sub-score individuals had the highest total FESM scores. Post hoc comparisons using the

Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean total FESM score for individuals with low VIA Arab

Identity subscale scores and low American Identity subscale scores, $M = 39.2$, $SD = 8.04$,

was significantly different than the mean total FESM score for individuals with high VIA

Arab Identity subscale scores and low American Identity subscale score, $M = 50.53$, $SD =$

5.35, as well as individuals with high VIA Arab Identity subscale scores and high American

Identity subscale scores, $M = 49.83$, $SD = 8.10$. However, the mean total FESM score for

individuals with high VIA Arab Identity subscale scores and low American Identity subscale

score were not significantly different than the mean total FESM score for individuals with

high VIA Arab Identity subscale scores and high American Identity subscale scores.

      To assess the mediation effect, as predicted by the study's conceptual model, of

cultural identity on the relationship between family cultural socialization and the two

outcome variables of perceived discrimination and acculturative stress two standard

regressions examined if scores on the FESM significantly predicted scores on the ED and

SAFE scales (see Figure 4-4). The following analyses are connected to the study's second

and third hypotheses. The predicted mediation effect of cultural identity was tested through

four steps: a. analyzing the direct effect of family cultural socialization on perceived

discrimination and acculturative stress; b. analyzing the direct effect of family cultural

socialization on cultural identity; c. analyzing the direct effect of cultural identity on

perceived discrimination and acculturative stress; and d. conducting a hierarchical regression

to test if both family cultural socialization and cultural identity predict perceived

discrimination and acculturative stress (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Please note that step c has

already been reported above. A standard multiple regression was performed between total

ED scale scores as the dependent variable and total FESM scale scores as the independent

variable. Table 11 displays the relevant output. The regression model was not significant, F

$(1, 83) = 2.97$ ($p > .05$). However, it seems to be trending towards significance ($p = 0.09$).

Family Cultural Socialization	0.2* (0.04) →	Perceived Discrimination

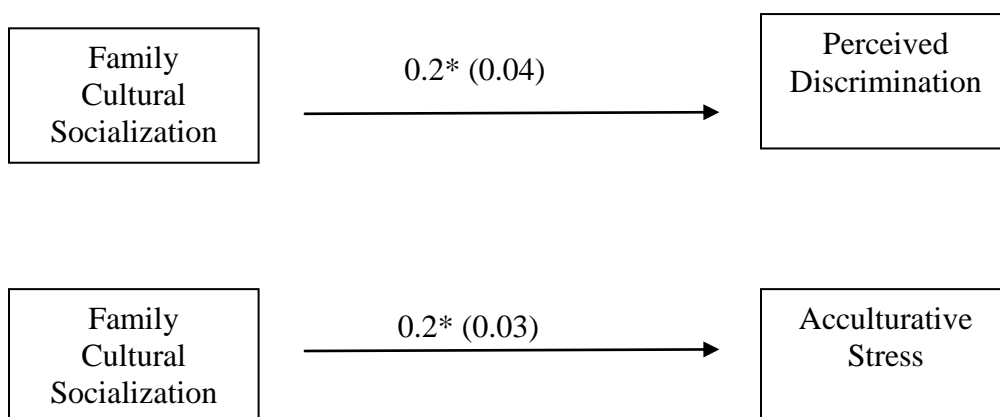| Family Cultural Socialization	0.2* (0.03) →	Acculturative Stress

Figure 4-4. Graphic depiction of standard regressions of family cultural socialization on outcome variables. Standardized beta coefficients (β), estimated from multiple regression analyses, are placed next to the respective link and the respective R^2 is placed in parentheses beside it (* = p-value trending towards significance; ** = $p < 0.05$; *** = $p < 0.001$).

Table 11.

Two standard regressions of family cultural socialization on ED scores and family cultural socialization on SAFE scores

Variables	Total ED Scores	Total SAFE Scores	*B*	β	sr^2 (unique)
Total FESM Scores	.19**	.18**			
Total ED Scores			.20* *Intercept= 10.06 *￼*	.19	.04
Total SAFE Scores			.14* *Intercept = 28.03***	.18	.03
R^2	.04	.03			
Adjusted R^2	.02	.02			
R	.19*	.18*			

Note. The following are the abbreviations used above: FESM = Family Ethnic Socialization Measure, ED = Everyday Discrimination scale, and SAFE = Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress scale (* = *p*-value trending towards significance; ** = *p* < 0.05; *** = *p* < 0.001).

Total FESM scale scores did not significantly contribute to the prediction of total ED scores. About 4% (2% adjusted) of the variability in total ED scores was predicted by knowing total FESM scores. Also, the correlation between total ED scale scores and total scores on the FESM scale, *r* = 0.187, which reveals that total ED scores was found to have a significant moderate, positive contribution to the regression. This finding indicates that as levels of family cultural socialization increase, levels of perceived discrimination experiences increase.

Another standard multiple regression was performed between total SAFE scale scores as the dependent variable and total FESM scale scores as the independent variable. Table 11 displays relevant output for this analysis. The regression model was not significant (F (1, 85) = 2.91, $p > .05$). However, it seems to be trending towards significance ($p = 0.09$).

Total FESM scale scores did not significantly contribute to the prediction of total SAFE scores. About 3% (2% adjusted) of the variability in total SAFE scores was predicted by knowing total FESM scores. Also, the correlation between total SAFE scale scores and total scores on the FESM scale, $r = 0.183$, reveals that total SAFE scores was found to have a significant moderate, positive contribution to the regression. This finding indicates that as levels of family cultural socialization increase, levels of acculturative stress experiences increase Based on these findings, it may be concluded that family cultural socialization is partially related to the likelihood of experiencing acculturative stress.

To analyze the direct effect of family cultural socialization on cultural identity, two standard regressions were conducted with family cultural socialization as the predictor variable and cultural identity as the outcome variable. Table 12 displays all relevant regression output (i.e., correlations between the variables, unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients (B), the standardized regression coefficients (β), the semipartial correlations (sr^2) and R, R^2, and adjusted R^2). The regression using the Binary Bicultural Identity variable as the outcome variable was significant, F (1, 84) = 6.99, $p < .01$. The second regression using the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores as the outcome variable also emerged significant, F (1, 84) = 29.33, $p < .001$.

Table 12.

Two standard regressions of family cultural socialization on binary bicultural identity & on Arab and American Identity Interaction

Variables	Total FESM Scores	VIA Binary Bicultural Identity	VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	B	β	sr^2 (unique)
VIA Binary Bicultural Identity	.28***			.02**	.28**	.08**
				Intercept = - -0.09		
VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	.51***			.80***	.51***	.26***
				Intercept = 5.72		
R^2		.08	.26			
Adjusted R^2		.07	.25			
R		.28	.51			

Note. The following are the abbreviations used above: VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale and ED = Everyday Discrimination scale (* = *p*-value trending towards significance; ** = $p < 0.05$; *** = $p < 0.001$).

Total FESM scale scores contributed significantly to the prediction of Arab American identity scores on the VIA scale, sr^2 = .08, for the Binary Bicultural Identity variable, and sr^2 = .26 for the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores. Total FESM scale scores significantly predicted Binary Bicultural Identity scores on the VIA scale with about 8% of the variability in Binary Bicultural Identity scores being explained by

the relationship. Total FESM scale scores significantly predicted interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores with about 26% of the variability in interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores being explained by the relationship. This reveals that total FESM scores were found to have a positive, significant contribution to the regressions. This finding suggests that as reports of family cultural socializations experiences increase, levels of Arab American identity increase, and the opposite also is true.

In order to further assess cultural identity's mediation effect, two hierarchical regressions examined if scores on the FESM and VIA significantly predicted scores on the ED and SAFE scales (see Figure 4-5). A hierarchical regression was employed to determine if the addition of information regarding identity development to family cultural socialization experiences improved prediction of perceived discrimination and acculturative stress experiences. Two hierarchical regressions were conducted with total FESM scores entered into the first step and the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores entered into the second and final step with perceived discrimination and acculturative stress as outcome variables. With perceived discrimination as the outcome variable, Table 13 displays relevant output after entry of the two independent variables. For each step, the regression was not significant nor was the model after all variables were entered into the equation, $R = 0.205$, F (2, 83) = 1.79, $p > .05$.

	0.20* (0.03)		-0.29** (0.10)	
Family Cultural Socialization	→	Bicultural Identity Formation	→	Acculturative Stress

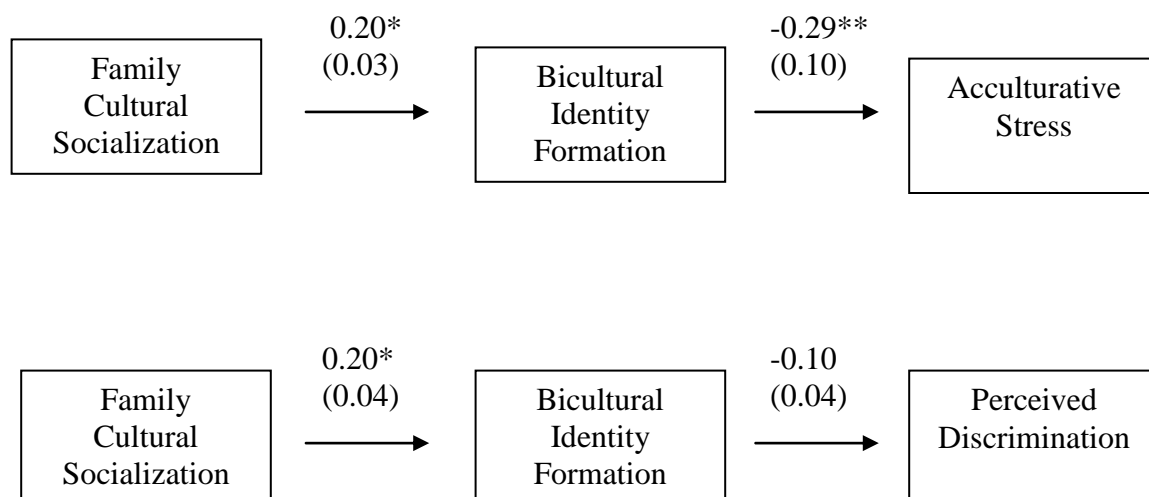|	0.20* (0.04)		-0.10 (0.04)	
Family Cultural Socialization	→	Bicultural Identity Formation	→	Perceived Discrimination

Figure 4-5. Graphic depiction of hierarchical regressions of family cultural socialization and bicultural identity on outcome variables. Standardized beta coefficients (β), estimated from multiple regression analyses, are placed next to the respective link and the respective R^2 is placed in parentheses beside it(* = p-value trending towards significance; ** = $p < 0.05$; *** = $p < 0.001$).

Table 13

Hierarchical regression of family cultural socialization and Arab and American identity interaction on ED scores

Variables	Total FESM Scores	VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	B	β	sr^2 (incremental)
Total ED Scores	.19**	.02			
Total FESM Scores		.51***	.20* *Intercept = 10.06*	.19	.04*
VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction			- .07 *Intercept = 10.44*	-.10	.01
R^2	.04	.04			

Adjusted R^2	.02	.02
R	.19*	.21

Note. VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale, FESM = Family Ethnic Socialization Measure, ED = Everyday Discrimination scale (* = p-value trending towards significance; ** = $p < .05$; *** = $p < .001$).

After step one, with total FESM scores in the equation, $R^2 = 0.035$, F_{inc} (1, 82) = 2.97 ($p > .05$). This ANOVA test was trending towards significance ($p = .09$). At the second step, with the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores added to the prediction of perceived discrimination experiences by total FESM scores, $R^2 = 0.042$, F_{inc} (1, 82) = 0.62 ($p > .05$). Addition of the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores to the equation did not result in a significant increment in R^2. Nonetheless, the negative direction of beta weights suggests that bicultural identity is having a suppressor effect. Bicultural identity may be acting as a suppressor such that it is possibly suppressing the predictive power of family cultural socialization in predicting perceived discrimination experiences. Bicultural identity's suppression effect was further examined by the comparison of the bivariate correlation between family cultural socialization and perceived discrimination, $r = .19$ $p = 0.09$, and the partial correlation between the two variables after controlling for bicultural identity, $r = .21$ $p = 0.06$. The correlation coefficient increased and trended closer to significance.

