ACCULTURATION OF CHILDREN OF BANGLADESHI IMMIGRANTS IN NEW YORK CITY: INTERGENERATIONAL PERSPECTIVES AND ALTERNATIVE TRAJECTORIES

by

MOHAMMED FARIDUL ALAM

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	Professor Harriet Goodman
Date	Chair of Examining Committee
	Professor Michael Fabricant
Date	Executive Officer

Professor Nancy Foner

Professor Miriam Abramowitz

Professor Michael Smith
Supervision Committee

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Abstract

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Mohammed Faridul Alam

Adviser: Professor Harriet Goodman

This study explores the acculturation experiences of thirty-three Bangladeshi second generation youths in New York City through in depth interviews. The researcher has observed and recorded interactions between youths and parents in the natural setting of their homes. The findings of this qualitative study, conducted in the tradition of grounded theory, are presented in four analytic categories: crossroads of acculturation dividing immigrant parents and children; gendered socialization of Bangladeshi children in traditional patriarchal families; influence of New York City on acculturation of these children; and their ethnic self-identity trajectories and repertoires. These frameworks reveal how intentionality and secondary socialization impinge on intergenerational cultural continuity to transform new New Yorkers; unlike their parents, the children renounce ethnocentricity, native country affiliation, and patriarchal value system.

Bangladeshi immigrant parents contribute to the city's increasing diversity by remaking the city through burgeoning ethnic enclaves, in which they hold fast to cultural traditions. In contrast, their children remake the city and the city remakes them. They embrace a plurality of perspectives and the values of an egalitarian society. Because all

the young informants are New Yorkers, their acculturation experiences are shaped in a diverse and multi-ethnic setting. They contextualized these experiences in comparison with actual and potential second generation immigrant experiences in "the mid-west" or upstate New York, isolated from a vibrant ethnic enclave and multi-cultural community.

The study has also developed mid-level theories: immigrant children's acculturation is attributed to push-pull factors, shift from primary to secondary socialization, and intentionality compared with parents. Bangladeshi girls question gendered socialization and reject their parent's role in contracting arranged marriages more so than the boys. They benefit from the protection of stringent parental oversight, while boys' freedoms lead, in some instances, to antisocial behavior. In addition, the length of children's self-identity trajectories is matched by the level of complexity in their identity repertoires. A key implication for social work practice is that Bangladeshi parents reject services from members of their own community because they do not want exposure of parent-child conflicts within the ethnic enclave. Community-based services are unlikely to benefit families who need to resolve intergenerational discord.

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I owe a great debt of gratitude to Professor Harriet Goodman, who was a guide and mentor beyond measure. She encouraged me to engage in discursive practices and contest the foundational epistemological premises early on in the doctoral program. However, she never hesitated to restrain me from distractions by redirecting my focus to the "eye of the needle." She always reminded me not to gild the lily or to foreclose any analytic category prematurely. Despite her overcrowded schedule, she made herself available whenever I needed supervision. She challenged my conceptual framework at every stage of data collection and analysis without trying to impose any preconceived notion of her own. In a dialogic relationship I was always allowed to defend myself and grow. In retrospect, this collaboration was "a lifetime burning in every moment."

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father-in-law was alive and well when I started in this program. He expressed his desire to be with me to celebrate the completion of this journey. Unfortunately, two years into my trajectory he breathed his last, but his spirit lived on with me as I continued to burn the midnight oil. Hosne Ara Begum, my mother in law, presently waging a losing battle against chronic physical ailments in Bangladesh, never ceased to encourage me to stay the course. Afroza Shireen, my sister in law, and Dr. Sadrul Hoque, her husband, always inspired me from Toronto, Canada.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Background

In a grand symbolic gesture at a ceremony on Liberty Island in New York Harbor, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (Wright & Ellis, 2001). Also known as the Hart-Cellar Act (P.L. 236), this legislation began a major demographic transformation in the United States. Following its enactment, immigrants from a wide range of sending countries arrived in the US. In 1965, Senator Edward Kennedy was chairman of the senate immigration subcommittee. He did not believe that the bill would flood the nations' cities with immigrants or upset the ethnic mix of American society. However, the pattern of immigration that unfolded in the aftermath proved him wrong. Until the middle of the 20th century, the demographic composition of the US was largely black and white (Waters, 2000). The Immigration Act of 1965 changed this scenario once and for all into a polychrome of ethnic and racial groups, creating new challenges and opportunities for policymakers and researchers alike.

