PERCEPTIONS AND BEHAVIORS THAT ENCOURAGE OR IMPEDE
ADVANCEMENT OR ATTAINMENT OF LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN HIGHER
EDUCATION BY MUSLIM WOMEN WEARING HIJAB

A Dissertation presented to
the Faculty of the Graduate School
at the University of Missouri-Columbia

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
VICTORIE JOYCE-ANN KELLEY-HOLLWELL, B.S., M.S., ED.S.

Dr. Barbara N. Martin, Dissertation Supervisor

DECEMBER 2008
The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School, have examined the dissertation entitled

PERCEPTIONS AND BEHAVIORS THAT ENCOURAGE OR IMPEDE ADVANCEMENT OR ATTAINMENT OF LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION BY MUSLIM WOMEN WEARING HIJAB

Presented by Victorie Joyce-Ann Kelley-Hollwell,

A candidate for the degree of Doctor of Education

And hereby certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

_______________________________________
Dr. Barbara Martin, Major Advisor

_______________________________________
Dr. Patricia Antrim

_______________________________________
Dr. Linda Bigby

_______________________________________
Dr. Sandra Hutchinson

_______________________________________
Dr. Michael Jinks
DEDICATION

I thank Allah for allowing me to pursue a higher education degree and bringing wonderful people in my life to assist me in this endeavor. A special dedication goes to my husband Carlos Hollwell. It is because of his influence that I decided to pursue a doctorate. He has been my rock throughout this process and I thank him for his understanding and patience while, I was away working on my topic and for the two summers he held down the fort. Additionally, thank you Darius and Akila for not making your mom feel guilty about pursuing her dream and reminding me by saying “have you worked on your homework.” And thank you, Mom (Cynthia Gray), Tondaling Abdullah, Huda (Kim Malzone), Rose Munoz, Najiah (Diana Helwani), Iman (Yvonne Alashwawi), and Niemeh Abdullah for keeping an eye on my children when Carlos was on night shift and making sure they were safe and had good nutritious meals, as well as your support as I pursued my educational aspirations. Next, I wish to thank Sheikh Abdullah Idris Ali for his spiritual advising and Islamic scholarship as well as Rita Shadeed and Alicia Miguel for their assistance with editing. Moreover, I thank those who constantly encouraged me as I ventured on this journey. This includes all those mentioned above as well as second summer team members Rhonda Frazelle, Donald Scott, and Ruthann Williams. As a team, we put all that we learned over the last two years in practice. Susan Meador for her constant mention of “Soon to Be Dr. Hollwell;” to Rebecca Owens who years prior purchased me an attaché case to serve two purposes, to look good at work and a tacit reminder to aspire me to pursue a doctoral degree. And to those who provided the initial references as part of the application process into the program: Dean James Baber, Ph. D., Dr. Don Doucette, Dr. Sue Slusarki, and Dr. Carol Ellison.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, I would like to thank Sandy Hutchinson for conducting an orientation for those interested in pursuing a doctorate degree and for all her convincing arguments to choose the Educational Leadership and Policy cooperative program. I would also like to thank my advisor Dr. Barbara Martin for her review and critique of my dissertation. I could not have done this without your guidance. Furthermore, I want to thank her for encouraging me to conduct my research on this topic. I may not have chosen this topic on my own. As a result, I have grown mentally and spiritually. Second, I sincerely thank my dissertation committee members, Doctors Barbara Martin, Patricia Antrim, Linda Bigby, Sandra Hutchinson, and Michael Jinks for providing their time and feedback during this process. Your dedication to me will never be forgotten. Furthermore, I would like to send a special thanks to the Educational Leadership & Policy instructional team for providing the knowledge and experience to accomplish this goal. Because of the format and assignments of the program, especially the first summer, I felt equipped to complete the dissertation stage and become an educational leader.

Last, but not least, I want to thank the participants who took part in this study. It was because of your willingness to be forthright and candid about your experiences, perceptions, aspirations, and barriers that the once muffled voice of Muslim women who wear hijab in leadership positions in the United States has an opportunity to be heard.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ........................................................................................................... ii
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS ...................................................................................................... viii
ABSTRACT ............................................................................................................................... ix

Chapter

1. INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................. 1
   Conceptual Underpinnings of the Study .............................................................................. 2
   History of Critical Race Theory ......................................................................................... 3
   Critical Race Theory in Education ..................................................................................... 4
   Storytelling and Critical Race Theory ............................................................................... 5
   Statement of the Problem .................................................................................................. 6
   Purpose of the Study .......................................................................................................... 7
   Research Questions ........................................................................................................... 8
   Limitations and Assumptions ............................................................................................ 9
   Design Controls ................................................................................................................ 10
   Definitions of Key Terms .................................................................................................. 11
   Summary ........................................................................................................................... 16

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE .................................................................................................. 18
   Introduction ....................................................................................................................... 18
   History of Islam in the United States ............................................................................... 20
      Pre-Columbian Past ...................................................................................................... 20
      The African Slave Trade ............................................................................................... 21
      The Immigration Movement ......................................................................................... 22
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The African American Movement</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islam as Culture and Identity</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of Experience on Identity</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Cultural Practice</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Rights and the Rights of Muslim women Post in Pre-Islamic Arabia</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Spirituality of Muslim women According to Islam</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Intellectual Ability of Muslim women According to Islam</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic Cultural Dress and Style of Muslim women</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of Islamic Dress</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Islamic Dress</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of Islamic Dress</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Enforcement versus Self Enforcement of Hijab</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors Encouraging Women in Education Leadership</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors Discouraging Women in Education Leadership</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies for Increasing Muslim women in Education Leadership</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenets and History of Critical Race</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Race in Education</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narratives and Storytelling</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale for use of a Case Study</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Population and Sample .................................................................65
Data Collection and Instrumentation ...........................................70
  Interview Protocol ...................................................................72
  Observation Protocol ..............................................................73
  Focus Group Protocol ..............................................................74
Data Analysis .............................................................................75
  Interview Analysis ..................................................................76
  Document Analysis ..................................................................77
  Observation Analysis ..............................................................77
Credibility and Consistency .........................................................78
Summary ....................................................................................79

4. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA ..........................................80
  Introduction ..............................................................................80
  Study Design ............................................................................81
  Data Collection Methods ........................................................81
  Conceptual Underpinnings .......................................................83
  Research Questions ..................................................................85
  Process of Data Analysis ..........................................................85
  Setting .....................................................................................86
  Participants ...............................................................................87
  The Interviews and Focus Groups ............................................98
  Research Questions: Analysis of Data ....................................99
    Research Question 1 ..............................................................100
    Research Question 2 ..............................................................102
Research Question 3 ................................................................. 104
Research Question 4 ................................................................. 107
Research Question 5 ................................................................. 108
Endorsing Inclusion ................................................................. 111
Institution Policy ........................................................................ 112
Hiring Process ........................................................................... 114
Initiatives and Activities .......................................................... 116
Connecting with The Other ....................................................... 121
Display of Scholarship .............................................................. 123
Display of Skills ....................................................................... 125
Display of Openness ................................................................. 126
Conclusion ............................................................................... 130

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY ................................................................. 132

Introduction .............................................................................. 132
Summary of Findings ................................................................. 133
Conclusions ............................................................................. 139
Circumstantial ......................................................................... 140
Role of Islam ............................................................................ 140
True to Self, True to Profession ............................................... 141
Institutions Role in Diversity .................................................. 141
The Real World ....................................................................... 142
Limitations .............................................................................. 142
Implications for Practice ................................................................. 145
Recommendations for Future Research ........................................ 147
Concluding Overview ..................................................................... 148
REFERENCES CITED ......................................................................... 150
APPENDIXES
A. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) ....................................... 165
B. INFORMED CONSENT ................................................................. 168
C. FORMS ......................................................................................... 190
D. DATA CODES ............................................................................... 194
E. RESEARCH QUESTIONS ............................................................... 197
VITA ................................................................................................. 205
# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Factors contributing to Non Stereotypical Perceptions of Muslim Women</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Theme 1: Endorsing Inclusion</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Theme 2: Connecting with The Other</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Conclusions Based on Study Findings</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PERCEPTIONS AND BEHAVIORS THAT ENCOURAGE OR IMPEDE
ADVANCEMENT OR ATTAINMENT OF LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN HIGHER
EDUCATION BY MUSLIM WOMEN WEARING HIJAB

Victorie Joyce-Ann Kelley-Hollwell

Dr. Barbara N. Martin, Dissertation Supervisor

ABSTRACT

“The quest for greater awareness and knowledge can also help our country advance in its mission to set an example for the rest of the world by moving beyond tolerance towards accepting and even celebrating racial, ethnic or religious differences. For all these reason, it is increasingly vital for America to develop a better understanding of Islam and for Muslims to become more fully a part of the structures of American democracy and civil society”
Afridi

The purpose of this study was to identify factors that encouraged or impeded Muslim women wearing hijab from attaining or advancing in positions of leadership in higher education institutions in the United States. The researcher viewed the study through the lens of Critical Race Theory (CRT), which challenges traditional educational beliefs and practices. The overarching questions guiding this investigation centered on strategies Muslim women who wear hijab have used to overcome adversity and how institutions supported the aspirations of these women.

The study population consisted of two Muslim female leaders wearing hijab and working in higher education in the United States and these women’s colleagues and administrators. The setting was a Midwestern college. The researcher chose a case study approach because of its qualitative and hypothesis-generating, rather than quantitative and hypothesis-testing nature (Merriam, 1998). Furthermore, a qualitative approach
emphasizes a holistic description of the situation (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). Data collection methods included on-site campus observations, interviews, two focus groups, and an analysis of campus documents. Informal interviews were conducted with two Muslim educational leaders and their superiors and focus groups were conducted with their colleagues at the college and assisted in supporting and triangulation of the data. The study findings articulated the importance of the role institutions of higher education played in creating environments that endorse inclusion for recruiting, employing, supporting and promoting aspiring Muslim female leaders; and the importance of relationships or connecting with The Other- between Muslims and non Muslims in breaking down barriers and stereotypes of Muslim women to support recruit, employ, and promote aspiring Muslim female leaders. The results of this inquiry could impact both K-12 institutions and higher education institutions as they address the issue of engaging Muslim students, creating inclusive climates, and hiring Muslim staff, faculty, and administrators.
CHAPTER ONE
Introduction to the Study

The United States Census Bureau (2007) reported Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world. The world population stands at 6.6 billion people while Muslims make up 1.7 billion of the planet’s inhabitants, a fifth of the world’s residents. This increase ranks Islam second of the world’s major religions (Afridi, 2001; Lunde, 2002). The United States State Department (2007) estimated 5-7 million Muslims reside in the United States. The Muslim population in the United States has grown substantially and Muslims are becoming increasingly visible. Additionally, Muslims make up a considerable portion of the educational system, yet are under-represented in positions of leadership. More specifically, the absence of Muslim women, who wear hijab (a loose full body covering, excluding the hands and face) in leadership positions, presents a problem. Pickerden (2002) posited, “Muslim women have long been under-represented in higher education institutions for a variety of reasons” (p. 39). For many, Muslims remain “the other--the outsider, the enemy, the threat” (Afridi, 2001, p. 4). Afridi further stated the distortion of Islam or Islamophobia has contributed to a fear of anything Islamic. Hertz-Lazarowitz and Shapira (2005) asserted, whatever the reason, the absence of women in formal school leadership positions reflects their status in society.

According to McCloud (2007), Muslim female leaders have been recognized in many countries, but not in the United States. Shepard (1999) cited as negative attitudes, socialization patterns, levels of aspiration, and lack of support as examples of institutional barriers that contributed to the lack of Muslim women in education leadership. McCreight (1999) attributed the decrease to cultural and professional barriers. Knott and
Khokher (1993) added, trying to balance double cultures, or as Tyrer and Ahmad (2006) described “juggling a dual life” (p. 11), is sometimes a barrier. Afridi (2001) cited the absence is due to Muslim women not speaking up.

To examine racial barriers faced by those marginalized in the dominant society, researchers have utilized the Critical Race Theory (CRT). CRT challenges dominant culture ideas and ideologies by utilizing the voice of the marginalized, in the form of storytelling, to examine ideas and ideologies through the lens of the oppressed (Yosso, 2005). This allows participants to employ their version of the phenomenon which adds a different perspective and understanding of the event. The underpinnings of CRT, its tenets, history, use in education, and in storytelling in providing Muslim women a “voice” in academia are discussed in this chapter. Additionally, the problem, purpose, research questions, limitations, and assumptions, design, and key terms of this study will also be addressed.

**Conceptual Underpinnings of the Study**

A traditional framework used to examine practices within the dominant society are appropriate for understanding the systems, values, and beliefs of American culture; however, a postmodern framework would be more appropriate for studying underrepresented populations (Marshall & Gerstl-Pepin, 2005). The theoretical foundation of this study was guided by a postmodern perspective. Postmodernism seeks to examine submerged issues faced by the marginalized populations (Carrette & Keller, 1999; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). This research used the postmodern perspective of CRT as its lens (Yosso, 2005).
CRT examines how racism is embedded into normative assumptions about policy, schooling, and research (Marshall & Gerstl-Pepin, 2005) and the need to study and transform the relationships among race, racism, and power (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001) in organizations. When segments of a population lack a platform to showcase their beliefs and personal reality, it creates the perception that their needs are not being met and their concerns are not valued. To complicate matters, multiple constructs like “interactions between race class, gender, sexual orientation, and other forms of difference (Marshall & Gerstl-Pepin, 2005, p. 98) create a complex dichotomy which creates the perception that a multiplicity of needs and values are undervalued.

History of Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory was developed in the 1970s. CRT has its foundation in Critical Legal Studies (CLS). CRT evolved in response to race-based bias in the legal system (Lyn and Parker, 2006). According to Crenshaw, Delgado, Lawrence, and Matsuda (1993) six unifying themes define the CRT movement, which are as follows: “1) CRT recognizes that racism is endemic to American life; 2) CRT expresses skepticism toward dominant legal claims of neutrality, objectivity, colorblindness, and meritocracy; 3) CRT challenges a historicism and insists on a contextual/historical analysis of the law….Critical race theorists…adopt a stance that presumes that racism has contributed to all contemporary manifestations of group advantage and disadvantage; 4) CRT insists on recognition of the experiential knowledge of people of color and communities of origin in analyzing law and society; 5) CRT is interdisciplinary; and 6) CRT works toward the end of eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression” (p. 6).
Researchers (Delgado, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1998) suggested Critical Legal Studies (CLS) could not accommodate race-based biasness strategies for social transformation of the legal system. Because of this shortfall, CRT scholars detached from CLS and formed the CRT movement. The movement initially focused on Civil Rights legislation (Yosso, 2005). Earlier forms of CRT focused on black/white analysis but later incorporated women, persons of color, whites, and religion (Arriola, 1997; Caldwell, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 1997; Wing, 1997, 2000).

**Critical Race Theory in Education**

CRT is utilized in education to examine education policy (Gloria Ladson-Billing, 1998) as a way to challenge traditionally held views of equal opportunity and the declaration of color-blind impartiality (Bernal, 2002; Creshaw, 1993; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billing, 1998; Yosso, 2005). According to researchers (Brayboy, 2002; Dixson & Rousseau, 2005; Parker, 1998; Tate, 1996; Valencia, 1997), CRT is used to give voice to those marginalized in society in the form of real life stories. Solorzano (1997) asserted, CRT can be used in education to inform theory, research, pedagogy, curriculum, and policy. As such, CRT can be applied as a lens to examine those oppressed in higher education and institutions dedicated to social justice. Solorzano (1997, 1998) identified five themes of CRT that informed education theory, research, pedagogy, curriculum, and policy: (1) the intercentricity of race and racism; (2) the challenge to dominant ideology; (3) the commitment to social justice; (4) the centrality of experiential knowledge; and (5) the utilization of interdisciplinary approaches (p.73). Yosso (2005) wrote:
CRT in education [is] a theoretical and analytical framework that challenges the ways race and racism impact educational structures, practices, and discourses. CRT is conceived as a social justice project that works toward the liberatory potential of schooling. This acknowledges the contradictory nature of education, wherein schools most often oppress and marginalize while they maintain the potential to emancipate and empower. Indeed, CRT in education refutes dominant ideology and White privilege while validating and centering the experiences of People of Color. CRT utilizes transdisciplinary approaches to link theory with practice, scholarship with teaching, and the academy with the community. (p. 74)

*Storytelling and Critical Race Theory*

A unique facet of CRT is storytelling. Delgado (1989) and Tate (1996) posited that storytelling (or counterstorytelling) allows individuals and groups to offer their perspective of an event. Through counterstorytelling individuals who normally do not have a voice challenge the status quo by constructing and projecting their own reality of the situation. Muhtaseb (2007) stated Arabs and Muslims, particularly women, are one group that deserves attention. Careete and Keller (1998) asserted that CRT can be used as a lens to rethink the concept of gender identity as it relates to religion. As such, CRT can be used to tell the story of Muslim women who provide their perspective of challenges and adversity faced while seeking or advancing in leadership positions.

The end goal of qualitative research is closely related to critical race leadership theory. CRT employs the use of storytelling to look at power relationships from both an overt and covert power position (Marshall & Gerstl-Pepin, 2005; Thompson, 2004) and
seeks to understand values of the marginalized (Ladson-Billings, 1998). According to Merriam (1998) the use of story telling is a method used in qualitative research and provides a detailed description of the member’s meaning or a historical understanding of the roots of these suppressed issues. As such, using the lens of CRT to employ a qualitative method to examine this premise would provide a historical understanding of the roots of the suppressed issues identify how policy and values are intricately connected, and how policies convey societal norms that help maintain elite power structures (Yukl, 2006).

Statement of the Problem

This study attempted to identify factors that encouraged or impeded Muslim women who wore hijab in attaining leadership positions. These factors may work alone or be interrelated. The absence of Muslim women in leadership positions who wear hijab is particularly important considering the growth of the Muslim population in the United States coupled with the nation's values of promoting equality, accepting others, and embracing diversity (Afridi, 2001). A widely held value in American culture is that of embracing diversity and multiculturalism, yet policies adopted by educational institutions expect employees to adopt dominant culture ideals through assimilation and acculturation (Bruffee, 1999; Thompson, 2004). Muslim women are often acculturated to dominant culture ideas. Yet, they attempt a balance between embracing some of the societal norms while trying to maintain their own cultural norms and values. The hijab may be seen as a barrier in attaining leadership positions because it goes against established societal norms of appropriate dress code (Ruitenbergen, 2008). In France, the reason given for banning face, head, and body coverings was official policy. In Oklahoma the reason was to
minimize gang affiliation. London cited an increased threat to security, whereas others contend veiling represents oppression of women, or that they are expressions of political resistance and hostility towards Western liberal democratic ideas (Ruitenberg, 2008, p. 18). Whatever the reason, the hijab may be seen as a barrier to attaining leadership positions because it goes against established societal norms that may surface as an organizational policy of professional dress code (Ruitenberg, 2008).

The absence of Muslim women who wear hijab in leadership positions in educational institutions prompted the researcher to conduct this study. CRT was used as the lens to establish how Muslim women wearing hijab have been discouraged or encouraged in their aspirations in attainment of leadership positions.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify factors that encouraged or impeded Muslim women wearing hijab from advancing or attaining leadership positions in the United States. An increasing number of women of diverse backgrounds are entering the workforce to take on leadership positions. As Yukl (2006) stated, there is “more diversity with regard to ethnic, religious, and racial backgrounds” (p. 435). As such, an analysis surrounding the reasons why Muslim women wearing hijab have trouble attaining leadership positions should be researched.

The researcher used a single case study approach by interviewing two Muslim women, from the same institution, who has attained a leadership position in higher education. The researcher chose these women because of her leadership roles in Islamic and secular society, their contributions to higher education, and their knowledge of leadership. The researcher chose a case study approach because of the qualitative
inductive-hypothesis generating technique as compared to a deductive-theory testing technique of quantitative research. Gillham (2000) stated that "the case study researcher, working inductively from what's there in the research setting develops grounded theory: theory that is grounded in the evidence that is turned up" (p. 12). The end goal is to gain an insider’s view of a phenomenon, rather than an outsider's view (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995) or as Merriam (1998) coined, obtaining members’ meaning.

Research Questions

According to Merriam (1998), in qualitative research, the researcher first identifies a problem. Then out of this problem develops questions to guide a study. This study began by identifying the problem of a lack of Muslim women who wear hijab in leadership positions. The literature review considered factors that encouraged or impeded Muslim women wearing hijab while in or seeking to attain leadership positions. The researcher chose to utilize CRT to view this issue. The review also examined strategies for increasing the number of women administrators in positions of leadership. The synthesis of related literature focused on the role that Islam, culture, dress, perception, and higher education institutions played in supporting or hindering Muslim women’s career advancement. As a result of the review of literature the following questions emerged that informed the study.

1. Why do Muslim women who wear hijab choose to go into education leadership?
2. What are strategies Muslim women who wear hijab use in their career path?
3. How can institutions support the aspirations of aspiring Muslim female leaders who wear hijab?
4. How does a higher education leader develop skills to remain resilient in the face of occupational barriers based on majority beliefs and values of the workplace?

5. How does a higher education leader’s public display of spirituality influence reactions by other administrators? Colleagues?

Limitations and Assumptions

One limitation of a case study design is the issue of internal validity and reliability. Internal validity asks how the research matches reality (Merriam, 1998). Reliability “refers to the extent to which research findings can be replicated” (Merriam, 1998, p. 205). Merriam suggested one way to address these issues is for the researcher to utilize multiple methods of data collection triangulating the data. Merriam also suggested five additional methods researchers may use to enhance validity: 1) Checking with members of the study throughout the study to obtain feedback. This is called “member checks” (p. 204); 2) Long-term observations: Conducting repeated observations at the same site (p. 204); 3) Peer examination: Obtaining feedback from colleagues as the findings emerge; 4) Participatory or Collaborative Modes of Research: offering participants a chance to collaborate and provide feedback throughout the process of inquiry (p. 204); and 5) Researcher’s biases: Having the researcher clarify one’s own personal biases at the beginning of the study (p. 205).

A second limitation was the external validity or generalizability of the study as it only focused two Muslim female leaders in higher education. Merriam (1998) wrote that qualitative methods are not meant to be generalizable; they are meant to provide a contextual understanding of the event. As stated above, when utilizing qualitative methods, topics of interest emerge from the subjects being studied rather than having a
predetermined theory to help explain and understand a phenomenon in context (Merriam, 1998).

Another limitation is that participant and researcher biases may have surfaced. The women chosen to inform this study are two Muslim women, and the researcher is a Muslim woman. At the same time, all women provided insight into this issue that other women of different background may not. Additionally, because the researcher is a Muslim and veils, the non Muslim participants may withhold crucial information that may inform the study for fear of hurting the researcher’s feelings. To control for this issue, the researcher will initiate multiple informal visits to get to know the participants and for the participants to get to know the researcher. The researcher will also make each participant feel comfortable throughout the study. One way the researcher will do this is by building rapport on an ongoing basis. Another way to do this is by being forthright in the intent of the study at the onset. Lastly, while Islam is followed by many diverse people from all over the world, the researcher chose American Muslim’s to inform this study. Many studies have been conducted over Muslim women outside of America, but few studies have been completed within the United States. The researcher wanted to gain an insight of the American Muslim experience.

Design Controls

To address internal validity, the researcher triangulated the data (Merriam, 1998) by conducting multiple interviews and observations of the Muslim female leaders’ and their superiors. A focus group was also conducted with the leaders’ colleagues. The researcher also conducted a multitude of document reviews and on site observations.
Transcription was verified through “member checks” (Merriam, 1998, p. 204). The transferability of this case may be determined should future researchers choose to replicate the study. Additionally, the researcher’s personal assumptions and biases were discussed at the onset of the study, thus, increasing the chance that the study can be replicated at another site (Merriam, 1998). Furthermore, to address external validity or generalization, the researcher used thick, rich description. Merriam affirmed that it is important that the researcher provide “enough description so that readers will be able to determine how closely their situations match the research situation, and hence, whether findings can be transferred” (p. 211).

Additionally, this researcher is aware of the potential for researcher bias, ideological preconceptions, and subjectivity. “The worth of the study is the degree to which it generates theory, description, or understanding” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 34). The use of detailed field notes, inclusive of reflections regarding personal subjectivity, served as a guard against personal bias. The data were collected exclusively by the one researcher, thus consistency in data collection was established. Furthermore, the interview scripts were presented to participants for feedback regarding fittingness establishing the fact that the researcher conveyed with words what the participant wished to express during the interview session. Changes and corrections were made to enhance the credibility and reliability of the collected data through member checking as well.

Definitions of Key Terms

The following terms were identified by the researcher as important to the understanding of the investigation. They are as follows:
Allah. [Al-LAH] This is an Arabic term which literally means, “The God.” It is used by Muslims as the proper name for God. Muslims view Allah as the creator and Sustainer of everything in the universe, who is transcendent, has not physical form, and has no associates who share in His divinity. In the Qur’an, God is described as having at least ninety-nine Divine Names, which described His attributes (Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), 1995, p. 104).

Critical Race Theory. Critical Race Theory (CRT) is "a strategy to foreground and account for the role of race and racism in education and works toward the elimination of racism as part of a larger goal of opposing or eliminating other forms of subordination based on gender, class, sexual orientation, and national origin" (Solorzano 1998, p. 25) and to analyze religion in regards to religious identity (Carrette & Keller, 1999).

Giving Voice. Giving voice is obtaining and telling the stories of oppressed groups, thus empowering previously unacknowledged, silenced and marginalized groups (Solorzano, 1998).

Hadith. [Ha-Deeth] Unlike the verses contained in the Qur’an, Hadith are the sayings and traditions of Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings Be Upon Him-PBUH) himself, and from part of the record of the Prophet’s Sunnah (way of life example). The Hadith recorded the words and deeds, explanations, and interpretations of the Prophet concerning all aspects of life. Hadith are found in various collections compiled by Muslim scholars in the early centuries of the Muslim civilization. Six such collections are considered most authentic (Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), 1995, p. 106).
Halal. Halal is any act or deed which is permissible by Allah, also known as Islamic law (Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), 2007).

Haram. Haram is any act or deed which is prohibited by Allah and will incur His wrath and punishment (Islam 101, 2007).

Hijab. Hijab can be interchanged with the word veil. Commonly, the term hijab is used to denote the scarf or other type of head-covering worn by Muslim women throughout the world. However, the broader definition of the term refers to a state of modesty and covering that encompasses a woman’s entire body, excluding hands and face (Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), 1995, p. 107).

Iftar. Iftar is an Arabic term meaning the breaking of the fast or sawn after sunset during the month of Ramadan. (Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), 2007).

Imam. The Imam is the leader of the prayer (Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), 2007).

Islam. Islam is an Arabic word derived from the three-letter root s-l-m. Islam Literally means "submission to the will of Allah." Its meaning encompasses the concepts of peace, greeting, surrender, and commitment, and refers commonly to an individual’s surrender and commitment to God the Creator through adherence to the religion by the same name (Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), 1995, p. 108).

Islamophobia. Islamophobia, developed by Francis Fukuyama and Samuel Huntington, refers to unfounded fear of and hostility towards Islam as a result of an impending clash of civilization between Islam and the West. Such fear and hostility leads
to discriminations against Muslims, exclusion of Muslims from mainstream political or social process, stereotyping, the presumption of guilt by association, and finally hate crimes (Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), 2005).

*Jihad.* [jee haad] Jihad literally means 'to strive' or 'to exert to the utmost.' In Islamic parlance it signifies all forms of striving, including armed struggle, aimed at making the Word of God prevail (Islam 101, 2007).

*Jilbab.* [jill baab] A jilbab is a long, loose robe-like coat warn by some Muslim women. Many Muslim women believe that the jilbab fulfills the Quranic requirement for hijab. The jilbab is a head-to-toe garment obscures women's bodily features and hides all parts of the body except hands, feet, face and head. Generally, the jilbab is accompanied by a scarf covering the head (Human Rights Watch in Ssenyonjo, 2007, p. 657).

*Kufi.* A cap worn by some Muslim men (Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), 2007).

*Masjid.* The word masjid is the Arabic word for mosque. The masjid or mosque, like a church or synagogue, is an Islamic house of worship (Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), 2007).

*Muhammad.* (S.A.W.) Muhammad (peace be upon him), is regarded by Muslims as the last and final Messenger of God (Islam 101, 2007).

*Muslim.* [MOO-slim]. The word Muslim, literally (and in the broadest sense), means “one who submits to God.” More commonly, the term describes any person who accepts the creed and teaching of Islam. The word ‘Muhammadan” is a pejorative and offensive misnomer, as it violates Muslims’ most basic understanding of their creed--Muslims do not worship Muhammad, nor do they view him as the founder of the religion.
The word ‘Moslem’ is also incorrect, since it is a corruption of the word ‘Muslim’ (Council on Islamic Education (CAIR), 1995, p.112).

*Niqab*. A niqab is a face veil worn by some Muslim women (Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), 2007).

*PBUH. Peace be upon him*. Somewhat English equivalent of S.A.W. used whenever the name of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is read or heard (Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), 2007).

*Prayer*. Prayer is the second pillar of Islam. Islam mandates structured prayers five times a day. Muslims are also required to attend a weekly congregational prayer on Fridays. During the month of Ramadan, devout Muslims also observe extended evening prayers (Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), 2007).

*Quran*. Islam’s revealed text (Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), 2007).

*Ramadan*. Ramadan is the Islamic holy month of fasting and the ninth lunar month of the Islamic calendar (Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), 2007). Fasting or sawm is obligatory upon every believing Muslim, except for those who are exempted for fasting. Fasting involves abstinence from food, drink, and sexual intercourse from dawn to sunset. Because Ramadan is a lunar month, the start of fasting begins approximately 11 days earlier each year.


**Salah.** Salah is the Arabic word for prayers. There are five daily obligatory prayers. These prayers and their time zones are: 1. Fajr (morning prayer) which is after dawn but before sunrise; 2. Duhr (early afternoon or noon prayer) which occurs early afternoon till late afternoon; 3. 'Asr (late afternoon prayer) which is the late afternoon prayer till sunset; 4. Maghrib (sunset prayer) that occurs just after sunset; 5. Isha (late evening prayer) which occurs late evening till late at night (Islam 101, 2007).

**Sunnah.** [soon a] Also known as Ahadeeth (hadith) as the way the Prophet Muhammad practiced the religion (S.A.W.) (Islam 101, 2007).


**Ummah.** [ooh mah] Ummah, community, or nation, is a special name given to Muslim brotherhood/sisterhood and unity. The Qur'an refers to Muslims as the best Ummah raised for the benefit of all mankind (3:110). At another place, (2:143), it calls them 'the middle nation' (Umma Wasat) a unique characteristic of the Islamic community which has been asked to maintain equitable balance between extremes, pursue the path of moderation and establish the middle way. Such a community of Muslims will be a model for the whole world to emulate (Islam 101, 2007).