With acculturative stress as the outcome variable, Table 14 displays relevant output from the hierarchical regression after entry of the two independent variables. The regression was significant different from zero at the end of the second step, but was not at the first step.

At the final step, with all independent variables in the equation, $R = 0.309$, F (2, 85) = 4.39, p

< .05.

Table 14

Hierarchical regression of family cultural socialization and Arab and American identity interaction on SAFE scores

Variables	Total FESM Scores	VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	B	β	sr^2 (incremental)
Total SAFE Scores	.18**	-.12			
Total FESM Scores		.51***	.14* *Intercept = 28.03****	.18	.03*
VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction			- .14** *Intercept = 28.85****	-.29	.06**
R^2	.03	.10			
Adjusted R^2	.02	.07			
R	.18*	.31**			

Note. VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale, FESM = Family Ethnic Socialization Measure, SAFE = Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress scale (* = *p*-value trending towards significance; ** = $p < .05$; *** = $p < .001$).

After step one, with total FESM scores in the equation, $R^2 = 0.033$, F_{inc} (1, 84) = 2.92

($p > .05$). This ANOVA test was trending towards significance ($p = .09$). At the second step,

with the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores added

to the prediction of acculturative stress experiences by total FESM scores, $R^2 = 0.096$, F_{inc} (1,

83) = 5.71 ($p < .05$). Addition of the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American

Identity subscale scores to the equation resulted in a significant increment in R^2. This finding

suggests that bicultural identity is acting as a suppressor such that is suppressing the

predictive power of family cultural socialization in predicting acculturative stress

experiences. Bicultural identity's suppression effect was further supported by the comparison

of the bivariate correlation between family cultural socialization and acculturative stress, $r =$

.18 $p = 0.09$, and the partial correlation between the two variables after controlling for

bicultural identity, $r = .30$ $p < 0.01$. The correlation coefficient increased considerably and

became highly significant.

Similar analyses were conducted using VIA Binary Bicultural Identity as the

mediation variable rather than the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American

Identity subscale scores. Two hierarchical regressions were conducted with total FESM

scores entered into the first step and VIA Binary Bicultural Identity entered into the second

and final step with perceived discrimination and acculturative stress as outcome variables.

With perceived discrimination as the outcome variable, Table 15 displays the main results of

the regression after entry of the two independent variables. R was not significantly different

from zero at the end of each step. It was found to be trending towards significance at the end

of the first step ($p = .09$). For the total model, with all independent variables in the equation,

$R = 0.22$, F (2, 83) = 2.06, $p > .05$.

After step one, with total FESM scores in the equation, $R^2 = 0.035$, F_{inc} (1, 82) = 2.97

($p > .05$). This ANOVA test was trending towards significance ($p = .09$). At the second step,

with the VIA Binary Bicultural Identity scores added to the prediction of perceived

discrimination experiences by total FESM scores, $R^2 = 0.05$, F_{inc} (1, 81) = 1.15 ($p > .05$).

Addition of the VIA Binary Bicultural Identity scores to the equation did not result in a

significant increment in R^2.

Table 15

Hierarchical regression of family cultural socialization and binary bicultural identity on ED scores

Variables	Total FESM Scores	VIA Arab Binary Bicultural Identity	B	β	sr^2 (incremental)
Total ED Scores	.19**	-.06			
Total FESM Scores		.28***	.20* *Intercept = -1.05**	.19	.04*
VIA Binary Bicultural Identity			- 2.28 *Intercept = -1.26**	-.12	.01
R^2	.04	.05			
Adjusted R^2	.02	.03			
R	.19*	.22			

Note. The following are the abbreviations used above: VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale, FESM = Family Ethnic Socialization Measure, ED = Everyday Discrimination scale (* = p-value trending towards significance; ** = $p < .05$; *** = $p < .01$).

With acculturative stress as the outcome variable, Table 16 displays the relevant

hierarchical regression output after entry of the two independent variables. After each step,

the model did not emerge significant. As well, the total model was not significant, $R = 0.195$,

$F (2, 85) = 1.63, p > .05$.

Table 16

Hierarchical regression of family cultural socialization and binary bicultural identity on SAFE

Variables	Total FESM Scores	VIA Binary Bicultural Identity	*B*	β	sr^2 (incremental)
Total SAFE Scores	.18**	-.01			
Total FESM Scores		.28***	.14* *Intercept = 28.03****	.18	.03*
VIA Binary Bicultural Identity			- .97 *Intercept = 27.95****	-.07	.00
R^2	.03	.04			
Adjusted R^2	.02	.02			
R	.18*	.20			

Note. The following are the abbreviations used above: VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale, FESM = Family Ethnic Socialization Measure, SAFE = Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress scale (* = *p*-value trending towards significance; ** = $p < .05$; *** = $p < .01$).

After step one, with total FESM scores in the equation, $R^2 = 0.033$, F_{inc} (1, 84) = 2.91 ($p > .05$). This ANOVA test was trending towards significance ($p = .09$). At the second step, with the VIA Binary Bicultural Identity scores added to the prediction of acculturative stress by total FESM scores, $R^2 = 0.038$, F_{inc} (1, 83) = 0.38 ($p > .05$). Addition of the VIA Binary Bicultural Identity scores to the equation did not result in a significant increment in R^2.

The fourth and fifth hypotheses predicted that levels of spirituality would moderate the cultural identity mediation effect such that individuals who report high Spirituality *and*

Bicultural Identity would have lower levels of perceived discrimination and acculturative stress (see Figures 4-6 & 4-7). Based on the results of the previous multiple regression analyses, it was determined that the variable of the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores is a more potent measure of bicultural identity in the study sample. Hence, the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores was used to measure bicultural identity in the analyses for the study's full conceptual model. Hierarchical regressions were employed to determine if the addition of information regarding bicultural identity development and then the interaction between levels of spirituality and bicultural identity development improved prediction of perceived discrimination and acculturative stress experiences beyond that afforded by levels of spirituality and family cultural socialization experiences alone.

Figure 4-6. Graphic depiction of hierarchical regression of family cultural socialization, bicultural identity, and total spirituality on perceived discrimination. Standardized beta coefficients (β), estimated from multiple regression analyses, are placed next to the respective link and the respective R^2 is placed in parentheses beside it (* = *p*-value trending towards significance; ** = $p < .05$; *** = $p < .001$).
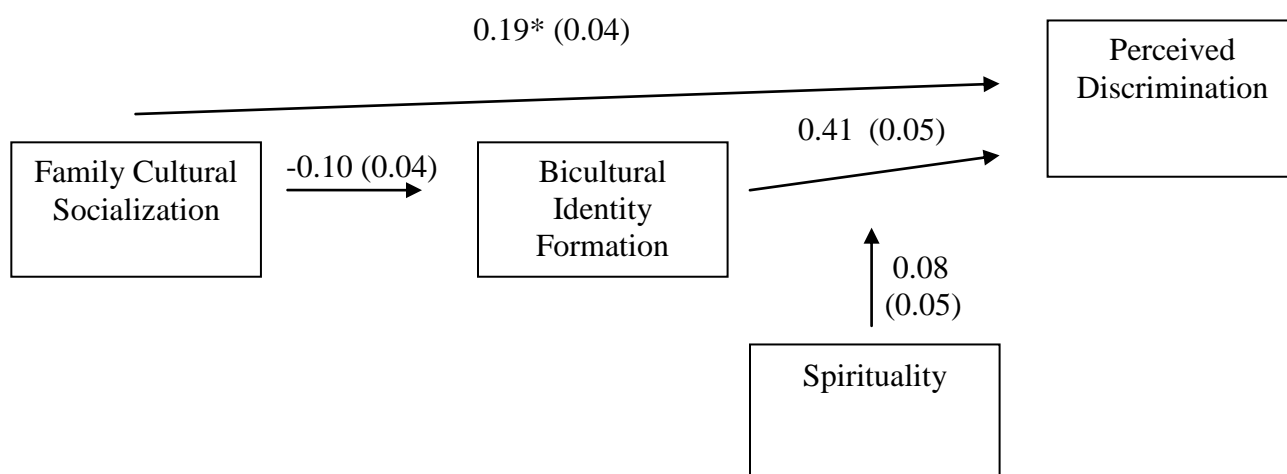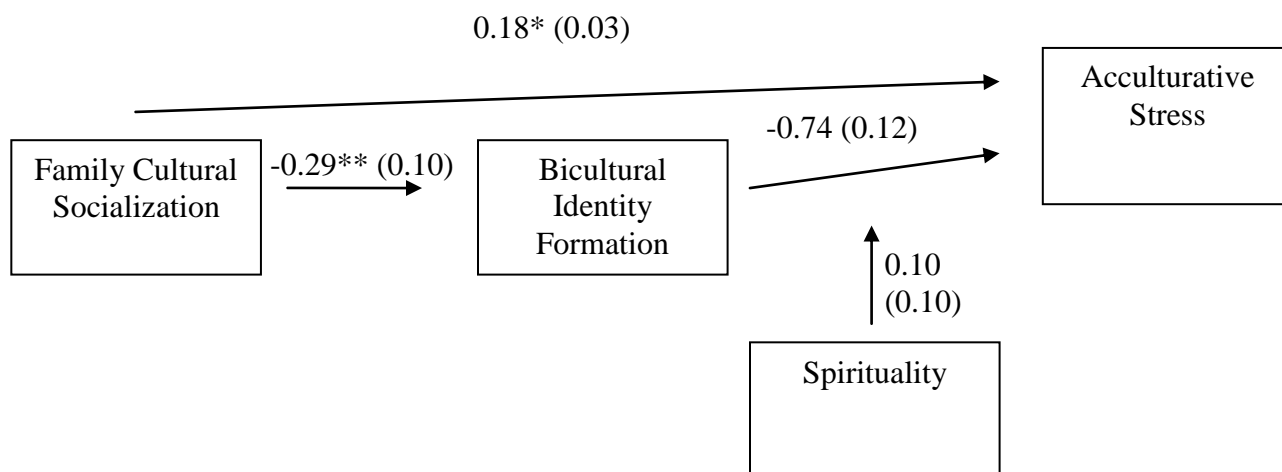
Figure 4-7. Graphic depiction of hierarchical regression of family cultural socialization, bicultural identity, and total spirituality on acculturative stress. Standardized beta coefficients (β), estimated from multiple regression analyses, are placed next to the respective link and the respective R^2 is placed in parentheses beside it (* = *p*-value trending towards significance; ** = *p* < .05; *** = *p* < .001).

Two hierarchical regressions were conducted with total FESM scores entered into the first step, the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores into the second step, total ESI-R scores entered into the third step, and the interaction between total ESI-R scores with the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores entered into the final step and perceived discrimination and acculturative stress as outcome variables. With perceived discrimination as the outcome variable, Table 17 displays the correlations between the variables, the unstandardized regression coefficients (*B*), the standardized regression coefficients (β), the semipartial correlations (sr^2) and *R*, R^2, and adjusted R^2 after entry of all four independent variables. *R* was not significantly different from zero at the end of each step. After step four, with all independent variables in the equation, $R = 0.229$, F (4, 83) = 1.09 ($p > .05$).