Researchers describe the mass immigration of the post-1965 era to the US as the "second great wave" of immigration to distinguish it from the "first great wave" that took place during the four decades between 1880 and 1920. During the earlier period, most immigrants to the US were of European origin (Gerstle & Mollenkopf, 2001). But within three decades after the enactment of 1965 Act, more than 20 million immigrants came to the US from non-European countries, primarily Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Almost half of the population growth in the US during this period is attributed to post-1965 immigrants and their children (Graham, 1995). Approximately two and a half million immigrants settled in New York City (Foner, 2005; Gerstle; & Mollenkopf, 2001;

Graham, 1995; Hirschman, 2001; Wright & Ellis, 2001). The March 2005 Current Population Survey (cited by Kasinitz, Mollenkopf & Holdaway, 2006) indicated that foreign-born immigrants made up 36 percent of the population of New York City, and second generation immigrants accounted for an additional 20 percent. In contrast, native born children who had native born parents contributed only 20 percent towards the City's population. Such an overwhelming majority of immigrants and minorities made New York City unparalleled in the US as a "majority minority city" (Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, & Holdaway, 2006).

The question of how these heterogeneous groups of new non-European immigrants and their descendants would become incorporated into the new country challenged the prevailing theories of assimilation. The "melting pot" theory that historically captured the grand narrative of Anglo-conformity and Euro-American culture describing the "first great wave" immigrants' experience lost its salience in the face of increased cultural diversity (Feagin & Feagin, 1996; Robbins, Chatterjee, & Canda, 1998). Fuchs (1990) argued that metaphors such as "melting pot," "mosaic," "salad bowl," "rainbow," and "symphony" failed to capture the complex dynamics of new ethnicities in the US. He preferred the trope of a "kaleidoscope" in which "the viewer sees an endless variety of variegated patterns, just as it takes place on the American landscape" (p.278).

However, not everybody embraced this analogy of the kaleidoscope. Arthur Schlesinger Jr. (1992) expressed concern that the driving force of post-1965 immigrants to the US was no longer assimilation, but ethnicity that disrupted unity through diversity: "The contemporary ideal is not assimilation, but ethnicity. We used to say *e pluribus*

unum. Now we glorify *pluribus* and belittle *unum*. The 'melting pot' yields to the 'Tower of Babel" (Los Angeles Times, 1992, Feb, 7). Similar misgivings about the transformation towards multiculturalism and pluralism were voiced by E.D. Hirsch Jr. in *Cultural Literacy* (1987) and Allan Bloom in *The Closing of the American Mind*. (1987).

If Bloom, Hirsch, and Schlesinger felt that the arrival of diverse ethnic and cultural groups would result in the decadence of Western culture, a new generation of researchers (Gans, 1992; Glazer, 1993; Glazer & Moynihan, 1970; Portes & Rumbaut, 2002; Portes & Zhou, 1993) proposed an alternative discourse. They argued that the wave of non- European ethnic immigrants and their descendants, who arrived in the contemporary socio-political context, demanded a new conceptual framework to replace classical assimilation theory. Their central premise was that the "second great wave" immigrants, unlike their predecessors of the "first great wave," were exposed to a very different context of reception. It was marked by entrenched discrimination because their phenotype was different from European immigrants who were physically more like American mainstream whites (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Portes and Rumbaut (2006) also argued that the contemporary sociopolitical context of reception and even official policies of the US towards Hispanic and Asian immigrants constructed two new major supranational ethnic minority categories to contend with.

Anthropologists, historians, political scientists, sociologists, and other immigration researchers needed to develop more compatible theories to study the second great wave of immigrants. The profound demographic change in the second half of the 20th century in the US triggered a major shift of emphasis in social scientific study on immigration resulting in "dual transformations" (Foner, Rumbaut, & Gold, 2000, p.1).

Many immigrants themselves became scholars on US immigration (Rumbaut, 2000). But whether these researchers represented new immigrant groups or not, most of them perceived the need to track the demographic transformation by utilizing new theories to guide contemporary study of immigrant assimilation and incorporation.

Trends in Post-1990 Immigration Research

Beginning in the 1990s a growing body of research rekindled the debate about how new immigrants and their descendents assimilated in the US; this occurred against a backdrop of concerns about illegal immigration. Both policymakers and the general public worried about mounting pressures "illegal immigrants" had on the nation's resources including housing, public health, and education. A general anti-immigrant mood swept the nation (Ueda, 2001). Local initiatives sought to ban bilingual education and deny social services, health care, and public education to both legal and illegal immigrants. Portes and Rumbaut (2001) described California's Proposition 187, a 1994 ballot initiative designed to deny illegal immigrants social service, health care, and public education, as "intransigent nativism" (p.272). They referred to California's Proposition 227, a 1998 anti-bilingual education ballot initiative and Arizona's proposition 203, a 2000 ballot initiative banning bilingual education, as "forced assimilationism" (p. 272).