**Summary**

Addressed in Chapter one is the under representation of Muslim women in education leadership and an overview of organizational factors, barriers and perceptions faced by these women as well as how the researcher intends to utilize CRT to view this issue. Also provided in this chapter are the research questions to be explored, limitations and assumptions of the study, design controls and key terms that were important to
understanding the investigation. A review of the current literature related to this premise will be addressed in chapter two. The subjects and the research design will be discussed in Chapter Two. In Chapter Three the methodology of the study including the measurement of instruments and sampling procedures is described. Included in Chapter Four is the qualitative analysis of the research questions presented. In Chapter Five, the results of the study are summarized, along with conclusions, recommendations, and with implications provided.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The Muslim population in the United States has grown substantially and Muslims are becoming increasingly visible. Afridi (2001) asserted that it is evident from the increase of Muslims in academia, the rising numbers of chaplains in the military, as well as Ramadan being celebrated in the White House that Islam has had an impact on American society. Additionally, Muslim women are becoming increasingly active in Islamic communities in America as they teach in Islamic schools, preside over Islamic studies programs, and work as authors and public speakers regarding issues critical to Muslim women and the Islamic community (Afridi, 2001; Esposito & Mogahed, 2007).

Yet, as Pickerden (2002) pointed out, "Muslim women have long been under-represented in higher education institutions" (p.5) and absent from positions of education leadership. Hertz-Lazarowitz and Shapira (2005) asserted that the absence of women in formal school leadership positions reflects their status in the society. Muslim feminist researchers concurred and called for a “gender jihad,” or struggle in the name of God, towards socially recognized and institutionalized gender parity (Abugideiri, 2001, p. 2). Afridi (2001) posited that measures need to be taken to address the issue of the under representation of Muslim women. Wadud (2001) further expanded upon this notion and argued:

When Muslims grapple with the notion of equality for women here, the historical silencing of the female voices creates a gap. Understanding both effects of this
gap and the nature of the missing female voice are useful to any consideration of how to correct the gender imbalance. (p. 13, 16)

Creating a balance not only helps Muslim women but also the society. Moreover, keeping with the nation’s values of promoting equality, accepting others, and embracing diversity is more crucial than ever if the United States wants to compete in a global society. According to Afridi (2001),

The quest for greater awareness and knowledge can also help our country advance in its mission to set an example for the rest of the world by moving beyond tolerance towards accepting and even celebrating racial, ethnic or religious differences. For all these reasons, it is increasingly vital for America to develop a better understanding of Islam and for Muslims to become more fully a part of the structures of American democracy and civil society. (p. 5)

This researcher investigated the perceptions and barriers that encouraged or impeded attainment of leadership positions in higher education by Muslim women wearing hijab utilizing the lens of Critical Race Theory (CRT). Thus this literature review is an assessment of the impact Islam has had in the United States as well as the role Islam played for Muslim women. First, the researcher focused on providing a historical background of Muslims in the United States. Second, she analyzed the role Islam played in regards to Muslim identity followed by the impact experience and ethnic cultural practice had on identity and gender perceptions of Muslim women. Additionally, she addressed the rights of women, including the rights of Muslim women pre-Islamic Arabia which incorporated the spiritual and intellectual rights of Muslim women according to Islam. Thirdly, the researcher examined in the literature review the role Islam played in
regard to why and how Muslim women dressed and how they themselves and others perceived their dress. A caveat on the government versus self enforcement was also conveyed. Moreover, the literature review addressed those factors that encouraged or impeded women in general and that of Muslim women wearing hijab while in or seeking to attain leadership positions in education. Finally, strategies for increasing women administrators were also reviewed, and studies on CRT were intertwined throughout the review.

*History of Islam in the United States*

In researching the historical past of Islam in America, four phases of the growth of Muslims in the United States can be identified. Nyang (1999) speculated about the first stage, which is not well documented occurred in the pre-Columbian past while the second stage, agreed upon by most scholars as the initial stage of arrival, occurred with the influx of Muslims in America to the African slave trade (Numan, 1992; Nyang, 2006; Siddiqui, 2007). The third and fourth stages are attributed to the immigration movement followed by the African American movement.

*Pre-Columbian Past*

Although not widely taught in American history, the arrival of Muslims to the United States pre dates Christopher Columbus (Nyang, 1999; Quick, 1996; Sertima, 1976; Wiener, 1922). The first scholar to document a Muslim presence in the Americas was Leo Wiener (1922). Through his linguistic and ethnographic research on Native American groups in Mexico, he was able to identify an Arabic influence from the North Western part of the African continent on the languages of the Mexican people’s native words. Sertima (1976) built upon the work of Wiener. His research focused on historical
sources of data which documented the presence of Africans, yet not limited to Muslims, from the Caribbean and America. Additional support of Wiener’s (1922) research comes from Nyang (1999) which found that Muslims first perused the new world in 1312 when “Mansas Abu Bakr of Mali is believed to have traveled from the Senegambian region of the African coast to the Gulf of Mexico” (Nyang, 1999, p. 12). However, most historians trace the arrival of Islam in the United States to Timbuktu and the arrival of African slaves to the Americas in the early 1500s to the late 1800s (Numan, 1992; Nyang, 2006; Siddiqui, 2007).

_African Slave Trade_

According to Nyang (1999), although exact numbers are unknown, the Atlantic slave trade brought a massive number of African slaves to America. During this African holocaust, it is estimated that 10 million Africans were uprooted and enslaved to cultivate the land of the New World, and 10% of these individuals were Muslims (Numan, 1992; Nyang, 2006; Siddiqui, 2007). Nyang (2006), the Howard University professor who wrote *Islam in the United States of America*, stated that most of the African Muslims were literate, and their literacy posed a threat to the idea that whites were intellectually superior to their African counterparts. As a result, importation of indentured servants from many predominately Muslim nations was banned. These nations included the Jalofs, Biafras, Mandingos, and Hausas-Fullah (Numan, 1992; Nyang, 1999, 2006). Although there were noteworthy Muslim survivors of the slave trade, as well as various accounts of Muslims visiting the United States over the next 500 years, there seemed to be no known Muslim families said to have survived slavery and who maintained Islam as a way of life after this period (Nyang, 1999, Siddiqui, 2007). Of the many reasons for Islam’s
extinction in the new world, Nyang (1999) summed it best when he concluded that the
“harshness of slavery and the determined efforts of the slave masters to separate persons
of the same ethnic background made the survival of Islam problematic” (p. 13). He also
stated that many Muslim slaves returned to their homelands, and those who stayed
reluctantly converted to Christianity because any other religious practice was forbidden.

The Immigration Movement

In the early part of the 1800s, waves of Arab Muslim immigrants from the
Ottoman Empire began arriving along the East coast and in the Midwest. Additionally, to
flee religious persecution, settlers from southern Europe by way of Yugoslavia, Albania,
and Greece, as well as refugees from Palestine, Lebanon, and what is now known as
Pakistan, began to arrive (Numan, 1992; Nyang, 1999; Quick, 1996; Siddiqui, 2007).
Many of these individuals were unskilled and illiterate (Numan, 1992, Nyang, 1999,
Quick, 1996, Siddiqui, 2007). Most settled in Detroit and became part of the auto
industry workforce, “a legacy of the days when Henry Ford employed Lebanese laborers”
(Pipes & Duran, 2002, p. 51). Then, in the early 1950’s the scene changed. Muslim
professionals, many of whom were physicians, began settling in the country after
completing their studies (Siddiqui, 2007).

Two other factors contributed to immigrant migration and the influx of Muslims
in the United States: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and the 1965
Immigration Act. (Nyang, 1999; Pipes & Duran, 2002; The Universal Declaration of
Human Rights of 1948). These acts not only increased the presence of Muslims in the
United States, but also allowed the United States to diversify. The Universal Declaration
of Human Rights of 1948 provided political asylum to individuals oppressed in other
societies. Article 14 of the declaration stated that every person in the world should be able to “seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution” (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 14, ¶ 1). In addition to assisting those seeking asylum, this declaration indirectly became a way for the United States to diversify the society. The 1965 Immigration Act allowed highly skilled immigrants and their families from all over the world to enter the United States. Thus, the legislation placed priority on ability while instituting a way to capitalize on talent worldwide and make the United States a diverse place (Pipes & Duran, 2002).

The African American Movement

Siddiqi (2007) asserted another reason for the Muslim presence in the United States was the emergence of the African American movement in the 1930s. During this time, the first African American mosque, First Muslim Mosque, was built in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (Numan, 1992; Nyang, 1999). Moreover, the Nation of Islam (NOI), one of the largest organizations for African American Muslims, was founded by Fard Muhammad, also known as Wallace Ford, in 1933 (Nyang, 1999). Fard was an immigrant to the United States and built the organization to uplift African American consciousness and promote Islam as a way of life in the United States (Nyang, 1999). However, shortly after establishing the organization, Fard disappeared (Nyang, 1999). His successor Elijah Mohammed continued the vision of his predecessor. Single-handedly, he is known to have produced more African American converts to Islam than any other movement (Numan, 1992; Nyang, 1999). The “Black Islamic” movement prospered up until the exposure of Elijah Muhammad’s promiscuity (Numan, 1992). Muhammad Ali and Malcolm X are the most famous African American Muslims and
“were early adherents of the Black Muslim movement, however, both later embraced broader multiethnic concepts of Orthodox Islam” (Nyang, 1999, p. 6).

Malcolm X, who later became known as El Hajj Malik El Shabazz, was one of Elijah’s most prominent followers, but they began to distance himself from the self-proclaimed prophet after the allegations of Elijah’s promiscuity were proven true (Numan, 1992). Malcolm completely detached himself from Elijah after returning from Hajj. Additionally, because of Malcom X’s Hajj experience, he changed his position, that all members of the white race were evil, and began his own movement of Orthodox Islam (Numan, 1992; Nyang, 1999). In 1965 Malcolm was assassinated, but his death did not stop his followers. Ironically, another strong supporter of Elijah Muhammad, Elijah’s son, Warituddin Muhammad, took leadership of Malcolm’s followers and the spread of Islam (Numan, 1992; Nyang, 1999). Today, there still exists a split between the Nation of Islam and Orthodox Islam, with Louis Farrakhan currently leading the Nation (Numan, 1992; Nyang, 1999).

As the African American movement became stronger and immigrants began to settle, large numbers of Muslims began attending higher education institutions and other Muslim communities began to form (Numan, 1992; Nyang, 1999; Quick, 1996; Siddiqui, 2007). Nyang (1999) asserted “the growing assimilation of most Muslims of the second and third generations has made it more and more imperative for the Muslims to build up structures and develop the mechanisms of self development and self-affirmation” (p. 18). These communities included Islamic centers, mosque, and the formation of Islamic organizations. The Muslim Student Association (MSA) of the United States and Canada, later to be renamed the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), is the organization
today seen as the governing body in the Muslim community of North America about various topics of interest to Muslims (Numan, 1992; Siddiqui, 2007).

Today the Islamic community continues to expand its Muslim populace, and now, according to a recent survey conducted by the American Muslim Council (2007), there are 843 mosques/Islamic centers, 426 Islamic organizations, 89 Islamic publications, and 165 Islamic schools of which 92 are fulltime. Yet, only 1% of Muslim children attend these schools in America (Sound Vision, 2008). Most Muslim children are in public primary and post-secondary institutions. These organizations continue to grow, and Muslims continue to prosper as their dual identities are nurtured as Muslims and Americans in spite of the current increase of anti-Muslim sentiment (Islamophobia) which has grown precipitously since the tragic events of September 11, 2001 (Al-Islam, 2006, p. 74).

*Islam as Culture and Identity*

For Muslims, Islam is their culture. As such, Islam defines their Muslim identities and navigates their way of life. Substantiated by Hussain (1997), Islam “embraces the spiritual, social, moral, economic and cultural life of its followers, as well as their belief in God” (p. 1). The notion of Islam as identity has also been validated by many other researchers (Ahmad, 2001ab; Brah, 1996; Dwyer, 1999; Jacobsen, 1998). As such, one phenomenon that should be noted is the way Muslims categorized themselves when asked about their identity. Muslims often identify ‘being Muslim’ first rather than all other attributes of their individuality (Wyche, 2004).

In a study conducted by Cole and Ahmadi (2003) when participants were asked how they identified themselves, they said they defined themselves by prayer and not by
color. Hence, considering spiritual development independent of students’ “cognitive and affective development ignores and ultimately neglects an essential element influencing student’s and development” (Cole & Ahmadi, 2003, p. 50). These researchers, along with others, demonstrated religious classification of self rejects traditional hegemonic definitions based on racial classification (Ahmad, 2006ab; Cole & Ahmadi, 2003; Dwyer, 1999; Hussain, 1997; Jacobsen, 1998; Wyche, 2004). Badawi (1995) affirmed these findings when noting that in Islam the only characteristics that position men or women to be superior to others is their piousness. For Muslims, Islam is a complete way of life “concerned with the total person, and all acts receive their justification and direction from the teaching that is embodied in Qura'n” (Hussain, 1997, p.8). Badawi (1995) concurred that the Quran is the religious text Muslims defer to as their guide. Shah (2006) also noted, “In spite of variations across the range of Muslim societies, sacred religious texts remain the sources of legitimation, contributing to a philosophical likeness” (p. 366). Hence, because the primary sources of Islam stems from the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) or Hadith (Badawi, 1995; Shaikh, 1995, 1995; Lunde, 2002; Shah, 2006), it is important that one understands the Quran when dealing with Muslims. The Quran guides what Muslims do and say and how they interact and react. For Muslims, the Quran is considered the divine word of Allah (God) as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), from 610-632 C.E. over a span of 20 years (Badawi, et al). Badawai asserted that this sentiment also holds true for the Sunnah. The Sunnah is the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad. These include what he said, what he did, and how he lived and practiced Islam within society. In short, the Sunnah is the embodiment of Quran (Badawi, et al). Shah (2006) affirmed that the Quran presented an “explicit charter
of values and morality aiming at self-discipline and character building and the Prophet is an expression of these moral and ethical values” (p. 375).

*Impact of Experience on Identity*

Former studies have been conducted focusing on the impact experience had on identity and gender perceptions of Muslim women (Ahmad, 2006ab; Dwyer, 1999; Jacobsen, 1998). However, all of these studies were conducted outside the United States. Fauzia Ahmad (2001, 2006b) was one of the first researchers to explore the experiences of Muslim women seeking higher education in London. Her study investigated the impact their educational experiences had on their religious and cultural identities, their subsequent relationships with their families, and personal attitudes towards relationships. The study showed a strong correlation between religion and identity. This study also pointed to a relationship between cultural identity with that of personal and family relationships.

Hamdan (2006) “used the social, cultural, and traditional expectations of women to explore the gender perceptions participants shared” (p. 62). Hamdan (2006) focused on first generation Arab Muslim women living in Canada, their experiences in education institutions and how their gender perception may have changed as a result of navigating two cultures before and after arriving in Canada. The subjects of their study explained, in the educational system in their countries, they were not able to challenge their instructors or openly voice their opinions. Yet, in Canada, subjects reported they found their voice. The respondents also claimed they learned to be reflective and outspoken to question their traditional gender roles and critically examine issues.
Tyrer and Ahmad (2006) expanded upon Hamdan’s (2006) work to include the experience of Muslim women seeking higher education experiences in the United Kingdom (Tyrer, & Ahmad, 2006). The purpose of their study was to identify the impact of religion and culture as it related to equal educational opportunities and employability. These researchers examined institutional factors as well as women’s motivations, experiences, and identities from before they stepped foot on the campus until they departed. In their analysis they attributed the gap of Muslim women participating in education to be due to cultural and religious constraints. Tyrer and Ahmad also found that Muslim women often identified with being Muslim first rather than categorizing themselves using other aspects of their identity, such as nationality or ethnicity. In isolation, “The expressing of Muslim identities by many respondents not only served to reject hegemonic definitions based on racial classifications, but also presented a radically different and less exclusionary way of constructing identities and envisioning social relations” (Tyrer & Ahmad, 2006, p. 42). Their research supported the findings of numerous other studies (Ahmad, 2006; Dwyer, 1999; Jacobsen, 1998). Shah (2006), concurred that “Muslims tended to highlight their religious identity, irrespective of the level of commitment to religious practices” (pp. 371-372). Furthermore, they are identified both by themselves and others as Muslims. Pickerden (2002) expanded upon Shah’s concept and stated, not only do Muslims identify themselves through their faith, but their identity as a Muslim also guides their decisions, mistakes, and way of life.
While it is important to acknowledge the role Quran and Sunnah have in the life of a Muslim, Jamal Badawi (1995) stressed that Islam and ethnic cultural practices may sometimes differ. In Islam, ethnic cultural practices are recognized so long as they do not conflict with the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. He added that Islam teaches that these differences were created so that we learn from one another and the noblest among male, female, or nations are those who are best in conduct. Yet, in spite of this command, Western media has illustrated some actions performed by Muslims are contrary to scripture. Consequently, the ill-conduct of a few Muslims is seen as embedded in the tenets of the religion (Kraemer, 2007). Unfortunately, most of this conduct seems to marginalize Muslim women. Examples include women being forced in marriage, being forced to wear hijab or to uncover, prohibited from taking one’s share in inheritance or partaking in education (Badawi, 1995; Khan, 2001, Moorse, 2007). However, studies abroad have shown that Muslim women understand the difference between Islam and ethnic cultural practices (Ahmad, 2006; Dwyer, 1999; Hamdan, 2006). In a study of Arab Muslim women living in Canada (Hamdan, 2006), respondents were asked whether there is a difference in Islamic text and cultural practice, “some of the women referred to the traditional and cultural practices as merely ‘sexist traditions” (p. 60). Additionally, almost all of the Arab Muslim women commented that Arab Muslim culture defines who an ideal woman is; they claimed that “it is the culture and not the religion which is our problem” (p. 61). Ironically, when the same respondents were asked about their views of an ideal woman almost all of them focused first on the cultural expectation (Hamdan, 2006, p. 61). As one can see, ethnic cultural practice can sometimes dominate the
teachings of the Quran and Sunnah; thus, it is important to understand the difference between the two so as not to attribute ethnic cultural practice as the tenets of Islam.

Kraemer (2007) summed it best when he stated:

> Just because these things happen in countries that purport to be Islamic does not mean that the practices are rooted in Islamic tenets or values. The Quran offers guidance on practices within the home and in the community, and the traditions of the Prophet (PBUH) include what he supported as a practice or a way of life. Conduct that varies from the stipulated norms of Islam and the model behaviors of the Prophet (PBUH) and contradicts the intent of Islam show ignorance. We should not be fooled into thinking it is Islamic, and we should not believe others’ claims that their chosen behavior is Islamic just because they want us to think that. Yet, it is these varied ethnic cultural practices that send a message to Westerners’ that Islam oppresses women. (p. 1)

Women’s Rights and the Rights of Muslim women Post Pre-Islamic Arabia

Muslim women’s rights were unheard of in the seventh century (Shaikh, 1995) and only within the last two centuries were rights afforded to women in the west (Inaboroni, 2008; Landorf & Pagan, 2005; Morse, 2007). The first attempt to obtain women’s rights in the West occurred in 1848 when The Declaration of Sentiments was written (Imbornoni, 2008; Landorf & Pagan, 2005; Morse, 2007). This pronouncement sought to obtain the same rights for women, including voting rights, as afforded to men. However, it was not until 1964 when the Civil Rights Act, which barred discrimination based on race and sex that discrimination practices began to change (Imbornoni, 2008).

Similarly, prior to Islam, Muslim women were denied certain inalienable rights (Badawi 1995; Shaikh, 1995; Morse, 2007).

Badawi (1995) asserted, “It should be noted that in pre-Islamic society women themselves were sometimes objects of inheritance” (p. 17), and Islam provided rights to women. The civil liberties afforded to Muslim men and women consisted of the right to
security, property, inheritance, and employment (Badawi 1995; Shaikh, 1995; Morse, 2007). In regards to property, Badawi reported that Muslim women may keep, sell, or lease their property at will. In fact, money Muslim women obtain from employment belongs to them. Additionally, Muslim women are allowed to lead in any area except for leading prayer of mixed genders (Badawi, 1995; Mattson, 2007). This exception is because prayer contains various positions that are accompanied by bending and prostrating. As such, the format of the prayer makes it unsuitable for a woman to lead in mixed company (Mattson, 2007). Badawi (1995) further stated that it is also traditional for many Muslim women to keep their maiden name, even when married. This is an indication that women are their own person, independent, and not owned.

Researchers (Badawi, 1995; Shaikh, 1995; Khan, 2001) related that Islam also ensured that a Muslim woman is provided security by her spouse physically, emotionally, and spiritually. These securities include: 1) The right to food, clothing, and shelter; 2) The right to just treatment—physically, emotionally, spiritually, and sexually; 3) The right to time with one’s spouse; 4) The right to care for and visit sick relatives if needed, so long as it does not cause harm to the relationship; and 5) The right to protection, including the safeguard of one’s honor, dignity, and defense against jealousy (Council on Islamic Education, p. 37). It must be noted that although Islam has afforded these rights to women, cultural factors must also be taken into account (Badawi, 1995; Shaikh, 1995).

The Spirituality of Muslim women According to Islam

Jamal Badawi (1995) exclaimed, according to Islam, men and women have the same spiritual nature; both have rights over one another and have the same religious and moral duties, and the superiority of a man over a woman or a woman over a man in the
eyes of Allah (God) is determined by the one who has the most piety. Thus, irrespective of gender, language, nationality, or class, both genders stand upon equal footing in the face of Allah (Badawi, 1995). Hamdan (2006) concurred, “In Islam, men and women have the same religious, moral duties, and responsibilities (p. 59).” Badawi (1995) adds, men and women are rewarded equally for their bad and good deeds in this life and the next, and the Quran does not blame women for the “fall of man” nor is pregnancy as punishment for having eaten the forbidden fruit (p.7). Instead, Islam acknowledges the sins of a believer belong to that individual.

*The Intellectual Ability of Muslim women According to Islam*

Researchers (Badawi, 1995; Shaikh, 1995; Khan, 2001) asserted the first revelation provided to the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him (PBUH), and which he delivered to mankind was to “read in the name of your Lord who created you” (Shaikh, p. 13). Badawi asserted, this message was not gender specific and added that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was reported to have said, “Seeking knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim” (p.22). As such, both men and women are accountable for obtaining knowledge.

One of the most prominent female scholars in Islamic history is Aisha (Badawi, 1995; Shaikh, 1995; Khan, 2001). Aisha was one of the wives of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). She committed knowledge of the Quran and Sunnah to memory and narrated over 2,210 traditions and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) which she taught to men and women of the society (Badawi, 1995). She provided rulings on various legalities and was a well known poet and scholar of medicine and history. Badawi (1995) pointed out that the Quran and Sunnah embraces the notion of an educated society which
shares its knowledge with its fellow man or woman. He further stated that the Quran and Sunnah affirmed that teaching others one’s knowledge is valued in Islam, but also the pursuit of knowledge is a duty of all Muslims both male and female (p.22).

Islamic Cultural Dress and Style of Muslim women

Seckinelgin (2007) asserted that prior to the scrutiny of the National Security Council regarding the freedom to wear a headscarf at the university this issue brought up by Islamic groups in the past was seen as “pre-democratic and pre-modern views on women” (Seckinelgin, 2007, p. 755). Mcloud (2007) added, “long before authors such as Ahmed, Kecia Ali, Dr. Fatima Mernissi, Marjane Satrapi and Shirin Ebadi, to name a few, had their memoirs published in the United States, Muslim women had their stories published elsewhere” (p. 22). Smith (2007) concurred that Muslim women have been marginalized in America, not in Europe. Yet, despite the complex meanings inherent in the veil and the existence of historical and anthropological research on the veil and Muslim dress (Chaudhry, 2005; El Guindi, 1999; Muhtaseb, 2007; Seckinelgin, 2007), researchers seldom conducted research on Muslim women who wear hijab or veil, nor have they consulted veiled women in order to understand how the veil functioned in their lives. Indeed, scholars tend to 'ascribe' meaning rather than 'describe' the meaning the veil has for women (Daly, 2007, p. 295). Additionally, most studies that investigate the hijab or veil focused on the Arab, Turkish, and Pakistani experience (Chaudhry, 2005; El Guindi, 1999; Muhtaseb, 2007; Seckinelgin, 2007). Seldom did researchers conduct studies of American Muslim women who veil (Droogsma, 2007). The subsequent sections will provide information regarding the purpose and type of Islamic dress, how
individuals perceive Islamic dress, and a note on who should enforce the practice of covering.

**Purpose of Islamic Dress**

Muslim women who wear hijab stand out in Western society because of their dress (Droogsma, 2007; Mattson, 2007). There are two reasons Muslim women cover: for modesty and because it is obligatory (Badawi, 1995; Droogsma, 2007; Mattson, 2007). The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said there are over 70 branches of iman (faith) and modesty is a branch of Iman (Sahih Bukhari, MSA-USC Compendium of Muslim Text). He also asserted modesty is an ingredient of Iman (Sahih Bukhari, MSA-USC Compendium of Muslim Text). For Muslim women, wearing the hijab is a display of modesty. In a research study conducted by Cole and Ahmadi (2003), respondents affirmed that wearing the hijab is only for the sake of modesty as interpreted within a religious context, where modesty signifies modest dress and chaste interpersonal behavior. From this perspective, veiling is a component of modesty, which presumes a more holistic pursuit toward virtuous human behavior. As such, “the practice of veiling, along with a pursuit toward virtuous behavior is expected and used as a means to strengthen their relationship with God” (pp. 55-56). Mattson (2007) concurred; modest dress and gender interaction coexist, and how one dresses displays his or her modesty. She added, being modestly dressed allows men and women to interact in a wholesome and productive environment.

Badawi (1995) asserted the second reason for wearing hijab is the tenet of faith. He further stated in Islam it is believed that women should cover so as to be known as a
Muslim and not to be annoyed. The eminent Islamic scholar, Dr Ali Jurhah, Mufti of Egypt, summed Badawi’s comments well. He stated:

A Muslim woman is obliged to wear hijab as soon as she reaches puberty, . . . Hijab is known to be essential and necessary in religion; it is not merely a symbol that distinguishes Muslims from non-Muslims. It is an obligation that forms part and parcel of the Islamic religion. (2004, ¶ 4)

Cole and Ahmadi’s (2003) research affirmed this when they also found that Muslim women chose to wear hijab because of religious obligation and other cultural norms. In their research, Muslim women provided the following three standard reasons for covering: 1) it was expected by parents to wear hijab, 2) it was their religious obligation, and 3) due to peer pressure. One Muslim participant was quoted as saying, “often people commend you for covering, and the covering among Muslims is synonymous with being a good Muslim woman” (p. 55).

Drogsma (2007) conducted one of the only studies incorporating American Muslim women’s lived experiences into research on how veiling functions in women’s lives. During their investigation, they found Muslim women felt liberated and free. Respondents clarified their statements by saying that they did not have to aspire to societal image of beauty. Participants further stated that having to conform to the current fashion is more oppressing than covering. They added that covering is a personal choice not to be forced on them by society (Drogsma, 2007). Participants also stated the hijab reminded them of God and served as a personal and worldly protection. As an example, respondents commented the scarf served as a personal protection by reminding them to behave professionally and not to go to places that would compromise their beliefs. The participants further exclaimed that the scarf also served as a worldly protection because it did not provide opportunities for others to “misbehave” or display unwanted behaviors.
towards them. In essence, the “Hijab, helped the women align their behavior with their religious values” (Droogsma, 2007, p. 305) and served as a symbol to society to respect them. Further, the women stressed that hijab helps them resist patriarchal control over their bodies; instead of revealing themselves for men’s pleasure, they chose to resist patriarchal control by covering.

*Types of Islamic Dress*

In the practice of Muslims, the Islamic dress for women takes three main forms, namely “(i) the head scarf or sari (khimar), veil covering the hair and the neck or long enough to cover the bosom; (ii) loose robe or jilbab the head-to-toe garment that obscures women's bodily features and hides all parts of the body except hands and eyes and (iii) the full veil (an all enveloping garment) covering the whole of the body (burka) and including the face veil (niqab/purdah), as enforced by the Taliban in Afghanistan” (Human Rights Watch in Ssenyonjo, 2007, p. 657).

Cole and Ahmadi (2003) asserted the dress of a Muslim woman may vary “depending on an individual’s cultural practice, family tradition, and personal choice” (p. 48). Ssenyonjo (2007) expanded upon this statement and said, “While Islam has no fixed standard as to the style of dress or type of clothing that Muslims must wear, it is widely believed by Muslims that the Islamic religion obliges women (from the age of puberty) to veil when in the presence of men they are not related or married to” (pp. 654-655).

Although Islamic dress may take on many forms globally, as long as the Muslim woman meets the minimum criteria of covering all her body except the face and the hands when in public, a variation of cultural style is acceptable (Mattson, 2007). With that said, the type and color of fabric, as well as the ornate details may vary (Landorf & Pagan, 2005;
Mattson, 2007). For example, Muslim women in the United States may wear loose fitting pants or a skirt with a long shirt, where Muslim men and women in West Africa traditionally wear billowing robes. Muslim men and women in Indonesia and Malaysia will wear a traditional wrap-around skirt with a long shirt. Still, Bedouin Arabs across North Africa and Western Asia wear long straight-cut robes while in Pakistan, men and women wear baggy pants and long shirts (Landorf & Pagan, 2005; Mattson, 2007). Yet, although Muslim women may sport their traditional cultural dress, many will wear a light weight overcoat while in public. For example, some may wear the black chador of Iran, the dark-colored abayas of the Arabian Peninsula and the varied colored chadori of Afghanistan (Landorf & Pagan, 2005; Mattson, 2007).

Perceptions of Islamic Dress

Individuals view the hijab in a variety of ways. In a study conducted by Landorf and Pagan (2005), they utilized an instructional method with non-Muslim students to examine the meaning of the hijab as a political, cultural, social, and spiritual expression of Islam within and outside of the faith. After weeks of studying the topics, participants concluded, “To wear it, in France, not to wear it, in Iran, is an expression of freedom for the people who are acting on their desires” (p. 175). In retrospect, one student compared the freedom to wear hijab to the first amendment right and patriotism in United States. The student explained being able to dress according to religious preferences is similar to being able to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. The student added saying the Pledge of Allegiance is one way people show patriotism to their country, as covering shows patriotism to Allah. The student further stated “Patriotism in the United States is a little
like a religion” (Landorf & Pagan, 2005, p. 175). It must be noted, these participants came to their conclusions after examining previous stereotypes held.