After step one, with total FESM scores in the equation, $R^2 = 0.035$, F_{inc} (1, 82) = 2.97 ($p > .05$). This ANOVA is trending towards significance ($p = .09$). After step two, with the

interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores added to the prediction of perceived discrimination experiences by total FESM scores, $R^2 = 0.042$, F_{inc} (1, 81) = 0.62 ($p > .05$). The addition of the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores to the equation did not result in a significant increment in R^2. After step three, with total ESI-R scores added to the prediction of perceived discrimination experiences by total FESM scores and the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores, $R^2 = 0.048$, F_{inc} (1, 80) = 0.49 ($p > .05$). Addition of total ESI-R scores to the equation did not significantly improve R^2. After step four, with the interaction between total ESI-R scores and the interaction between VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores added to the prediction of perceived discrimination experiences by total FESM scores, the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores, and total ESI-R scores $R^2 = 0.05$, F_{inc} (1, 79) = 0.35 ($p > .05$). Addition of the interaction between total ESI-R scores and the interaction between VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores to the equation did not significantly improve R^2.

Table 17

Hierarchical regression of family cultural socialization, Arab and American identity interaction, total ESI-R scores, and interaction of total ESI-R scores and Arab and American identity interaction on ED scores

Variables	Total FESM Scores	VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	Total ESI-R Scores	Interaction of Total ESI-R Scores VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	B	β	sr^2 (incremental)
Total ED Scores	.19**	.02	.11	.08			
Total FESM Scores		.51***	.19**	.50***	.20* *Intercept = 10.06**	.19	.04*
VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction			.08		-.07 *Intercept = 10.44**	-.10	.01
Total ESI-R Scores					.05 *Intercept = 7.53*	.08	.01

Interaction of Total ESI-R Scores VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction					.00 *Intercept = 17.50*	.41 .00
R^2	.04	.04	.05	.05		
Adjusted R^2	.02	.02	.01	.00		
R	.19*	.21	.22	.23		

Note. The following are the abbreviations used above: ED = Everyday Discrimination scale, VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale, ESI-R = Expressions of Spirituality Inventory- Revised, and FESM = Family Ethnic Socialization Measure (* = p-value trending towards significance; ** = $p < .05$; *** = $p < .001$).

With acculturative stress as the outcome variable, Table 18 displays the relevant statistics from the regression after entry of all four independent variables. The model was significant at the end of the second, third, and fourth step. It was not significant at the end of the first step, but it was trending towards significance ($p = .09$). For the total model, with all independent variables in the equation, $R = 0.342$, F (4, 84) = 2.65 ($p < .05$). This finding suggests that bicultural identity and spirituality are having effects in improving the predictive power of family cultural socialization in predicting acculturative stress experiences. Total spirituality levels improved family cultural socialization's predictive power, but did not moderate it.

Table 18

Hierarchical regression of family cultural socialization, Arab and American identity interaction, total ESI-R scores, and interaction of total ESI-R scores and Arab and American identity interaction on SAFE scores.

Variables	Total FESM Scores	VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	Total ESI-R Scores	Interaction of Total ESI-R Scores VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	B	β	sr^2 (incremental)
Total SAFE Scores	.18**	- .12	.13	-.05			
Total FESM Scores		.51***	.19**	.50***	.14* *Intercept = 28.03***	.18	.03*

VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction			.08		- .14** *Intercept =* *28.85****	-.29	.06**
Total ESI-R Scores					.05 *Intercept =* *26.37 ****	.09	.01
Interaction of Total ESI-R Scores VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction					.00 *Intercept =* *13.07*	-.74	.01
R^2	.03	.10	.10	.12			
Adjusted R^2	.02	.07	.07	.07			
R	.18*	.31**	.32**	.34**			

Note. The following are the abbreviations used above: SAFE = Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress scale, VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale, ESI-R = Expressions of Spirituality Inventory- Revised, and FESM = Family Ethnic Socialization Measure (* = *p*-value trending towards significance; ** = $p < .05$; *** = $p < .001$).

After step one, with total FESM scores in the equation, $R^2 = 0.033$, F_{inc} (1, 83) = 2.87 ($p > .05$). This ANOVA is trending towards significance ($p = .09$). After step two, with the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores added to the prediction of acculturative stress experiences by total FESM scores, $R^2 = 0.096$, F_{inc} (1, 82) = 5.64 ($p < .05$). Addition of the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores to the equation resulted in a significant increment in R^2. Cultural identity is having an effect beyond the effect of family cultural socialization alone in predicting acculturative stress. After step three, with total ESI-R scores added to the prediction of acculturative stress experiences by total FESM scores and the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores, $R^2 = 0.103$, F_{inc} (1, 81) = 0.699 ($p > .05$). The addition of total ESI-R scores to the equation did not significantly improve R^2. After step four, with the interaction between total ESI-R scores and the interaction between VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores added to the prediction of acculturative stress experiences by total FESM scores, the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores, and total ESI-R scores $R^2 = 0.117$, F_{inc} (1, 80) = 1.22 ($p > .05$). Addition of the interaction between total ESI-R scores and the interaction between VIA Arab and American Identity subscale scores to the equation did not significantly improve R^2.

In order to fully explore spirituality's moderation effect, additional analyses were conducted that explored specific spirituality dimensions. Based on the literature that suggests a connection between spirituality and religiousness, wellbeing, and cognitive orientation, the following ESI-R scale dimensions were added to the final model regression analyses: COS, EWB, and REL (Erikson, 1996; Kiesling, Sorell, Montgomery, & Colwell; Kim & Esquivel, 2011; King & Roeser; Hall & Livingston, 2006). The addition of these specific ESI-R scale dimensions is supported by the literature that suggests that Arab Americans tend to emphasize these spirituality dimensions in their understanding of spirituality (Abi-Hashem, 2014; Ajrouch & Jamal, 2007; Amer, 2014; Hall & Breland-Noble, 2011; Juang & Syed, 2008).

Two hierarchical regressions were conducted with total FESM scores entered into the first step, the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores into the second step, COS, EWB, and REL ESI-R dimension scores entered into the third step, and the interactions between COS, EWB, and REL ESI-R dimension scores with the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores entered into the final step and perceived discrimination and acculturative stress as outcome variables.

With perceived discrimination as the outcome variable, Table 19 displays the relevant regression output after entry of all eight independent variables. R was very significantly different from zero at the end of the third and fourth step. It was trending towards significance at the first step ($p = .09$). For the total model, with all independent variables in the equation, $R = 0.489$, F (8, 83) = 2.95 ($p < .01$). This finding suggests that spiritual existential wellbeing is having an effect in improving the predictive power of family cultural socialization in predicting perceived discrimination experiences. Spiritual existential

wellbeing is having an effect beyond the effect of family cultural socialization and bicultural identity in predicting perceived discrimination.

After step one, with total FESM scores in the equation, $R^2 = 0.035$, F_{inc} (1, 82) = 2.97 ($p > 0.05$). This ANOVA is trending towards significance ($p = 0.09$). After step two, with the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores added to the prediction of perceived discrimination experiences by total FESM scores, $R^2 = 0.042$, F_{inc} (1, 81) = 0.62 ($p > .05$). Addition of the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores to the equation did not result in a significant increment in R^2. After step three, with COS, EWB, and REL ESI-R dimension scores added to the prediction of perceived discrimination experiences by total FESM scores and the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores, $R^2 = 0.217$, F_{inc} (3, 78) = 5.79 ($p < .01$). Addition of COS, EWB, and REL ESI-R dimension scores to the equation made a reliable improvement to R^2. After step four, with the interactions between COS, EWB, and REL ESI-R dimension scores with the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores added to the prediction of perceived discrimination experiences by total FESM scores, the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores, and COS, EWB, and REL ESI-R dimension scores $R^2 = 0.239$, F_{inc} (3, 75) = 0.745 ($p > .05$). Addition of the interactions between COS, EWB, and REL ESI-R dimension scores with the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores to the equation did not significantly improve R^2. Based on these results, spiritual existential wellbeing is indeed having an effect on the predictive powers of family cultural socialization and bicultural identity. Based on the plotted graphs, this effect can be described as a moderating effect.

Table 19

Hierarchical regression of family cultural socialization, Arab and American identity interaction, total COS, EWB, and REL ESI-R scores, and interaction of total COS, EWB, and REL ESI-R scores and Arab and American identity interaction on ED scores

Variables	Total FESM Scores	VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	Total ESI-R-COS. Scores	Total ESI-R EWB. Scores	Total ESI-R REL. Scores	Interaction of ESI-R COS. Scores and VIA Arab & American Identity Interaction	Interaction of ESI-R EWB. Scores and VIA Arab & American Identity Interaction	Interaction of ESI-R REL. Scores and VIA Arab & American Identity Interaction
Total ED Scores	.19**	.02	.17*	-.37***	.20**	.14*	-.26**	.13
Total FESM Scores		.51***	.15*	.06	.32***	.43***	.32***	.55***
VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction			-.01	.22**	.11			
Total ESI-R-COS. Scores				-.07	.72***		-.07	.39***
Total ESI-R EWB. Scores					.10	.08		.22**

Total ESI-R REL. Scores			.61**	.13

Variables	Total FESM Scores	VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	Three ESI-R Dimension Scores	Interaction of Three ESI-R Dimension Scores and VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction
R^2	.04	.04	.22	.24
Adjusted R^2	.02	.02	.17	.16
R	.19*	.21	.47***	.49***
B	.20*	-.07	COS. = - .05 EWB = - .73*** REL = .54	COS. = - .04 EWB = - .01 REL = .05
	Intercept = 10.06	*Intercept= 10.44*	*Intercept = 13.61**	*Intercept = 15.71*
β	.19	-.10	COS = - .03 EWB = - .41 REL = .22	COS = - 1.45 EWB = - .38 REL = 1.62
sr^2 (incremental)	.04*	.01	COS = .00 EWB = .2*** REL = .03	COS = .03 EWB = .01 REL = .02

Note. The following are the abbreviations used above: ED = Everyday Discrimination scale, VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale, ESI-R = Expressions of Spirituality Inventory- Revised, FESM = Family Ethnic Socialization Measure, ESI-R COS. Dimension = Cognitive Orientation towards Spirituality, ESI-R EWB. Dimension = Existential Well-being, and ESI-R REL. Dimension = Religiousness (* = p-value trending towards significance; ** = $p < 0.05$; *** = $p < 0.01$).

With acculturative stress as the outcome variable, Table 20 displays the correlations between the variables, the unstandardized regression coefficients (B), the standardized regression coefficients (β), the semipartial correlations (sr^2) and R, R^2, and adjusted R^2 after entry of all eight independent variables. The regression emerged significant at the end of the second, third, and fourth steps. It was trending towards significance at the first step (p = 0.09). After step four, with all independent variables in the equation, $R = 0.59$, F (8, 83) = 2.95 ($p < .001$). This finding suggests that bicultural identity has an effect and spiritual existential wellbeing has an effect in improving the predictive power of family cultural socialization in predicting acculturative stress experiences. Bicultural identity is having an effect beyond that of family cultural socialization in predicting acculturative stress. Spiritual existential wellbeing is also having an effect beyond the effect of family cultural socialization and bicultural identity in predicting acculturative stress.