Forced assimilationism signaled how the dominant culture delegitimized *pluribus* and strove to reinvent the lost *unum* through coercion. Intransigent nativism attempted to reduce all non-European immigrants to the sidelines by delaying or denying them the rights and privileges of full citizenship and by intimidating illegal immigrants with threats of deportation. Portes and Rumbaut (2001) recommended a third way to resolve this dilemma by introducing the notion of "selective acculturation." The second wave of

immigrants, whether they came to the US legally or not, could preserve their native culture and language and at the same time adapt to American culture and acquire English language skills. However this vision of dual assimilation lacked political support in most quarters.

The decade of the 1990s saw the emergence of new research and scholarship on the impact of post-1965 immigration to the US (Alba, 1998; Alba & Nee, 2003; Gans, 1992, Glazer, 1993; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Zhou, 1997). Historians, sociologists, and migration researchers became interested in reinterpreting assimilation theory; they developed fresh analytical frameworks to understand the experiences of second great wave immigrants and their descendants (Kivisto, 2005). In order to understand the nature of acculturation and assimilation among the new immigrants, these researchers focused on the family as the most important site for constructing and testing theories (Rumbaut, 1997). Some of them (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996, 2001, 2006) studied how intergenerational dynamics of immigrant acculturation determined the trajectories of second generation immigrants in the US. They examined how second wave immigrant families succeeded in handing down ethnic identity, culture, and values to their descendants and how second generation immigrants defined themselves under the conflicting influences of the home environment and surrounding realities of American life (Zephir, 2001). Foner (1997) and Kibria (1997) proposed that immigrant families were influenced by both native cultural customs and life in the host country; they created a model of family life different from both, exemplifying integration or bicultural adjustment.

Nonetheless, several major gaps have been identified in existing immigration research (Gans, 2000). Three of them guided the design of this study on Bangladeshi immigrants in the "majority minority city" of New York. One such missing element was investigation of intergenerational patterns of acculturation in which the vantage points of the first and the second generation immigrants were adequately analyzed and contrasted. Another was minimal concern with the limits of an immigration researcher's role as an insider or an outsider in gaining access to the field. Finally, the omission pertained to research on new immigrant populations (Gans, 2000). Bangladeshi immigrants came to New York City in large numbers in the 1990s, but they received little attention as a distinct group in immigration research. Gaining access to this community is difficult. Because the researcher is himself a Bangladeshi immigrant, his role as an insider ultimately shaped his access to informants in unanticipated but revealing ways. Serendipitously, they provided him an unusual opportunity to compare the perspectives of immigrant parents with those of their children.

Demographic Shifts in New York City and the Growth of Bangladeshi Immigrants

Before the 1990s, Bangladeshis did not comprise a substantial segment of the New York City's demographic landscape. However, they became significant beneficiaries of the Diversity Visa Program of 1990. Consequently, New York saw an extraordinary influx of new arrivals from Bangladesh that paralleled the phenomenal growth of other South Asian populations in the city. A large number of them settled in other gateway cities including Los Angeles, Dallas, and Washington DC (Reimers, 2005). Some of these immigrants to New York City came to the US after 1985 (Asian

American Federation Report, 2005) following the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent South Asian country in 1971.

A spectacular growth of South Asian immigrant population in New York City occurred between 1980 and 1990. During this period Indian immigrants grew by 125%; Pakistani immigrants increased by 415%; and Bangladeshi immigrants rose by a remarkable 801% (Williams, 2000). The *Newest New Yorkers 2000* (2004) reported that the number of Bangladeshi immigrants in New York City was 8,695 in 1990, when they ranked 42nd among the foreign born populations by country of birth. By 2000, the total came to 42,865, when they ranked 14th in the City. Between 1990 and 2000 the percentage growth of Bangladeshi immigrants (393%) was the highest among all foreign-born nationals in the City.