In other studies about general societal views of the hijab conducted by Droogsma (2007) and Ssenyonjo (2007), they found for most, the hijab or headscarf symbolized oppression of women and gender disparity. Mattson (2007) asserted, “Some people interpret the practice of hijab as a way to “control women’s sexuality- but this is a misunderstanding—or perhaps, an incomplete understanding” (p. 1). She said Islam ordered men and women to protect their chastity. Muslim women who choose to wear the hijab are often perceived as agents of “Islamic fundamentalism” or “jihadist terrorism,” and as visible indicators of the inassimilable nature of Muslims in Europe (Ssenyonjo, 2007, p. 657). In a study about Muslim women in Turkey, respondents stated the hijab is more than a symbol; it is a religious obligation ordained by God (Wyche, 2004). Wyche’s study demonstrated that Muslim women believed the media paints a false image of Islam as being oppressive to women. The participants agreed that there are aberrant examples, such as in Afghanistan and Iran, in places around the world that subject women to repression, but these examples are not what Islam teaches. One woman in the study clarified the meaning of the hijab and stated, “Hijab is a visible sign of Islam and a private act of faith, rather than a political statement” (Wyche, 2004, p.8) and not a symbol of domination. The women of the study went on to point out positive examples of great women leaders in Pakistan and Bangladesh and added that these positive images are seldom portrayed in the media.

Cole and Ahmadi (2003) argued negative perceptions are due to misrepresentation of Muslim women in hijab, including being perceived as “docile, oppressed, and as
having limited English speaking ability because of the veil. They further explained, people view the veil as cultural adornment that can be changed or altered rather than as a religious practice that remains constant at all times. They added that these stereotypes are also due to a lack of information on Muslim women who wear hijab and suspicions felt by the general public about the veil (Cole & Ahmadi, 2003). In fact, since September 11, 2001, Muslim women in the United States who wear headscarves face greater scrutiny and suspicion due to a generalized fear of Muslims (Kavakci, 2004). As a result of suspicion, Muslim women have reported being removed from flights for security screening, having difficulties locating employment, and receiving angry looks or lewd comments (Droogsma, 2007).

Cole and Ahmadi (2003) also found that peer reactions appeared to be perpetrated by social interactions. If one set of classmates laughed at the hijab, they all laughed. If another asked questions about the hijab, they all asked questions. Female respondents exclaimed students and teachers often disengaged from interaction because of the perception of the scarf meant they are unapproachable. As a result, participants reported feelings of social and academic alienation, isolation, and sometimes visible discrimination (Cole & Ahmadi, 2003). The study further revealed estrangement and isolation caused Muslim women to analyze and reflect upon the reason for wearing hijab. However, despite the distancing from peers and negative interactions felt from instructors, Muslim women reported that they continued to wear the hijab because they see it as their religious obligation (Cole & Ahmadi, 2003).
Government Enforcement vs. Self Enforcement of Hijab

As stated previously, Islam provided the guidelines to Muslim women for covering. However it does not sanction any one person to force the requirements upon another. Therefore, Mattson (2007) specified that enforcement should come from the believer herself. She explained no where in the Quran does it command others to force the law on another, but she adds there is some controversy among individuals whether government should play a role in enforcing hijab or not. She contended any time a person is forced to dress a certain way it augments animosity. Mattson recognized that in some countries, like the United States, the government leaves the choice to individuals, while in other countries, like Saudi Arabia and Iran women are forced to be dressed in a certain style of hijab. Still other countries like Turkey (formerly) and France have banned the covering in public altogether. Mattson reminded her readers that self regulation is the best resolution, but added although the law is accommodating of the hijab in some countries, due to political turmoil, women experience incidents of harassment. Droogsma (2007) affirmed that the hijab “provided most of the women with the type of respect they desire in opposite-sex encounters. However, hijab can also make veiled women a target of disrespect in the post-9/11 world” (p. 308). The cultural and religious reproduction of gender socialization is a major part of the analysis for this research (Hamdan, 2006).

Factors Encouraging Women in Education Leadership

Current studies researching factors encouraging women in education leadership in the United States fail to mention the reason women chose to go into education leadership. These studies tended to focus on barriers women faced, including the reasons women lagged behind men in educational administration (King, 2006; Susannah, 2007) and
historical evidence on how businesses and education institutions discriminate against women who are or aspire to be educational leaders (Reinarz, 2002; Susannah, 2007).

In an earlier study Kanter (1993) showed how aspirations by minorities were lowered due to the lack of minorities in positions of leadership and administration. Other researchers have studied Muslim women educators. These researchers identified social significance as the number one factor Muslim women aspired to positions of leadership (Basit, 1997; Bruner, 1962; Tyrer & Ahmad, 2006).

Basit (1997) pointed out many Muslim women viewed education “as a vehicle for social mobility” (p.12). Higher education holds a personal and social significance in the life of a Muslim woman regardless of social class or parental background (Basit, 1997; Tyrer, & Ahmad, 2006). Also revealed in Tyrer and Ahmad's investigation of reasons Muslim women who entered higher education were personal interest, career aspirations, financial stability, personal independence, and greater respect and choices when thinking about marriage. One participant disclosed her inspiration to be employed stemmed from examples of Muslim women and particularly Khadija, the wife of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). She stated:

She was a business woman, so there’s nothing wrong with me being married and working. It’s just a stereotype that people have that once you’re married you’re automatically a housewife, that’s it you’re bound by that. (Tyrer, & Ahmad, 2006)

Additionally, Muslim women spoke of their parents and other female relatives as often sharing in their educational and career aspirations (Tyrer, & Ahmad, 2006, p. 16). Tyrer and Ahmad also found that Muslim women cited their husbands and fathers as key supporters of their education aspirations. They further reported that Muslim women
aspired to have careers in a diverse array of areas and were generally positive about their job outlook. They felt they had resources and skills to find and secure a job but pointed out barriers were often due to gender stereotypes of Muslim women (Tyrer, & Ahmad, 2006).

Factors Discouraging Women in Education Leadership

Attainment of racial and gender equity within the realm of higher education administration is ostensibly valued in the United States, yet ethnic minorities and women are still lagging behind their white male counterparts (King, 2006; Susannah, 2007). A 2005 report disseminated by the United States Department of Education found that women obtained 3 out of 4 degrees conferred in the areas of education, allied health and social sciences. In traditionally male-dominated fields like business and engineering, women obtained 42% and 21% of degrees conferred, respectively (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005, table 265). However, although women are receiving the larger portion of undergraduate and graduate degrees and although education leadership programs are known to have more women represented than any other program, (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005), they are underrepresented in education administration (King, 2006). Susannah (2007) affirmed,

Despite the fact that we have a female U.S. Supreme Court justice, a female secretary of state, and a woman who is a leading candidate for the presidency, almost a half-century after the modern women's movement began to press for equality in the workplace, a new wave of books and articles is still debating whether women have made it into the ranks of top leadership. (pB4-B4, 1p)

Cook and Cordova (2007) concurred, in a follow up study by the American Council on Education (ACE) in 2007 it was revealed that women currently hold 21% of the presidencies at U.S. colleges and universities. However, although women “have seen
gains in the number of presidential appointments since 1986, the gains have moderated in recent years. As an example, in 1998 only “19.3 percent of college and university presidents were women” (Cook & Cordova, 2007, p. 3). This figure is not much different than 2007. So what barriers do women face in obtaining positions of leadership?


Susannah (2007) and Reinarz (2002) found that many businesses discriminate against motherhood. This included pregnancy discrimination and discriminative actions as a result of mothers having to care for their sick children or attend school functions. These researchers also found discrimination among women because of the ability or lack of ability to spend enormous hours at work. Reinarz (2002) and Jackson and Harris (2007) discovered three additional barriers that a variety of women are challenged with: not having a mentor, taking work too seriously, and gender labeling. Reinarz (2002) provided the following examples of gender labeling: a man might be seen as goal directed, a woman as pushy; a man is described as passionate, a woman as over-emotional; a man is seen as a shrewd negotiator, a woman as conniving (p.1). Additionally, Reinarz (2002) identified other challenges women administrators may face.
These included not understanding the unwritten "rules" of the academic or campus culture, underdeveloped communication skills, the inability to use power and advocate for resources, and being incapable of grasping budget information and financial consequences of decisions (Reinarz, 2002).

McCreight (1999) attributed the decrease of women in leadership positions to cultural and professional barriers. Culturally the traditional roles of women include nurturers and caretakers of their families. Social barriers were due to “work and careers as secondary to marriage and family. McCreight also found that society pigeonholes women by reinforcing the role of the woman in society. She pointed out that women dominate the field of education but make up a small percentage of administrators (McCreight, 1999). She further stated, although there is a variety of literature focusing on barriers of women in education leadership, a gap exists in the literature examining Muslim women’s routes into education and leadership positions in the United States of America.

Researchers have begun to examine the reason for the absence of Muslim in leadership (Afridi, 2001; Hertz-Lazarowitz & Shapira, 2005; Knott & Khokher, 1993; McCreight; 1999; Pickerden, 2002; Tyrer & Ahmad, 2006). Anita Pickerden (2002) posited, “Muslim women have long been under-represented in higher education” (p. 39). Hertz-Lazarowitz and Shapira (2005) affirmed. They found few studies investigating Muslim women’s paths into education and leadership. In fact, this is what prompted these researchers to conduct a study of Arab-Israeli women. In their research, they found that graduation rates among Arabs had increased by 90%, but graduates lacked employment opportunities. Afridi (2001) attributed this lack of research to the lack of Muslim women.
speaking out. Afridi also found that Muslim women had a fear of speaking up for themselves because of fear of becoming a victim. In this study, the Muslim women reported employers often held stereotypical attitudes that Muslim women preferred to be housewives rather than have a career. Participants also stated that they perceived themselves as the new threat to society in place of communism (Afridi, 2001). For many, Muslims remained “the other, the outsider, the enemy, or the threat” (Afridi, 2001, p. 4).

It is because of these sentiments that Muslim feminist researchers called for a “Gender jihad,” A “Gender jihad” which seeks gender parity (Abugideiri, 2001, p. 2). Hertz-Lazarowitz and Shapira, (2005) noted whatever the case, the absence of women in formal school leadership positions reflects their status in the society. Susannah (2007) agreed. She added “that the unequal representation of women in leadership also creates a barrier (Susannah, 2007, pB4-B4, 1p). Reinarz (2002) and Susannah (2007) concluded these barriers compromise the fundamental principle of equality opportunity and social justice for all.

Tyrer and Ahmad (2006) alluded to the lack of support from instructors who did not appreciate the socioeconomic circumstances of the students they served. Tyrer and Ahmad also examined students’ perceptions of racism and Islamophobia in relation to their experience or lack thereof. They found that racism or feelings of Islamophobia surfaced when students had past negative experiences. Those who did not have these type of experiences responded that Islamophobia would not happen at their university.

Other researchers ascribed personal factors as barriers that impeded Muslim women in their career and education endeavors. Knott and Khokher (1993) stated Muslim women are trying to balance dual cultures: “traditional/Western, religious/secular,
parents/peers—which are also dichotomized” (p. 7). Tyrer and Ahmad (2006) expanded upon the work of Knott and Khokher and reported the role of the caretaker of children and parents is sometimes a barrier: while children were young and parents were elderly and the role of being a spouse or “juggling a dual life” (p. 11). They go on to say, students experience a complex interplay of factors, balancing and negotiating their positions and responsibilities as students, daughters, friends, and classmates (Tyrer, & Ahmad, 2006). Yet, these researchers also noted that although a barrier, many of the women also listed these individuals as a support.

Tyrer and Ahmad (2006) also found Muslim students lacked preparation. These researchers wrote that these students received little encouragement and preparation for higher education. Thus, they were unaware of educational opportunities afforded to them. However, Ahmad (2006) differed from Tyrer and Ahmad. She stated “the presence of Muslim women in higher education and the diverse routes they follow in order to enter the university, contradicts problematic discourses that suggest that Muslim woman’s educational choices are limited due to cultural or religious reasons” (Ahmad, 2006, p. 12).

Studies conducted by Basit (1997) and Tyrer and Ahmad (2006) inferred that society was a factor. Tyrer and Ahmad (2006) stated some barriers stemmed from employers themselves. Respondents reported being asked irrelevant questions about wearing a scarf, such as: “Do you wear it all the time?” Muslim women also reported being categorized by employers to only be able to work in a lesser status role because of the covering.
Basit (1997) found stereotyped attitudes of many teachers and careers advisors towards Muslim females influenced the nature of the advice they gave. Muslim women self-reported they feel like outcasts because they believed society perceived them as weird or an “alien” (Tyrer, & Ahmad, 2006). These respondents also expressed that when they felt at risk in educational institutions, it was not because of their skin color but because of their dress (Tyrer, & Ahmad, 2006). In fact, a significant number of accounts highlighted experiences of anti-Muslim racism linked to the hijab, which was seen by some respondents to mark women who wear hijab as alien, non-liberal, or oppressed in the eyes of racists (p. 30). Participants also spoke on the gender differences they perceived in regard to dress. Participants reported feeling that men and women experienced Islamophobia in different ways and stated this was linked to their greater visibility as Muslim women wearing the hijab.

Dwyer (1999) explored the relationship of dress on identity. He argued because clothing is a contested signifier for young Muslim women, the construction and contestation of their own identities often require an engagement with the multiple meanings attached to dress (p. 5). This investigation explored the ways in which dress is actively used by young Muslim women in the construction of their identities, both “through the challenging of meanings attached to different dress styles and in the reworking of meanings to produce alternative identities” (Dwyer 1999, p. 5). Tyrer and Ahmad (2006) summarized this issue best when they said,

To many of our respondents, this marked Muslim women as particularly vulnerable to anti-Muslim racism while, to others, stereotypes about Muslim women’s passivity (particularly if wearing hijab) was seen to render Muslim women as ideal subjects against whom to enact anti-Muslim racism. To others, hijab-wearing Muslim women could also be targeted because they were seen as more visually “threatening” than Muslim men as it was more difficult for the
‘Muslimness’ of such women to be mistaken, denied, or concealed. Finally, while Muslim men may often be represented as being more overtly criminalized or violent, respondents felt that Muslim women would be more likely to be represented as oppressed and subservient. (p. 4)

Muslim women also experience institutional barriers. Tyrer and Ahmad (2006) asserted that the lack of cultural diversity makes Muslim women subject to Islamophobia and a target for harassment and racist comments. They also found that institutions lacked a process or consistent process to handle issues, provide equal opportunities, or prohibit anti-Muslim prejudice and discrimination (2006). The respondents, however, cautioned against institutions in making blanket accommodations. They said, instead, institutions should handle needs as they arise. Accommodations may included providing food that respected Islamic guidelines (halal or zabihah), access to facilities for prayer and ritual washing (wudhu), and even in some cases having the permission to have a mahram or ‘chaperone’ to attend events with a Muslim female student. These researchers added that universities have a responsibility to sensitively identify the needs of all students in advance in such a way as to ascertain students’ needs. They further stated that the wider practices through which disability needs are established can be adapted to ensure that particular religious needs are also identified and met (Tyrer, & Ahmad, 2006).

Jackson and Harris (2007) explored perception and personal experience of African American college presidents. Much of their findings paralleled the findings of Susannah (2007) and Reinarz (2002). First, they looked at the presidents’ perceptions of barriers faced that may have prevented them from obtaining the presidency. The most often reported perceived barrier was the “exclusion from the formal network” followed by “other” which included lack of doctorate, lack of access to multiple levels of management related to professional goals, exclusion from top management positions,
lack of a mentor and lack of experience in instruction, and learning to manage people. The third most common barrier selected was career development planning. Secondly, the researchers examined the effects of the glass ceiling on these African American female presidents. Participants identified female stereotyping, male stereotyping, informal recruitment, and ethnicity as barriers they had personally experienced (Jackson & Harris, 2007).

As one can see from the literature review, Muslim women have faced a variety of personal, institutional and even societal barriers. Yet, some women still succeed despite the hurdles they have faced. These women seem to have developed skills to remain resilient in the face of occupational barriers based on majority beliefs of ethnicity. Perhaps these women’s public display of spirituality has not influences reactions by other administrators or colleagues as they aspired or advanced into positions of leadership. In the next section, the researcher attempted to address these issues.

*Strategies for Increasing Women in Education Leadership*

Initially the researcher found no studies that investigated ways to increase Muslim women in education leadership. However, there have been a variety of studies that have researched strategies for increasing women in general and minorities in particular. Most of the research alluded to having mentorship programs. Enomoto, Gardiner, and Grogan, (2000) identified mentoring tips for women of color. They found one way to support women of color is through mentorship tools. As such, they identified six mentorship tools: (a) gaining political savvy, (b) accessing networks, (c) finding mentors who are similar to their protégés, (d) seeking mentors who were different from their protégés, (e) having more than one mentor, and (f) securing alternative support systems (p. 577).
These researchers also gained insight on the need for network systems which included mentors similar to the background of the mentored. Participants exclaimed that being provided the ability to navigate the political scene of the educational institution allowed one to gain access to people and organizations for networking purposes and having a mentor who shares similar experiences, language, and hardships develops a closer relationship.

Susannah (2007) offered strategies that businesses could implement to support women in leadership roles which included 1) creating work life balance allowing more flexibility in schedules; 2) offering rewards based on quality and quantity of work and not face to face time; and 3) valuing and embracing female diversity. Susanna commented the “workplaces need individuals with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and styles of leadership (Susannah, 2007, pB4-B4, 1p). Reinarz (2002) also provided solutions women could utilize and incorporate as they seek to obtain or advance in roles of leadership. These include writing down ones personal and professional priorities, finding mentors, hooking into networks for advice beyond their campus, and presentations and workshops at national and regional meetings. Moreover, Christman and McClellan (2007) conducted a study to obtain the impact of educational leadership programs as a strategy for resiliency. They utilized the classical Delphi Technique with seven diverse women administrators in educational leadership at doctorate-granting universities to explore how these female leaders sustained their positions in the face of adversity.

Participants identified mentoring as the number one support, including having support from colleagues and their family. For example, they conveyed they overcame adversity by talking to other women and obtaining recognition from others in the field
nationally. Additionally, participants also identified spiritual support as one strategy they used to overcome difficulty (Christman & McClellan, 2007). The women interviewed in this study had also completed education leadership programs. When asked how education leadership programs fostered resiliency, participants provided answers from both ends of the spectrum: some participants argued resiliency cannot be taught while others advocated that without the program they would not have had the tools to be resilient (Christman & McClellan, 2007).

Jackson and Harris (2007) obtained strategies directly from the African American college presidents they researched. Respondents listed “exceeding job expectation followed by holding positions of viability, developing leadership skills outside of education and upgraded skills” (p. 129). However, mentoring was listed as the top reason for obtaining positions of leadership. In fact, in many of the studies reviewed above, mentoring was listed as the top choice for supporting aspiring women leaders. Brown (2005), in a study of 91 female college presidents, found mentoring and professional development programs to be important for recruitment and preparation of women in general (p. 659). She reported that the majority (63.1%) had one to three mentors. Also, the majority (64.4%) served as mentors themselves to both men and women. In a parallel study of six state regional public and private institutions, Hubbard and Robinson (1998) in a study reported that few women are moving into top level positions in academic institutions because of the lack of mentoring. They wrote, “Females reported having female mentors more often than male mentors in their early professional careers” (p. 296). They went on to report that mentors cannot only provide advice and guidance...
but can also help deal with politics and procedures. Lastly, they reported, “Female mentors can help expedite plans for career advancement” (p. 291).

As stated above, the absence of women in formal school leadership positions reflects their status in the society (Hertz-Lazarowitz & Shapira, 2005). In fact, the unequal representation of women in leadership creates a barrier: “most obviously, the barriers to women's advancement compromise fundamental principles of equal opportunity and social justice” (Susannah, 2007, p. B4, B4, 1p). To address barriers faced by those marginalized in the dominant society, this researcher employed CRT. Critical Race Theory challenges dominant culture ideas and ideologies by utilizing the voice of the marginalized, in the form of storytelling, to examine ideas and ideologies through the lens of the oppressed (Yosso, 2005). This allows participants to employ their version of the phenomenon which adds a different perspective and understanding of the event. The next section will provide the history of CRT, its role in education and in telling the story of those otherwise not heard.

**Tenets and History of Critical Race**

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is rooted in Critical Legal Studies (CLS). According to Lyn and Parker (2006), the CLS movement emerged out of the Civil Rights movement in the early 1990’s when a group of lawyers began to question the bias of the legal system. They argued that the law protected the rich and powerful, but not the poor and underprivileged. These lawyers began to realize that the critical legal studies movement “did not go far enough in challenging the specific racialized nature of the law and its impact on persons of color” (p. 259). As such, they separated from the movement and “eventually became the architects of CRT as a political scholarly movement” (p. 256).
CRT is a theoretical construct that emphasizes the use of voice. Many of the earlier CRT critiques were presented in black versus white terms. Soon after, other races were added. Yosso (2005) alleged that “women and people of color who felt their gendered, classed, sexual, immigrant and language experiences and histories were being silenced” were included in the new CRT movement (p. 72). For example, Latina/o critical race (LatCrit) theory extended critical race discussions to address the layers of racialized subordination that comprise Chicana/o, Latina/o experiences (Delgado, 2002; Montoya, 1994; Yosso, 2005). LatCrit scholars asserted that racism, sexism, and classism are experienced amidst other layers of subordination based on immigration status, sexuality, culture, language, phenotype, accent, and surname (Delgado; Yosso, 2005). Additionally, FemCrit theory was developed to address feminist analysis of how racism and classism is experienced by people of color (Caldwell, 1995; Wing, 1997, 2000). CRT was extended to expose white privilege and the challenges of racism. This segment of CRT was named Whitecrit (Delgado & Stefancic, 1997). Lastly, Carrette and Keller (1999) used CRT to include religion. These researchers used CRT to analyze religion in regards to gender identity. They argued “It is not possible to study religion without recognizing the multiple forces that shape practices, beliefs and even the study of religion itself” (p.22). They further contended many individuals feel marginalized based upon their gender orientation that rejects traditional views in Western society. Carrette and Keller further argued CRT can be used to analyze race, racism, sexuality, and religions. Yet, since exploring this concept in 1998 they found few studies focusing upon religion as a construct to be analyzed utilizing CRT.
According to Crenshaw, Delgado, Lawrence, and Matsuda (1993), six unifying themes define the movement:

1. Critical Race Theory recognizes that racism is endemic to American life.
2. Critical Race Theory expresses skepticism toward dominant legal claims of neutrality, objectivity, colorblindness, and meritocracy.
3. Critical Race Theory challenges a historicism and insists on a contextual/historical analysis of the law. Critical race theorists also adopt a stance that presumes that racism has contributed to all contemporary manifestations of group advantage and disadvantage.
4. Critical Race Theory insists on recognition of the experiential knowledge of people of color and our communities of origin in analyzing law and society.
5. Critical Race Theory is interdisciplinary.
6. Critical Race Theory works toward the end of eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression (p. 6).

*Critical Race in Education*

According to Gloria Ladson-Billing (2000) researchers began to utilize CRT in education to analyze and examine education policy in 1994. According to Solórzano, (1997, 1998) Five tenets of CRT inform education theory, research, pedagogy, curriculum, and policy: 1) the interplay between race and racism, 2) the challenge of the dominant world view, 3) the commitment to social justice; 4) the centrality of experiential knowledge; and 5) the utilization of interdisciplinary approaches (p.73).

Critical Race researchers (Brayboy, 2002; Dixson & Rousseau, 2005; Parker, 1998; Tate, 1996; Valencia, 1997) utilized CRT to search for an oppositional voice that
questioned deeply held beliefs about the U.S. Constitution and the nature of equality in American society but also sought to anchor itself in a kind of racial realism based on the actual lives or life stories of its subjects. Delgado (1995) asserted, “CRT came at a time when racial inequality and school desegregation began to receive national attention” (p. 1). Delgado provided as an example the case of Brown versus the Board of Education. As such, CRT can be used to examine the marginalized in modern society. Muhtaseb (2007) identified Arabs and Muslims, particularly women, as one group that deserves attention. She suggested many people in the United States deny that racial and gender discrimination exists, yet are sensitive to a Muslim woman’s dress. She further adds, students are usually surprised if their professor is a woman dressed in a way that indicates she is supposed to be “backward and ignorant,” … “CRT recognizes the centrality of experiential knowledge of people of color and that such knowledge is valid, appropriate, and essential to understanding, analyzing, and teaching about racism in education” (p. 27).

Careete and Keller (1998) also utilized CRT to include religion. Muhtaseb (2007) used the lens of CRT to rethink the concept of gender identity as it relates to religion. They described different alliances and different forms of myopia, including religious myopia, "especially for the analysis of religious concepts because the exclusion of otherness marking the boundaries by which humans orient themselves and assert power" (p. 36). According to Carrette and Keller (1999) the traditional views of gender is confounded in Western theories and assumptions and argue that these ideologies can sometimes oppress those who do not project these ideologies. For these researchers religion is more than ideology; it is an orientation and a "mythological tool for rethinking
religion using CRT" (p.1). Tyrer and Ahmad (2006) concurred with Carrette and Keller (1999) and alleged although western views of identity hinged on race, this is not true for Muslims. They stated a Muslims identity stems from religion and not race. This classification rejects racial classification held by society and forces one to look at identity using a different lens, religion. Long (1986) claimed "religion of any people is more than a structure of thought; it is experience, expression, motivations, intentions, behaviors, styles and rhythms” (p. 24). Hence, CRT can be used to analyze religious ideology as it relates to race, culture, and gender identity. Consequently viewing gender identity through the lens of CRT enables researchers to engage in an intellectual dialogue in academia to change biases in regards to culture and religion where identity, then, can be examined as a construct (Carrette & Keller, 1999).

Narratives and Storytelling

A major component of CRT is storytelling. Delgado (1998) and Tate (2005) asserted storytelling allows marginalized groups to express their experience outside of the dominant world view. In turn, challenging the status quo by constructing their own reality (Hall, 2007). Storytelling enables individuals to arrange the “plots” of their lives into a meaningful whole, giving each event a unique place of significance (Hertz-Lazarowitz & Shapira, 2005). Wing (2005) argued that CRT “seeks to give voice to minority women, whose experiences are overlooked by traditional feminisms, and to present the important contributions and the lack of contribution which leads to feminist discourse” (pp. 2-8). CRT provides this voice through storytelling (Delgado, 1989; Tate, 1995). Ladson-Billing (1998) referred to this as a use of voice. CRT allows participants to employ their
version of the phenomenon which adds a different perspective and understanding of the event.

Because Muslim women are not part of the dominant society and because they “have long been under-represented in higher education institutions for a variety of reasons” (Pickerden, 2002, p. 39) an examination of perceptions and behaviors that encourage or impede attainment of leadership positions in higher education by Muslim women wearing hijab utilizing CRT as a lens to give voice to Muslim women in America was a natural choice for this study.

Summary

This literature review revealed the reason for the increase of Islam in this society and the need to increase Muslim female leaders in higher education. This study also explored the role Islam played in the lives of Muslim women, including their identity, dress, and their spiritual and intellectual rights according to Islam thus setting the stage that woman are valued in Islam. Furthermore, the literature review provided an examination of the role of government versus self enforcement of a Muslim women’s dress. The subsequent section examined factors that encouraged and discouraged women in education leadership. A variety of barriers were presented both for women in general, for women of color, and for Muslim women. This section ended with strategies for increasing women in educational leadership. Finally, the history of CRT was conveyed as well as the role CRT played in education and how it can be used to tell the story of those marginalized. This provided a segue to discuss how CRT can be used to study the factors that encouraged or impeded Muslim women wearing hijab while in or seeking to attain education and leadership positions.
In Chapter Three the methodology of the study including the measurement of instruments and sampling procedures is described. Included in Chapter Four is the qualitative analysis of the research questions presented. In Chapter Five, the results of the study are summarized, along with conclusions, recommendations, and implications.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

“Our present world works for only a few. However, by shifting our consciousness, then our culture and institutions, we can create a world that works for all” (Abdullah, 1999, p.2). The world we live in is becoming increasingly diverse. As a result, the student and employee population in educational institutions are more varied including social-economic class, gender, ethnicity, and religion (Yukl, 2006). Diversity enhances perspectives, ideas, and creativity, yet including these divergent world views, which sometimes goes against the dominant world view, can create feelings of alienation, “loss of power,” and distrust (p. 435). Ethical leaders may find it challenging to balance prevailing views and incorporate diverse views in their organizations, yet in order to compete within a globally changing society, it is essential. Yukl further argued, “An organization is less likely to have shared values and strong member commitment when it has mainly diverse members who identify primarily with their own subgroup” (p. 435). Therefore, it is crucial that education leaders take the lead in incorporating diverse perspectives. Marshall and Gerstl-Pepin (2005) present various postmodern frameworks for examining underrepresented populations. Without open discussion or historical understanding of the roots of these suppressed issues, it is difficult to articulate such viewpoints or to create a strategy to change them (p. 78).

Using a qualitative method to examine this premise provides an historical understanding of the roots of the oppressed and identifies how dominant values help maintain elite power structures. Using qualitative research also allows the researcher to
understand by discovery and obtain meaning of the phenomenon being studied from an emic point of view, through the compilation of thick, rich description (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995).

Included in Chapter Three are the research questions, the rationale for design, and methodology for this study. A qualitative, case study was selected to address the over-arching questions: How does an aspiring Muslim female leader who wears hijab develop skills to remain resilient in the face of adversity? And how can institutions support the aspirations of Muslim women by removing the roadblocks they may face? A review of the problem and purpose of this study provided a framework for the research questions.

The population and sample will be explained and the protocol for conducting the study will be specified. A rationale for the chosen study design will also be presented, as well as specific procedures for data analysis. Additionally, the significance of ensuring credibility and consistency will be discussed and an explanation of the researcher’s biases and assumptions will be provided.

Research Questions

This study was undertaken to examine the perceptions and insights of two Muslim women wearing hijab as they advanced into leadership positions. Furthermore, this study explored the congruence between these women’s perceptions as compared to the current research on this topic. Through inquiry, the personal perceptions of these women will be identified and viewed through the lens of Critical Race Theory (CRT). The inquiry process provided a framework to address the over-arching questions which guided the study:

1. Why do Muslim women who wear hijab choose to go into education leadership?
2. What are strategies Muslim women who wear hijab use in their career path?

3. How can institutions support the aspirations of aspiring Muslim female leaders who wear hijab?

4. How does a higher education leader develop skills to remain resilient in the face of occupational barriers based on majority beliefs and values of the workplace?

5. How does a higher education leader’s public display of spirituality influence reactions by other administrators? Colleagues?