Table 20

Hierarchical regression of family cultural socialization, Arab and American identity interaction, total COS, EWB, and REL ESI-R scores, and interaction of total COS, EWB, and REL ESI-R scores and Arab and American identity interaction on SAFE scores

Variables	Total FESM Scores	VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	Total ESI-R-COS. Scores	Total ESI-R EWB. Scores	Total ESI-R REL. Scores	Interaction of ESI-R COS. Scores and VIA Arab & American Identity Interaction	Interaction of ESI-R EWB. Scores and VIA Arab & American Identity Interaction	Interaction of ESI-R REL. Scores and VIA Arab & American Identity Interaction
Total SAFE Scores	.18**	-.12	.21**	-.49***	.12	.07	-.43***	-.04
Total FESM Scores		.51***	.15*	.06	.32***	.43***	.32***	.55***
VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction			-.01	.22**	.11			
Total ESI-R- COS. Scores				-.07	.72***		-.07	.39***

Total ESI-R EWB. Scores   .10   .08   .22**

Total ESI-R REL. Scores   .61***   .12

Variables	Total FESM Scores	VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction	Three ESI-R Dimension Scores	Interaction of Three ESI-R Dimension Scores and VIA Arab Identity & American Identity Interaction
R^2	.03	.1	.33	.34
Adjusted R^2	.02	.07	.29	.28
R	.18*	.31**	.57***	.59***
B	.14*	-.14**	COS. = .16 EWB. = - .60*** REL. = .01	COS. = - .02 EWB. = - .01 REL. = .01

	Intercept = 28.03***	Intercept = 28.85***	Intercept = 34.42***	Intercept = 23.55*
β	.18	-.29	COS. = .13 EWB. = - .47 REL. = .00	COS. = - .76 EWB. = - .49 REL. = .37
sr^2 (incremental)	.03*	.06**	COS. = .01 EWB. = .23*** REL. =.00	COS. = .02 EWB. = .01 REL. = .00

Note. The following are the abbreviations used above: SAFE= Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress scale, VIA = Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale, ESI-R = Expressions of Spirituality Inventory- Revised, FESM = Family Ethnic Socialization Measure, ESI-R COS. Dimension = Cognitive Orientation towards Spirituality, ESI-R EWB. Dimension = Existential Well-being, and ESI-R REL. Dimension = Religiousness (* = *p*-value trending towards significance; ** = *p* < .05; *** = *p* < .001)

After step one, with total FESM scores in the equation, $R^2 = 0.033$, F_{inc} (1, 83) = 2.87 ($p > .05$). This ANOVA is trending towards significance ($p = .09$). After step two, with the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores added to the prediction of acculturative stress experiences by total FESM scores, $R^2 = 0.096$, F_{inc} (1, 82) = 5.64 ($p < .05$). Addition of the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores to the equation resulted in a significant increment in R^2. After step three, with COS, EWB, and REL ESI-R dimension scores added to the prediction of acculturative stress experiences by total FESM scores and the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores, $R^2 = 0.327$, F_{inc} (3, 79) = 5.79 ($p < .001$). Addition of COS, EWB, and REL ESI-R dimension scores to the equation made a reliable improvement to R^2. After step four, with the interactions between COS, EWB, and REL ESI-R dimension scores with the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores added to the prediction of acculturative stress experiences by total FESM scores, the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores, and COS, EWB, and REL ESI-R dimension scores $R^2 = 0.344$, F_{inc} (3, 76) = 0.656 ($p > .05$). Addition of the interactions between COS, EWB, and REL ESI-R dimension scores with the interaction between VIA Arab Identity and American Identity subscale scores to the equation did not significantly improve R^2. Thus, it is plausible that the relationships between family cultural socialization and bicultural identity as well as spirituality are having effects on each other's predictive power in relation to perceived discrimination and acculturative stress.

In order to visualize and better illustrate the moderation effect of total EWB ESI-R scores on the prediction of acculturative stress and perceived discrimination experiences, moderation graphs were plotted to support the study's results. The study's relatively small

sample makes it less likely for the moderation variables themselves to reach statistical significance. Hence, even though a meaningful effect may not emerge as significant, it would be important to have a detailed illustration of the how the relevant variables relate in the expected moderation effects.

Figure 4-8 shows a graphic depiction of the moderation effect of the interaction variable between the VIA Arab and American subscale scores and ESI-R EWB scores on total SAFE scores. The figure is based on centered variables, which means that the variables were adjusted to make their mean scores equal to zero. It is thought that centering variables helps reduce the intercorrelations of predictors and helps make the graph easier to interpret. This graph helps depict the directionality of the moderation effect, which is consistent with the hypothesized directionality in hypothesis five (i.e., high bicultural identity and high spirituality leads to less acculturative stress). The lines in this graph do not cross, but the non-parallel nature of the two lines suggests that they will eventually cross (e.g., with a larger sample size) and suggests that a moderation effect on acculturative stress experiences is highly likely.
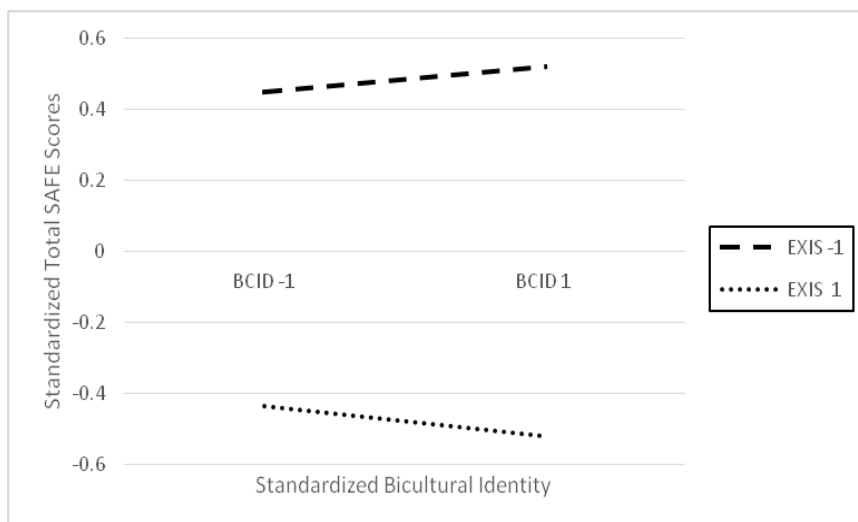
Figure 4-8. Graphic depiction of the moderation effect between levels of bicultural identity and levels of ESI-R EWB (EXIS) on acculturative stress experiences (total SAFE scores). Bicultural identity (BCID) was scored by the interaction between VIA Arab and American identity subscales. All variables in figure were centered before graphing.

ANOVA tests were conducted to in order to graph the moderation variables. In order to test the moderation effect in an ANOVA test, an interaction effect was tested between levels of cultural identity and levels of spirituality. A between-subject design was used to compare the interaction effects of levels of cultural identity and levels of spirituality as grouping variables on levels of acculturative stress and perceived discrimination (i.e., participants' total SAFE scores and total ED scores). Participants were grouped based on their scores on the ESI-R EWB dimension and their levels of cultural identity on the VIA scale. To fully assess levels of cultural identity, two variables were used to represent this construct: the Binary Bicultural Identity and the Cultural Identity Grouping variables. The Binary Bicultural Identity variable was scored by assigning participants a score of one if they had scores higher than the mean on both the VIA American and Arab Identity subscales. For the Cultural Identity Grouping variable, participants were grouped based on their scores

on the two VIA cultural identity subscales. Three groups emerged based on previous analyses: individuals with low VIA Arab Identity subscale scores and low American Identity subscale scores, $n = 10$; individuals with high VIA Arab Identity subscale scores and low American Identity subscale scores, $n = 17$; and individuals with high VIA Arab Identity subscale scores and high American Identity subscale scores, $n = 53$. In addition, participants were grouped based on their ESI-R EWB dimension scores. Individuals with low EWB dimension scores, scoring below the mean, were given a score of one; individuals with moderate scores, scoring around the mean, were given a score of two; and individuals with high scores, scoring above the mean, were given a score of three.

Figures 4-9 and 4-10 depict the moderation effect between the Binary Bicultural Identity variable and the ESI-R EWB grouping variable on perceived discrimination experiences, total ED scores, and acculturative experiences, total SAFE scores, respectively.
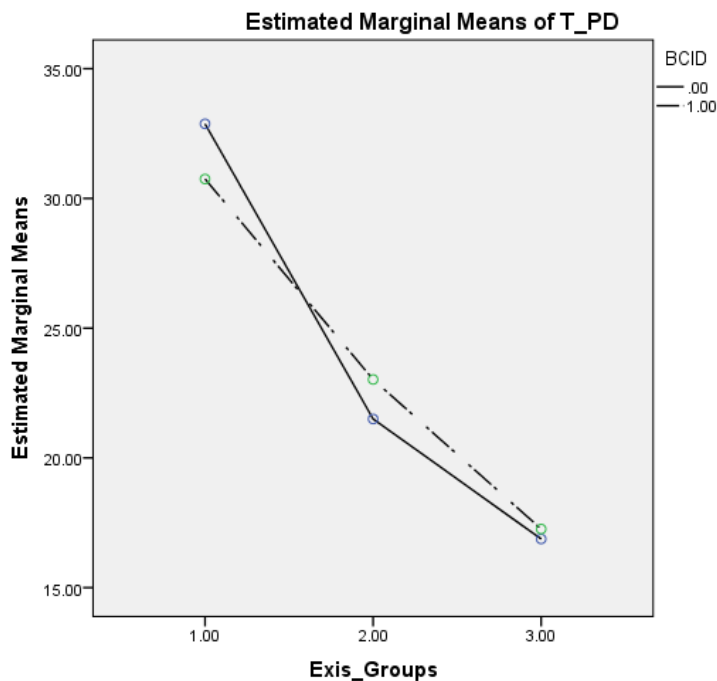
Figure 4-9. Graphic depiction of the moderation effect between levels of bicultural identity and levels of Expressions of Spirituality Inventory- Revised Existential Wellbeing dimension scores, ESI-R EWB (Exis_Groups) on perceived discrimination experiences measured by the Everyday Discrimination scale (T_PD scores). Exis_Groups represents three participant groups based on scores on the ESI-R EWB. The number of the group increases as levels of ESI-R EWB reported increases. Bicultural identity (BCID) was scored by assigning participants a score of 1 when they had high scores on both of the Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale (VIA) Arab and American identity subscale scores.
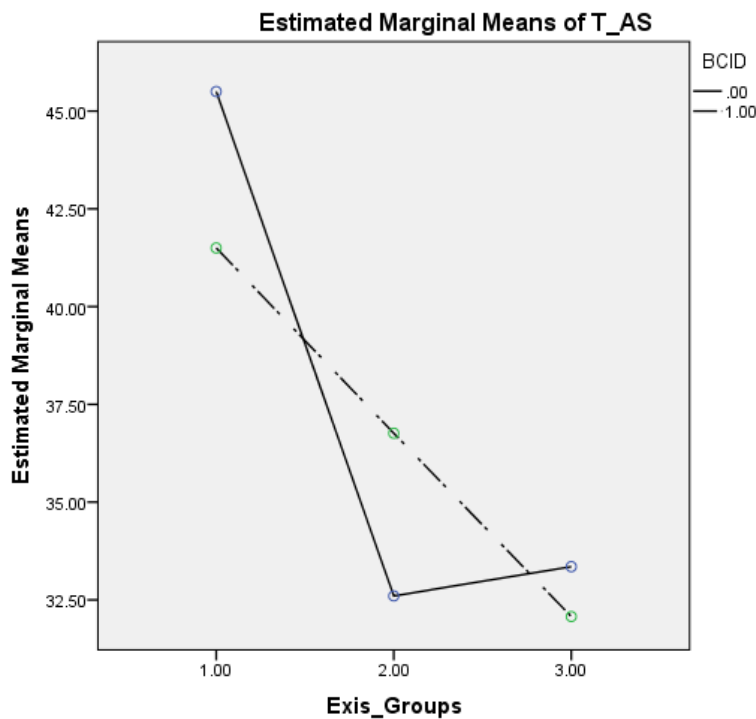
Figure 4-10. Graphic depiction of the moderation effect between levels of bicultural identity and levels of Expressions of Spirituality Inventory- Revised Existential Wellbeing dimension scores, ESI-R EWB (Exis_Groups) on acculturative stress experiences measured by the Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress scale (T_AS scores). Exis_Groups represents three participant groups based on scores on the ESI-R EWB. The number of the group increases as levels of ESI-R EWB reported increases. Bicultural identity (BCID) was scored by assigning participants a score of 1 when they had high scores on both of the Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale (VIA) Arab and American identity subscale scores.