Bangladeshi immigrants are a vibrant new population in New York City. However, despite average educational attainments, they have limited English language proficiency, low income, and a high poverty rate. In 2000, 13% (2,247) of Bangladeshi adults had less than a 9th grade education compared with 15% citywide; 27% (4,517) did not graduate from high school compared with 28% citywide; and 52% (8,500) had post secondary education compared with 48% citywide. School enrollment for Bangladeshi children is significantly higher than the City average; 94% of their children are enrolled in New York City public schools compared with 79% citywide. To meet the growing needs of Bangladeshi immigrants, the New York City Department of Education introduced an Asian Bilingual/ESL program in Bengali in an elementary school in Manhattan (PS 20) an Intermediate school in Queens (IS145), and three high schools; one in Manhattan (Seward Park HS) and two in Queens (Long Island City HS and New

Comer HS). Nonetheless, many working age adults (65% compared with 25% among New York City residents) and senior citizens (83% compared with 27% citywide) in this immigrant community fall in the category of English language learners (Asian American Federation Report, 2005).

Bangladeshi immigrants also share a greater burden of the City's poverty. The per capita income of $10,479, median household income of $31,537, and median family income of $29,231 is lower than the City average of $22,402, $38,293, and $41,887, respectively (Asian American Federation Report, 2005). Nearly one third (31% or 8,312) live below poverty line compared with 21% of all City residents. The poverty gap among Bangladeshi senior citizens is more prominent than the City average (35% compared with 18%). About 38% (2,984) Bangladeshi children live in poverty compared with 30% citywide. Even so, the vast majority of poor Bangladeshi immigrant children live in two-parent families compared with 34% citywide. By 2000, the number of Bangladeshi households was 11,585, of which 79% were married couples; only 3% were female heads of household. Approximately 18% of their homes were owner-occupied, and 61% were overcrowded. Among the male population aged 16 and older, 74% were in the labor force, and their mean income for a full time job approached $28,000. Conversely, less than one-third of women over 16 years of age were in the labor force and their mean income for full time employment was estimated at $22,000 (*Newest New Yorkers 2000,* 2004).

The overwhelming majority of Bangladeshi immigrants (95%) who live in New York State reside in New York City. Astoria, Queens has been a primary location of resettlement, where a large Greek immigrant community previously lived (Kraly &

Miyares, 2001). This influx of new immigrants took place as Europeans died out or out-migrated to suburban areas (Salvo & Lobo, 2002). Additionally, Sunnyside and Corona in Queens; Kensington, New Lots and Midwood in Brooklyn; Parkchester in the Bronx; and the Lower East Side in Manhattan became popular enclaves for this ethnic community (Lii, 1995). A new Bangladeshi enclave is developing in Jamaica, Queens, replacing the African-Americans and Caribbean immigrants. Jamaica Muslim Center has become a hub of Bangladeshi cultural-religious activities in the city. Jackson Heights abounds in popular Bangladeshi restaurants and stores that specialize in cultural artifacts, traditional clothes and jewelry in addition to ethnic grocery stores in a south-Asian ambience. A small number of Bangladeshi immigrants also settled in Staten Island close to the Ferry Station. Between 1990 and 1998, the Bangladeshi immigrant population in Astoria grew from 830 to 6,000, as Bangladesh became the tenth largest sending country of immigrants in New York City (Salvo & Lobo, 2002). The Annual Bangladeshi "Mela" or fairs in Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx attract tens of thousands of people who celebrate their native culture and cuisine as they extend their ethnic space in New York City. This process enables Bangladeshi immigrants to preserve and recreate their unique cultural backgrounds similar to other minorities and immigrant groups in the "unmelted pot" of New York City (Castells & Mollenkopf, 1991).

Because of the increasing cost of living, Bangladeshis sometimes migrate out of New York City. In an article entitled *Queens to Detroit: A Bangladeshi Passage* (New York Times, 2001, March 8), Kershaw reported on eight thousand immigrant Bangladeshis who relocated to Detroit's east side and nearby Hamtramck over an eighteen month period. It was difficult for them to survive in New York City. Many of

them were attracted by small factory jobs and substantially low rents in Detroit, also home to a growing number of Muslims in the US (Reimers, 2005). Informed sources told the researcher that other Bangladeshi immigrants also left New York City each year for upstate New York; Philadelphia and Delaware in search of more affordable living. Stories on return migration of these Bangladeshis to New York City are not uncommon. One informant in this study told how his family had relocated from Queens to Hudson, New York, before returning to New York City to make the full circle.

Despite the remarkable spurt in immigrant flows from Bangladesh over several decades, Bangladeshi immigrants remain an under researched group even among South Asian immigrant ethnic communities. Instead of being studied as a unique population, they are grouped together with Indian and Pakistani immigrants under a pan-ethnic South-Asian or Asian-Indian category. A comprehensive search of scholarly literature did not produce any study on the acculturation and assimilation experiences of Bangladeshi immigrants in New York City as a distinct group.