Rationale for Use of a Case Study

This study used qualitative research techniques. According to Merriam (1998), “qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world” (p. 6). Additionally, in qualitative research, reality is subjective and dependent upon the researcher who becomes part of the study (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005; Creswell, 2003; Merriam, 1998). As such, Merriam asserted, a case study approach provides a holistic look at the phenomenon being studied. In fact, multiple realities exist because all voices, including that of the researcher, are considered (Creswell, 2003). Participant voice is particularly important since the end goal is to understand through the experiences and viewpoint of the participant. This type of research is based upon inductive forms of logic and topics of interest emerging from the subjects being studied rather than having a predetermined theory to help explain a phenomenon (Merriam, 1998). Triangulation of data is used to find patterns and determine the accuracy of inferences made. The goal was to understand by discovery and obtain meaning of the phenomenon being studied that enabled the researcher to provide an emic point of view,
using thick, rich description (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995), which results in theory
creation. In an attempt to understand and rectify societal inequalities, a quantitative
model, although providing an understanding of variables that may contribute to social
inequalities, would not provide the explanation needed to answer the questions under
investigation. A qualitative method was preferable at identifying participant meaning and
perceptions of behaviors that seem to impede or encourage advancement of Muslim
women in obtaining leadership positions. The qualitative case study also seeks to answer
“how” questions (Yin, 2003). The researcher chose a case study approach to answer the
overarching questions of: how have Muslim women used strategies to overcome
adversity and how have institutions of higher education provided support for their
aspirations.

Similar to qualitative research, CRT looks at power relationships from both an
overt and covert power position (Marshall & Gerstl-Pepin, 2005; Thompson, 2004) and
seeks to understand stories of the marginalized (Ladson-Billings, 1998) through the use
of storytelling. As such, the use of a qualitative method utilizing the lens of CRT would
compliment one another and using a case study approach, then, was necessary since
research goals included empowering Muslim women and giving voice to improve the
representation of Muslim women in institutions of higher education.

Furthermore, the researcher chose a case study approach because of the qualitative
inductive-hypothesis generating technique as compared to a deductive-theory testing
technique of quantitative research (Merriam, 1998). Gillham (2000) stated that "the case
study researcher, working inductively from what's there in the research setting develops
grounded theory: theory that is grounded in the evidence that is turned up" (p. 12). The
end goal is to gain an insider’s view of a phenomenon, rather than an outsider's view (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995) or as Merriam (1998) coined, obtaining “members meaning.” This “members meaning” then, provides a different perspective that subsequently can be developed as provisional hypotheses for future research. Merriam asserted a case study methodology is critical to moving a field’s knowledge base forward.

Case studies use interviews, observations, focus groups and document reviews to understand the particular case being studied. Merriam (1998) stated, “Understanding the case in its totality, as well as the intensive, holistic description and analysis characteristic of a case study, mandates both breadth and depth of data collection” (p. 134). Creswell (2003) asserted change and empowerment are central to critical research and critical theory perspective focuses on empowering the marginalized to overcome limitations placed on them due to differences of the dominant society. Creswell posited,

[Critical] researchers believe that inquiry needs to be intertwined with politics and a political agenda. Thus the research should contain an action agenda for reform that may change the lives of the participants, the institutions in which individuals work or live, and the researcher’s life. Moreover, specific issues needed to be addressed that speak to important social issues of the day, issues such as empowerment, inequality, oppression, domination, suppression, and alienation…. [T]he “voice” for the participants become a united voice for reform and change… [which may] mean providing a voice for these participants, raising their consciousness, or advancing an agenda for change to improve the lives of the participants. (p. 10)
Using a case study approach, then, was necessary since research goals included empowering Muslim female leaders and giving voice to improve the culture of institutions of higher education. There are, however, limitations to a case study approach (Merriam, 1998). First, due to the importance of obtaining rich, thick description for analysis of a phenomenon, a researcher may not have the time or money to devote to such an undertaking. Another limitation for case study research is the inability to obtain needed documents that are considered protected or closed to the public. The researcher was able to overcome this limitation due to the availability of documents on the institution’s public server and documents provided freely by the participants. Participants were also gracious in providing many of the needed documents to use to triangulate the data.

Second, case studies are limited by the sensitivity and integrity of the investigator (Merriam, 1998). Merriam asserted “the researcher must be sensitive to the context and all the variables within it, including the physical setting of the people, the overt and covert agendas, and the nonverbal behavior (p. 21)” and any personal biases the researcher may have that may influence the research. One way to be sensitive to the context is for the researcher to be trained in interviewing and observation techniques (Merriam). To control for this limitation, the researcher has received training in observation and interviewing techniques and has had practical experience. The researcher has been an assessor or validator for many national accrediting bodies in higher education over the last 10 years. This professional courtesy requires observation and interviewing skills. Additionally, as a component of counseling courses the researcher completed, the researcher was trained to know when to allow for silence, to probe, or to change direction.
during interviewing and observation. Currently, the researcher is a practicing counselor at a local community college.

Furthermore, to control for researcher bias, the researcher identified her own bias and theoretical orientation at the onset of the study. According to Merriam (1998) identifying one’s biases and theoretical orientation at the onset of the study increases the chance that the study can be replicated at another site. Additionally, it provides a degree of integrity and acknowledges that all inquiry is value laden (Marshall & Gerstl-Pepin, 2005; Meterns, 2004). One bias that may surface is as a result of the researcher being a Muslim woman who wears hijab, and inferences made by the researcher may be shaped by the identification with the participant of the case study as well as one’s own experience. Additionally, given that the researcher is responsible for interpreting and drawing conclusions about the data through one’s personal lens, the issues of reliability and validity are questioned. To control for this limitation, the researcher triangulated the data (Merriam, 1998) by using multiple methods of data collection such as observations, audio recorded interviews, and document analysis in order to ensure validity and reliability of the data (Creswell, 2003). Transcription was verified through “member checks” (Merriam, 1998, p. 204) to determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings of the participants being studied. Triangulation gave voice to the marginalized by buttressing the findings gathered from observations, interviewing, and document analysis of those being studied, thus diminishing biases and assumptions held by the researcher.

*Population and Sample*

When identifying a population and sample for a qualitative study, the researcher selected participants who were able to contribute additional knowledge to further inform
the study (Creswell, 2003; Yin, 2003). Merriam (1998) determined that “purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p. 61). Thus, when choosing participants for the case study, the researcher identified two Muslim women who wear hijab (veiled) and hold leadership roles within higher education in the United States.

The participants for this single case study were comprised of (a) Two Muslim female leaders in higher education who wear hijab \((n=2)\), (b) their superiors \((n=2)\), and (c) a snowball sampling of these leader’s colleagues \((n=12)\). The researcher chose to interview two Muslim women who wear hijab and work in a leadership role within higher education in the United States. The first participant was chosen because of her activism and leadership roles in Islamic and secular society, her contributions to higher education, and her theoretical and practical knowledge of leadership. The participant is recognized as an educational leader in both the Islamic community and the secular community in which she lives and works. Practical leadership experience includes being a mentor, director, state representative for a nationally recognized early childhood organization, trainer, adjunct faculty, and a training coordinator for a resource and referral organization. She works as an adjunct at the institute under study and is currently the division chair and professor of another local Midwest Suburban community college. The participant’s education includes an Associates and Bachelors in Early Childhood and a Masters of Science degree in Higher Education Administration. She is currently working on a doctorate in Urban Leadership and Early Childhood.
The second participant was also chosen because of her activism and leadership roles in Islamic and secular society, her contributions to higher education, and her practical knowledge of leadership. She has been an educator for the last 15 years. She has taught pre-school, third and fourth grade, and substituted for grades nine through twelve. She also served as an English tutor in the writing lab for the college in which she works. Practical leadership experience includes an elected position as board secretary for the local community Islamic school, administrative secretary and program coordinator for the director of a nationally known early education institute which includes a training department, lab school, and college credit bearing early childhood program. While in these positions, one of her primary functions was budget oversight. She is currently the Grants and Contract Manager of the college under study. Recently she was chosen by her superior to complete supervisor training and to attend the organization’s internal leadership academy. The academy was created to recognize and cultivate leaders within the organization. The participant’s education includes an Associates of Arts and Bachelors in Sociology. She is currently working on a Masters degree Adult Education with and emphasis in Public Administration. She plans to pursue a doctorate degree in educational leadership.

Both participants work in the same college in the early education institute. The researcher purposefully selected (Creswell, 2003) this institute, which is part of a multi-campus college district, because it is nationally recognized and has been in existence for over 30 years. The institute is part of a Midwestern based college which began as a junior college in the early 1900s. The college was one of the first colleges to award an Associate degree. Later, the college joined forces with local school districts to expand its service.
The college opened more campuses and became known as the college district. By the late 1900s the college had expanded into four counties with multi-campuses in suburban, urban, and rural areas. Today, the college serves over 40,000 students a year and offers transfer programs as well as nearly 70 occupational programs that articulate to many of the area universities. The college prides itself on having staff and faculty that reflect the diverse community it serves and in providing quality affordable education and training.

Additionally, of the over 6,000 students enrolled at the campus where the institute resides, 23% were African-American, 5% Hispanic, 3% Asian-American and 1% were international students. The international student population spans over 39 countries around the world. Additionally, traditional age college students (18-24 years old) account for about 50% of the student body, and the average student is 27 years old. Around 64% of students are part-time, and many have children and family responsibilities: women make up 70% of the student body.

The mission of the institute is to increase the quality of care for children by providing accessible education and professional development opportunities to adults working in the fields of child and youth development. The institute consists of a training department, lab school, and college credit department. It employs over 60 full-time employees and 50 part-time employees. The college credit department offers training toward the nationally recognized Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, one-year certificate and two-year Associate of Applied science degree. The training department offers continuing education units, accepted by the International Association of Continuing Education and Training (IACET) on a variety of early childhood and school age topics for parents, teachers, administrators, and staff. Finally, the lab school
offers students and the community a place to see theory in practice. These programs prepare early education professionals to work in, own, or become leaders in a variety of early education and youth settings. The institute is managed by the Director/Associate Dean.

The institute’s Director/Associate Dean has dedicated his work over the past 30 years to programs and services in support of healthy child and youth development. Prior to his current position as Associate Dean and Director, he spent 20 years in philanthropy with a focus on children and youth. He was also the Vice President for Youth Development at a prestigious non-for-profit organization and the Director of a variety of non-for-profit businesses. He holds a Bachelor's degree in education, a Masters in Education and a Masters in Business Administration. He also serves on local and national boards of directors, is published, and a contributor to some recent publications.

Merriam (1998) based purposeful sampling on the premise of wanting “to discover, understand, and gain insight . . . [to] select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p. 61). Snowball sampling was noted by Merriam (1998) as the most common form of purposeful sampling and this is how participants were selected to inform the study. The snowball sampling strategy involved empowering the Muslim female leaders to recommend others as good subjects for interview (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). The focus group was selected randomly from colleagues from institute who had known both participants in a variety of roles as they aspired to leadership. The goal was to develop a sample rich in insight, perception, and information in order to guide the study.
Data Collection and Instrumentation

Participant rights in a research study are to be valued, respected, and communicated upfront (Seidman, 2006). The first ethical guideline followed by the researcher was to obtain the informed consent form. Components of a consent form included the right to participate voluntarily, the right to withdraw, the right of reviewing and withholding interview material, and the right to privacy (Seidman, 2006). Thus procedures were followed to safeguard the rights of the participants. Approval of the study was obtained through the Institutional Review Board of the University of Missouri – Columbia and University of Central Missouri State prior to any data collection.

The veiled Muslim female leaders working in higher education were first contacted via email to obtain initial interest in participating in the study. The researcher provided the Muslim female leaders with a draft of the informed consent letter which outlined the following elements: right to participate voluntarily, purpose of the research study, procedures of the study, length, potential risks, rights, including withdrawal from the study, possible benefits, confidentiality, dissemination, researcher’s contact information, and signatures of participants and researcher (Seidman, 2006). An abbreviated draft of the informed consent letter was also sent via email to both of the Muslim female leaders’ superior for prior approval to conduct the study at the institution and to potential colleagues who participated in the study. The draft copy of the informed consent letter outlined a description of how the leaders and their colleagues would participate in the study. Later, after acceptance and approval of campus IRB, the participants, their superior, and colleagues were contacted by email and/or telephone to obtain signatures for the informed consent letter (see Appendix B) and to establish a date.
and time to conduct face-to-face field interviews and observations with the Muslim female leaders, their superior, and their colleagues.

The researcher allotted 1 ½ to 2 hours to conduct the open-ended, semi-structured interviews with the participants, the participants’ superiors, and their colleagues. Participants were assured of their anonymity to promote open, honest, in-depth dialogue surrounding their perceptions and feelings of barriers and aspirations faced by Muslim female leaders as they seek or advance in leadership positions. Before the interview, each participant was asked to read and sign a letter of consent to participate in the study (see Appendix B). Data collection began after informed consent had been obtained from participants. The researcher also observed each of the participants in their natural settings and during department meetings. Field notes were taken by the researcher during the interview process to record information not reflected on the audio-tapes and while the researcher observed the participants in their natural settings.

Thru snowball sampling the researcher obtained a sampling of colleagues who had come in contact with the Muslim female leaders. Merriam (1998) based purposeful sampling on the premise of wanting “to discover, understand, and gain insight . . . [to] select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p. 61). Snowball sampling was noted by Merriam (1998) as the most common form of purposeful sampling and was the selected form utilized by this researcher. Snowball sampling strategy involved empowering the Muslim female leaders, and the leaders’ superiors to recommend others as good subjects for interview (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). The focus group was selected randomly from colleagues who had worked with the female Muslim leaders presently or in the past. The goal was to develop a sample rich in insight, perception, and information
in order to guide the study. Triangulation of the data occurred through the use of rich, thick descriptions provided from the interviews, field notes, document analysis, and observations during interviews (Creswell, 2003; Merriam, 1998).

*Interview Protocol*

Merriam (1998) asserted that interviewing is necessary when we cannot observe behavior, feelings, or how people interpret the world around them (p. 72). A semi-structured interview was conducted to research the phenomenon under study and to triangulate the data for the study. A face-to-face audio recorded interview was conducted with the Muslim female leaders and their superiors. A focus group was employed with the leaders’ colleagues.

The interview guide or list of questions (Merriam, 1998, p. 81) was developed based upon the review of literature. An interview guide was developed for the Muslim female leader (see Appendix E) and an additional guide was developed for the Muslim leaders’ superiors and colleagues (see Appendix E). The interview guide for the Muslim female leader followed a protocol of questions related to the characteristics of giving voice as seen through the lens of CRT. Both sets of questions were first reviewed by the researcher to ensure that questions could be asked honestly and comfortable (p.79). Then questions were field tested with individuals outside the study to ascertain whether the researcher was asking good questions (p.79) and modified accordingly.

The field tested questions were used with the participants to guide the interview. Since the researcher wanted to gain member meaning, the questions were open ended. Merriam asserted, an open ended less structured format allows individuals to define their world the way they see it. Each of the interview sessions was audio-taped, with the
participants’ permission, and then the audio recorded interviews were transcribed by the researcher. Transcription was verified through “member checks” (Merriam, 1998, p. 204) to check for accuracy of the transcripts and to ensure each of the participants’ stories was told in their own words. Member checking also enhances transferability of the case study and increases the likelihood of replication should future researchers choose to replicate the study. After corrections were made, additional member checks were conducted (Delgado, 1989; Tate, 1996). Field notes were also taken by the researcher throughout the interview process. Triangulation of data also occurred through the use of rich, thick description from interviews, field notes, focus groups, observations and document analysis (Creswell, 2003; Merriam, 1998).

Observation Protocol

Observations are used for participants engaged in activities and interactions in their natural settings, including participants, verbal and nonverbal communication (Merriam, 1998). Merriam (1998) identified three reasons one should conduct observations: (a) to understand the context of the phenomenon, (b) to observe the phenomenon first hand, and (c) to observe specific behaviors related to the phenomenon. Like interviews, observations are an important tool in qualitative research (Heppner & Heppner, 2004; Merriam, 1998). Unlike interviews, observations allow the researcher to examine a first hand view of the phenomenon being studied in its natural setting. The researcher gained entry into the site first, through the contact of the participant of the study then by seeking permission from the institution’s institutional review board. Merriam explains, gaining entry through the “gatekeepers” makes it easier to gain access. Once access was gained, the researcher established rapport and became familiar with the
setting (Merriam, 1998) then utilized the tips suggested by Taylor and Bogdan (1984) for the first few days in the field. The researcher was relatively passive and unobtrusive, putting the people at ease; she became familiar with the setting before collecting data, kept first observations relatively short to avoid making participants feel uncomfortable, and was honest by explaining to the participants the researcher’s actions at all times (p. 99). While observing, the researcher assumed the role of participant observer. Merriam (1998) stated, in the role of participant observer, “The researcher’s observer activities which are known to the group are subordinate to the researcher’s role as participant. The trade-off here is between “the depth of the information revealed to the researcher and the level of confidentiality promised to the group in order to obtain this information” (p.101).

While observations were being conducted, the researcher engaged in taking field notes (see Appendix C). The content of the observations included ideas recommended by Merriam (1998) and included “verbal descriptions of the setting, the people, and activities; direct quotations and observer’s comments” (p.106). The multiple observations of the participant, the participant’s colleagues, and the site were used to further assist in triangulating data.

*Focus Group Protocol*

The researcher facilitated one focus group meeting to gather data from present and former colleagues of the Muslim leaders. Focus groups allowed the researcher to capitalize on the sharing and creation of new ideas that may not have occurred if the participants had been interviewed individually (Kruger and Casey, 2000). The focus group protocol (see Appendix C) was selected because, as noted by Krueger and Casey (2000), “a range of ideas or feelings that people have” (p. 24) was necessary. The focus
group consisted of a random sampling of the Muslim female leaders’ colleagues. These colleagues were selected based on being determined as information-rich participants (Krueger & Casey, 2000). The focus group conversations were audio-recorded and transcribed by the researcher at a later date. The focus group took place at the research site and lasted two hours. The facilitator used slightly modified questions based on the same focus of questions as used in the interview protocol for the Muslim female leaders and their superiors. The focus group of the Muslim female leaders’ colleagues, observations, document reviews, and interviews were used to further assist in triangulating data.

Data Analysis

According to Merriam (1998), qualitative data collection and analysis must be done concurrently. The researcher gathered and analyzed the data simultaneously. The researcher took time to reflect on the data as the data were compared and analyzed. Qualitative data provides background information to establish triangulation of data given in the interviews, observations, the focus group and document reviews (Creswell, 2003; Merriam, 1998). In the end, the researcher hoped to discover and obtain meaning of the participant and organization being studied that would enable the researcher to provide an emic point of view and richer description of the phenomenon being studied (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). The researcher ended the official data collection process when incidents began to show duplication of data. The constant comparative method was also utilized for further data analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Merriam, 1998).

To encourage consistency among the data collection the researcher was the only interviewer of the study (Merriam, 1998). The audio recorded individual and focus group
interviews were transcribed word for word by the researcher. Then, the transcriptions were coded for themes amid the participants’ responses utilizing the CRT concepts identified in the literature review, thus allowing the female Muslim women who wear hijab voice to be heard and no longer marginalized.

The constant comparative method was used to analyze the transcripts, field notes, researcher journal, institutional documents, and field observations to identify patterns among the data (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Merriam, 1998). These patterns were put into categories which allowed the researcher to look for consistency and triangulation (Creswell, 2003; Merriam, 1998). Saturation was determined by the level of redundancy in participant responses.

**Interview Analysis**

Interviews (see Appendix C) of individuals and the focus group were used to observe behaviors and gather reports of feelings of and how participants interpreted the world around them (Merriam, 1998, p.72) Data were analyzed “inductively rather than deductively” by looking at the “transcripts with a open attitude, seeking what emerged as important and of interest from the text” (Seidman, 2006 p.117). As the researcher analyzed the data, themes emerged from the open and axial coding (coding) of the interview transcripts, observation notes and document reviews. Open coding is a process for developing categories of concepts and themes which emerge from one’s data. It is this open process that the researcher engages in exploration of the data without making any prior assumptions about what might be discovered. Axial coding facilitates the building of connections within and between categories and subcategories, and thus serves to deepen the theoretical framework underpinning ones analysis of the data (Merriam,
Open and axial coding helped the researcher to triangulate the data obtained from the interviews and observations to weigh the evidence, establish validity, and determine the accuracy of inferences made (Merriam, 1998). The coded themes were then organized to identify patterns and make inferences of the data. Organized data were then stored in an EXCEL spreadsheet.

**Document Analysis**

The analysis of documents (see Appendix C) was derived from the themes developed from the coding of the interview transcripts, focus group transcripts, observation notes, and document reviews. After the data were collected from interviews, observations, and document reviews, the information was analyzed and categorized. Then, the researcher used open and axial coding to identify patterns. After patterns were identified, the data were organized and stored in an EXCEL spreadsheet.

**Observation Analysis**

Observations (see Appendix C) were used in order to develop thick, rich descriptions (Merriam, 1998) of how these Muslim women used strategies to overcome adversity and how the institution supported their aspirations. Observations were recorded during individual interviews with the Muslim female leaders, their colleagues, and their superior. The observation categories included the setting, interactions, activities, language, nonverbal communication, what was not happening, and the researcher’s own feelings. The observations were then analyzed in conjunction with the themes developed from the coding of the transcripts of the interviews, observations, and document reviews (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003).
Credibility and Consistency

Since qualitative data analysis does not provide any fixed procedure to the researcher, much depends on the investigator’s way of thinking about the data, along with consideration of alternative interpretations and presentation of evidence (Yin, 2003). In order for the research to be sound, it should be reliable and have both internal and external validity. Merriam (1998) explained that in order to enhance reliability the researcher must (a) explain the theoretical underpinnings and assumptions fundamental to the study; (b) triangulate data; (c) develop an audit trail; and (d) code raw data clearly and consistently in order for the study to be replicated (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003). The researcher explained at the onset of the study that this study was viewed through the lens of CRT. As the researcher gathered evidence from interviews, observations, and documents, the researcher triangulated the data and maintained a journal of the qualitative procedures utilized. This allowed the researcher to establish an audit trail or database separate from the study report (Merriam, 1998). Credibility was enhanced through the use of multiple data sources which permitted the process of triangulation. Participants were given the opportunity to review the transcribed data a “member check” for congruency between what the intended stakeholders wished to convey in relation to what was reported by the researcher. Additionally, interviews were conducted exclusively by this researcher in order to encourage consistency of data collection. Data were coded into themes and were further analyzed throughout each stage of data collection, utilizing the constant comparative method (Merriam, 1998). This constant comparative analysis, viewed through the lens of CRT, allowed themes and patterns to emerge from the multiple sources of evidence.
The researcher stored transcripts, audio-tapes, and field notes in a secured locked cabinet under the direct care of the researcher. Three years from the completion of the study, all documents will be destroyed.

Summary

The need for diversification of leaders in higher education, especially the representation of women, has gained the attention of many policy makers (Reinarz, 2002; Susannah, 2007). Giving voice to Muslim women wearing hijab who aspire to positions of leadership is especially needed considering the globally changing society (Afridi, 2001). The literature review in chapter two established that a gap exists, including the marginalized voices of these women. Thus, this researcher set out to narrow the gap by exploiting this issue as a case study using CRT as its lens to obtain member meaning through the use of storytelling.

Provided in this chapter is a rationale for the use of a case study design to investigate the under representation of Muslim women in education leadership. The next section included a discussion of the research questions, followed by a rationale for the use of a case study. The researcher then discussed the population and sample, data collection and instrumentation, data analysis, and credibility and consistency.

Included in Chapter Four are the findings of the research questions presented. In Chapter Five, research questions are answered, the results of the study are summarized, along with conclusions, recommendations, and with implications provided.
CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

Pickerden (2002) surmised “Muslim women have long been under-represented in higher education institutions for a variety of reasons (p. 39), yet whatever the reason, the absence of women in formal school leadership positions reflects their status in society (Hertz-Lazarowitz & Shapira, 2005). Kecia Ali (as cited in Smith, 2007) acknowledged, certain voices aren’t being heard. As an example, although texts about Muslim women are being published, “There is a certain type of book being published in the West (p.22).” Many of the popular memoirs published about Muslim women, such as Azar Nafisi’s, Reading Loh’ta in Tehran: A Memoir in Books, Ayan Hirsi, Infidel, and even Deborah Rodriguez’s fiction best seller Kabul Beauty School: An American Woman Goes Behind the Veil, are published by secular society and rooted in the medieval era which scrutinizes Islamic practices in regards to women (Smith, 2007). McCloud (as cited in Smith, 2007) agreed, and stated what’s needed is a diversity of stories being told. Therefore, the purpose of this investigation was to add to the knowledge base an understanding of successes and challenges two Muslim women wearing hijab faced as they advanced into leadership positions. Furthermore, this study explored the congruence between these women’s perceptions and experiences as compared to the current research on this topic.

Presented in this chapter is a review of the study design, data collection methods, conceptual underpinnings, research questions and process of data analysis. In addition, a description of the campus setting and the participants were also discussed.
Specifically, this study was viewed through the lens of CRT which has as a key element the use of storytelling as an effective resource for giving voice to the oppressed. Therefore, in keeping with that concept, the researcher presented the data, when possible, using the participants’ own words.

**Study Design**

The single case qualitative study, conducted at Hei Ran Community College [pseudonym], a Midwestern college in the United States, examined the factors that encouraged or impeded Muslim women wearing hijab from advancing or attaining in positions of leadership in higher education institutions in the United States. The Muslim female leaders were purposefully selected (Creswell, 2003) because they were able to contribute additional knowledge to further inform the study (Creswell, 2003; Yin, 2003). These leaders were also chosen because of their activism and leadership roles in Islamic and secular society, their contributions to higher education, and their practical knowledge of leadership. In addition, these leaders’ superiors were interviewed and their colleagues participated in a focus group because of their unique insights about the Muslim women and their experiences.

**Data Collection Methods**

The Muslim female leaders were contacted initially by email to obtain initial interest in participating in the study after the gatekeeper’s permission was obtained. The researcher provided the leaders a draft of the informed consent letter. This letter included the following information: right to participate voluntarily, purpose of the research study, procedures of the study, length of the study, potential risks, and rights, including withdrawal from the study, possible benefits, confidentiality, dissemination of results,
researcher’s contact information, and signatures of participants and researcher, to inform the participant. An abbreviated draft of the informed consent letter was also sent via email to potential colleagues who may participate in the study and to these leaders’ superiors for prior approval to conduct the study at the institution. The draft copy of the abbreviated informed consent letter outlined a description of how they would participate in the study.

The researcher then completed the formal university institutional review board (IRB) application which included providing information about the purpose and extent of the study. After acceptance and approval of University of Missouri-Columbia and the research site’s campus IRB (Appendix A), the researcher contacted the Muslim female leaders, their superiors’, and colleagues by email or telephone to obtain signatures for the approved informed consent and to establish a date and time to conduct face-to-face, field interviews, a focus group, and observations.

Following approval, the researcher traveled to the college to begin collecting data. Informedconsents were signed by the Muslim female leaders (Appendix B), each leaders’ superiors, and their colleagues (Appendix B) prior to observations and interviews. Following the interview, participants received a verbatim transcript of their interview and were provided the opportunity to modify or clarify their recorded responses following member check protocol. The researcher used a field tested interview guide that was developed from the literature review for the Muslim female leaders (see Appendix E) and an additional field tested guide was developed for the Muslim leaders’ superiors and their colleagues (see Appendix E). The interview guide for the Muslim female leaders followed a protocol of questions related to the characteristics of giving voice as seen
through the lens of Critical Race Theory (CRT). Responses to the participants were recorded on an interview protocol form. On-site observations were recorded using an observation protocol form and documents using a document review form.

The data were triangulated through document analysis, observations, and interviews of each Muslim female leaders’, each leaders’ superiors, and each leaders’ colleagues. Data were analyzed “inductively rather than deductively” by looking at the “transcripts with an open attitude, seeking what emerges as important and of interest from the text” (Seidman, 2006, p.117). Then, the researcher utilized axial coding to identify themes among the interview transcripts, observation notes, and document reviews. After that, the coded themes were organized into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to identify patterns and make inferences of the data.

Invitations for one-on-one audio-recorded interviews, were sent to two Muslim female leaders and two of the leaders’ superiors. Additionally an invitation to participate in a focus group was sent to 16 of the leaders’ colleagues. Of the 16 participants invited to participate in the focus group, 12 (N=12) agreed to be interviewed. Both Muslim female leaders (N=2) agreed to participate, and both of the Muslim female leaders’ superiors (N=2) agreed to participate.

*Conceptual Underpinnings*

During the study, themes and categories emerged through the conceptual framework of the basic tenets of CRT, as established previously in Chapter Two. According to Crenshaw, Delgado, Lawrence, and Matsuda (1993), six unifying themes define the movement:

1. Critical Race Theory recognizes that racism is endemic to American life.
2. Critical Race Theory expresses skepticism toward dominant legal claims of neutrality, objectivity, colorblindness, and meritocracy.

3. Critical Race Theory challenges a historicism and insists on a contextual/historical analysis of the law. Critical race theorists also adopt a stance that presumes that racism has contributed to all contemporary manifestations of group advantage and disadvantage.

4. Critical Race Theory insists on recognition of the experiential knowledge of people of color and our communities of origin in analyzing law and society.

5. Critical Race Theory is interdisciplinary.

6. Critical Race Theory works toward the end of eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression (p. 6).

According to Solórzano (1997, 1998), five tenets of CRT inform education theory, research, pedagogy, curriculum, and policy: 1) the interplay between race and racism, 2) the challenge of the dominant world view, 3) the commitment to social justice; 4) the centrality of experiential knowledge; and 5) the utilization of interdisciplinary approaches (p.73). Describing CRT, as applied to education, Yosso (2005) wrote:

CRT in education [is] a theoretical and analytical framework that challenges the ways race and racism impact educational structures, practices, and discourses. CRT is conceived as a social justice project that works toward the liberatory potential of schooling. This acknowledges the contradictory nature of education, wherein schools most often oppress and marginalize while they maintain the potential to emancipate and empower. (p. 74)
Research Questions

Based on the conceptual underpinning, the following research questions were formulated:

1. Why do Muslim women who wear hijab choose to go into education leadership?
2. What are strategies Muslim women who wear hijab use in their career path?
3. How can institutions support the aspirations of aspiring Muslim female leaders who wear hijab?
4. How does a higher education leader develop skills to remain resilient in the face of occupational barriers based on majority beliefs and values of the workplace?
5. How does a higher education leader’s public display of spirituality influence reactions by other administrators? Colleagues?

After the participant interviews, focus groups, on-site observations, and document analysis, the data were analyzed to determine themes and categories.

Process of Data Analysis

All data were examined and assigned the following codes (Appendix D): Muslim female leader 1 (M1), Muslim female leader 2 (M2), administrator 1 (A1), administrator 2 (A2), colleague 1 (C1), colleague 2 (C2), colleague 3 (C3), colleague 4 (C4), colleague 5 (C5), colleague 6 (C6), colleague 7 (C7), colleague 8 (C8), colleague 9 (C9), colleague 10 (C10), colleague 11 (C11), colleague 12 (C12). Additionally, the following codes were used for campus documents (campdoc), field observations (FO), setting context (setco), situation (sitcom), event (eventco), strategy (stratco), and relationship (relateco).
The Hei Ran Community College Setting

This case study was conducted at Diversity and Development Institute (DDI) [pseudonym]. DDI is a large early education institute, which is part of a multi-campus college district. The setting will be referred to as the Institute for the purposes of this study. The researcher purposefully selected (Creswell, 2003) this institute, which is part of a multi-campus college district (college district), because it is nationally recognized.