Figures 4-11 and 4-12 depict the moderation effect between the Cultural Identity Grouping variable and the ESI-R EWB grouping variable on perceived discrimination experiences, total ED scores, and acculturative experiences, total SAFE scores, respectively.
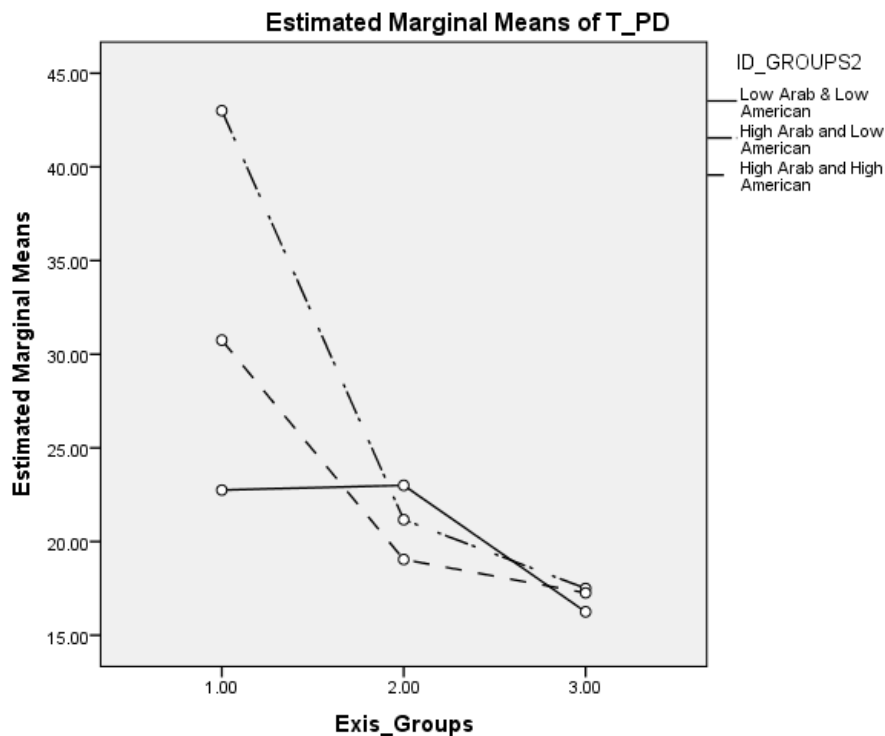
Figure 4-11. Graphic depiction of the moderation effect between levels of cultural identity and levels of Expressions of Spirituality Inventory- Revised Existential Wellbeing dimension scores, ESI-R EWB (Exis_Groups) on perceived discrimination experiences measured by the Everyday Discrimination scale (T_PD scores). Exis_Groups represents three participant groups based on scores on the ESI-R EWB. The number of the group increases as levels of ESI-R EWB reported increases. Cultural identity (ID_Groups2) was scored by grouping participants based on their scores on both of the Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale (VIA) Arab and American identity subscale scores (see figure key above).
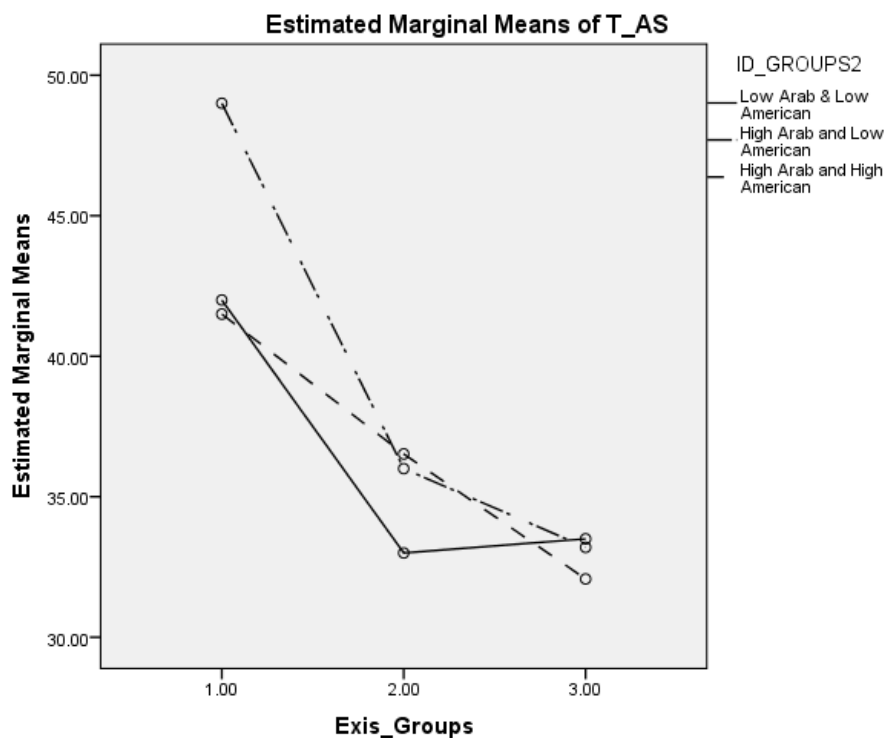
Figure 4-12. Graphic depiction of the moderation effect between levels of cultural identity and levels of Expressions of Spirituality Inventory- Revised Existential Wellbeing dimension scores, ESI-R EWB (Exis_Groups) on acculturative stress experiences measured by the Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress scale (T_AS scores). Exis_Groups represents three participant groups based on scores on the ESI-R EWB. The number of the group increases as levels of ESI-R EWB reported increases. Cultural identity (ID_Groups2) was scored by grouping participants based on their scores on both of the Vancouver Index of Acculturation scale (VIA) Arab and American identity subscale scores (see figure key above).

Based on these graphs, it seems that with a larger sample the moderation variables themselves would reach significance in regression analyses. All the graphs suggest that when levels of spiritual existential wellbeing are low, there is a positive relationship between cultural identity and both of the outcome variables. However, when levels of spiritual existential wellbeing are high, there is an inverse relationship between cultural identity and both of the outcome variables. This moderation effect suggests that when a participant has high levels of spiritual existential wellbeing, he/she will likely have high levels of bicultural

identity and low levels of sociopolitical stressors, especially acculturative stress. This moderation effect seems to be especially apparent in moderating the number of acculturative stress experiences the participants report. In conclusion, all of the graphs discussed above suggest the existence of moderation effects, even though in the hierarchical regressions testing hypotheses four and five the moderation variables themselves were not found to be significant. These graphs give strong visual support of the hypothesized moderation effect, especially for hypothesis five with moderating the extent of acculturative stress experiences reported.

Chapter 5- Discussion

This study sought to fill the gap in the literature of empirical studies on the experiences of the Arab American community (Aboul-Enein & Aboul-Enein, 2010; Amer & Bagasra, 2013). It is a particularly unique addition because it explored factors that affect the cultural identity formation of Arab American adolescents. Peoples of Arab descent have a long history in the United States. Better understanding their experiences has become increasingly important due to our post-9/11 sociopolitical environment (Amer, 2014; Amer & Bagasra, 2013; Selod, 2012). Arab American adolescents are at risk for experiencing stressors such as perceived discrimination and acculturative stress (Amer, 2014; Goforth, 2012; Tabbah, Miranda, & Wheaton, 2012). Specifically, this study explored whether experiencing family cultural socialization, which was expected to help Arab American adolescents develop a sense of biculturalism, would help individuals cope with these stressors. It was also proposed that adolescents who identify as spiritual would have an even easier ability to cope with these stressors. These expectations were developed based on past literature that suggests the impact of family cultural socialization (Gartner, Kiang, & Supple, 2014; Scabini & Manzi, 2011), the psychological benefits of developing a sense of biculturalism (Britto & Amer, 2007; LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993) as well as spirituality (MacDonald, 2009; Roehlkepartain, Benson, & Scales, 2011).

Based on the above expectations, five study hypotheses were developed and studied. The first hypothesis stated that Arab American adolescents who score higher on Family Cultural Socialization will score higher on Arab Cultural Identity. Study results strongly support this hypothesis. Levels of family cultural socialization were found to strongly predict levels of Arab cultural identity. Hence, the more adolescents with Arab origins are socialized

by their family about Arabic culture, the more they will identify with the culture. Results suggest that family cultural socialization has a strong positive effect on identity development, particularly Arab cultural identity development. Family appears to have a particularly strong role in helping them develop a sense of Arab cultural identity. This finding is supported by the research that suggests the strong role family plays in helping adolescents from minority cultures develop their cultural identities (Brittian, Umaña-Taylor, & Derlan, 2013; Gartner, Kiang, & Supple, 2014; Umaña-Taylor, Zeiders, and Updegraff, 2013). It is also supported by the literature that suggests the emphasis of family in the Arabic culture (Aboul-Enein & Aboul-Enein, 2010; Awad, 2010; Willems, 2013) as well as the role the Arab American family plays in helping Arab American adolescents develop their identity (Britto & Amer, 2007; Erickson & Al-Timimi, 2001; Fakih, 2014). The reason the family plays such a significant role in helping an adolescent learn about his/her heritage culture is because the family is the adolescent's first and most reliable source of cultural information. That role is amplified in any minority culture because the adolescent is granted minimal opportunities outside of the family to learn about his/her heritage culture.

A positive significant association was also found between levels of family cultural socialization and levels of American cultural identity. Even though the relationship was not as strong as the relationship with Arab cultural identity levels, this finding suggests that the family still plays a strong, significant role in helping Arab American adolescents develop their cultural identity, whether it be a sense of Arab cultural identity or American cultural identity. A positive significant moderate association was also found between levels of biculturalism and levels of family cultural socialization. This conclusion is supported by past research that illustrates the impact of family cultural socialization on adolescent identity

development (Baden, Treweeke, & Ahluwalia, 2012; Ferrera, 2011; Smith, 2011),

particularly bicultural identity formation (Britto & Amer, 2007; Park, 2007). The strong

effect of family in the study results is supported by the participants' cultural context. It is also

consistent with the strong emphasis on family interdependence in the Arabic culture (Amer,

2014; Willems, 2013). It seems that adolescents seek their family's guidance not only in

understandings of their heritage culture, but also in developing their understandings of the

mainstream culture.

Another fascinating finding of this study was that gender is related to the degree of

American cultural identity reported. Male Arab American participants reported a higher

degree of American cultural identity. Additional analyses supported that this difference

between males and female participants was significant. This result is similar to past research

that suggests a difference in the cultural identity development of male and female Arab

Americans (Ahmed, Kia-Keating, & Tsai, 2011; Ajrouch and Jamal, 2007). This result can

be also be interpreted as the frequent difference in gender-role expectations found in families

of Arab origin. There is a stronger emphasis on females in preserving their heritage culture

because they are more likely to socialize future generations about Arabic culture. In addition,

regrettably, male Arab Americans are usually given more independence to engage in the

mainstream culture (Cainkar & Read, 2014).

Further analyses revealed that individuals with low levels of Arab cultural identity as

well as low levels of American cultural identity had significantly less levels of family

cultural socialization in comparison to individuals with high levels of Arab cultural identity

and low levels of American cultural identity as well as individuals with high levels of Arab

cultural identity and high levels of American cultural identity. Individuals who reported low

levels of Arab cultural identity and low levels of American cultural identity also reported the lowest levels of family cultural socialization. This difference was shown to have a strong effect size indicating that the differences between the groups did not occur by chance. This finding is further evidence of the impact of family cultural socialization in helping the Arab American participants develop a sense of bicultural identity. This result is supported by previous research suggesting a strong relationship between biculturalism and family cultural socialization, which was also found to be true in the study sample (Britto & Amer, 2007; Park, 2007). These results seem to suggest that participants were receiving almost all of their cultural socialization from their families, whether it is socialization about the Arabic culture or the American mainstream culture. That is, family may be one of the only, if not the only, sources of developing a cultural identity for these adolescents.