The Importance of the Post-Immigrant Generation

Some researchers (Kasinitz, Waters, Mollenkopf, & Anil, 2004) interpret the post-immigrant generation as an analytic category that lends itself to three research objectives: to gauge the distance of an age cohort from the native county; to measure its exposure to acculturation in the host country; and to capture its transition within a historical time-frame. Others (Gerstle & Mollenkopf, 2001) propose that each surge of immigration precipitates a series of generational waves in which the second generation differs substantially from the first in socio-economic and political orientation. Second generation immigrants also play a critical role in what Alba and Nee (2003) describe as

the hypothesis of third generation return. In this formulation, unlike the third generation immigrants who can afford to be confident about their American identity and express their ethnicity, the second generation immigrants have to demonstrate an affiliation with mainstream society by distancing themselves from their foreign identity.

In the 1990s, the resurgence of interest among researchers in immigrant incorporation triggered a desire to trace the trajectories or acculturation paths of the children of post-1965 immigrants as they came of age (Mollenkopf, 2005). Children became the focal point of research, based on the premise that first generation immigrants did not traditionally determine the impact of immigrant flows to the US; they were considered "birds of passage haunted by the dreams of return" (Portes, 2004. p. 157). In contrast, the second generation was in the host country to stay (Portes, 2004). Unlike first generation immigrants who accepted their disadvantages as transitory in anticipation of a better future, second generation immigrants, born or raised in the United States, expected to do better than their parents and even native-born peers (Zhou, 2004) by achieving parity with them in all respects (Alba, 2005) to begin with.

The turning point for ethnic self-identity among immigrants was not generally observed among members of the first generation, who might still have a single reference group. It was their children, or the post-immigrant generation, who demonstrated this change through affiliations with multiple reference groups in the host country (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Since it was well understood that these children of "second great wave" immigrants would increasingly join the workforce in the coming decades and determine what the US was going to look like (Greenman & Xie, 2006), they were of considerable interest to immigration researchers and policy makers alike.

The Importance of an Intergenerational Focus

A study of second generation immigrants would be incomplete without examining the first generation from a cross-generational or intergenerational perspective. Gans (2000) referred to the exclusive focus of contemporary researchers on the second generation as a repetition of the mistakes of the first generation researchers on US immigration. They developed theories on first generation immigrants without transparency on methodology and sources of information. However, information about second generation immigrants was used to imagine their parent's characteristics retrospectively, including the so called tenacity for preserving native culture in the host country. This methodological gap led to a simplistic notion of "straight line theory" in which each succeeding generation of immigrants performed better than its predecessor. For example, second generation immigrants were more acculturated than the first generation while third and fourth generations were socially more assimilated to the American mainstream than the second generation. Gans (2000) recommended a comparative study of American experiences across different generations of immigrants, especially between the first and the second generations, for a more nuanced understanding of intergenerational patterns of acculturation. Others (Feliciano, 2006) also argued that one of the best ways to assess the outcome of second generation immigrants in the US was to examine the cultural values, beliefs, attitudes, socioeconomic status, and education of their first generation immigrant parents.

The intergenerational focus of a second generation study helps develop the first and second generation of immigrants as two different analytic categories so that the vantage point of one generation may be seen from the vantage point of another. It also

assists the researcher in exploring how the trajectories of second generation acculturation are played out on a larger stage in the host country as parental influences attenuate (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001) when children of immigrants come of age.

Purpose of the Study

The study was originally intended to explore acculturation of children of Bangladeshi immigrants in New York City and how it was reflected in their intergenerational relations regarding transmission of native culture, family cohesion, educational performance, and ethnic self-identities. It was expected that in-depth interviews of young informants would reveal adequate information about how their parents made sense of their lives as first generation immigrants in this gateway city and how it impinged on the children's acculturation. However, the study evolved serendipitously during the first round of interviews with the informants. The subjects themselves guided the researcher about what was important to them and their parents. More importantly, the ritual of conducting interviews in the informant's home facilitated observations of parent-child interactions. Enthusiastic parents encouraged informal conversation with the researcher. These discussions revealed the first hand experiences of how parents made sense of their lives as first generation immigrants and interpreted their children's acculturation in New York City.