The college district began as a junior college in the early 1900s. According to interviews with the Muslim women’s superiors’ and documents examined, the college district was one of the first colleges to award an Associate degree. Later, the college joined forces with local school districts to expand its services. The college district opened more campuses and became known as the college district. By the late 1900s the college had expanded into four counties with multiple campuses in suburban, urban, and rural areas. Today, the college serves over 40,000 students a year and offers transfer programs as well as nearly 70 occupational programs that articulate to many of the area universities. The college prides itself on having staff and faculty who reflect the diverse community it serves and in providing quality, affordable education and training. The Institute is located on the Hei Ran campus [pseudonym] of the college district.

Over 6,000 students are enrolled at the Hei Ran campus. Twenty-three percent are African-American, 5% Hispanic, 3% Asian-American, 1% international students and the rest are Caucasians. The international student population spans over 39 countries around the world. Additionally, traditional-aged college students (18 to 24 years old) account for about 50% of the student body, and the average student is 27 years old. Around 64% of
are part-time students and many have children and family responsibilities. Furthermore, women make up 70% of the student body.

The mission of the Institute coincides with the mission of the college district and the Hei Ran campus. The institute’s mission is to increase the quality of care for children by providing accessible education and professional development opportunities to adults working in the fields of child and youth development. The institute consists of three entities: a training department, a lab school, and a college credit department. It employs over 60 full-time employees and 50 part-time employees. The college credit department offers training toward the nationally recognized Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, one-year certificate, and two-year Associate of Applied Science degree in Child Growth and Development. The training department offers continuing education units, accepted by the International Association of Continuing Education and Training (IACET) on a variety of early childhood and school age topics for parents, teachers, administrators, and staff. Finally, the lab school offers students and the community a place to see theory in practice. These programs prepare early education and youth professionals to work in, own, their own business, or become leaders in a variety of early education and youth settings. The institute is managed by the Director/Associate Dean.

Participants

This study consisted of two Muslim female leaders, their two superiors, and twelve of their colleagues. Superiors who participated in the study consisted of one male and one female. The focus group participants participating in the study were all female. The departments represented by these employees include the training and college credit department of the institute. During the focus groups and interviews, the researcher asked
each of the participants to identify their religious affiliation. Due to the research study being viewed through the lens of CRT, the researcher wrote exactly what the participants stated.

*Muslim Female Leader 1: Grant and Contract Manager Kelley Miguel* [pseudonym]

For the purposes of this study, the Muslim female leader will be referred to as Grant and Contract Manager Kelley Miguel. Manager Miguel is Italian, American and a convert to Orthodox Islam from Catholicism. She was covered from head to toe, everything except her hands and face. She was dressed in a light gray, tic-weave jilbab that draped one inch past her calf. The jilbab was buttoned down the front with the last 3 buttons unfastened. She expressed “I never fasten the last 3 buttons. When I sit down, I always pop those buttons. I have saved so many jilbabs this way.” She was also wearing black cotton pants, black socks and brown clog shoes. Miguel's head, neck, and bosom were covered with a black cotton scarf with a three inch black lace band at the bottom and an elastic band that started and ended at her temples and circled around her head and nape of the neck, producing the look of a cap.

Manager Miguel was chosen because of her activism and leadership roles in Islamic and secular society, her contributions to higher education, and her practical knowledge of leadership. She has been an educator for the last 15 years. She has taught pre-school, third and fourth grade, and substituted for grades nine through twelve. In the past, she also served as an English tutor in the writing lab for the college district in which she works. Practical leadership experience includes an elected position as board secretary for the local community Islamic school. She also served as the administrative secretary and program coordinator for the director and training department coordinator of the
institute. While in the position of program coordinator, one of her primary functions was budget oversight. This responsibility is what launched her into her current leadership position as the Grants and Contract Manager. Additionally, she was recently chosen by her superior to complete supervisor training and to attend the organization’s internal leadership academy. The academy was created to recognize and cultivate leaders within the organization. Kelley Miguel’s education includes an Associate of Arts and a Bachelor of Science in Sociology. She is currently working on a Master degree in Adult Education with an emphasis in Public Administration. She plans to pursue a doctoral degree in educational leadership.

Manager Miguel described herself as a critical thinker and analyzer who is always searching for balance. Manager Miguel believes strongly that because of her skills in critical thinking, analyzing, and looking for meaning, [this] caused [her] to begin questioning long-held religious beliefs and aspirations of leadership. She stated, “I started to question a lot of the catholic tenets. That was what led me on my path.” This questioning and analyzing also catapulted her into a position of leadership.

When I began at the Institute, I did not have leadership aspirations. I was at Maslow’s safety and relatedness level; and then progressed through being effective—the best I could possibly be. I am a behind-the-scenes worker bee—or that’s what I thought until I changed directions two years ago. As I was “dropped” into this position, it was chaotic, hectic, and unorganized. I had to review, analyze, put the pieces of a puzzle together and, furthermore, create protocols for this position. After approximately 12 months, the position has been set up; now I am working on refining the “bumps” in the road. Did I tell you that when I was
working this position, I was also performing my old position at the same time? Oh well, that was a blast.

Her current responsibilities as Grants and Contracts Manager include being a member of the institute’s leadership team, managing projects, and the institute’s budget, marketing the institute’s programs, reporting, and planning strategically for the institute.

**Muslim Female Leader 2: Division Chair Akila Frazier [pseudonym]**

For the purposes of this study, the Muslim female leader will be referred to as Division Chair Akila Frazier. Like Manager Miguel, Chair Frazier was fully covered from head to toe except the face and hands. She was wearing a black, linen-like jilbab with matching pants embellished with a paisley turquoise print. The jilbab stretched to her ankle. She wore a matching scarf with hues of blue which covered her head, neck, and bosom coming to a point at her sternum. Chair Frazier was chosen because of her activism and leadership roles in Islamic and secular society, her contributions to higher education, and her theoretical and practical knowledge of leadership. Practical leadership experience includes being an early education mentor and teacher in the Islamic community and secular society as well as being the assistant director in an Islamic program serving pre-K thru twelfth grade. She has also been a state representative for a nationally recognized early childhood organization as well as a trainer, adjunct faculty, and a training coordinator in the early childhood community to classroom teachers, directors, and other early education professionals. Furthermore, she worked as the Training Coordinator for a local resource and referral organization that served the early childhood community throughout the state. Currently she works as an adjunct instructor at the Institute and has accepted a position as the division chair and professor of another
local Midwest Suburban community college. The participant’s education includes an
Associate and Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood and a Master of Science degree in
Higher Education Administration. She is currently working on a doctorate in Urban
Leadership and Early Childhood. When asked why she chose to go into educational
leadership, Chair Frazier stated, “Education itself has been a part of my life from the time
I can remember. It was just a natural progression to go into education (M2-9-3).” She
also described herself as a person who likes to move up in the ranks of a community
college setting, but shared that she also has an entrepreneurial spirit as well. She declared,

I enjoy the community college setting and I would like to stay in it and move up
in the ranks as a community college administrator. Currently, I am partly an
administrator and partly a faculty, and so it is an interesting balance. You get to
be a part of both worlds but I think I would really like to have the opportunity to
be a full-time administrator and see what opportunities, challenges, and rewards it
would bring for me. I also have an entrepreneurial spirit. I would also like to
develop my own company that I can put together and run in the educational arena
but more on the nonprofit side of it. (M2-10-3)

Initially the researcher was only interviewing the institute’s Director/Associate
Dean as these leaders’ superior. Yet after talking to the Muslim leaders’ previous
superior, who is now their colleague, it made sense to interview her as well. This decision
was made because Rose Chasteen [pseudonym] directly supervised both of the Muslim
female leaders for at least 2 years or more. Thus the researcher chose to interview both
administrators, Rose Chasteen and Carlos Kim [pseudonym].
Muslim Female Leader’s Superior 1: Director/Associate Dean Carlos Kim [pseudonym]

For the purposes of this study, administrator 1 will be referred to as Director/Associate Dean Carlos Kim. Director/Associate Dean Kim is Catholic and has dedicated his work over the past 30 years to programs and services in support of healthy child and youth development. Prior to his current position as Director/Associate Dean and Director, he spent 20 years in philanthropy with a focus on children and youth. He was also the Vice President for Youth Development at a prestigious not-for-profit organization and the Director of a variety of not-for-profit businesses. He holds a Bachelor's degree in education, a Master’s in Education and a Master’s in Business Administration. He also serves on local and national boards of directors, is published, and a contributor to some recent publications. He supervised one of the Muslim female leaders directly and the other indirectly.

Director/Associate Dean Kim described himself as “a middle aged Caucasian—younger, middle aged Caucasian male, who wanted this environment” (A1-20-7). He goes on to say that “most people who come to this institution do so because they know it is diverse, and they chose to work in an environment like this” (A1-20-7).

Muslim Female Leader’s Superior 2: Training Department Coordinator Rose Chasteen

For the purposes of this study, Administrator 2 will be referred to as Training Department Coordinator Rose Chasteen. Administrator Chasteen is Presbyterian, has a bachelors of science in early childhood education and a Master's degree in Public School Policy and Administration. She is currently seeking her doctorate degree in Training Development Leadership. She has been in the early childhood field for over 25 years and has worked as an infant/toddler teacher, preschool teacher, school-age teacher, Director
of a child care center, education coordinator for Head Start, youth counselor, and an
adjunct faculty at two local community colleges. Her passion is assuring all teaching
adults become lifelong learners in order to provide the best education for children.

Of the other colleagues interviewed, all were female. They represented the
training and college credit department of the Institute and college.

*Colleague Member 1: School Aged Professional Development Specialist/Youth
Development Faculty, Salimah Vonzell [pseudonym]*

For the purposes of this study, Colleague 1 will be referred to as Salimah Vonzell.
Salimah Vonzell described her religious affiliation as Christian. She holds a Master of
Education in Curriculum and Instruction with a Specialization in Creative Arts in
Learning. She has worked at the Institute since 2000 as a School Age Professional
Development Specialist providing training and technical assistance to after-school
programs. In addition, she teaches courses to prepare students for the state Youth
Development Credential. Mrs. Vonzell has presented workshops for state and national
after-school conferences and has been an accreditation consultant and national trainer for
literacy and math. She was also a member of the state School Age Coalition for 10 years
serving as president, treasurer, and conference chair. Currently she serves on the
Professional Development committee, overseeing the Youth Development Credential,
and is building a state-wide professional development network.

*Colleague Member 2: Chair Education/Child Development and Education
Coordinator/Faculty Cynthia Bruce [pseudonym]*

For the purposes of this study, Colleague 2 will be referred to as Cynthia Bruce.
Cynthia Bruce, Catholic, holds an Education Doctorate in Multicultural Education, a
Master of Education in Counseling and Guidance, and a Bachelor of Science in Education. She currently serves as the division chair for the Child Growth and Development/Education program and the Coordinator/Faculty in teacher education. With a career of over 20 years in education, Mrs. Bruce has worked at many levels, kindergarten through graduate studies and in many settings across the nation. She is currently focused on assisting the Child Development program attain accreditation instituting the new Associate of Arts in Teaching degree, and starting a recruitment/support program for minority males to enter the elementary school level teaching ranks.

*Colleague Member 3: Child Development Faculty Lavenia Beuford* [pseudonym]

For the purposes of this study, Colleague 3 will be referred to as Lavenia Beuford. Lavenia Beuford, Baptist, is a Child Development Faculty and Coordinator of the Child Development site-based program. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Child and Family Studies and a Master of Science in Early Childhood. She was the institute director for 27 years before changing her focus to teaching adults.

*Colleague Member 4: Child Development Advisor Nisha Donaldson* [pseudonym]

For the purposes of this study, Colleague 4 will be referred to as Nisha Donaldson. Nisha Donaldson, Baptist, completed her undergraduate study with a Bachelor of Social Work/Child Development Technology. She also received her Master in Curriculum and Instruction and holds a Vocational Certification. Nisha has worked for the college for over 28 years in a variety of capacities: as Education Specialist for the Pre-School classroom, as family advocate and currently serves as the institute’s liaison and Child Development Academic Advisor.
Colleague Member 5: Professional Development Specialist Sarah Papa [pseudonym]

For the purposes of this study, Colleague 5 will be referred to as Sarah Papa. Sarah Papa, a member of the Assemblies of God, received a Bachelor of Science in Psychology with an emphasis in child care. She also holds a Master’s in Education in integrating the arts in curriculum. She has worked for over 26 years to support improvements in the lives of children. She is a Professional Development Specialist for the institute as well as an adjunct faculty for the Child Development program. She currently offers support to the after-school programs by coaching, training, mentoring, and educating staff. She also has her own consulting company.

Colleague Member 6: Program Specialist Mariam Shadeed [pseudonym]

For the purposes of this study, Colleague 6 will be referred to as Mariam Shadeed. Mariam Shadeed, Baptist, has an Associate of Arts degree and has been with the Institute since 1991. She is currently the program specialist for the Child Growth and Development site-based program and is committed to excellence in all aspects of her position.

Colleague Member 7: Professional Development Specialist Ericka Benkadra [pseudonym]

For the purposes of this study, Colleague 7 will be referred to as Ericka Benkadra. When asked about her religious affiliation, she described herself as spiritual. Ericka Benkadra is a Professional Development Specialist and Quality Improvement Coach for the Institute. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Child Development. She has 16 years experience working with children and families and shares her knowledge with professionals who care for and educate children in early childhood centers and homes.
**Colleague Member 8: Professional Development Specialist Tondaling Mohn**

[pseudonym]

For the purposes of this study, Colleague 8 will be referred to as Tondaling Mohn. Tondaling Mohn, an Episcopalian, is a Professional Development Specialist for the institute. She has over 25 years in the early childhood field providing technical assistance, training, and coaching to child care programs in the Greater Metropolitan area. She is an adjunct instructor and has been a center director, program director, and lead teacher providing childcare for infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children. She has also provided early intervention special education services for children birth to age five. Her personal goal is to provide adults with the tools and information they need to create developmentally appropriate environments and experiences that promote young children's development.

**Colleague Member 9: Professional Development Specialist Linda Suirad** [pseudonym]

For the purposes of this study, Colleague 9 will be referred to as Linda Suirad. Linda Suirad, an Episcopalian, holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Family and Child Development and a Master of Science degree in Family Life Education. She has 27 years of experience in the field of child development. The first 17 years of her career were spent providing home based treatment to families with issues of child abuse and neglect and supporting child care providers via training and consultation. In addition, she supervised programs including multicultural and teen parents in the urban core. She created and utilized systems to implement the Head Start Performance Standards and provided technical assistance services to child care partner community programs at an Early Head Start Program. As a Professional Development Specialist she provides
training and technical assistance to community child care providers through on-site coaching and consultation model of services, including coaching services for child care programs participating in the state’s quality rating system pilot. She develops and presents training modules and she is also an adjunct faculty member for two local community colleges.

Colleague Member 10: Afterschool Professional Development Specialist Loralei Gray [pseudonym]

For the purposes of this study, Colleague 10 will be referred to as Loralei Gray. Loralei Gray describes herself as Spiritual/Christian. She is an Afterschool Professional Development Specialist. She has worked in this field for nearly 12 years. Her skills include providing technical assistance, consultation, and training to frontline staff and supervisors of youth programs. She is also involved in regional initiatives in her field including quality improvement and grant funding. Her philosophy and mission is to bring together individuals and organizations that are dedicated to developing a strong, diverse, after-school and youth development workforce that is stable, prepared, supported, and committed to the well-being and empowerment of children and youth.

Colleague Member 11: Professional Development Specialist Evelyn Rahman [pseudonym]

For the purposes of this study, Colleague 11 will be referred to as Ms. Evelyn Rahman. Evelyn Rahman, a Catholic, is a bilingual professional development specialist. She holds a Master of Arts in Integrating the Arts into Curriculum. Her Bachelor of Science degree combines both the fields of Psychology and Social Work. Previous positions held range from Teacher Aid to Director of Child Care Facilities. Her list of
specializations includes offering Child Development Associate (CDA) training to Spanish participants for college credit and continuing education. In addition, she is an adjunct faculty and has served on many local and state childcare boards and accreditation agencies. She is also trained in early childhood curriculum and assessment and is a national CDA Council Representative and CDA advisor.

*Colleague Member 12: Administrative Assistant Pam Pierre [pseudonym]*

For the purposes of this study, Colleague 12 will be referred to as Mrs. Pam Pierre. For many years Pam Pierre, Christian, worked for the city’s utility company in customer service and as a meter reader. Then, Pierre began another challenge working for the Chamber of Commerce as an administrative assistant and bookkeeper. Later she became the recording secretary for the board of zoning, where she took official minutes for the planning commission. Next, she took on a job as a permit technician where she checked over blueprints and calculated the cost of permits. Currently, Pam Pierre is an administrative assistant for the training department of the institute. She joined the institute one year ago. She coordinates all continuing education activities, including enrollment and payment. Her education includes an Associate in Business Management. She also holds certificates as a certified Administrator Professional and Certified Technician.

*The Interviews and Focus Groups*

The researcher informed the participants that the results may help Muslims and non-Muslims gain a greater insight into what it means to be a Muslim female leader working in a higher education institution in the United States. The researcher added that the information gathered should be beneficial to college and university officials.
responsible for recruiting and retaining diverse leaders, especially Muslim women. Next, the researcher informed the participants that the study was approved and will follow the guidelines as established by the University of Missouri Institutional Review Board and that of their institution’s review board.

Furthermore the researcher assured the participants that there are no right or wrong answers but rather differing points of view and to feel free to share their point of view even if it differs from what others have said. Moreover, the researcher stated that the session should be more of a conversation among participants and not to feel that they had to respond to all questions. The researcher told each participant she wanted to hear from each who wished to share information on various topics and reminded them to speak up and converse one at a time.

The researcher concluded by telling the participants that the length of the session would be about 1 ½ - 2 hours without any formal breaks but to feel free to leave the table for any reason if they needed. The participants agreed to participate and signed the informed consent forms and then the interview or focus group began.

Research Questions: Analysis of Data

Transcripts from the focus group interviews of 12 of the Muslim female leaders’ colleagues and interviews of the Muslim female leaders and their superiors were coded for statements related to the five research questions. The researcher noted patterns in the responses from the interviews as they related to the framework of the research questions. These patterns and observations made from field observations and document analysis were used to triangulate the data and guide the researcher in addressing the research questions.
Research Question 1

*Why do Muslim women who wear hijab choose to go into leadership positions?*

The researcher did not find any consensus among the participants, not even from the Muslim leaders, for this question. While one of the Muslim female leaders’ superiors stated, it comes from confidence, the other stated, its personal due to a desire to serve. Rose Chasteen uttered, “I think [Muslim women go into leadership] because they have confidence in themselves. I think it is important for anybody whether they wear a scarf or don’t wear a scarf, to have confidence in their ability” (A2-9-5). Carlos Kim stated, “I would think that that is strictly personal. Again, I can only speak for Kelley on that. Her desire to serve a larger community has really pushed her to go beyond what her job responsibilities are here. He begins to chuckle then explained, She advances her position before the title follows” (A1-9-3).

Focus group participants theorized the following: Mariam Shadeed answered, “I don’t know, because I don’t see them in positions of leadership.” Nisha Donaldson countered Mariam’s comment. She asserted that Muslim women are in leadership positions, just in bigger cities” (C4-9-6). Ericka Benkadra hypothesized,

I would say, I would guess that positive feedback and encouragement from others would increase your aspiration for continuing what you are doing. I mean you [the researcher] worked very hard where you are right now and I am sure if someone had not knocked down some of your blocks [obstacles] two or three or four times it would have been hard for you, as with any one. I just think that you guys [the researcher and Muslim female leaders’] were in a very encouraging environment
and anyone and everyone here would have helped you in any way to make sure that you got where you wanted to go. (C7-9-6)

Cynthia Bruce added, “Some people have that leadership drive and some people don’t. In my opinion, these women have moved ahead because of personality and perseverance” (C2-9-6).

Salimah Vonzell felt that women aspire to positions of leadership because they are female. She stated, “Take out Muslim, and take out who wear hijab. We are women; we have something to offer regardless of what your religion is. We are women; we can do this” (C1-9-6).

The Muslim leaders offered their reasons for going into educational leadership. Akila Frazier asserted

Education itself has been a part of my life from the time I can remember. Both of my parents have been in the field. To some extent my mother was a special needs teacher and an elementary school teacher and that was her career. So I had a great opportunity to see the field. Additionally, my father was an adjunct faculty member at a local community college. So I got kind of both aspects of the field, and it was just a natural progression to go into education. (M2-9-3)

Kelley Miguel asserted she did not have aspirations to become an administrator when she first came to the institute. She explained,

When I first entered the Institute as an administrative assistant, I thought “this is my niche,” this is what I’m good at. I really enjoyed my job and I loved organization. I thought of myself as the backbone of organization; I filled gaps no one noticed so that we were able to operate more effectively and efficiently. It
was difficult for me to leave that position because I loved what I was doing and also because I knew that I was performing two positions – and wondered if anyone else could really do the amount of work I did for as little pay. We did have trouble replacing it [her formal position] and I finally had to tell the supervisor—this is all you can expect this position to do--- and I redefined the job so the individual who replaced me would have the opportunity to be successful.

As I made the leap, I grew personally and professionally and I have come to love this position as well. Currently after my second year in this position I am beginning to write a “how to” for my job. (M1-8-3)

Research Question 2

What are strategies Muslim women who wear hijab use in their career path?

Akila Frazier argued the strategy she uses is just being who she is and demonstrating confidence in her abilities to others. She stated, “I come into the room and I see myself on the same level of all the other people. That I am a peer that I’m on the same level as you and that’s just how I walk in and see my situation. She added, I think once I start talking and people can see that I am articulate, confident, and possess skills, this is confirmation to them” (M2-15-5). Akila Frazier stated further that education leaders also need to know the theory behind administrative practice. She also said that leaders need to understand their leadership style and to be humble. “For example, if I am in this position, I don’t have the attitude that the buck stops here or whatever I say goes, with me if you have a question or a comment, I would gladly listen.” She added, “This [leadership position] is a wonderful experience for me, and I would like it to be the same way for all the people that I work with” (A2-13-5).
Kelley Miguel stated one must also communicate and advocate for oneself. She added, “I was pigeonholed by my position. She pointed out that women dominate the field of education but make up a small percentage of administrators. Miguel further stated, “Some of it was my fault and some of it was the perceptions of others.” She went on to explain, “I think you can get around it [being pigeonholed], but I think it takes probably a lot more communication than I was willing to give. If you want to do something, you have to advocate for yourself. One must make others comfortable and be comfortable with themselves.” After making this point she provided examples of how she made others feel comfortable with her. She stated, “I have a smile on my face, show confidence, and remain calm, and I talk to people just like I would if I didn’t wear a scarf. I try to act as normal as possible. But with the smiling and the smile in your voice I think that that helps a lot, because it puts people at the ease and if you’re at ease with yourself, people are at ease with you.”

After a pause, Kelley Miguel began reflecting on her past actions. She asserted, One strategy that I utilized earlier was to conform to appearance—wearing jeans, long shirts, tucking my scarf in… modifying my dress. Then I realize I am not comfortable doing that and I don’t want to have to modify myself for anybody else. And they could either take it or leave it. So when I finally got to that point I think things became a lot easier. This is who I am and what I believe. I am proud of who I am. I am proud of what I believe. We’re all works in progress, we all have things we need to work on, learn, and educate ourselves. But, you know we are all good people. As long as you have that kind of attitude, I think non-
Muslims get their cue from you, and so if you are unsure of yourself, I think, that is when people react the hardest.

Research Question 3

*How can institutions support the aspirations of aspiring Muslim female leaders who wear hijab?*

The data showed that institutional support of Muslim female leaders can be in the form of supporting their leadership aspirations or their Islamic culture. Rose Chasteen provided the following example of how she has respected Islamic food guidelines for her Muslim colleagues. She stated,

I remember one time we had training that Akila Fraizier was at and I ordered pepperoni and cheese pizza. I made sure we had two separate knives and I made sure if I wasn’t there that my staff knew that they can’t use the knife from the pepperoni for the pizza with cheese. She added, I learned those kinds of things actually from asking you [the researcher] first, and it got to the point that I wouldn’t order certain foods. For example one catering service provides a sandwich wrap with bacon bits in it. I tell them to leave the bacon off. I also learned from you [the researcher], not to have ham on the same plate as turkey and beef, for example, if you were doing a deli tray.

Akila Frazier and Kelley Miguel expressed their appreciation for the institute including them by incorporating their cultural guidelines when serving food. Akila Frazier reflected upon the last few years and asserted,

You know I think in recent years there has been a shift. And as companies and organizations are trying to be seen as more inclusive and as more new age, they
are making some changes as far as their leadership style and their leadership choices go. So I think now it is a great opportunity; just like it is a great opportunity to buy a house, it is a great opportunity to be a Muslim woman in higher education. But sure some individuals are banned and or more accepted into the public eye. I think it is a great opportunity for Muslim women to be able to slide in and enjoy the ranks. Because if the organization is promoting that they are diverse and that they truly believe, then they’re going to be accepting of others who normally haven’t been accepting in the past, that it will be a great opportunity to stand up and say, “You know what about me how about giving me? How about giving me a chance?” And I think organizations are a lot more open to that idea. (M2-14-5)

Miguel discussed how supervisors can hinder or empower employees.

She stated,

Other people believed in me so I just flourished and grew. Also, you have to believe in yourself as well as have others believing in you. The only thing that I would say in regards to supports is that people don’t see you in just one light. You know with my current situation, before the director came I probably would have stayed in the position I was in, because people felt either I had gone as far as I could go or I was happy/comfortable in my position and did not aspire to anything else. Yet, perhaps, when we get too comfortable, we begin to not work as hard. Perhaps we need to be pushed outside our comfort zone to achieve more, to contribute more. (M1-10-8)
Miguel further described the role institutions play in helping to educate their employees about how to lessen barriers. She affirmed,

I think that part of that is the education. I can’t say that enough, because education and interaction and really wanting to know about everyone, -and I’m not just talking just about us, but for us specifically also- but wanting to know about each individual as an individual and to recognize their strengths and differences and also their similarities. And building upon those makes a bridge that is very necessary to get there. Having people in those positions already in providing a mentor program that hooks up between Muslim and non Muslim so that people can see the different perspectives and maybe putting everybody together, for mentorship. So that although the mentors and mentees come together. Also having a fast track where you would have a, a bridge. The leadership academy tries to provide part of that bridge, but I think there are other ways we can do that so people don’t get pigeonholed in one area. And providing that type of opportunity for Muslim women particularly and women, I think, as a whole. (M1-18-13)

Miguel also provided an example of how the institution could employ more diverse people. She cited ways in which the hiring process could be streamlined to alleviate barriers. She declared,

We have a very convoluted process of hiring. They have a hiring committee and people aren’t aware that they’re going to be faced with a panel of their peers, and that they are going to listen to and score them accordingly or, you know, have a discussion about them and make a decision. They are used to one on one
interviews. They’re not used to four on one or five on one interviews. And I think if we were to set up a web site that talked about how the hiring process is and this is why, this is what you could expect and these are some other questions you might encounter—because some of the questions really shouldn’t be secretive. And you know we do want them to be able to come in and think on their feet, but at the same time, you can say you might expect a diversity question, so be prepared to give an example, or you should expect this kind of question—give an example. I think if we were to give them… but do we want them to succeed or do we want them to fall flat? And I think part of the interview process is very counterproductive, it sets people up to fail. (M1-19-13)

Research Question 4

How does a higher education leader develop skills to remain resilient in the face of occupational barriers based on majority beliefs and values in the workplace?

Both Akila Frazier and Kelley Miguel expressed that their resilience stems from their faith. Miguel confirmed,

I have a responsibility to Allah. I think that in everything that you do that you have a responsibility to God, because he is always there always watching you. He is looking at your interactions. He is also looking at what is in your heart, what you’re saying, and so you want to strive to be better all the time. You want to learn to communicate more effectively, but you want to learn to be ethical in your business decisions and ethical in your private life and have that balance. I have to focus on what I am there to do today. And I make prayer or dua and get refocused. And I say I am at work. This is the job, so let me be focused at work
because this is the job Allah gave me. He is watching me. And that accountability just plays into you being more accountable. Because you know that there is a purpose, a greater purpose in your life than each individual piece. But it is a greater purpose than just being a mother, a greater purpose than just being a wife, being a student, an educator, or be an employee. These are jobs that play that the purpose ultimately is to go to heaven.

Akila Frazier and Kelley Miguel also stated that they utilized their personal skills to enhance or develop new skills to navigate their career path and to remain resilient. Akila Frazier demonstrated confidence in her abilities to others by taking on new projects, showing she was a team player through collaboration but also taking the lead when needed and by the same time remaining humble. Kelley Miguel stated she looks for opportunities to communicate and advocate for herself. Examples included attending community and campus meetings, keeping a positive attitude and projecting a welcoming attitude from the smile on her face to the smile in her voice.

Research Question 5

*How does a higher education leader's public display of spirituality influence reactions by other administrators? Colleagues?*

Respondents indicated the display of hijab communicates negative perceptions about Muslim women due to stereotypes presented by society and positive perceptions due to prior interactions or relationships with Muslim women and nonjudgmental attitudes. Stereotypical messages included women being submissive, quiet and not able to speak for themselves, strict, oppressed, and foreign. Another finding from this study indicated that the scarf made some participants curious or hesitant. Positive perceptions of the scarf
were also noted. Carlos Kim stated the clothing indicated an inner strength and discipline that carries over in their personal, work, and spiritual life. (A1-8-2) He further argued at Hei Ran it is accepted, understood, and respected from the president up. (A1-11-13) He suggested that it probably isn’t this way at universities and in society. Lavenia Beuford indicated “the scarf is an expression of self that should be respected, just as I would expect the same type of respect for me and my religion” (C3-6-3).

When asked why the stereotype is different here, Rose Chasteen asserted, “due to them exhibiting confidence and demonstration of skills contrary to the stereotype. She added, holding your own in meetings and for brief encounters also help” (A2-6-3). Linda Suirad stated, “Because they speak up and provide ideas” (C9-6-7).

Ericka Benkardra confirmed Linda’s comment. She stated, “It was because they are so open with me [that I don’t have the stereotypes]. Most participants agreed that getting to know them or someone who was Muslim challenged stereotypes presented by society. This finding is consistent with the research on this topic, Tyrer and Ahmad (2006) found that racism or feelings of Islamophobia surfaced when students had past negative experiences. Those who did not have these type of experiences responded that Islamophobia would not happen at their university. Being that all respondents had positive experiences with the Muslim women at their institution, racism or feelings of Islamophobia would not surface.