The second hypothesis stated that Arab American adolescents who score higher on Bicultural Identity will report lower levels of Perceived Discrimination. This hypothesis was not supported by the study results. Results suggest that family cultural socialization and developing a bicultural identity do not predict the number of perceived discrimination experiences an Arab American adolescent will report. This result is different from previous studies that suggest that levels of biculturalism will affect an adolescent's perceived discrimination experiences (Pascoe & Richman, 2009; Rodriguez, Schwartz, and Whitbourne, 2010; Schmitt, Branscombe, Postmes, & Garcia, 2014). Previous studies with Arab American samples also found the predictive power of identity development in predicting discrimination experiences (Awad, 2010; Fakih, 2014; Tabbah, Miranda, & Wheaton, 2012). Nevertheless, results were trending in the direction suggested by the study hypothesis such that higher degree of biculturalism was associated with less perceived

discrimination experiences. This suggests that data results may have reached significance with a larger sample size.

Some considerations should be made when interpreting analyses involving levels of bicultural identity. Firstly, a strong positive relationship was found between participants' levels of Arab cultural identity and levels of American cultural identity. This suggests that a large portion of the sample identified as bicultural. In addition, to ensure variable coding did not influence the study results, analyses involving the degree of bicultural identity were conducted by calculating Bicultural Identity in two alternative ways. Bicultural identity was measured by coding it as a binary variable (i.e., participants were coded as having bicultural identity or not) and as an interaction variable (i.e., each participants' scores on the VIA Arab and American identity subscales were multiplied). Similar results were found when coding Bicultural Identity either way. The study results illustrate that the transforming of the Bicultural Identity variable did not change the conclusions suggesting that study results are not a product of sample specific effects.

Moreover, a considerably strong association was found between the grade level of participants and their levels of Arab cultural identity reported. It was found that the higher the grade level of the Arab American adolescent the more likely he/she will have lower levels of Arab cultural identity and the opposite is true. It could be that as adolescents increase their educational knowledge they are more likely to have increased independence to engage in the mainstream culture (Branch, 2001; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004). As the adolescents become more socially aware and learn about their environments, they become more likely to explore opportunities to adopt cultural identities outside of their heritage cultures.

The third hypothesis stated that Arab American adolescents who score higher on Bicultural Identity will report lower levels of Acculturative Stress. This hypothesis was partially supported by the study results. The ability of family cultural socialization in predicting acculturative stress was enhanced when levels of biculturalism were added to the analyses. Neither family cultural socialization alone nor bicultural identity alone could predict acculturative stress experiences. These findings suggest that individuals who identify with high levels of bicultural identity, developed with the help of their family's cultural socialization, are more likely to have fewer acculturative stress experiences. Thus, adolescents who have been socialized by their families about Arabic culture and also identify strongly with both the American and Arabic cultures will not experience as much acculturative stress. It appears that the family is helping the Arab American adolescents form their bicultural identities, which in turn makes them less likely to have negative experiences, such as acculturative stress.

Analyses that explored the mediation effect of cultural identity development revealed that levels of family cultural socialization did not significantly predict levels of perceived discrimination, but did significantly predict levels of acculturative stress. This finding suggests that cultural identity is suppressing the predictive power of family cultural socialization on acculturative stress experiences. Without the effects of cultural identity, the analyses results were trending towards significance, suggesting that with a larger sample the predictive power of family cultural socialization alone could be supported. The results revealed significant relationships between the variables that support this presumption. Significant, moderate positive associations were found between levels of family cultural socialization and perceived discrimination and between levels of family cultural socialization

and acculturative stress. The direction of the relationships suggests that higher levels of family cultural socialization is related to higher levels of perceived discrimination as well as acculturative stress. This relationship could be explained by the idea that the more the family socializes the Arab American adolescent about the Arabic culture, the more he/she identifies perceived discrimination experiences and pressures to acculturate by the mainstream culture. Hence, the stressors are experienced in part by how the adolescent is culturally socialized by his/her family. This stress may be related to the adolescent experiencing an increased tension or gap between the culture they experience in their family life and the culture they experience in mainstream society.

These results are consistent with previous studies suggesting that levels of biculturalism will affect the number of acculturative stress adolescents experience (Dubow, Pargament, Boxer, and Tarakeshwar, 2000; Meleis, Lipson, & Paul, 1992; Phinney, 1990). Arab American samples also demonstrated the predictive power of bicultural identity and its relationship to family cultural socialization (Britto & Amer, 2007; Erickson & Al-Timimi, 2001; Fakih, 2014). It seems that family is guiding the path of cultural identity formation, which helped study participants develop bicultural identities. Study participants who have developed high levels of biculturalism are able to integrate both their heritage and mainstream cultural identities. This leads to them feeling more accepted as a member of mainstream society and in turn not experiencing as much acculturative stress experiences. The participants' bicultural identities appear to be serving a significant protective factor against acculturative stress, but not perceived discrimination. The simple reason for these results could be that study participants may, in general, be experiencing more acculturative stress than perceived discrimination. This is likely why the results did not reach significance

when exploring perceived discrimination. These results may be explained by the concentrated ethnic enclaves in southeastern Michigan. The majority of study participants live in these areas. Hence, they do not have as much contact with peoples from cultural backgrounds different from themselves, which makes it less likely for them to experience discrimination. However, study participants may be reporting more acculturative stress experiences in general because living in ethnic enclaves can foster a sense of division between the mainstream culture and the adolescent's heritage culture. In other words, when the adolescents leave their ethnic enclaves they may feel pressured to acculturate to the mainstream culture that likely has been distanced from them. Past research has also suggested that living in an ethnic enclave complicates cultural identity development, especially for Arab Americans (Ajrouch, 2004; El-Sayed, Tracy, Scarborough, & Galea, 2011; Kumar, Seay, & Karabenick, 2015).

The fourth hypothesis stated that Arab American adolescents who score higher on Bicultural Identity *and* higher on overall Spirituality will report lower levels of Perceived Discrimination. This hypothesis was partially supported by the study results. Results suggest that family cultural socialization, developing a bicultural identity, and higher levels of overall spirituality do not predict the number of perceived discrimination experiences an Arab American adolescent will report. Cultural identity is not playing a mediating role and overall spirituality is not playing a moderating role in predicting perceived discrimination experiences. This result is different from previous studies which suggest that levels of biculturalism will help individuals cope with perceived discrimination experiences (Pascoe & Richman, 2009; Rodriguez, Schwartz, and Whitbourne, 2010; Schmitt, Branscombe, Postmes, & Garcia, 2014). Previous studies with Arab American samples also found that

bicultural identity predicted discrimination experiences (Awad, 2010; Fakih, 2014; Tabbah, Miranda, & Wheaton, 2012). The present results are also contrary to previous research that reveals the coping benefits of spirituality and its association to experiencing less perceived discrimination (Hayward & Krause, 2015; Tummala-Narra, 2009). Study results and previous research are further evidence of the fact that the ethnic enclaves the adolescent participants are living in are serving as a form of protection against perceived discrimination experiences. The community is mediating and reducing opportunities for perceived discrimination.

Nevertheless, these results approached significance, suggesting that the analyses may have reached significance with a larger sample size. The results of the analyses conducted to test hypothesis two and the potential changes in effect size suggest that family cultural socialization's impact on developing a bicultural identity may be suppressing the possible effect that bicultural identity and spirituality have on perceived discrimination. This is supported by the strong, positive association found between family cultural socialization and bicultural identity levels. It seems that the shared variance between family cultural socialization and bicultural identity is influencing how they are related to perceived discrimination.

Captivatingly, when spirituality was explored dimensionally the results reached significance. Cognitive and affective orientation (i.e., belief in the transcendent and its relevance to oneself and daily life), existential well-being (i.e., having a sense of purpose and coping with uncertainties), and religiousness (i.e., belief in a higher power and related religious traditions) were the three dimensions of spirituality explored in the present study (MacDonald, 2009). The results show that neither family cultural socialization nor

biculturalism alone is predicting perceived discrimination experiences. However, the combination of experiences of family cultural socialization, developing a bicultural identity, and experiencing high levels of existential spirituality predict the number of perceived discrimination experiences an Arab American adolescent will report. The only spirituality dimension that led to significant study results is spiritual existential well-being. In the present study, existential spirituality represented a "sense of meaning and purpose and of being able to cope with the existential uncertainties of life, such as the meaning of death" (MacDonald, 2009, p. 89). Cultural identity plays a role and existential spirituality is playing a moderating role in predicting perceived discrimination experiences. Spirituality, particularly existential wellbeing seems to be playing a strong moderating role in predicting perceived discrimination experiences such that individuals with higher levels of spiritual existential wellbeing experience less perceived discrimination experiences. These results are further supported by the literature that reveals how spirituality which has been associated with an increased level of wellbeing can be strong coping source for the Arab American community (Amer, 2014; Juang & Syed, 2008; Kim & Esquivel, 2011). It appears that for Arab American adolescents spirituality, in the form of existential wellbeing, may serve as a protective factor again perceived discrimination experiences. This study supports previous research that illustrates how Arab Americans turn to spirituality for a sense of support and wellbeing (Amer, 2014; Ahmed, Kia-Keating, and Tsai, 2011; Juang & Syed, 2008).

Arab Americans have a tendency to experience spirituality in existential terms; meaning they use spirituality to help bring meaning and significance to their existence. In addition, individuals who identify as having higher levels of biculturalism as well as spiritual existential wellbeing tend to have the least amount of perceived discrimination experiences.

This suggests that biculturalism as well as spirituality, particularly the dimension of existential wellbeing, is a significant source of protection for Arab American adolescents. In the study sample, a positive relationship was also found between levels of bicultural identity and levels of spiritual existential wellbeing suggesting that individuals who identify as bicultural are also more likely to have higher levels of spiritual existential wellbeing. These results can be interpreted as support to the suggestion that when spirituality and biculturalism are embraced together they can provide Arab American individuals, especially adolescents, with a sense of connectedness and affirmation that helps them navigate through social stress. It appears that the strength of each protective factor increases when experienced together.

The fifth hypothesis stated that Arab American adolescents who score higher on Bicultural Identity *and* higher on overall Spirituality will report lower levels of Acculturative Stress. This hypothesis was partially supported by the study results. Results suggest that family cultural socialization, developing a bicultural identity, and higher levels of spirituality predicted the number of acculturative stress experiences an Arab American adolescent report. As with perceived discrimination, cultural identity plays a role and spirituality appears to be playing a moderating role in predicting acculturative stress experiences. This result is consistent with previous studies that suggest that levels of biculturalism will help individuals cope with acculturative stress experiences (Berry, 2005; Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, & Senécal, 1997; LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993; Lee & Padilla, 2014; Wrobel, Farrag, & Hymes, 2009). Previous studies with Arab American samples also found that bicultural identity in predicted acculturative stress experiences (Ahmed, Kia-Keating, & Tsai, 2011; Faragallah, Schumm, & Webb, 1997). Study results and previous studies are consistent with the research that reveals the coping benefits of spirituality and its association to

experiencing less acculturative stress (Chae, Kelly, Brown, & Bolden, 2004; Houskamp, Fisher, & Stuber, 2004). The present study suggests that participants' families are socializing them about the Arabic culture which is related to their development of bicultural identities. Their bicultural identities, in turn, help them cope with acculturative stress experiences and be less likely to experience them. This connection is likely because by forming a bicultural identity, an individual is embracing rather than rejecting parts of the mainstream culture and as such will be less likely to experience pressure to accurate to the mainstream culture. Participants who report having bicultural identities as well as higher high levels of spirituality experience even less acculturative stress. This result supports the coping strength of spirituality and biculturalism together. It is possible that these adolescents are experiencing the benefits of biculturalism and spirituality because they are helping them face the negative experiences of acculturative stress.