Using the data set and the predetermined codes, the following themes emerged: A) Endorsing Inclusion; and B) Connecting with The Other. These two themes related to the decrease in non-stereotypical perceptions held about Muslim women are depicted in Figure 1.
Figure 1. Factors contributing to non-stereotypical perceptions of Muslim women
More women are entering traditional male jobs, the number of older workers is increasing, and there is more diversity with regard to ethnic, religious, and racial backgrounds. The increasing number of joint ventures, mergers, and strategic alliances is bringing together people from different types of organizations and national cultures. (p. 435)
Gary Yukl

Endorsing Inclusion

The first theme to emerge from the data was the vital role institutions of higher education played in creating environments that endorsed inclusion for recruiting, employing, supporting, and promoting aspiring Muslim female leaders. The female leaders’ superiors and colleagues identified the need for a) policy, b) hiring, and c) initiatives and activities for creating an inclusive environment that support diversity for recruiting, employing, supporting, and promoting aspiring Muslim female leaders. As shown in Figure 2, these themes are illustrated.

*Figure 2. Endorsing inclusion.*
Institutional Policy

The first category to develop under the theme of institutional support of inclusion is that of policy. Good institutions set policies that convey their commitment to recruit, employ, and promote diverse faculty, staff, and administrators. An examination of documents showed the attention to diversity running throughout Hei Ran's mission documents, including its vision, values, and purpose statements. Respondents conveyed and document reviews indicated both Hei Ran and the institute showed commitment through district, campus, and department strategic priorities. Carlos Kim, one of the Muslim leaders’ superiors and Cynthia Bruce, a colleague, asserted that diversity is part of the college’s strategic plan. Kim stated, “Well, it [diversity] is in our mission statement. Well, not our mission statement. It is a part of our strategic plan, and I would like to think that it is a part of our values and beliefs statement within that plan. Good organizations follow that and it starts at the top. (A1-13-4) Kim went on to explain:

We have a good college president that supports diversity and promotes diversity. Therefore, most people that work here recognize that you come to Hei Ran Community College because you want to be a part of diversity versus the other campuses within the system. The whole system has a plan and every system’s plan has a plan that relates to that plan and every department…well should. Departments should have a plan that relates to the campus plan and the campus plan should relate to the system plan. In my observation it is at every level. (A1-13-4)

Cynthia Bruce agreed with Kim that policies exist at every level of the system, but added although the college exhibits ways they embrace diversity in its documents, it
has a way to go when it comes to the practice in recruiting a diverse administration. She recalled a meeting she attended to welcome and converse with the new Vice Chancellor. She explained,

One of the African American leaders pointed out, as they stood up in the audience and asked a very pointed question about another white male being hired for a specific position in higher administrative. The moderators addressed his question by discussing the hiring process. But if you looked at the question in a broader sense he was 100% right. The gentleman was asking about how the campus actively recruits persons of color for administration rather than the hiring process.

Cynthia Bruce added, his question was really about the broader scale but he asked it in such a way that they were able to give and answer [that did not answer his actual question] and sit down. (C2-13-9/10)

As the researcher compiled the data from document reviews and reflected upon interviews with the leaders’ superiors and their colleagues, it was clear that the college is building a culture of inclusivity by spelling out expectations in its policies, but the data also indicated, from the respondents and observations, that although steps are being made to create a culture of inclusivity, the college still has a way to go in practice, especially in higher administration. Kelley Miguel summarized this finding best when she said,

“Respect for diversity, for traditions, cultures, and others is instrumental in our philosophy. Yet, the college is a bit behind the eight ball when it comes to inclusivity of all cultures.” Miguel took a deep breath, and then shared the following observation of an Islamic event she attended on campus. “We had the MSA [Muslim Student’s
Association] Iftar and nobody from the administration showed up or even came. Nobody. Yet they would expect us to be at the holiday dinner for them. (M1-14-12) We have a long way to go in implementing a diverse culture that is reflective of the students we serve. Because we’re definitely not reflective of the students we serve” (M1-17-13).

**Hiring Process**

The Muslim female leaders’, their colleagues, their superiors, and documents reviewed indicated that the college’s hiring process signifies one notable activity for boosting diversity in the workplace as an active intent to employ diverse employees. Participants also commented on Hei Ran’s hiring process and initiatives of the college, such as the leadership academy and internships, help to cultivate current employees or bring in qualified faculty who need experience. Carlos Kim expressed,

> The one [institutional activity that recruits diverse employees] that stands out the most is in the hiring process. On each hiring committee there is a diversity committee member, an affirmative action officer. This person makes sure that we are adhering to open recruitment and that officer has to sign off on a packet to make sure we are in compliance. I hate the word comply. There is an active intent on the part of the institution here to incorporate that with those officers and really promote the hiring of diverse populations. That is probably the most prominent one that stands out. (A1-15-5)

Kelly Miguel further explained the role of the affirmative action officer:

> This officer is supposed to be the person who ensures the questions are without prejudice and to observe the interactions that goes on in the committee and they need to make sure that those people [hiring committee members] do not
discriminate against age, or religion, or race, gender, or any type of social and economic or diverse status. The hiring committee always has an affirmative action officer. (M1-17-13)

Cynthia Bruce agreed, “There is always an equal opportunity person on every hiring committee that I have ever served on” (C2-15-10).

Akila Frazier’s comments confirmed that having an affirmative action officer is a good first step but a process to recruit diverse individuals is also important. She stated, although the college participates in affirmative action, there is no formal hiring process to encourage diversity in hiring.” She further uttered, “Even with affirmative action I think that’s kind of a sticky situation because some people are for affirmative action and some feel it’s an unfair advantage (M2-18-8).”

In reference to recruitment of diverse individuals, Cynthia Bruce detailed,

It seems to me that they are not advertising in the right places. Also, if they are really looking, they can promote from within. There is a wide variety of diverse people within the organization. It’s funny, we are the campus with the most diversity and the other campuses are always recruiting and snapping them up and they are not diverse at all. We are the ones who should be trying to mirror our student population. (C2-15-10)

Nisha Donaldson asserted in her experience qualified minority people apply to positions but are not chosen. She stated,

There must be things happening that could prevent us. I have known qualified minority people who have applied to positions over and over and over, and you know they met the guidelines and criteria but for some reason, I guess a
more qualified person is hired. I guess you can only take it for what you see. Is it discrimination? That is a hard one to call. But I believe there are people who are out there who are qualified. I don’t think it is a lack of, it is a choice of. (C4-15-10)

*Initiatives and Activities*

The third category to develop under the theme of institutional support of inclusion is that of initiatives and activities to educate faculty, staff, and administrators about the diversity among these groups and to provide a voice to the marginalized. Participants and the review of documents conveyed Hei Ran and the institute provide mandatory diversity training for all new employees. Employees are also offered a variety of campus activities like book discussions, workshops, films, and cultural events to educate and provide an avenue to belong. The researcher found that some respondents participated in these events personally, while others admitted being aware of the events as a result of an email, flyer, or a personal notification, but had not taken part in them. All participants agreed many outlets are available through campus life and leadership, but more could be done organization wide. Rose Chasteen shared the following:

I do think Hei Ran has some programs but I haven’t been involved with them. I see emails about different meetings and things. For example, there was a meeting Kelley Miguel said occurred here with the Muslims during Eid [MSA Iftar]. I have also seen other religious organizations’ activities like the Campus Crusades [Christian organization on campus]. I have also seen a lot of Latino things like Cinco De Mayo. We used to do a lot here in the institute as well, but because we have had so many changes in leadership I think we have been more focused in on
our goals than that [diversity activities]. You know we’ve talked about the chili
contests and everybody was going to bring their favorite cultural dish, but we
never did that. But I think it’s more because we are tired, and nobody wanted to
step up and plan it. You know I think we just have gotten lazy on some of our
activities here. I’d like to see more. We should incorporate all different cultures
more. When I first moved in here 10 years ago, I was told you couldn’t have
decorations, and now people are starting to decorate and things. I like to decorate.
I do it by season. And I try to encourage Kelley to put out her stuff in her office
that shows her religion; that’s important to her. I have a dinky nativity scene here.
Rose pauses, then turns and points to the nativity scene while saying, “I just keep
it up all year just to remind me, keep me focused, and show what I am about to
other people. Rose looks up at the shelf behind me and says, “I also have a Bible
verse behind you.” She pauses for a few seconds and then expressed, “You know
people should be able to do that and not feel like they are being too religious. I
think in this country we are all walking on tiptoes. We should be able to embrace
the diversity. We just need to work on it some more. (A2-14-7)
Kelley Miguel explained what Rose meant by the phrase work on it some more: “There is
an outlet for a variety of groups to have activities but we have not gotten to the point that
individuals outside these select groups participate.” When asked to provide an example,
Miguel began laughing and said, “Well, the MSA dinner that no one came to.”

After gaining composure, Miguel included, “Yet, I do believe that they have done
some things [participation in events outside their culture]. Like taste of the world type
things. Many different people attend this function. They have ethnic dishes from all over
the world.” Kelley Miguel further explained other campus events provided through the campus life and leadership office: She has witnessed,

The campus has a variety of events. MSA had an open booth. There was a Muslim women’s speech for women’s history month. They [the college] also have events that focused on black and African people during black history month. I also remember them doing something with Indian and Pakistani clothing and Holland shoes. The campus life and leadership office is the active promoter of many of these events. They create thematic bulletin boards. I remember seeing a board on the Arabic language and Chinese language. Amazing! So, I think the information is out there, but I think we try to be too politically correct when it comes to religion. So they don’t want to disseminate religious stuff. And instead of saying that the Koran is written in Arabic, they disseminate the Arabic to help with our culture but it really does not connect with people, and so there is a time and place to be politically correct, but in higher education or in any type of educational facility there’s a time to educate. Like if someone were a Wiccan, and were celebrating their holiday, I do believe that you should have the right to say this is a holiday, this is why we celebrate it, and we are going to do this event if you don’t want to come. And I think people have the right to come or not, but I think some of the people in the administration or from the diversity committee should have to attend, just like you would have a broader understanding and so they can bring back those ideas, talk about it, and educate themselves and others. I think that people think they know what they really don’t. People think they understand what they don’t. Just like when I was on my vacation for Eid holiday.
People kept calling me at home because to them work hasn’t stopped. But when they go on their Christmas vacation, their work stops [because the entire organization closes its doors]. And they don’t have to do anything or have to worry about anything. However, we [Muslims] still have all those [work] responsibilities [because while we are away on holiday vacation, the organization is open for business]. [There is a lot of balancing one has to do when they are] trying to be [good employees, while still being] true to our values and our religious obligations. (M1-16-13)

Salimah Vonzell also commented on the campus life and leadership office. She remarked that the student activities center focuses on various cultures each month although “it is a little bit of a tourist approach C1-14-10).” She added campus life provides information about a variety of cultures that we weren’t aware of. When asked to describe the tourist approach, Salimah explained, “The tourist approach is a one shot. Like on St. Patrick’s Day we may discuss the Irish and that’s the only time you may hear about it” (C1-14-10).

Akila Frazier discussed activities she had observed on campus. She stated,

During Hispanic heritage month the college had done quite a few different things like having different culturally specific movies that were presented to the campus community. There were also different displays around campus that had to do with the Hispanic culture. Also, recently during deaf awareness month, there were forums where the deaf talked about their experiences. There were also book discussions dealing with topics on death awareness. There are a lot of different
things that you can have on campus that people can choose to go or to feel supported. (M2-16-8)

Mariam Shadeed mentioned,

I know that they [administration] are looking at minority businesses and make it a focus. They encourage us at least once a month to use minority businesses when we order our supplies and at the inservice and the meeting today they gave out a brochure and they allowed minority businesses to display their business wear. She also added, The college also has activities during Black History Month. (C6-14-10)

In listening to the participants and examining the flyers of a variety of events, the researcher got the sense that Hei Ran was a safe place to conduct a variety of cultural events. Linda Suirad proclaimed, “At Hei Ran each individual shares about themselves. Everyone shares” (C9-14-15).

Akila Frazier describes the “everyone shares” concept as giving a voice. She noted, “I think the college provides a voice to the silent through the campus organizations. Campus organizations are a gateway to improving participation in that environment and a way to represent that party or group just like faculty association or anything like that” (M2-17-8).

Carlos Kim concluded, “I think Hei Ran provides a special recognition of students and staff through campus organizations. They recognize different cultures, celebrations, all events, or certain periods that are important for those groups and they actually promote that” (A1-14-4).
While many participants conveyed that Hei Ran endorses inclusion through many initiatives, most suggested one may not find this at other institutions. Tondaling Mohn stated, "I think we live in a little bubble" (C8-12-13). Loralei Gray added, "It is a bubble, a diverse bubble, a very beautiful bubble, a very happy bubble most of the time" (C10-12-14).

Connecting With The Other

The second theme to emerge from the data was connecting with The Other. This theme identified the role relationships and prior interaction between Muslims and non-Muslims helped to combat stereotypical views held of Muslim women. Abdullah (1999) asserted, that each person is The Other to someone. He further explained,

For real communication to be established, you must make a determined effort to see the other person in terms of his or her own life. Look at the…person in front of you and think of that person as just like you, with the needs, the same fundamental desire to be happy and avoid suffering, the same loneliness, the same fear of the unknown, the same secret areas of sadness, the same half-acknowledged feelings of helplessness---you will find that if you really do this, your heart will open toward the person and love will be present between you (p. 71-72).

This idea was supported by the focus group participants and the Muslim female leaders’ superiors. Many of the participants expressed they did not hold stereotypical views held by society because they had prior interactions with Muslim women that contested this view. They expressed that their perception of Muslim women differed from stereotypical views held by society because these Muslim women exhibited 1) a passion
for education; 2) leadership skills; and 3) an openness or willingness to share their Islamic culture. In Figure 3 these themes are illustrated.

*Figure 3. Connecting with the other.*
Display of Scholarship

The Muslim women leaders’ superiors and colleagues shared their perceptions regarding these leaders’ display of scholarship was not consistent with stereotypes of Muslim women. The leaders’ superiors, along with Nisha Donaldson, Sarah Papa, Mariam Shadeed, Loralei Gray, Linda Suirad, and Evelyn Rahman all expressed that these Muslim women had prepared themselves for leadership positions through education. As Evelyn Rahman stressed, “All the women that I have seen in the Muslim community think highly of education. It is a role that they, I, feel is key to being successful.” The researcher noted all participants attending the focus group nodding their heads in agreement (C11-5-6). Evelyn further explained,

I think what’s amazing is my contact with the women is that they are always wanting more. It is like you give them a little bit of information but they want to know why and how else can this happen (C11-5-6).

Linda Suirad, another colleague added, “they [Frazier and Miguel] have both been actively involved in their education since I have known them and they continue to seek more education and moving along that continuum” (C9-5-5). She further stated, “I think they have taken their education and they have readily used it and that they are actively using their education in their positions as they are moving forward. There’s a real transition of that learning into their practice” (C9-5-5). Rose Chasteen has been the supervisor of both the leaders. She stated,

I will talk about Akila first. Akila, almost immediately after she started here she began the master’s degree. I knew within her interview she said she wanted to go back to school and that didn’t bother me because she was hired for a short term
project, and I wasn’t sure how long we were going to have funding. After she started getting her master’s she started looking for doctoratal programs.

Chasteen further explained Akila Fraziers’s drive for training in addition to obtaining degrees. She commented the Department of Education project had so much training. She had to be trained on quality rating systems, curriculum, and hours and hours of training in the field of early childhood” (A2-5-2/3).

After discussing Fraziers’s drive for education, she began discussing Miguel’s. She stated,

…and Kelley, since she came here she took all kinds of training on her own. I think, she was more centered around being an administrative assistant. She took classes on Excel and Word, PowerPoint and things like that. I think she thought that she was just going to be the best secretary or administrative assistant that she could. Then, she started working towards her bachelor’s a little bit off and on. I think until a few years ago when we both were forced to relook at our goals and our lives due to circumstances here that she really wanted to finish her bachelor’s. I don’t know if she was looking for a leadership position, but I knew she wanted a new position. After this Miguel got her chance due to the arrival of Carlos Kim. Carlos Kim described Miguel as having tremendous skills, aptitude, and ability. He asserted,

When I got here she was performing beyond her job responsibilities. She was in an administrative position but she didn’t have the educational background that would allow her to have a higher position. But it was evident that she had the skills, the drive, and the determination to achieve higher levels. Since then she has
completed her bachelor’s degree and is closing in on her master’s degree. And I assume there will be other steppingstones along the way for her. (A1-5-1/2)

Display of Skills

Participants stated the Muslim female leaders they had come in contact with displayed a variety of skills like being determined, driven, articulate, and deep thinkers. For example, Evelyn Rahman asserted, “They are deep thinkers to me, very deep thinkers and they’re very articulate about why they want the information and the purpose of the information for them and they don’t expect just one answer” (C11-5-6).

Linda Suirad conveyed to the group that she wasn’t sure whether their drive came from the leaders’ culture or their personality, but “in all the Muslim women I know there is a drive to move forward and to be a leader. There is a desire to better yourself and to better the workplace” (C9-5-5).

Carlos Kim stated,

I did not directly supervise Akila so I can only speak about Kelley’s skills. Kelley exhibits problem solving and decision-making skills. In leadership that is what I think are real critical skills. Statistically she has been someone with responsibility of many areas who has the ability to size up the situation, collect enough information to inform decisions. She’s quick in that way. She doesn’t get into analysis paralysis. Sometimes it takes some people for ever, but she is very quick. (A1-5-1/2)

Rose Chasteen commented on Akila Frazier’s skills,

She [Akila] had to make decisions. When you’re out there in the field, you are put out to the wolves, so to speak, and I really had confidence in her. I mean, she
grew in her leadership just by doing that position and making decisions. I trusted her to make the right decisions. We would talk about it and I would meet with her and go out on site with her. She did a really good job of that [decision making] on her own. (A2-5-2)

*Display of Openness*

All participants explained that due to the openness of the Muslim female leaders, they had been provided an understanding and an opportunity to learn about them and Islam.

Linda Suirad stated,

I learned a lot because I had the opportunity to work with Akila who was always open and willing to share anything. If I had a question that I didn’t understand, she would always be open and she would say that you know we do it this way because of this or that or the other. So I certainly learned a lot and it was very powerful for me to learn so much. (C9-4-2)

Loralei Gray stated, "First it was the surface level of the dress and mannerisms, but when you talk and have a discussion about religion, you realize it's much deeper than that" (C10-4-3).

Pam Pierre stated, “with Kelley, I see it in her manner of dress and how she conducts herself. One can see it in how she relates to other people and how she relates to her children” (C12-4-2).

Evelyn Rahman agreed with Linda. She stated,

I feel that they are transparent [what you see is what you get] to explain what I mean by transparent, I will expand upon what Linda said. You almost forget that
they are Muslim because you just can have a conversation with them. I think it is just that relationship that we have with each of them and they’re just common people to us; there’s nothing that holds them above anyone or below anyone. They are equal to us. (C11-4-4)

Tondaling Mohn provided another example. She affirmed it is kind of a range.

What I see are people who have varying ideas of what it means to practice their faith, and being a Muslim is not being part of some monolithic group or identity, that there are different ways you practice your faith. She added, they might have on slacks and a shirt with their headscarf. They may have on a dress, a more full cover like a robe from shoulder to foot. People are still covered, and again I haven’t had this discussion with anyone, but there is a different definition of how some people, it seems to be a different definition of how you maintain modesty. (C8-4-3)

Pam Pierre affirmed, "Like the lady who worked at the front desk. She didn’t wear the full robe. She would wear jeans with a shirt and her scarf" (C12-4-3). Tondaling Mohn explained, "She would have a long pants and a long sleeve, you know, I thought that as different" (C8-4-3).

Pam Pierre speculated why she thought the lady at the front desk wore long pants and a shirt. She stated,

I think with the woman at the front desk, she was young. And I think that it [long shirt and pants] might be to be accepted among the young group. That is probably why she didn’t wear the robe full time. Maybe that afternoon she was going to do something. I think she didn’t want to stand out in the crowd.
Participants conveyed through their openness that they found that Islam was more than an outward expression through dress; it played a central role in their life. Cynthia Bruce asserted, it is a guiding force for their decision making and their behavior” (C242). Linda Suirad added,

I think that the first thing is you see it, you know it’s visually embodiment of them in their clothing and dress, their presentation of themselves. But, as you get to know them over the course of time there really is a guidance and it is the way that they look at their world and their life’s purpose and their goals. I think that it is a strong force in their life, not something that they do occasionally when they feel like it, but their viewpoint is that it [Islam] guides their life on a daily basis, so you see it in all aspects of their life. (C942)

Carlos Kim stated, “I’d say it [Islam] is a prominent role in that both followed and believe very sincerely in observance of the holidays and all the customs of the faith from what I can see” (A141).

Evelyn Rahman asserted,

The Muslim women that I have known, it’s their hierarchy. It’s how they believe, how they perceive their life. It is their path to reach the ultimate. She goes on to say, I’ve notice the different women that I’ve come in contact with also are at different levels. The researcher probed Evelyn for more information regarding what she meant by levels. She stated, “They are on different levels of education and different levels of belief.” She begins to think about her statement and then said, “I have a student currently that is a Muslim lady and she is completely covered [burqa]. So then, I have someone like Akila and Kelley who have just the
dress and the headscarf. You know, long dress covering their bodies. So, those are things, [dress] even they are at different levels. They are but at different education levels also. (C11-4-1)

In expressing their current perceptions, participants also articulated prior perceptions of Muslim women before they got to know Akila and Kelley. Ericka Benkadra stated, [before I knew Akila and Kelly]

I was curious, because you have on a different type of clothing than we do. I was very curious until I came here and became comfortable with you and the others, then I just asked. Because I like to learn about what’s going on. But before, I was really curious and kind of hesitate to ask, because I didn’t know a lot about what was going on. I didn’t want to seem rude. (C7-6-3)

Salimah Vonzell said, “I think I would agree. Not really well informed and if anything, going back to the stereotype, they must be slightly oppressed to have to wear that” (C1-6-3).

Sarah Papa weighed in, "Most of my experience with Muslims were with males because I worked in an international office with a lot of Muslims. So they didn’t wear any kind of thing. But when their wives came, I don’t remember their wives wearing it either” (C5-6-3).

Lavenia Beuford added,

I think my only impression was, they were expressing how they felt and that was okay because that was their thing. And I didn’t think one thing or the other. They were just expressing how they felt about their religion. And I thought I was
supposed to be respectful because I would like them to be respectful for whatever mine is [my religion] and that's it. (C3-6-3)

Cynthia Bruce stated, "years ago before I ever started working here, there was a stereotype in my mind that oh, they must be foreign. It wasn’t an American decision to do that" (C2-6-3).

Nisha Donaldson conveyed, “I have family members so I guess I never thought of anything different. I guess when it came to the head wrap and some of their clothing that was just a requirement. Thinking of them being different, I never thought of them being different. It was just a requirement.”

The researcher addressed the research questions through coding, identifying patterns and triangulating the data. In the next section, through an analysis of the interviews, focus groups, field observations, and documents, the role institutions play in endorsing inclusion for reducing stereotypes and the role prior interaction between Muslims and non Muslims, for connecting with The Other played in lessoning stereotypes emerged as themes of this qualitative inquiry. Additionally, Muslim leaders Kelley Miguel and Akila Frazier along with their superiors and colleagues, through their stories and in their own voices, assisted the researcher in presenting the data.

Conclusion

The study design, data collection methods, conceptual underpinning, research questions and process of data analysis were discussed in Chapter Four. In addition, a description of the campus setting and an introduction of the participants were also discussed. In Chapter Four the use of the CRT element of storytelling and the use of the participant’s voice were presented. Discussed in Chapter Five are the findings and
conclusions based on the data analysis. In addition, presented in Chapter Five are the implications for practice and recommendations for future study.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This single case study examined successes and challenges two Muslim women wearing hijab faced as they advanced into leadership positions. Furthermore, this study explored the congruence between these women’s perceptions as compared to the current research on this topic. The data were triangulated by comparing individual interviews of the Muslim female leaders, the leaders’ superiors and colleagues who work in the program. Additionally, field observations and documents were reviewed. From the data, two themes emerged which showed the role institutions play in endorsing inclusion for breaking down barriers and reducing stereotypes; and the role connecting with The Other- between Muslims and non Muslims played in lessening stereotypes. These results were found to be true for participants in the study whether they were the superiors, colleagues or Muslim leaders themselves. A summary of the findings of the inquiry and conclusions based on the data analysis are discussed in Chapter Five. Additionally, the implications for practice and recommendations for future study were also discussed.

A key element of this study was the use of storytelling and voice in allowing the participants to tell their own story. Delgado (1989) and Tate (1995) posited that storytelling (or counterstorytelling), a key component of Critical Race Theory (CRT), allows out groups to reject the corporate or institutional story in favor of their own versions which can counter the stories of the oppressor. Through counterstorytelling, the status quo is challenged through construction of the storyteller’s own reality. Therefore, this researcher determined that using a case study approach would allow the researcher to
obtain the language, or voice, of the participants (Creswell, 2003). Thus, since the empirical goal was to understand the actual experiences and beliefs of the participants, through this inquiry, the researcher placed emphasis on the participant’s personal voice to present the data.

Summary of Findings

The overarching questions guiding this qualitative inquiry was: How does an aspiring Muslim female leader who wears hijab develop skills to remain resilient in the face of adversity? And how can institutions support the aspirations of Muslim women by removing the roadblocks they may face? The study was viewed through the lens of Critical Race Theory. As established previously there are six unifying themes that define the movement:

1. Critical Race Theory recognizes that racism is endemic to American life.
2. Critical Race Theory expresses skepticism toward dominant legal claims of neutrality, objectivity, colorblindness and meritocracy.
3. Critical Race Theory challenges a historicism and insists on a contextual/historical analysis of the law. Critical race theorists adopt a stance that presumes that racism has contributed to all contemporary manifestations of group advantage and disadvantage.
4. Critical Race Theory insists on recognition of the experiential knowledge of people of color and our communities of origin in analyzing law and society.
5. Critical Race Theory is interdisciplinary (Crenshaw, Delgado, Lawrence, and Matsuda, 1993).
6. Critical Race Theory works toward the end of eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression (p. 6).

The following two overarching questions, 1) how does an aspiring Muslim female leader who wears hijab develop skills to remain resilient in the face of adversity and, 2) how can institutions support the aspirations of Muslim women by removing the roadblocks they may face, helped to focus the researcher as themes emerged from the data being analyzed. The following themes emerged; The role institutions play in endorsing inclusion for reducing stereotypes and the role connecting with The Other-between Muslims and non Muslims played in lessoning stereotypes. The research sought to answer the following questions:

1. Why do Muslim women who wear hijab choose to go into education leadership?
2. What are strategies Muslim women who wear hijab use in their career path?
3. How can institutions support the aspirations of aspiring Muslim female leaders who wear hijab?
4. How does a higher education leader develop skills to remain resilient in the face of occupational barriers based on majority beliefs and values of the workplace?
5. How does a higher education leader’s public display of spirituality influence reactions by other administrators? Colleagues?

The next section summarizes the data presented in Chapter Four that addressed each research question.

*Why do Muslim women who wear hijab choose to go into education leadership?*

As stated in chapter two research studies failed to reveal the reason women chose to go into educational leadership. These studies tended to focus on barriers women faced,
including the reasons women lagged behind men in educational administration (King, 2006; Susannah, 2007) and historical evidence on how businesses and education institutions discriminate against women who are or aspire to be educational leaders (Reinarz, 2002; Susannah, 2007). Of the limited research available on Muslim women researchers identified social significance as the number one factor Muslim women aspired to positions of leadership (Basit, 1997; Bruner, 1962; Tyrer & Ahmad, 2006). Basit (1997) pointed out many Muslim women viewed education “as a vehicle for social mobility” (p.12), while Tyrer and Ahmad's (2005) investigation cited personal interest, career aspirations, financial stability, personal independence, and greater respect and choices when thinking about marriage. Yet, none of these reasons were mentioned by the Muslim women researched for this study. Akila Frazier went into the area because education was always part of her upbringing. Kelley Miguel acquired a position of leadership after displaying skills for the position and gaining the necessary credentials needed. The Muslim leaders’ superiors and colleagues also varied on their responses to this question. Administrators said it was for personal reasons or because they had the confidence to do so. Colleagues told the researcher responses like some people have drive and some don’t; because they are female and because of personality and perseverance. It is particularly interesting to note that the reasons given by the Muslim women and their superiors and colleagues differed.

What are strategies Muslim women who wear hijab use in their career path?

Several researchers identified mentoring as the number one strategy used by Muslim and non-Muslim women in their career path (Enomoto, Gardiner & Grogan, 2000; Jackson & Harris, 2007; Reinarz, 2002). Other researchers cited exceeding job
expectations and upgrading skills as strategies used (Enomoto, Gardiner & Grogan, 2000; Jackson & Harris, 2007). Both Akila and Kelley mentioned their faith and education as strategies they used in their career path. This information is consistent with the research by Christman and McClellan (2007) that found that participants identified spiritual support and education as one strategy they used to overcome difficulty and foster resiliency. What’s more, administrators and colleagues of this research study overwhelmingly agreed that education was one strategy Muslim women used as they navigated their career paths. They asserted these women not only educated themselves by obtaining degrees and training, but also educated others about Islam which minimized stereotypes and led to a better understanding of them as people. Carlos Kim and Rose Chasteen asserted these women displayed the skills, aptitude, and ability in performing their job beyond responsibilities. Chasteen added these women showed confidence.

Focus group participant responses paralleled the administrators’ regarding skills exhibited by these women. They utilized descriptions like articulate, deep thinkers, determined, and persistent to describe the leaders’ abilities. Miguel also pointed out that communicating to others one’s aspirations as well as and being true to oneself are important strategies.

*How can institutions support the aspirations of aspiring Muslim female leaders who wear hijab?*

The research on this topic tended to focus on ways institutions failed to support the aspirations of women. In a study conducted by Afridi (2001), Muslim women reported employers often held stereotypical attitudes that limited their aspirations. Knott and Khokher (1993) stated aspirations are hindered due to Muslim women trying to
balance dual cultures: “traditional/Western, religious/secular, parents/peers--which are also dichotomized” (p. 7). Thus, if institutions could come up with ways to create environments to help these women balance their dual life, it would be helpful. Tyrer and Ahmad (2006) pointed out the Islamic dress was often seen as a barrier.

Respondents reported that the support for diversity was one way Hei Ran Community College and the institute supported the aspirations of Muslim female leaders. Other suggestions included actively seeking, hiring, and promoting Muslim women as well as taking time to get to know them and providing positive feedback and encouragement as they advanced. In the literature review, Susannah (2007) suggested one of the strategies that businesses could implement to support women in leadership roles included that “workplaces need individuals with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and styles of leadership (pB4-B4, 1p).”

Focus group members and the Muslim leaders’ superiors also provided specific examples for supporting the Muslim women in their culture, such as providing time off for personal holidays, providing and preparing food following Islamic guidelines, and accepting and embracing other cultural practices different from the general public, like averting the gaze from and not shaking the hands with persons of the opposite sex, and having to refrain from events featuring alcohol. Research conducted by Tyrer and Ahmad (2006) supports these findings. They argued, that institutions of higher education needed to provide accommodations like providing food that respected Islamic guidelines (halal or zabihah), access to facilities for prayer and ritual washing (wudhu), and even in some cases having the permission to have a mahram or ‘chaperone’ to attend events with a Muslim female student. They added that universities have a responsibility to sensitively
identify the needs of all students in advance in such a way as to ascertain students’ needs. The researchers further stated that the wider practices through which disability needs are established can be adapted to ensure that particular religious needs are also identified and met.

*How does a higher education leader develop skills to remain resilient in the face of occupational barriers based on majority beliefs and values of the workplace?*

The researcher found that the Muslim female leaders used their faith and personal ability to tear down occupational barriers based on majority beliefs and values of the workplace. As these women shared their beliefs openly and as their colleagues and supervisors began to understand the Muslim women's values and beliefs, colleagues and supervisors began incorporating these practices within the dominant culture. As a result a new culture which fostered inclusion of all employees was created because the colleagues and superiors sincerely sought to understand and embrace the culture. In turn, this understanding actually destroyed barriers between Muslims and the workplace.

*How does a higher education leader’s public display of spirituality influence reactions by other administrators? Colleagues?*

The public display of spirituality did not influence the reactions by administrators or colleagues in the workplace. Respondents stated and named stereotypes held by society that they were aware of but affirmed that these perceptions were not their perceptions of Muslim women. The participants in the study related just the opposite. They pointed out that the women were smart, articulate, capable, educated and, as Evelyn Rahman stated, "Just like me.” The participants’ non-stereotypical impression of the Muslim women stemmed from their relationship with them, the openness on the part of
the Muslim women themselves, as well as these women's display of education and skills, somehow made them overlook the scarf.

Conclusions

Merriam asserted a case study approach provides a holistic look at the phenomenon being studied. In fact, multiple realities exist because all voices, including that of the researcher, are considered (Creswell, 2003). Participant voice is particularly important since the end goal is to understand through the experiences and viewpoint of the participant. Gillham (2000) stated "the case study researcher, working inductively from what's there in the research setting develops grounded theory: theory that is grounded in the evidence that is turned up" (p. 12). The end goal is to gain an insider’s view of a phenomenon, rather than an outsider's view (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995) or as Merriam (1998) coined, obtaining “members meaning.” This “members meaning” then, provides a different perspective, subsequently, can be developed as provisional hypotheses for future research. Creswell posited,

[Critical] researchers believe that inquiry needs to be intertwined with politics and a political agenda. Thus the research should contain an action agenda for reform that may change the lives of the participants, the institutions in which individuals work or live, and the researcher’s life. Moreover, specific issues needed to be addressed that speak to important social issues of the day, issues such as empowerment, inequality, oppression, domination, suppression, and alienation…. [T]he “voice” for the participants become a united voice for reform and changes… [Which may] mean providing a voice for these participants, raising their
consciousness, or advancing an agenda for change to improve the lives of the participants. (p. 10)

Using a case study approach, then, was necessary since research goals included empowering Muslim female leaders and giving voice to improve the culture of institutions of higher education. Merriam (1998) stated that with the qualitative researcher, it “is not whether findings will be found again, but whether the results are consistent with the data collected,” (p. 206). As a result, the following conclusions are based on the study findings regarding; how an aspiring Muslim female leader who wears hijab develops skills to remain resilient in the face of adversity? And how institutions support the aspirations of Muslim women by removing the roadblocks they may face were identified.

*Circumstantial*

The first conclusion is that these Muslim women who wore hijab choose to go into educational leadership for a myriad of reasons. Additionally, the Muslim women interviewed did not enter educational leadership as their initial goal. Rather, leadership found them. Whether they were exposed to education all their lives and continued in the field to attain a position of leadership or whether they were encouraged to attain a position as a result of displaying the necessary skills to become a leader. Both leaders discussed that being in a position of leadership teaches them to be humble and realized leadership is a natural fit.

*Role of Islam*

A central tenet derived from the participants is the fundamental role Islam played in their lives. Participants conveyed that Islam is much deeper than what one sees. It
encompasses all aspect of the individual’s life; spiritually, cognitively, physically, and mentally. The participants saw clearly that “the expressing of Muslim identities by many respondents not only served to reject hegemonic definitions based on racial classifications, but also presented a radically different and less exclusionary way of constructing identities and envisioning social relations” (Tyrer & Ahmad, 2006, p. 42).

**True to Self, True to Profession**

Being true to oneself was the number one strategy both Muslim women used as they navigated their career paths. Even when Miguel began to acculturate to the dominant societal standards for dress, she soon returned to what she was comfortable in wearing. Both Muslim women found that being true to one’s values sent the message that they were genuine, not only about their religion, but also their personal and work relationships.

Additionally, education seemed to be the overarching strategy used to attain a position of leadership. Both leaders reported staying one degree ahead of their position requirements. Additionally, administrators’ reported the women displaying skills far more advance than the positions that they held as well as skills needed to be an effective leader.

**Institutions Role in Diversity**

The findings showed that institutions of higher education play a vital role in creating inclusive environments and endorsing conclusion. Institutions endorse inclusion by hiring diverse individuals, implementing institutional policies that endorse inclusion, and providing activities and programming that center on diversity. These actions create an environment that allows others to interact with, accept and form relationships with The
Other. At Hei Ran, these practices helped to break down the barriers and stereotypes of the Muslim women in this organization and formed memorable positive impressions of Muslim women. Ultimately this created a safe environment for the Muslim women to display their true identity and a safe place for the curious to ask questions. As a result of interaction and openness, these women were seen as talented, skilled, normal, colleagues, and finally friends who just happened to dress differently. Many participants reported that they have a better understanding of the culture and have personally grown as a result of their interactions with the Muslim leaders. Other members reported not ever feeling any difference about the Muslim women as they would any other women. These respondents stated they saw the women’s aptitude and not the scarf.

*The Real World*

Based upon the findings, the researcher, as well the respondents concluded that an environment like Hei Ran does not exist in the larger society and probably not in many institutions of higher education. In fact, when obtaining participants for the study many potential participants declined, providing the excuse that they were too busy or the topic was too political. The researcher wishes to convey that although this statement may be true, the findings suggested administrators who wish to give voice to Muslim women and create a world that works for them must create such an inclusive environment as the Hei Ran Community College and the institute.

*Limitations*

One limitation of a case study design is the issue of internal validity and reliability. Internal validity asks how the research matches reality (Merriam, 1998). Reliability “refers to the extent to which research findings can be replicated” (Merriam,
Merriam suggested one way to address these issues is for the researcher to utilize multiple methods of data collection triangulating the data. Thus, the researcher used multiple forms of data collection and, when possible, received feedback from the subjects through member checks.

A second limitation was the external validity or generalizability of the study as it only focused on two Muslim female leaders in higher education. Merriam (1998) wrote that qualitative methods are not meant to be generalizable; they are meant to provide a contextual understanding of the event. As stated above, when utilizing qualitative methods, topics of interest emerge from the subjects being studied rather than having a predetermined theory to help explain and understand a phenomenon in context (Merriam, 1998).

Third, case studies are limited by the sensitivity and integrity of the investigator (Merriam, 1998). Merriam asserted “the researcher must be sensitive to the context and all the variables within it, including the physical setting of the people, the overt and covert agendas, and the nonverbal behavior (p. 21)”…and any personal biases the researcher may have that may influence the research. One way to be sensitive to the context is for the researcher to be trained in interviewing and observation techniques (Merriam). To control for this limitation, the researcher has received training in observation and interviewing techniques and has had practical experience. The researcher has been an assessor or validator for many national accrediting bodies in higher education over the last 10 years. This professional courtesy requires observation and interviewing skills. Additionally, as a component of counseling courses completed. The researcher was trained to know when to allow for silence, to probe, or to change direction during
interviewing and observation. Currently, the researcher is a practicing counselor at a local community college.

Furthermore, to control for researcher bias, the researcher identified her own bias and theoretical orientation at the onset of the study. According to Merriam (1998) identifying ones biases and theoretical orientation at the onset of the study increases the chance that the study can be replicated at another site. Additionally, it provides a degree of integrity and acknowledges that all inquiry is value laden (Marshall & Gerstl-Pepin, 2005; Meterns, 2004). One bias that may have surfaced is as a result of the researcher being a Muslim woman who wears hijab and inferences made by the researcher may be shaped by the identification with the participant of the case study as well as one’s own experience. Additionally, given that the researcher is responsible for interpreting and drawing conclusions about the data through one’s personal lens, the issues of reliability and validity are questioned. To control for this limitation, the researcher triangulated the data (Merriam, 1998) by using multiple methods of data collection such as observations, audio recorded interviews, and document analysis in order to ensure validity and reliability of the data (Creswell, 2003). Transcription was verified through “member checks” (Merriam, 1998, p. 204) to determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings of the participants being studied. Triangulation gave voice to the marginalized by buttressing the findings gathered from observations, interviewing, and document analysis of those being studied, thus diminishing biases and assumptions held by the researcher.

Another limitation is that participant and researcher biases may have surfaced. Because the researcher is a Muslim and veils, the non Muslim participants may withhold crucial information that may inform the study for fear of hurting the researcher’s feelings.
To control for this issue, interview participants consisted of individuals who had built a prior relationship with the researcher and established rapport to the point where they felt comfortable with asking questions about Muslims and Islam openly and candidly. The researcher also initiated multiple informal visits to reestablish rapport after having been away from the Institute for a year. During the visits, the researcher was always forthright in the intent of the study. Lastly, while Islam is followed by many diverse people from all over the world, the researcher chose American Muslim’s to inform this study. Many studies have been conducted over Muslim women outside of America, but few studies have been completed within the United States. The researcher wanted to gain an insight of the American Muslim experience.

Finally, due to the importance of obtaining rich, thick description for analysis of a phenomenon, a researcher may not have the time or money to devote to such an undertaking. Another limitation for case study research is the inability to obtain needed documents that are considered protected or closed to the public. The researcher was able to overcome this limitation due to the availability of documents on the institution’s public server and documents provided freely by the participants. Participants were also gracious in providing many of the needed documents to use to triangulate the data.

*Implications for Practice*

The implications of this inquiry for application in higher education could also impact PK-12 institutions as they address the issues of diversity in recruiting, hiring, retaining and promoting aspiring Muslim female leaders. The study indicated the importance of providing a structure to create a climate for embracing and accepting diversity. One way organizations can do this is by establishing policies of inclusion and a
process for hiring diverse individuals. This action conveys the message that diversity in the workforce is valued at every level.

Other ways organizations can create a climate for embracing and accepting diversity (endorsing inclusion) is through campus activities and events. Campus activities and events provide a safe place for employees to learn about those different from them, as well as a place to provide a voice to those not part of the larger society. The study indicated these methods are a first step to creating a structure. However, the participants indicated the next level would involve individuals from all backgrounds attending a variety of functions and not just functions that supported their own cultural backgrounds.

The study findings also revealed the importance of institutions hiring Muslim women to provide both Muslims and non-Muslims opportunities to engage and form relationships with each other (connecting with The Other). It was found that through these relationships institutional barriers were removed and stereotypical perceptions changed. As a result, individuals began to see the Muslim women as human beings with feelings, skills, and aspirations similar to them. Additionally, racism or feelings of Islamophobia would not surface. More importantly, As Ericka Benkadra stated, “her interactions with the Muslim women led her to call one of them a colleague and friend.”

The study also found that although the college district had a structure that encouraged diversity and a hiring process and initiatives to assist diverse individuals in obtaining a position, there were no formal methods for recruiting these individuals. It was also interesting to find that these efforts focused only on gender and race, but not religious diversity. Therefore, if colleges and university officials are concerned about including individuals from a variety of religious backgrounds, this needs to be added
during the hiring process. What was particularly striking to the researcher is that although
the organizations documents recognized religious diversity, this was not a focus in the
hiring process.

Recommendations for Future Research

The results of this study should contribute to the current body of research and
literature on Muslim Women in the United States. First, due to the limited research
available, researchers may want to examine the effective strategies used by institutions to
recruit, retain and promote Muslim women. Researchers may also want to view how the
findings may be similar to or different from other studies about Muslim women who wear
different types of Islamic dress, for example, the niqab. Additionally, because many of
the respondents reported that they felt the Early Childhood field is more accepting;
researchers may want to conduct the study in other academic fields. Another topic of
study could review the differences in perception between converts versus someone born
into the religion Islam or how the experiences of white Muslim females are similar or
different from African America Muslim females or other ethnicities. Furthermore, what
would happen if the study is conducted in a focus group of all Muslims versus a focus
group of non-Muslims or with Muslim superiors versus Non-Muslim superiors?
Moreover, research could be conducted to address perceptions and aspirations held by
Orthodox versus the Nation of Islam Muslim women. Finally, future researchers may
want to examine the role age plays in perceived barriers. Akila Frazier, one of the
Muslim women stated that she had not experienced many barriers due to dress. She felt
the barrier was due to her age which may send the perception of having limited
experience. This is particularly interesting because Miguel, the focus group participants,
and the leaders’ superiors were around the same age, and most of them identified the hijab as an initial barrier.

Concluding Overview

This single case study examined how an aspiring Muslim female leader who wears hijab develops skills to remain resilient in the face of adversity and how institutions can support the aspirations of Muslim women by removing the roadblocks they may face. The findings of this inquiry suggested institutions played a vital role in creating environments that embrace diversity or endorsed inclusion. This role included instituting system wide procedures, hiring Muslim women and providing avenues to educate others about the women and interact with them. The researcher found that through the forming of relationships or connecting with The Other, barriers were lessoned and stereotypes alleviated. These results were found to be true among both superiors and the colleagues.

The data revealed, however, a strong need for institutions to begin using religion as a criterion for diversifying its workforce. Currently, the only factors used seem to be race and gender. Additionally, further study identifying strategies used by institutions to recruit Muslim women is warranted.

Finally, to address the original questions of how does an aspiring Muslim female leader who wears hijab develop skills to remain resilient in the face of adversity and how institutions can support the aspirations of Muslim women by removing the roadblocks they may face, the researcher found the following. Muslim female leaders find their strength in their faith, but initiations can remove roadblocks by supporting their faith and providing avenues to showcase their beliefs, to educate others as well as form
relationships so they can develop friends and allies to assist them as they aspire to positions of leadership.

“The quest for greater awareness and knowledge can also help our country advance in its mission to set an example for the rest of the world by moving beyond tolerance towards accepting and even celebrating racial, ethnic or religious differences. For all these reason, it is increasingly vital for America to develop a better understanding of Islam and for Muslims to become more fully a part of the structures of American democracy and civil society”

Afridi
REFERENCES


http://macdonald.hartsem.edu/mattsonart4.htm

http://macdonald.hartsem.edu/mattsonart4.htm


http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Clearinghouse/AdvisingIssues/women.htm


Sahih Bukhari *Volume 7, Book 62, Number 4 that MSA-USC Compendium of Muslim Text Book 001, Number 0055*) Retrieved January 12, 2008, from:
http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/reference/searchquran.html


Shepard, S. (1999). Level of aspiration, mobility, and persistence: Factors impacting the number of women in educational administration. Paper presented at the Women in


Appendix A

IRB Approval

1. University of Missouri IRB Approval

2. Hei Ran Community College IRB Approval
Dear Investigator:

Your human subject research project entitled Perceptions and Behaviors that Encourage or Impede Advancement or Attainment of Leadership Positions in Higher Education by Muslim Women Wearing Hijab was reviewed and APPROVED as "Exempt" on September 29, 2008 and will expire on September 29, 2009. Research activities approved at this level are eligible for exemption from some federal IRB requirements. Although you will not be required to submit the annual Continuing Review Report, your approval will be contingent upon your agreement to annually submit the "Annual Exempt Research Certification" form to maintain current IRB approval. You must submit the "Annual Exempt Research Certification" form by August 15, 2009 to provide enough time for review and avoid delays in the IRB process. Failure to timely submit the certification form by the deadline will result in automatic expiration of IRB approval. (See form: http://irb.missouri.edu/eirb/)

If you wish to revise your activities, you do not need to submit an Amendment Application. You must contact the Campus IRB office for a determination of whether the proposed changes will continue to qualify for exempt status. You will be expected to provide a brief written description of the proposed revisions and how it will impact the risks to subject participants. The Campus IRB will provide a written determination of whether the proposed revisions change from exemption to expedite or full board review status. If the activities no longer qualify for exemption, as a result of the proposed revisions, an expedited or full board IRB application must be submitted to the Campus IRB. The investigator may not proceed with the proposed revisions until IRB approval is granted.

Please be aware that all human subject research activities must receive prior approval by the IRB prior to initiation, regardless of the review level status. If you have any questions regarding the IRB process, do not hesitate to contact the Campus IRB office at (573) 882-9585.
HEI Ran Community College

Subject: HRCC IRB Exempt Approval Letter

**Project Title:** Perceptions and Behaviors that Encourage or Impede Advancement or Attainment of Leadership Positions in Higher Education by Muslim Women Wearing Hijab

Approval date: October 6, 2008
Expiration date: October 6, 2009
Investigator: Hollwell, Victorie Joyce Ann
Project Status: Approved Active Exempt

Dear Investigator:

Your human subject research project entitled Perceptions and Behaviors that Encourage or Impede Advancement or Attainment of Leadership Positions in Higher Education by Muslim Women Wearing Hijab was reviewed and approved as “Exempt” on October 6, 2008 and will expire on October 6, 2009. Research activities approved at this level are eligible for exemption from some federal IRB requirements. Although you will not be required to submit annual Continuing Review Report, your approval will be contingent upon your agreement to annually submit the “Annual Exempt Research Certification” form to maintain IRB approval. You must submit an Annual Exempt Research Certification request by August 30, 2009 to provide enough time for review and avoid delay in IRB process. Failure to submit the certification form by deadline will result in automatic expiration of the IRB approval.

If you wish to revise your activities, you must contact the HRCC Institutional Research Office for a determination of whether the proposed changes will continue to qualify the exempt status. You will be expected to provide a brief written description of the proposed revisions and how it will impact the risks to subject participants. HRCC IRB will provide a written determination of whether the proposed revisions change from exemption to expedite or full board review status. If the activities no longer qualify for exemption, as a result of proposed revisions, an expedited or full board IRB application must be submitted to the HRCC IRB. The investigator may not proceed with the proposed revisions until IRB approval is granted.

Please be aware that all human subject research activities must receive prior approval by the IRB prior to initiation, regardless of the review level status. If you have any questions regarding IRB process, please contact HRCC IR office at 816-759-1248.

HRCC Institutional Review Board

Application received notice end on September 30, 2008
To: victorie.hollwell@HRCC.edu
CC: Someone@HRCC.edu
Appendix B

_Informed Consent_

3. Muslim Female Leader Informed Consent Form
4. Muslim Female Leader Letter of Informed Consent Participant Form
5. Administrator Informed Consent Form
6. Administrator Letter of Informed Consent Participant Form
7. Colleague Informed Consent Form
8. Colleague Letter of Informed Consent Participant Form
Muslim Female Leader Informed Consent Form

Dear Participant,

Asalaam Alaikum,

This letter is an invitation to participate in a research study entitled, “Perceptions and Behaviors that Encourage or Impede Advancement or Attainment of Leadership Positions in Higher Education by Muslim women Wearing Hijab.” I am conducting the study as part of my doctoral requirements in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Missouri. You have been invited to participate in this study because you are a Muslim female leader who wears hijab between the ages of 20 and 60 who is currently living and working within United States in higher education.

Your participation may help Muslims and non-Muslims gain greater insight into what it means to be a Muslim female leader working in a higher education institution in the United States. Additionally, the information gathered should be beneficial to college and university officials responsible for recruiting and retaining diverse leaders. I have provided a summary of the study and what your involvement would entail should you decide to participate.

**Researcher:** Victorie Hollwell. University of Missouri, Doctoral Candidate, Victorie.Hollwell@mcckc.edu or call me at 816-682-3306

**Dissertation Supervisor:** Dr. Barbara N. Martin, University of Central Missouri State, Dr. Barbara Martin, who can be reached at 660-543-8823.

**Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of this study is to identify factors that encourage or impede Muslim women wearing hijab from attaining or advancing in positions of leadership in higher education institutions in the United States.

**Procedures:** If you agree to participate in this study, I will conduct a 1 ½ to 2 hour interview of open-ended, semi-structured questions and spend an additional two hours to observe you informally and/or during regularly scheduled meetings. I will also need to conduct an interview with your superior and a focus group with your colleagues. Furthermore, I will ask for documents of your schools diversity policies to provide a more comprehensive view of your organization. Although the interview questions have been pre-determined, please note that the process will be informal and any additional insight or perceptions you would like to share will be welcomed. You may choose to answer any or all of the questions. With your permission, the interview will be audio-taped to assure an accurate transcription of your responses. In the event that significant new findings develop during the course of the study, the researcher may ask you to participate in additional audio recorded interviews either in person or via telephone. In addition to being recorded, all interviews will be transcribed verbatim for use by the researcher. The researcher may also ask additional questions of you via electronic mail.
Following the interview, I will send a copy of the transcript to you for review. Any additions or clarifications you request will be made immediately to the transcript. At any time, you may withdraw as a participant without any negative consequences.

**Participation:** Participation in the study is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from participation at any time you wish without penalty, including in the middle of the interviews or after they have been completed. Your consent to participate or refusal to participate will not affect your employment in any way. You may also decline to answer any questions that you feel are too uncomfortable to answer. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns about your participation. You can call me at 816-682-3306. In addition, you are also welcome to contact the dissertation advisor for this research study, Dr. Barbara Martin, who can be reached at 660-543-8823. If you have a question about your rights as a research participant, you should contact your Compliance Office and/or the University of Missouri Institutional Review Board office at (573) 882-9585.

**Injury:** It is not the policy of the University of Missouri to compensate human subjects in the event the research results in injury. The University of Missouri does have medical, professional, and general liability self-insurance coverage for any injury caused by the negligence of its faculty and staff. Within the limitation of the laws of the State of Missouri, the University of Missouri will also provide facilities and medical attention to subjects who suffer injuries while participating in the research projects of the University of Missouri. In the event you suffered injury as the result of participating in this research project, you are to immediately contact the Campus Institutional Review Board Compliance Officer at (573-882-9585) and the Risk Management Office at (573-882-3757) to review the matter and provide you further information. This statement is not to be construed as an admission of liability.

**Risks and Benefits:** There are no known risks associated with your participation in this study. The research data should provide insight into what it means to be a Muslim female leader working in a higher education institution in the United States. Additionally, the information gathered should be beneficial to college and university officials responsible for recruiting and retaining diverse leaders. I have provided a summary of the study and what your involvement would entail should you decide to participate.

**Confidentiality:** The audio-tapes, transcriptions, field notes, and documents will be secured in a locked cabinet under the direct care of the researcher. Tapes and transcripts will remain confidential and separate from any identifying information. A pseudonym will be assigned to responses for use by the researcher. You will have the opportunity to verify the transcribed interview for accuracy of what was stated and what you intended. Edits, deletions, and clarifications will be made immediately to the transcript to comply with your right to voluntarily release data. Only the researcher and the dissertation supervisor will have Excel to identifiable data. Collected data will be kept locked and destroyed three years after the completion of this study.
Your identity and the college’s identity will be confidential in the reporting of results. I will not list any names of participants, or their corresponding institutions, in my dissertation or any future publications of this study.

This research has been preauthorized by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Missouri-Columbia. If you have further questions regarding research participants’ rights, please contact the University of Missouri-Columbia Campus Institutional Review Board at (573) 882-9585, or visit http://www.research.missouri.edu/cirb/index.htm or http://ohrp.osdfs.gov/humansubjects/guidance/ 45cfr46.htm.

**Costs to Study Participants:** There will be no cost to participate in the study other than your time.

**Compensation:** There will be no compensation for participating in the study. If you choose to participate in this study, please complete the information below. The researcher will provide no compensation to the student participants. However, if you choose to offer extra credit to those students volunteering to participate, the researcher asks that you also offer extra credit to students unwilling to participate. The extra credit offered to these students should be of equal effort to the extra credit offered the student interview participants.

**Signatures:** A signed statement of informed consent is required of all participants in this project. Your signature indicates that you understand and voluntarily agree to the conditions of participation described above, and that you have received a copy of this Form. Thank you for your time and consideration.

If it is your decision to participate in this study, please sign the attached consent form. Please retain a copy of this letter and your written consent for future reference.

Sincerely,

Victorie Hollwell
Aspiring Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri
I agree to take part in this study. I have had a chance to ask questions about being in this study and have those questions answered.

_____________________________
Printed Name of Participant

_____________________________  __________________
Signature of Participant        Date

Using language that is understandable and appropriate, I have discussed this project and the items above with the subject and/or authorized representatives.

_____________________________
Printed Name of Principal Investigator

_____________________________  __________________
Signature of Principal Investigator        Date
Dear Participant:

You have been invited to participate in a research study titled “Aspirations and Barriers of Muslim women Wearing Hijab and Leadership Perceptions or Behaviors that Encourage of Impede Advancement or Attainment of Leadership Positions in Higher Education.” I am conducting the study as part of my doctoral requirements in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Missouri. The information gathered should be beneficial to college and university officials responsible for recruiting diverse leaders. I have provided a summary of the study and what your involvement would entail should you decide to participate. Your participation has been approved by your college’s Institutional Review Board.

PURPOSE

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this study is to identify factors that encourage or impede Muslim women wearing hijab from attaining or advancing in positions of leadership in higher education institutions in the United States. The following questions guide this qualitative study:

1. Why do Muslim women who wear hijab choose to go into education leadership?
2. What are strategies Muslim women who wear hijab use in their career path?
3. How can institutions support the aspirations of aspiring Muslim female leaders who wear hijab?
4. How does a higher education leader develop skills to remain resilient in the face of occupational barriers based on majority beliefs and values of the workplace?
5. How does a higher education leader’s public display of spirituality influence reactions by other administrators? Colleagues?

Before you make a final decision about participation, you must know how your rights will be protected:
- INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPATING FACULTY

- Participation in the study is voluntary. You may withdraw at any time. If later you do not wish the data you provided to be used, inform me; your wish will be honored before culmination of the study. Your refusal to participate will have no adverse consequences. For any questions about your participation in this research, please contact me at home (816)524-0299 or cell (816)682-3306, or by email at Victorie.Hollwell@mckc.edu. You may also contact my dissertation supervisor Dr. Barbara Martin, at (660)543-8823 or by email at bmartin@ucmo.edu.

- As interview participant your name and answers will remain confidential; only my dissertation supervisor and I would have Excel to identifiable data. Your identity and university affiliation will not be published. Any materials identifying specific faculty, students or universities will be kept locked and destroyed three years after the completion of this project. Data collected from faculty will be coded for qualitative analysis, and summarized for reporting. Results may be published in Dissertation Abstracts and in professional journals at any time, protecting your anonymity.

- Your control as to which interview items you choose to answer insures that there will be no identifiable risk for you greater than that encountered in your everyday life. The University of Missouri does not compensate human subjects if injury or discomfort results from the research. Nonetheless, the university holds medical, professional, and general liability insurance coverage, and provides its own medical attention and facilities in the unlikely event that participants suffer as a direct result of negligence or fault from faculty or staff associated with this research. In such eventuality, the Risk Management Officer should be contacted immediately at (573) 882-3735 to obtain a review of the matter and receive further information. Ethical guidelines about Protection of Human Subjects set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations “45 CFR 46” will be upheld. This statement is not to be construed as an admission of liability.

- This research has been preauthorized by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Missouri-Columbia. If you have further questions regarding research participants’ rights, please contact the Campus Institutional Review Board at (573) 882-9585, or visit http://ohrp.osophs.dhhs.gov/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.htm.

If you elect to participate and make your professional opinion count as part of this study, please review the “Informed Consent Form” at your earliest convenience and return it to me, signed and dated. The interview will take approximately one hour to complete. A self-addressed stamped envelope has been provided, unless this letter was faxed. A second copy of the “informed Consent and Permission Form” has been provided for you to retain. Please mail or fax your signed Consent Form to me at 816 524-0299. Your participation is very valuable. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Victorie Joyce-Ann Kelley-Hollwell
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri-Columbia
MUSLIM FEMALE LEADER INFORMED CONSENT PARTICIPANT FORM

I, _____________________________________________, agree to participate in the study “Aspirations and Barriers of Muslim women Wearing Hijab and Leadership Perceptions or Behaviors that Encourage of Impede Advancement or Attainment of Leadership Positions in Higher Education” conducted by Victorie Joyce-Ann Kelley-Hollwell, doctoral candidate at the University of Missouri-Columbia. I understand the following:

- I have had a chance to ask questions about being in this study and have had those questions answered.
- I understand my participation is voluntary, and I may withdraw at any point before culmination of the study.
- I understand my responses will be used for dissertation research and for potential future journal publications.
- I understand my identity and affiliation will be kept confidential in all phases of the research.
- I agree to be observed informally and during regularly scheduled department meetings
- I agree to participate in a focus group and an audio-taped, open-ended, semi-structured interview which will last approximately one (1) to one and one half (1 ½) hour.
- I agree to provide the necessary documents needed to provide the researcher with a more comprehensive view of the department and organization.

I have read the statement above, which answered my questions to my satisfaction.

Signed: ____________________________________________________________
Date: _______________________
Title: _______________________________________________________________
College: _____________________________________________________________

Please return to Victorie Joyce-Ann Kelley-Hollwell, 2416 N.W. Riven Rock Trail, Lees Summit MO 64081
Cell Phone: 816-682-3306; Home Phone: 816-524-0299; FAX: 816-524-0299
Email: Victorie.Hollwell@mcckc.edu
Administrator Informed Consent Form

Dear Participant,

This letter is an invitation to participate in a research study entitled, “Perceptions and Behaviors that Encourage or Impede Advancement or Attainment of Leadership Positions in Higher Education by Muslim women Wearing Hijab.” I am conducting the study as part of my doctoral requirements in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Missouri. You have been invited to participate in this study because of your involvement with two Muslim female leaders’ in your organization who wear hijab between the ages of 20 and 60 and is currently living and working within United States in higher education that I would like to utilize for this study.

Your participation may help Muslims and non-Muslims gain greater insight into what it means to be a Muslim female leader working in a higher education institution in the United States. Additionally, the information gathered should be beneficial to college and university officials responsible for recruiting and retaining diverse leaders. I have provided a summary of the study and what your involvement would entail should you decide to participate.