Moreover, similar to the analyses conducted with perceived discrimination, when the effects of spirituality on acculturative stress were explored dimensionally, the results also reached significance. The results show that family cultural socialization alone is not predictive of acculturative stress experiences. However, it suggests that the combination of experiences of family cultural socialization, developing a bicultural identity, and experiencing high levels of existential spirituality predict the number of acculturative stress experiences an Arab American adolescent will report. Cultural identity affected study results and existential spirituality appears to be playing a moderating role in predicting acculturative stress experiences. Spirituality, particularly existential wellbeing, seems to be playing a strong moderating role in predicting acculturative stress experiences. This positive relationship between adolescents' spirituality and wellbeing has been supported in the

literature (Hill, 2007; Kim & Esquivel, 2011; Mason, 2012; Muench, 2012). It appears that

for Arab American adolescents spirituality, in the form of existential wellbeing, may serve as

a protective factor again acculturative stress experiences. This is supported by the literature

that illustrates how Arab Americans turn to spirituality for a sense of support and wellbeing

(Ahmed, Kia-Keating, & Tsai, 2011; Amer, 2014; Charani, 2005; Hall & Breland-Noble,

2011; Hall & Livingston, 2006).

Since for Arab Americans spirituality usually brings a sense of meaning and

significance to their ways of life, it is understandable that higher levels of spiritual existential

wellbeing would predict less acculturative stress experiences. In addition, individuals who

identify as having higher levels of biculturalism as well as spiritual existential wellbeing tend

to have the least amount of acculturative stress experiences. Since the relationship between

acculturative stress experiences and perceived discrimination experiences was found to be a

moderately strong, positive relationship, participants may be similarly experiencing these two

stressors. This further supported by previous studies showing a positive relationship between

the two stressors, including studies with Arab American samples (Faur, 2008; Padela &

Heisler, 2010; Rousseau, Hassan, Moreau, & Thombs, 2011; Willems, 2013). The results

suggest that biculturalism as well as spirituality, particularly the dimension of existential

wellbeing, is a significant source of protection for Arab American adolescents against

acculturative stress experiences in addition to perceived discrimination experiences. When an

Arab American adolescent embraces them together, he/she will experience a stronger

protective factor than when an adolescent embraces one or the other independently. This is

further support for the suggestion that spirituality and biculturalism *together* provide Arab

American individuals, especially adolescents, with a sense of connectedness and affirmation that helps them navigate through social stress.

Furthermore, the exploration of different spirituality dimensions led to some other important results that help better describe the study sample. For example, a moderately strong positive relationship was found between levels of family cultural socialization and levels of spiritual religiousness. This relationship supports previous literature which concludes that spirituality is related to culture (Erikson, 1996; King & Roeser, 2009; MacDonald, Freidman, Brewczynski, Holland, Salagmae, Mohan, Gubrij, & Cheong, 2015). This relationship suggests that the participants' families are influencing how they develop a sense of spirituality, especially religious spirituality. High levels of religious spirituality in Arab American samples have been found in the past (Amer, 2014; Ahmed, Kia-Keating, and Tsai, 2011; Juang & Syed, 2008). This study supports the conclusion that Arab Americans experience interconnections between their heritage culture and their spirituality, especially their related religious experiences and knowledge. In addition, significant associations were found between levels of Arab cultural identity and many spirituality dimensions. Positive relationships were found between levels of spiritual existential well-being and religiousness and Arab cultural identity whereas a negative relationship was found between levels of spiritual paranormal beliefs and Arab cultural identity. This finding is further support of the strong relationship between culture and spirituality, which is particularly important in the Arabic culture (Abi-Hashem, 2014; Ajrouch & Jamal, 2007; Amer, 2014). Results also suggest that developing a connection to the Arabic culture is related to developing a sense of spirituality that supports increased feelings of existential wellbeing and religiousness and decreased paranormal beliefs.

Furthermore, in order to qualitatively explore the participants' experiences data were collected from interested adolescents in regards to what their families have chose to socialize them about their heritage culture as well as their perceptions of the reasons for their discrimination experiences. A total of 40 adolescents tried to explain their discriminatory experiences. The following are the three most common themes in their responses: some individuals carry stereotypes against Arab Americans within themselves ($n = 9$), some people consider Arab Americans to be "inferior" in status ($n = 7$), and there is a lot of ignorance about Arab Americans ($n = 7$). For example, one participant explained discrimination occurs due to, "Stereotypes, gossip, media, [and a] corrupted reputation." Another participant believed, "It was the way they were raised and they were taught that they are better." A third participant assumed, "People are not educated enough about Arab Americans."A total of 50 adolescent participants described their family cultural socialization processes. The three most common themes in their responses are as follows: their families teaching them about cultural traditions and values ($n = 17$), about the importance of religious values ($n = 11$), and the importance of cultural preservation ($n = 9$). One participant described, "They try to teach me everything. From their customs to the way their life is structured." Another adolescent wrote, "They have taught me that it is a very peaceful and diverse culture. And it is important to believe in my religion." A third high school student stated, "It's something to hold onto for future generations." These responses further support study conclusions that suggest the strong interconnectedness of family processes, spirituality, culture, and religion in the Arabic culture.

Limitations

The most significant limitation of this study is that the sample was self-selected. Adolescents who participate in Arab American youth community organizations may not be representative of all Arab American adolescents in that adolescents who volunteer and participate in their youth activities may identify strongly with their heritage culture or experience more sociopolitical stress than other Arab American youth. Related to this limitation are some barriers to data collection that should be noted. There were significant difficulties in collecting parental consent forms due to the need for adolescent participants and their parents to come together in the same setting. Because participants were being asked questions about their perceptions of spirituality, data collection was also not permissible in school settings. In addition, the majority of participants lived in ethnic enclaves. This reality shapes the cultural context of study results and is likely causing a reduction in study results effects. However, this is a challenge to the research of minority groups since it is extremely difficult to locate participants outside of these ethnic enclaves (Amer, 2014; Amer & Bagasra, 2013). To address this limitation, the researcher plans on expanding this study in the future to explore the cultural experiences of Arab American adolescents, as well as young adults, who live outside of Michigan. Another related limitation is that this study focused on an Arab American adolescent sample which made it problematic to generalize the findings to adolescents from another cultural group. In addition, the study's relatively small sample size may have underpowered the study results. Providing more opportunities for incentives for completing the numerous questionnaires would have increased the study sample size. However, the study had limited resources available to use for incentives.

Providing questionnaires through the Internet also risked unintentionally excluding adolescents from less socioeconomically privileged backgrounds since they may have limited access to computers. This risk was minimized by providing the option of paper copies of research material. Moreover, all of the scales used in this study were self-reports and may be subject to biases and the social desirability of a positive self-presentation. Most of the measures that were used in this study also have not been validated for the use with Arab American populations. However, the measures have been validated across other minority cultural groups. The literature suggests that there is a need for the development of culturally sensitive and psychometrically sound instrument measurements (Amer, 2014). It could be that the study results were affected by the possibility that study measures were not sensitive to the cultural group. Nevertheless, this suggestion is not supported by the satisfactory inter-item reliability found within the sample.

Conclusions

This study has helped fill some of the gaps in the research on Arab American adolescent development and life experiences. It also explored inconsistencies in the literature about the study constructs. Family cultural socialization had effects on almost all of the constructs explored in this study. The strong influence of family cultural socialization in adolescent participants' lives is fascinating. It seems that regardless of what time of cultural identity formed (bicultural identity, American cultural identity, Arab cultural identity) the participants' families played a momentous role in helping the adolescent form their identity. As the active mechanism for cultural identity development in the study sample, family seems to be the single most important source of cultural information. This hypothesis was confirmed by examining the relationships between variables as well as comparing cultural

identity groups. The present study confirms the literature suggesting that individuals from collectivistic cultures, such as the Arabic culture, understand their identities, or have a sense of self, as connected to the family, which is different from most Western researchers' views of identity as definite and adaptively individuated from one's family of origin (Pérez-Foster & Moskowitz, 1996). Results of this study reveal that these familial connections actually promote adaptive adjustment and confirms past research about the centrality and value of family in the Arab American culture (Aboul-Enein & Aboul-Enein, 2010; Amer, 2014; Awad, 2010; Willems, 2013). However, it seems that some participants' families may be culturally socializing their male and female adolescent children differently. Male participants reported high degrees of American cultural identity than female participants, which is likely related to the cultural expectations adopted by some families for male and female adolescents in the Arabic culture.

Overall participants appeared not to have experienced a high number of perceived discrimination experiences. Developing a bicultural identity and having higher levels of family cultural socialization experiences were not predictive of perceived discrimination experiences. Biculturalism was not shown to play a mediating role in predicting perceived discrimination. Overall levels of spirituality also did not help predict perceived discrimination experiences. However, considering levels of spirituality related to existential wellbeing in addition to family cultural socialization and biculturalism helped improve the ability of the model to predict perceived discrimination experiences. Existential spirituality appears to play a moderating role in predicting perceived discrimination experiences. The Arab American sample seems to view spirituality from an existential perspective that supports wellbeing, which was related to them experiencing more cultural socialization from

their families, developing higher levels of biculturalism, and experiencing less perceived discrimination. Only when the potential protective factors are experienced together will they predict perceived discrimination experiences. Grade level was also found to be related to levels of Arab cultural identity such that the higher the grade of the participant, the lower levels of Arab cultural identity reported. This finding may be related to the increased independence and social awareness of educated adolescents (Branch, 2001; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004). Nevertheless, these results are affected by the protective power of living in large ethnic enclaves and not having many opportunities to interact with others from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Regardless of how the adolescent participant self-identified culturally, he/she still reported experiencing perceived discrimination because identity usually an internal, personal process while discrimination is caused by another individual.

On the other hand, participants reported a higher number of acculturative stress experiences than perceived discrimination experiences. One explanation for this finding is that participants may experience acculturative stress within their own cultural group as well as in mainstream society. Bicultural identity and family cultural socialization together predicted the number of acculturative stress experiences such that higher levels of biculturalism and less family cultural socialization predicted less acculturative stress experiences. Adding bicultural identity development improved the ability of the model in predicting acculturative stress. Biculturalism was shown to play a significant role in predicting acculturative stress. In addition, adding overall levels of spirituality as well as adding levels of spiritual existential well being to the model in addition to levels of family cultural socialization and biculturalism further improved the ability of the model in predicting acculturative stress. Results suggest that spirituality is playing a moderating role

such that individuals with more family cultural socialization and higher levels of biculturalism have less acculturative stress experiences. The combination of these experiences is protecting study participants from acculturative stress. These results also confirm the perceived protective factor of cultural identity formation in addition to family cultural socialization and spirituality suggested by the literature (Amer, 2014; Gartner, Kiang, & Supple, 2014; Wrobel, Farrag, & Hymes, 2009). The study supports past research suggesting the benefits of biculturalism and refutes the literature suggesting that biculturalism can lead to negative outcomes (Basilio, Knight, O'Donnell, Roosa, Gonzales, Umaña-Taylor, & Torres, 2014; Britto & Amer, 2007; LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993; Wrobel, Farrag, & Hymes, 2009). As Erikson (1968) suggested, identity development is a potential ego strength that can help adolescents cope with perceived environmental threats.

Moreover, study results further revealed significant relationships between spirituality, cultural identity, family cultural socialization, and acculturative stress. More spiritual religiousness was found to be related to more family cultural socialization experiences, which was confirmed by participants' qualitative descriptions of their families' cultural socialization processes. Spirituality was related to cultural identity development and seems to be culturally bound since it appears to be understood, experienced, and lived in a cultural context, evident in the Arab American culture. Hence, spirituality seems to be a cultural expression in its own right (MacDonald, Freidman, Brewczynski, Holland, Salagmae, Mohan, Gubrij, & Cheong, 2015; Puig & Fukuyama, 2008; Rich & Cinamon, 2007).