**Researcher:** Victorie Hollwell. University of Missouri, Doctoral Candidate, Victorie.Hollwell@mcckc.edu or call me at 816-682-3306

**Dissertation Supervisor:** Dr. Barbara N. Martin, University of Central Missouri State, Dr. Barbara Martin, who can be reached at 660-543-8823.

**Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of this study is to identify factors that encourage or impede Muslim women wearing hijab from attaining or advancing in positions of leadership in higher education institutions in the United States.

**Procedures:** If you agree to participate in this study, I will conduct a 1 ½ to 2 hour interview of open-ended, semi-structured questions and spend an additional two hours to observe you informally and/or during regularly scheduled meetings. I will also need to conduct a focus group with the colleagues of the female Muslim leaders. Furthermore, I will ask for documents of your schools diversity policies to provide a more comprehensive view of your organization. Although the interview questions have been pre-determined, please note that the process will be informal and any additional insight or perceptions you would like to share will be welcomed. You may choose to answer any or all of the questions. With your permission, the interview will be audio-taped to assure an accurate transcription of your responses. In the event that significant new findings develop during the course of the study, the researcher may ask you to participate in additional audio recorded interviews either in person or via telephone. In addition to being recorded, all interviews will be transcribed verbatim for use by the researcher. The researcher may also ask additional questions of you via electronic mail. Following the interview, I will send a copy of the transcript to you for review. Any additions or
clarifications you request will be made immediately to the transcript. At any time, you may withdraw as a participant without any negative consequences.

**Participation:** Participation in the study is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from participation at any time you wish without penalty, including in the middle of the interviews or after they have been completed. Your consent to participate or refusal to participate will not affect your employment in any way. You may also decline to answer any questions that you feel are too uncomfortable to answer. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns about your participation. You can call me at 816-682-3306. In addition, you are also welcome to contact the dissertation advisor for this research study, Dr. Barbara Martin, who can be reached at 660-543-8823. If you have a question about your rights as a research participant, you should contact your Compliance Office and/or the University of Missouri Institutional Review Board office at (573) 882-9585.

**Injury:** It is not the policy of the University of Missouri to compensate human subjects in the event the research results in injury. The University of Missouri does have medical, professional, and general liability self-insurance coverage for any injury caused by the negligence of its faculty and staff. Within the limitation of the laws of the State of Missouri, the University of Missouri will also provide facilities and medical attendance to subjects who suffer injuries while participating in the research projects of the University of Missouri. In the event you suffered injury as the result of participating in this research project, you are to immediately contact the Campus Institutional Review Board Compliance Officer at (573-882-9585) and the Risk Management Office at (573-882-3757) to review the matter and provide you further information. This statement is not to be construed as an admission of liability.

**Risks and Benefits:** There are no known risks associated with your participation in this study. The research data should provide insight into what it means to be a Muslim female leader working in a higher education institution in the United States. Additionally, the information gathered should be beneficial to college and university officials responsible for recruiting and retaining diverse leaders. I have provided a summary of the study and what your involvement would entail should you decide to participate.

**Confidentiality:** The audio-tapes, transcriptions, field notes, and documents will be secured in a locked cabinet under the direct care of the researcher. Tapes and transcripts will remain confidential and separate from any identifying information. A pseudonym will be assigned to responses for use by the researcher. You will have the opportunity to verify the transcribed interview for accuracy of what was stated and what you intended. Edits, deletions, and clarifications will be made immediately to the transcript to comply with your right to voluntarily release data. Only the researcher and the dissertation supervisor will have Excel to identifiable data. Collected data will be kept locked and destroyed three years after the completion of this study.
Your identity and your college’s identity will be confidential in the reporting of results. I will not list any names of participants, or their corresponding institutions, in my dissertation or any future publications of this study.

This research has been preauthorized by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Missouri-Columbia. If you have further questions regarding research participants’ rights, please contact the University of Missouri-Columbia Campus Institutional Review Board at (573) 882-9585, or visit http://www.research.missouri.edu/cirb/index.htm or http://ohrp.osophs.dhhs.gov/humansubjects/guidance/ 45cfr46.htm.

**Costs to Study Participants:** There will be no cost to participate in the study other than your time.

**Compensation:** There will be no compensation for participating in the study. If you choose to participate in this study, please complete the information below. The researcher will provide no compensation to the student participants. However, if you choose to offer extra credit to those students volunteering to participate, the researcher asks that you also offer extra credit to students unwilling to participate. The extra credit offered to these students should be of equal effort to the extra credit offered the student interview participants.

**Signatures:** A signed statement of informed consent is required of all participants in this project. Your signature indicates that you understand and voluntarily agree to the conditions of participation described above, and that you have received a copy of this Form. Thank you for your time and consideration.

If it is your decision to participate in this study, please sign the attached consent form. Please retain a copy of this letter and your written consent for future reference.

Sincerely,

Victorie Hollwell  
Aspiring Doctoral Candidate  
University of Missouri
I agree to take part in this study. I have had a chance to ask questions about being in this study and have those questions answered.

______________________________
Printed Name of Participant

______________________________
Signature of Participant                  Date

Using language that is understandable and appropriate, I have discussed this project and the items above with the subject and/or authorized representatives.

______________________________
Printed Name of Principal Investigator

______________________________
Signature of Principal Investigator                  Date
Administrator Letter of Informed Consent Participant Form

[Date]

Dear Participant:

You have been invited to participate in a research study titled “Aspirations and Barriers of Muslim women Wearing Hijab and Leadership Perceptions or Behaviors that Encourage of Impede Advancement or Attainment of Leadership Positions in Higher Education.” I am conducting the study as part of my doctoral requirements in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Missouri. The information gathered should be beneficial to college and university officials responsible for recruiting diverse leaders. I have provided a summary of the study and what your involvement would entail should you decide to participate. Your participation has been approved by your college’s Institutional Review Board.

PURPOSE

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this study is to identify factors that encourage or impede Muslim women wearing hijab from attaining or advancing in positions of leadership in higher education institutions in the United States. The following questions guide this qualitative study:

1. Why do Muslim women who wear hijab choose to go into education leadership?

2. What are strategies Muslim women who wear hijab use in their career path?

3. How can institutions support the aspirations of aspiring Muslim female leaders who wear hijab?

4. How does a higher education leader develop skills to remain resilient in the face of occupational barriers based on majority beliefs and values of the workplace?

5. How does a higher education leader’s public display of spirituality influence reactions by other administrators? Colleagues?

Before you make a final decision about participation, you must know how your rights will be protected:
- INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPATING FACULTY

● Participation in the study is voluntary. You may withdraw at any time. If later you do not wish the data you provided to be used, inform me; your wish will be honored before culmination of the study. Your refusal to participate will have no adverse consequences. For any questions about your participation in this research, please contact me at home (816)524-0299 or cell (816)682-3306, or by email at Victorie.Hollwell@mckkc.edu. You may also contact my dissertation supervisor Dr. Barbara Martin, at (660)543-8823 or by email at bmartin@ucmo.edu.

● As interview participant your name and answers will remain confidential; only my dissertation supervisor and I would have Excel to identifiable data. Your identity and university affiliation will not be published. Any materials identifying specific faculty, students or universities will be kept locked and destroyed three years after the completion of this project. Data collected from faculty will be coded for qualitative analysis, and summarized for reporting. Results may be published in Dissertation Abstracts and in professional journals at any time, protecting your anonymity.

● Your control as to which interview items you choose to answer insures that there will be no identifiable risk for you greater than that encountered in your everyday life. The University of Missouri does not compensate human subjects if injury or discomfort results from the research. Nonetheless, the university holds medical, professional, and general liability insurance coverage, and provides its own medical attention and facilities in the unlikely event that participants suffer as a direct result of negligence or fault from faculty or staff associated with this research. In such eventuality, the Risk Management Officer should be contacted immediately at (573) 882-3735 to obtain a review of the matter and receive further information. Ethical guidelines about Protection of Human Subjects set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations “45 CFR 46” will be upheld. This statement is not to be construed as an admission of liability.

● This research has been preauthorized by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Missouri-Columbia. If you have further questions regarding research participants’ rights, please contact the Campus Institutional Review Board at (573) 882-9585, or visit http://ohrp.osophs.dhhs.gov/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.htm.

If you elect to participate and make your professional opinion count as part of this study, please review the “Informed Consent Form” at your earliest convenience and return it to me, signed and dated. The interview will take approximately one hour to complete. A self-addressed stamped envelope has been provided, unless this letter was faxed. A second copy of the “informed Consent and Permission Form” has been provided for you to retain. Please mail or fax your signed Consent Form to me at 816-524-0299. Your participation is very valuable. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Victorie Joyce-Ann Kelley-Hollwell
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri-Columbia
I, _____________________________________________, agree to participate in the study “Aspirations and Barriers of Muslim women Wearing Hijab and Leadership Perceptions or Behaviors that Encourage of Impede Advancement or Attainment of Leadership Positions in Higher Education” conducted by Victorie Joyce-Ann Kelley-Hollwell, doctoral candidate at the University of Missouri-Columbia. I understand the following:

- I have had a chance to ask questions about being in this study and have had those questions answered.
- My participation and that of my staff is voluntary, and I may withdraw at any point before culmination of the study.
- My responses and that of my staff will be used for dissertation research and for potential future journal publications.
- My identity, my staff’s identity and affiliation will be kept confidential in all phases of the research.
- My staff and I agree to be observed informally and during regularly scheduled department meetings.
- My staff and I agree to participate in a focus group and an audio-taped, open-ended, semi-structured interview which will last approximately one (1) to one and one half (1 ½) hour.
- My staff and I agree to provide the necessary documents needed to provide the researcher with a more comprehensive view of the department and organization.

I have read the statement above, which answered my questions to my satisfaction.

Signed: ____________________________________________________________

Date: _______________________

Title: _____________________________________________________________

College: ____________________________________________________________

Please return to Victorie Joyce-Ann Kelley-Hollwell, 2416 N.W. Riven Rock Trail, Lees Summit MO 64081
Cell Phone: 816-682-3306; Home Phone: 816-524-0299; FAX: 816-524-0299
Email: Victorie.Hollwell@mcckc.edu
Colleague Informed Consent Form

Dear Participant,

This letter is an invitation to participate in a research study entitled, “Perceptions and Behaviors that Encourage or Impede Advancement or Attainment of Leadership Positions in Higher Education by Muslim women Wearing Hijab.” I am conducting the study as part of my doctoral requirements in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Missouri. You have been invited to participate in this study because of your involvement with two Muslim female leaders’ in your organization who wear hijab between the ages of 20 and 60 and is currently living and working within United States in higher education that I would like to utilize for this study.

Your participation may help Muslims and non-Muslims gain greater insight into what it means to be a Muslim female leader working in a higher education institution in the United States. Additionally, the information gathered should be beneficial to college and university officials responsible for recruiting and retaining diverse leaders. I have provided a summary of the study and what your involvement would entail should you decide to participate.

**Researcher:** Victorie Hollwell. University of Missouri, Doctoral Candidate, Victorie.Hollwell@mcckc.edu or call me at 816-682-3306

**Dissertation Supervisor:** Dr. Barbara N. Martin, University of Central Missouri State, Dr. Barbara Martin, who can be reached at 660-543-8823.

**Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of this study is to identify factors that encourage or impede Muslim women wearing hijab from attaining or advancing in positions of leadership in higher education institutions in the United States.

**Procedures:** If you agree to participate in this study, I will conduct a 1½ to 2 hour focus group interview with you and your colleagues using open-ended, semi-structured questions. Furthermore, I may ask for documents of your schools diversity policies to provide a more comprehensive view of your organization. Although the interview questions have been pre-determined, please note that the process will be informal and any additional insight or perceptions you would like to share will be welcomed. You may choose to answer any or all of the questions. With your permission, the interview will be audio-taped to assure an accurate transcription of your responses. In the event that significant new findings develop during the course of the study, the researcher may ask you to participate in additional audio recorded interviews either in person or via telephone. In addition to being recorded, all interviews will be transcribed verbatim for use by the researcher. The researcher may also ask additional questions of you via electronic mail. Following the interview, I will send a copy of the transcript to you for review. Any additions or clarifications you request will be made immediately to the transcript. At any time, you may withdraw as a participant without any negative consequences.
**Participation:** Participation in the study is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from participation at any time you wish without penalty, including in the middle of the interviews or after they have been completed. Your consent to participate or refusal to participate will not affect your employment in any way. You may also decline to answer any questions that you feel are too uncomfortable to answer. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns about your participation. You can call me at 816-682-3306. In addition, you are also welcome to contact the dissertation advisor for this research study, Dr. Barbara Martin, who can be reached at 660-543-8823. If you have a question about your rights as a research participant, you should contact your Compliance Office and/or the University of Missouri Institutional Review Board office at (573) 882-9585.

**Injury:** It is not the policy of the University of Missouri to compensate human subjects in the event the research results in injury. The University of Missouri does have medical, professional, and general liability self-insurance coverage for any injury caused by the negligence of its faculty and staff. Within the limitation of the laws of the State of Missouri, the University of Missouri will also provide facilities and medical attention to subjects who suffer injuries while participating in the research projects of the University of Missouri. In the event you suffered injury as the result of participating in this research project, you are to immediately contact the Campus Institutional Review Board Compliance Officer at (573-882-9585) and the Risk Management Office at (573-882-3757) to review the matter and provide you further information. This statement is not to be construed as an admission of liability.

**Risks and Benefits:** There are no known risks associated with your participation in this study. The research data should provide insight into what it means to be a Muslim female leader working in a higher education institution in the United States. Additionally, the information gathered should be beneficial to college and university officials responsible for recruiting and retaining diverse leaders. I have provided a summary of the study and what your involvement would entail should you decide to participate.

**Confidentiality:** The audio-tapes, transcriptions, field notes, and documents will be secured in a locked cabinet under the direct care of the researcher. Tapes and transcripts will remain confidential and separate from any identifying information. A pseudonym will be assigned to responses for use by the researcher. You will have the opportunity to verify the transcribed interview for accuracy of what was stated and what you intended. Edits, deletions, and clarifications will be made immediately to the transcript to comply with your right to voluntarily release data. Only the researcher and the dissertation supervisor will have Excel to identifiable data. Collected data will be kept locked and destroyed three years after the completion of this study.

Your identity and your college’s identity will be confidential in the reporting of results. I will not list any names of participants, or their corresponding institutions, in my dissertation or any future publications of this study.
This research has been preauthorized by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Missouri-Columbia. If you have further questions regarding research participants’ rights, please contact the University of Missouri-Columbia Campus Institutional Review Board at (573) 882-9585, or visit http://www.research.missouri.edu/cirb/index.htm or http://ohrp.osophs.dhhs.gov/humansubjects/guidance/ 45cfr46.htm.

**Costs to Study Participants:** There will be no cost to participate in the study other than your time.

**Compensation:** There will be no compensation for participating in the study. If you choose to participate in this study, please complete the information below. The researcher will provide no compensation to the student participants. However, if you choose to offer extra credit to those students volunteering to participate, the researcher asks that you also offer extra credit to students unwilling to participate. The extra credit offered to these students should be of equal effort to the extra credit offered the student interview participants.

**Signatures:** A signed statement of informed consent is required of all participants in this project. Your signature indicates that you understand and voluntarily agree to the conditions of participation described above, and that you have received a copy of this Form. Thank you for your time and consideration.

If it is your decision to participate in this study, please sign the attached consent form. Please retain a copy of this letter and your written consent for future reference.

Sincerely,

Victorie Hollwell  
Aspiring Doctoral Candidate  
University of Missouri
I agree to take part in this study. I have had a chance to ask questions about being in this study and have those questions answered.

_____________________________
Printed Name of Participant

_____________________________  ____________________
Signature of Participant                  Date

Using language that is understandable and appropriate, I have discussed this project and the items above with the subject and/or authorized representatives.

_____________________________
Printed Name of Principal Investigator

_____________________________  ____________________
Signature of Principal Investigator                  Date
Dear Participant:

You have been invited to participate in a research study titled “Aspirations and Barriers of Muslim women Wearing Hijab and Leadership Perceptions or Behaviors that Encourage of Impede Advancement or Attainment of Leadership Positions in Higher Education.” I am conducting the study as part of my doctoral requirements in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Missouri. The information gathered should be beneficial to college and university officials responsible for recruiting diverse leaders. I have provided a summary of the study and what your involvement would entail should you decide to participate. Your participation has been approved by your college’s Institutional Review Board.

PURPOSE

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this study is to identify factors that encourage or impede Muslim women wearing hijab from attaining or advancing in positions of leadership in higher education institutions in the United States. The following questions guide this qualitative study:

1. Why do Muslim women who wear hijab choose to go into education leadership?

2. What are strategies Muslim women who wear hijab use in their career path?

3. How can institutions support the aspirations of aspiring Muslim female leaders who wear hijab?

4. How does a higher education leader develop skills to remain resilient in the face of occupational barriers based on majority beliefs and values of the workplace?

5. How does a higher education leader’s public display of spirituality influence reactions by other administrators? Colleagues?

Before you make a final decision about participation, you must know how your rights will be protected:
- INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPATING FACULTY
  
  ● Participation in the study is voluntary. You may withdraw at any time. If later you do not wish the data you provided to be used, inform me; your wish will be honored before culmination of the study. Your refusal to participate will have no adverse consequences. For any questions about your participation in this research, please contact me at home (816)524-0299 or cell (816)682-3306, or by email at Victorie.Hollwell@mckkc.edu. You may also contact my dissertation supervisor Dr. Barbara Martin, at (660)543-8823 or by email at bmartin@ucmo.edu.

  ● As interview participant your name and answers will remain confidential; only my dissertation supervisor and I would have Excel to identifiable data. Your identity and university affiliation will not be published. Any materials identifying specific faculty, students or universities will be kept locked and destroyed three years after the completion of this project. Data collected from faculty will be coded for qualitative analysis, and summarized for reporting. Results may be published in Dissertation Abstracts and in professional journals at any time, protecting your anonymity.

  ● Your control as to which interview items you choose to answer insures that there will be no identifiable risk for you greater than that encountered in your everyday life. The University of Missouri does not compensate human subjects if injury or discomfort results from the research. Nonetheless, the university holds medical, professional, and general liability insurance coverage, and provides its own medical attention and facilities in the unlikely event that participants suffer as a direct result of negligence or fault from faculty or staff associated with this research. In such eventuality, the Risk Management Officer should be contacted immediately at (573) 882-3735 to obtain a review of the matter and receive further information. Ethical guidelines about Protection of Human Subjects set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations “45 CFR 46” will be upheld. This statement is not to be construed as an admission of liability.

  ● This research has been preauthorized by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Missouri-Columbia. If you have further questions regarding research participants’ rights, please contact the Campus Institutional Review Board at (573) 882-9585, or visit http://ohrp.osophs.dhhs.gov/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.htm.

If you elect to participate and make your professional opinion count as part of this study, please review the “Informed Consent Form” at your earliest convenience and return it to me, signed and dated. The interview will take approximately one hour to complete. A self-addressed stamped envelope has been provided, unless this letter was faxed. A second copy of the “informed Consent and Permission Form” has been provided for you to retain. Please mail or fax your signed Consent Form to me at 816-524-0299

Your participation is very valuable. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Victorie Joyce-Ann Kelley-Hollwell
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri-Columbia
COLLEAGUE INFORMED CONSENT PARTICIPANT FORM

I, _____________________________________________, agree to participate in the study “Aspirations and Barriers of Muslim women Wearing Hijab and Leadership Perceptions or Behaviors that Encourage of Impede Advancement or Attainment of Leadership Positions in Higher Education” conducted by Victorie Joyce-Ann Kelley-Hollwell, doctoral candidate at the University of Missouri-Columbia. I understand the following:

- I have had a chance to ask questions about being in this study and have had those questions answered.
- I understand my participation is voluntary, and I may withdraw at any point before culmination of the study.
- I understand my responses will be used for dissertation research and for potential future journal publications.
- I understand my identity and affiliation will be kept confidential in all phases of the research.
- I agree to be observed informally and during regularly scheduled department meetings
- I agree to participate in a focus group and an audio-taped, open-ended, semi-structured interview which will last approximately one and one half (1 ½) to two (2) hours.
- I agree to provide the necessary documents needed to provide the researcher with a more comprehensive view of the department and organization.

I have read the statement above, which answered my questions to my satisfaction.

Signed: ____________________________________________________________

Date: ____________________________

Title: ____________________________________________________________

College: __________________________________________________________

Please return to Victorie Joyce-Ann Kelley-Hollwell, 2416 N.W. Riven Rock Trail, Lees Summit MO 64081
Cell Phone: 816-682-3306; Home Phone: 816-524-0299; FAX: 816-524-0299
Email: Victorie.Hollwell@mcckc.edu
Appendix C

*Forms*

1. Interview Protocol Form
2. On-Site Observation Form
3. Document Review Form
Interview Protocol Form

Date ______________________________

Beginning Time _____________________ Ending Time ______________________

Participant ___________________________________________________________

Location _____________________________________________________________

Field Notes:
On-Site Observation Form

Date ______________________________

Beginning Time _____________________ Ending Time ______________________

Setting ______________________________________________________________

Participant ___________________________________________________________

Observations:
Document Review Form

Name of Document ____________________________________________________

Document # __________________________________________________________

Date Procured _________________________________________________________

Document Received From _______________________________________________

Notes:
Appendix D Data Codes

Data Codes
Data Codes

M1  Muslim Leader 1
M2  Muslim Leader 2
A1  Administrator Participant 1
A2  Administrator Participant 2
C1  Colleague Participant 1
C2  Colleague Participant 2
C3  Colleague Participant 3
C4  Colleague Participant 4
C5  Colleague Participant 5
C6  Colleague Participant 6
C7  Colleague Participant 7
C8  Colleague Participant 8
C9  Colleague Participant 9
C10 Colleague Participant 10
C11 Colleague Participant 11
C12 Colleague Participant 12
Campdoc1 University document (policies, procedures)
Campdoc2 University document (policies, procedures)
I   Interview
FO1 Field observation 1
FO2 Field observation 2
FO3 Field observation 3
FO4  Field observation 4
Setco  Setting/Context
Sitco  Situation
Eventco  Event
Stratco  Strategy
Relateco  Relationship
M1-5-12  Underlined character denotes the question from the interview or focus group transcript.
M1-5-12  Underlined character denotes the page number from the interview or focus group transcript
M1-5-12  Underlined character denotes the participant data code
Appendix E Research Questions

Research Questions

1. Muslim Female Leader Participant Questions
2. Administrator Questions
3. Focus Group Questions
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR MUSLIM FEMALE LEADER PARTICIPANT

Introduction:

1. Informed Consent

Interview Questions:

Personal Background and Professional Experience

2. Please tell me about yourself. Please be sure to state your name, ethnicity, religious affiliation, age and occupation
3. What is the role of Islam in your life?
4. Please tell me the reason why you wear hijab?
5. How do you feel about wearing hijab?
6. Please describe any negative or positive experiences you have had as a result of wearing hijab.
7. What is your current title and responsibilities?
8. Please share with me your experiences and professional development opportunities you have had that has prepared you for your current position and other positions of leadership that you have held?
9. Why did you choose to go into education leadership?

Perceived/Experienced Barriers and Encouragers

10. What are your leadership aspirations?
11. What supports assist you in obtaining your leadership aspirations?
12. What do you perceive to be barriers standing in the way of your leadership aspirations?
13. What skills does one need to become an educational leader at this institution?
14. In your opinion are Muslim women hindered or encouraged from positions of leadership? Please elaborate.
15. Have you observed negative or positive behaviors or comments as a result of the public display (the hijab) in the workplace? Please provide examples

Organizational Policies and Practices

16. What organizational policies or practices exist that encourage diversity?
17. What organizational activities foster appreciation of diversity?
18. What organizational policies or practices encourage the selection of diverse educational leaders in the workforce?
19. What supports can be put in place by your organization to encourage qualified Muslim women who wear hijab to aspire to positions of leadership?
20. What constraints can your organization eliminate that prevent qualified Muslim women who wear hijab from the selection of leadership positions?
Overcoming Barriers

21. Have you had to overcome barriers related to the display of the hijab in the workplace? If so, what are some strategies you have used to overcome these barriers?

22. What would you like others to know about Muslim women who wear hijab aspiring to leadership positions that you have not already mentioned?
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATOR

Introduction:

1. Informed Consent

Interview Questions:

Personal Background and Professional Experience

2. Please state your name, ethnicity, age, and occupation
3. How long you have known the Muslim women being utilized for this study and what is your relationship to them.
4. What is the role of Islam in their lives?
5. Please share with me the types of education and experiences that these women have had that prepared them for positions of leadership.

Perceived/Experienced Barriers or Encouragers

6. Before you had an opportunity to get to know Muslim women who wore hijab, what were your perceptions?
7. What are your perceptions now?
8. What skills does one need to become an educational leader at this institution?
9. What, in your opinion encourages aspiring Muslim Female leaders who wear hijab to obtain leadership positions?
10. What, in your opinion hinders aspiring Muslim Female leaders who wear hijab from obtaining leadership positions?
11. What positive behaviors or comments have you observed as a result of the public display (the hijab) in the workplace?
12. What negative behaviors or comments have you observed as a result of the public display (the hijab) in the workplace?

Organizational Policies and Practices

13. What organizational policies or practices encourage diversity?
14. What organizational activities foster appreciation of diversity?
15. What organizational policies, practices or activities encourage the selection of qualified diverse education leaders in the workplace? Discourage?
16. What organizational supports assist qualified Muslim women who wear hijab to be selected for positions of leadership?
17. What organizational restraints prevent qualified Muslim women who wear hijab from the selection of leadership positions? Please explain.
Overcoming Barriers and Aspirations

18. In your experience, when faced with barriers due to the public display of religion in the form of hijab, how have Muslim women leaders overcome these barriers in the workplace?
19. How, in your opinion has your workplace embraced the idea of a Muslim woman who wears hijab in attaining a leadership position?
20. What would you like to add to our conversation today?
Focus Group: Colleagues of Muslim Female Leaders

Date: ________________  Start Time: _________

Introduction:
Good afternoon and welcome. My name is Victorie Hollwell, and I will serve as the moderator for today’s focus group. In order to ensure accuracy I will be audio taping the discussion. Thank you for taking the time to join our discussion about “Aspirations and Barriers of Muslim women Wearing Hijab and Leadership Perceptions or Behaviors that Encourage of Impede Advancement or Attainment of Leadership Positions in Higher Education”. I believe your experiences with Muslim women who wear hijab in or aspiring to be in leadership positions can help to answer the overarching questions of my research study. Which are- How does an aspiring Muslim female leader who wears hijab develop skills to remain resilient in the face of adversity? And how can institutions support the aspirations of Muslim women by removing the roadblocks they may face?

Afridi states, “The quest for greater awareness and knowledge can also help our country advance in its mission to set an example for the rest of the world by moving beyond tolerance towards accepting and even celebrating racial, ethnic or religious differences. For all these reasons, it is increasingly vital for America to develop a better understanding of Islam and for Muslims to become more fully a part of the structures of American democracy and civil society (p. 5).”

The results may help Muslims and non-Muslims gain a greater insight into what it means to be a Muslim female leader working in a higher education institution in the United States. Additionally, the information gathered should be beneficial to college and university officials responsible for recruiting and retaining diverse leaders. The study will follow the guidelines as established by the University of Missouri Institutional Review Board.

Please remember, there are no right or wrong answers but rather differing points of view. Feel free to share your point of view even if it differs from what others have said. If you want to follow-up on something that someone has said, you want to agree, disagree or give an example, feel free to do that. I want this to be more of a conversation among yourselves, so don’t feel like you have to respond to me all of the time. I am here to ask questions, listen and make sure everyone has a chance to share. I am interested in hearing from each of you. Please speak up and remember only one person should talk at a time.

Our session will last about an 1 ½ -2 hours and we will not be taking a formal break. Feel free to leave the table for any reason if you need to. I have placed name cards in front of you to help me facilitate the discussion, but no names will be included in any reports. Let’s begin by obtaining the informed consent and then going around the room and finding out more about each other.
Introduction:

1. Informed Consent

Interview Questions:

*Personal Background and Professional Experience*

2. Please state your name, ethnicity, age, and occupation
3. How long have you known the Muslim women being utilized for this study and what is your relationship to them?
4. What is the role of Islam in their lives?
5. Please share with me the types of education and experiences that these women have had that prepared them for positions of leadership.

*Perceived/Experienced Barriers or Encouragers*

6. Before you had an opportunity to get to know Muslim women who wore hijab, what were your perceptions?
7. What are your perceptions now?
8. What skills does one need to become an educational leader at this institution?
9. What, in your opinion encourages aspiring Muslim Female leaders who wear hijab to obtain leadership positions?
10. What, in your opinion hinders aspiring Muslim Female leaders who wear hijab from obtaining leadership positions?
11. What positive behaviors or comments have you observed as a result of the public display (the hijab) in the workplace?
12. What negative behaviors or comments have you observed as a result of the public display (the hijab) in the workplace?

*Organizational Policies and Practices*

13. What organizational policies or practices encourage diversity?
14. What organizational activities foster appreciation of diversity?
15. What organizational policies, practices or activities encourage the selection of qualified diverse education leaders in the workplace? Discourage?
16. What organizational supports assist qualified Muslim women who wear hijab to be selected for positions of leadership?
17. What organizational restraints prevent qualified Muslim women who wear hijab from the selection of leadership positions? Please explain.
18. In your experience, when faced with barriers due to the public display of religion in the form of hijab, how have Muslim women leaders overcome these barriers in the workplace?
19. How, in your opinion has your workplace embraced the idea of a Muslim woman who wears hijab in attaining a leadership position?
20. What would you like to add to our conversation today?
VITA

Victorie Joyce-Ann Kelley Hollwell was born on April 15, 1970, in Kansas City, Missouri, to Cynthia A. Gray and Vonzell E. Kelley, Sr.; however, Victorie was raised by her mom and stepfather, Bertram A. Gray. She graduated from Raytown South High School in 1988. In 1993, she received a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology/Rehabilitation from Central Missouri State University, now known as the University of Central Missouri. She earned a Secondary Occupational Family and Consumer Sciences and Human Services Education Certification (0273172) through the Missouri Department of Education and a Master of Science degree from Kansas State University in 2001, an Education Specialist degree from the University of Missouri-Kansas City in 2002, and a Doctorate in Education from The University of Missouri in Columbia in 2008.

Victorie Joyce-Ann Kelley-Hollwell's work experiences include serving as a resource specialist, faculty member, coordinator, chair, and counselor at the Metropolitan Community. In addition, she has served as an affirmative action officer and district diversity facilitator. Her research interests include Critical Race, Black Feminism, Religious Identity, Adult Learning, Social Justice Theories, and culturally-relevant pedagogical constructs.

Hollwell currently resides in Lees Summit, Missouri, with her husband, Carlos Mario Hollwell, and their two children, Darius and Akila.