Considering the role the Arabic culture plays in the lives of Arab American adolescents in a clinical context has been shown to be particularly important based on the present study. The importance of family processes in the lives of participants suggests the benefit of mental health professionals to include a family systems lens when conceptualizing their Arab American adolescent clients. Results also imply that family involvement and/or family treatment may have a significant effect in improving the development of an Arab American adolescent client. There is a high potential that this may lead to positive outcomes. Study results also suggest that level of emotional adjustment in an Arab American adolescent may affect his/her prognosis and treatment outcomes. Hence, it is possible that when clinicians focus on self development and awareness in addition to assisting Arab American youth in searching for meaning and purpose, positive outcomes can occur such as decreasing the likelihood of experiencing acculturative stressors. This study will hopefully help clinicians develop specific interventions tailored to the Arab American adolescent experience that are culturally appropriate and sensitive. This will inevitably decrease the potential for misunderstandings between Arab American clientele and their clinicians.

Future research studies will need to address the barriers faced during data collection, including the difficulties collecting parental consent, the impressibility of recruitment in school settings, and providing more effective incentives. Since the Arab American community tends to be cautious and suspicious of research studies, it would be important to build trust and connections within the community to address this barrier. Researchers need to be particularly careful in assuring confidentiality and emphasizing the communal need and benefit for research studies (Amer, 2014; Amer & Bagasra, 2013; Britto & Amer, 2007). Schools have been the main sources of data collection for previous studies on adolescent

experiences since they allow for easy access to a large number of potential study participants (e.g., Golden, 1987; Phinney, 1992; Rayle & Myers, 2004).

Similar to the nature of any research study, this study's conclusions not only suggest some answers, but also prompt some questions. This study will hopefully encourage future research and inquiry. Plans for future studies on Arab American adolescents' experiences and development include expanding upon the present research findings. This will include expanding the sample size and replicating study investigations with participants from the same age group as well as comparing experiences across age groups. It would be beneficial to compare the experiences of Arab American adolescents to Arab American young adults. This type of developmental research will elucidate if cultural identity development and experiencing sociopolitical stressors changes with time. In addition, it would be interesting to include the experiences of adolescents from other minority cultural, racial, and ethnic groups and explore how they compare to the experiences of Arab American adolescents. Potentially promising and important results could be obtained from such research. This researcher will continue to work with the Arab American community in hopes of helping decrease their negative experiences. This study as well as similar research studies will help promote tolerance and understanding as well as increase the community's positive visibility.

Appendix A:

Study Questionnaires

Standard Demographics Questionnaire

1. What is your race? What is your ethnicity?
    a. What are your parents' race and their ethnicity?
2. How old are you?
    a. How old are your parents?
3. What is your gender?
4. What is your marital status?
    a. What is your parents' marital status?
5. Where were you born?
    a. Where were your parents born?
6. What is your religious affiliation?
    a. What is your parents' religious affiliation(s)?
7. How many years have you lived in the United States?
    a. How many years have your parents lived in the United States?
8. Where do you currently live?
    a. Where do your parents currently live?
9. What is your parents' country of origin?
10. What is your family's income level?
11. What grade are you in?
    a. What is the highest level of education that your parents have completed?

The Everyday Discrimination Scale (ED)

In your day-to-day life, how often do any of the following things happen to you?

1. You are treated with less courtesy than other people are.
2. You are treated with less respect than other people are.
3. You receive poorer service than other people at restaurants or stores.
4. People act as if they think you are not smart.
5. People act as if they are afraid of you.
6. People act as if they think you are dishonest.
7. People act as if they're better than you are.
8. You are called names or insulted.
9. You are threatened or harassed.

Choose one for all items:
Almost everyday
At least once a week
A few times a month
A few times a year
Less than once a year
Never

Follow-up Question (Asked only of those answering "A few times a year" or more frequently to at least one question.):

What do you think is the main reason for these experiences?

Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress Scale (SAFE)

The following statements indicate how you perceive cultural stress. For each statement below, please check only one box.

1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Disagree, and 4 = Strongly Disagree

1. I feel uncomfortable when others make jokes about Arabic culture.
2. My family members do not understand my American values.
3. My family members and I have different expectations about my future.
4. It bothers me that I cannot be with my family.
5. Being Arab can be a limitation in looking for a good job.
6. Many people have stereotypes about Arabic culture.
7. Living in the U.S. gives me stress.
8. It bothers me when I think of my limited English skills.
9. Other ethnic people try to stop me from advancing.
10. I get pressure from others to become a part of the American culture.
11. Because I am Arab, I do not get enough credit for the work I do.
12. It bothers me when I lose contacts with friends or families in the Middle East.
13. Other ethnic friends exclude me from activities because of my Arabic background.
14. People look down upon me when I practice my Arabic customs.
15. It will be better if I have more Arabs in my neighborhood.
16. I will gain more respect if I were in the Middle East.

Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA)

Please enter *one* of the numbers to the right of the questions to indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement.

Many of these questions will refer to your *heritage culture*, meaning the original culture of your family (other than American). It may be the culture of your birth, the culture in which you have been raised, or any culture in your family background. If there are several, pick the one that has influenced you *most* (e.g. Arab, Middle Eastern, Irish, Chinese, Mexican, African). If you do not feel that you have been influenced by any other culture, please name a culture that influenced previous generations of your family. Your heritage culture (other than American) is: _____

Disagree

Agree

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8

9

1. I often participate in my *heritage* cultural traditions.
2. I often participate in mainstream American cultural traditions.
3.   I would be willing to marry a person from my *heritage culture*.
4. I would be willing to marry a white American person.
5. I enjoy social activities with people from the same *heritage culture* as myself.
6. I enjoy social activities with typical American people.
7. I am comfortable interacting with people of the same *heritage culture* as myself.
8.   I am comfortable interacting with typical American people.
9. I enjoy entertainment (e.g. movies, music) from my *heritage culture*.
10. I enjoy American entertainment (e.g. movies, music).
11. I often behave in ways that are typical of my *heritage culture*.
12. I often behave in ways that are typically American.
13. It is important for me to maintain or develop the practices of my *heritage culture*.
14. It is important for me to maintain or develop American cultural practices.
15. I believe in the values of my *heritage culture*.
16. I believe in mainstream American values.
17. I enjoy the jokes and humor of my *heritage culture*.
18. I enjoy white American jokes and humor.
19. I am interested in having friends from my *heritage culture*.
20. I am interested in having white American friends.

Expressions of Spirituality Inventory- Revised (ESI-R)
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This is a questionnaire which concerns your experiences, attitudes, beliefs and lifestyle practices pertaining to spirituality. Below are several statements. Read each statement carefully. Using the five point scale described below, rate the extent to which you agree with each statement as it applies to you and put your response in the space provided. There are no right or wrong answers. Please respond to every statement and respond as honestly as possible.

0------------------1------------------2------------------3------------------4
Strongly   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Agree

_____ 1. Spirituality is an important part of who I am as a person
_____ 2. I have had an experience in which I seemed to be deeply connected to everything
_____ 3. It always seems that I am doing things wrong
_____ 4. It is possible to communicate with the dead
_____ 5. I believe that going to religious services is important
_____ 6. Spirituality is an essential part of human existence
_____ 7. I have had an experience in which I seemed to transcend space and time
_____ 8. I am not comfortable with myself
_____ 9. I believe witchcraft is real
_____ 10. I feel a sense of closeness to a higher power
_____ 11. I am more aware of my lifestyle choices because of my spirituality
_____ 12. I have had a mystical experience
_____ 13. Much of what I do in life seems strained
_____ 14. It is possible to predict the future
_____ 15. I see myself as a religiously oriented person
_____ 16. I try to consider all elements of a problem, including its spiritual aspects, before I make a decision
_____ 17. I have had an experience in which I seemed to merge with a power or force greater than myself
_____ 18. My life is often troublesome
_____ 19. I do not believe in spirits or ghosts
_____ 20. I see God or a Higher Power present in all the things I do
_____ 21. My life has benefited from my spirituality
_____ 22. I have had an experience in which all things seemed divine
_____ 23. I often feel tense
_____ 24. I think psychokinesis, or moving objects with one's mind, is possible
_____ 25. I practice some form of prayer
_____ 26. I believe that attention to one's spiritual growth is important
_____ 27. I have had an experience in which I seemed to go beyond my normal everyday sense of self
_____ 28. I am an unhappy person
_____ 29. It is possible to leave your body
_____ 30. I believe that God or a Higher Power is responsible for my existence

Familial Ethnic Socialization Measure (FESM)

Please rate (between 1 and 5) how much you agree with each of the following items.
1 = Not at all & 5 = Very much

1. My family teaches me about my ethnic/cultural background.	1	2	3	4	5
2. My family encourages me to respect the cultural values and beliefs of our ethnic/cultural background.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My family participates in activities that are specific to my ethnic/cultural group.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Our home is decorated with things that reflect my ethnic/cultural background.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The people who my family hangs out with the most are people who share the same ethnic/cultural background as my family.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My family teaches me about the values and beliefs of our ethnic/cultural background.	1	2	3	4	5
7. My family talks about how important it is to know about my ethnic/cultural background.	1	2	3	4	5
8. My family celebrates holidays that are specific to my ethnic/cultural background.	1	2	3	4	5
9. My family teaches me about the history of my ethnic/cultural background.	1	2	3	4	5
10. My family listens to music sung or played by artists from my ethnic/cultural background.	1	2	3	4	5
11. My family attends things such as concerts, plays, festivals, or other events that represent my ethnic/cultural background.	1	2	3	4	5
12. My family feels a strong attachment to our ethnic/cultural background.	1	2	3	4	5

Follow-up Question: *What has your family taught you about Arabic culture?*

Study Introductions

General introduction to study:

I am interested in learning about your life. I will be asking you questions about what your life is like, who you see yourself as being, and how you have come to view yourself in that way. Please be honest and reflective and answer all of the questions.

Introduction before each questionnaire:

This section will ask you questions about [your experiences with prejudice/your experiences of stress related to culture/how you identify yourself/your experiences with spirituality/your experiences with family and culture]. If you would like to proceed, then please answer the questions below. If not, then you are welcome to exit this portal by clicking on the icon below. Thank you!

At end of the questionnaires:

Thank you for participating in this study! Your participation is greatly appreciated. As a gesture of appreciation for your participation, your identification number will be placed in a raffle for a $50 gift card valid at Twelve Oaks mall in Novi, MI.

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ABSTRACT

FAMILY SOCIALIZATION, CULTURAL IDENTITY FORMATION, AND
SPIRITUALITY AS PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR ARAB AMERICAN
ADOLESCENTS' PERCEIVED DISCRIMINATION AND ACCULTURATIVE STRESS

By

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Cultural identity formation has important implications for the psychological development of
individuals, especially for developing adolescents. In particular, the cultural identity of Arab
American adolescents has not been well studied despite the sociopolitical tensions this
population may experience in post-9/11 America. This study explored the factors related to
the cultural identity formation of Arab American adolescents, specifically the relationships
between family socialization (i.e., how much the family has taught and exposed children to
their heritage, cultural practices, and cultural values) and cultural identity formation (i.e., the
degree to which adolescents identify themselves as having a bicultural identity or an Arab
cultural identity). Moreover, to investigate adolescents' experience of sociopolitical tensions,
the study examined the relationships between participants' cultural identity and their ratings
of perceived discrimination and acculturative stress as moderated by spirituality. Levels of
spirituality and bicultural identity showed protective effects against participants'
experiencing acculturative stress, but not perceived discrimination experiences. The

combination of experiencing family cultural socialization, having high levels of biculturalism, reporting high spiritual existential wellbeing predicted experiencing less acculturative stress experiences. Family cultural socialization had the most robust relationships across variables suggesting the influence of family processes on the lives of participants. Interesting findings were found when spirituality was explored dimensionally signifying that the sample views spiritual existential wellbeing as a protective factor rather than general spirituality. The participants' cultural context was taken into consideration and discussed. Gender differences were also explored. The findings of this study have important social as well as clinical implications for understanding the cultural identity of Arab American adolescents and its related factors. These implications as well as future directions are discussed.

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