In effect, it sharpened the focus of the study and enabled the researcher to expand the scope of cross-generational perspectives of acculturation. In other words, it was possible to gain insight into the experiences of one generation from the vantage point of another without having to rely exclusively on the experiences of the children. Nonetheless, both by design and by merit, the central purpose of the study continued to

be the trajectories of second generation acculturation beyond the confines of intergenerational continuity as new New Yorkers.

The study purported to develop cultural competence among social work practitioners, program administrators, and policy analysts who serve this underserved ethnic immigrant community in New York City. An important objective of the study was to help human service workers understand the acculturation gap between Bangladeshi immigrant parents and their children that lead to parent-child conflicts or family disruptions; the gendered socialization of the children of immigrants growing up in traditional patriarchal families in different boroughs of New York City; and the complexity of their identification, assimilation, and acculturation.

Drawing upon immigration policy frameworks, theories of acculturation and assimilation, and empirical studies in the US, this study aspires to bridge the gap between theory and praxis to formulate more effective social welfare policy, practice, and program design and implementation to serve new second generation immigrants in New York City. Another purpose of this study was to promote evidence-based social work practice by exploring continuities and discontinuities of Bangladeshi native and home culture within various modes of immigrant acculturation and incorporation in the US and their impact on the second generation immigrants. It contemplated sensitizing social welfare practitioners, policymakers, researchers, and program administrators about the significance of multiculturalism, cultural pluralism, and secondary socialization, ethnic, racial, and bicultural identities of second generation immigrants.

Following this introduction, there would be a brief review of how US immigration policy framework evolved until the present day creating a changing context of reception

for immigrants from various countries of origin. A discussion on various theories of immigrant acculturation and assimilation, in the wake of two distinctive major waves of immigration to the US, would follow. Despite the huge gap between the conceptually well developed theoretical literature and the less developed empirical studies on immigrant acculturation and assimilation (Phinney, 1990; Greenman & Xie, 2006), the researcher would also review empirical studies that employed various theoretical approaches to examine assimilative outcomes among diverse groups of second great wave immigrants and their descendants. This review is presented in the fourth chapter.

CHAPTER II: UNITED STATES IMMIGRATION POLICY IN CONTEXT

Introduction

Research on immigrant incorporation in the US is nested in the evolving nature of immigration policy reflected in the country's shifting cultural, economic, humanitarian, political, religious, social, and even national security priorities. History does not present itself in neat packages, but imposing a structure can provide clarity (Chomsky, 1991) as the demand for labor to fuel the needs of an expanding nation alternated with periods of extreme xenophobia (Keefe, 2009). The history of US immigration policy is characterized by a mix of opportunity and exclusion in several distinct, but interconnected periods (Ewing, 2008) unfolding the story of a great nation in the making.

Immigration to the New World was unrestricted after Christopher Columbus' arrival to the Bahamas in 1492 through the early years of the colonial period. Open migration continued until the enactment of Alien and Sedition Act of 1798, when the Federal government first took the responsibility of the flow of new arrivals to the country, and the President of the United States was authorized to deport any individual considered dangerous (Ewing, 2008). US immigration policies underwent three major developmental stages: laissez-faire policy, qualitative and quantitative restrictions (Martin, 2002). From 1780 to 1875 a laissez-faire immigration policy encouraged "states, private employers, railroads and churches to promote immigration" (Martin, 2002, p.14). However, enactment of the first "exclusionary" laws in 1875 ushered in a new era in immigration policy by targeting undesirables, who included criminals, prostitutes, and Chinese contract laborers. Centralized control of US immigration was consolidated during this period incrementally through a series of laws that decided on

who could or could not enter the country. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was renewed in 1892 for another ten years with The Geary Act, but it continued unabated past 1902. True to its name, The Anarchist Exclusion Act of 1903 barred anarchists and political extremists, and The Immigration Act of 1907 targeted a range of new "undesirables" including imbeciles, feeble minded persons, physically or mentally handicapped people unable to earn their livelihood, patients with tuberculosis, unaccompanied children, and individuals who admitted committing crimes. In the same year, the Gentleman's Agreement with Japan prevented Japanese immigration to US. The Immigration Act of 1917 barred immigration from nations of the Asia-Pacific triangle (Ewing, 2008). Despite numerous exclusionary immigration laws affecting the quality of immigrants that actually defined the core principles of US immigration policy during this formative period, an unprecedented number of immigrants came from Northern and Western Europe between 1880 and 1920. This period is known as the first great wave of immigration to the US.

However, the period of expansive immigration ended following the Great War paving the way for another round of US immigration laws characterized by quotas imposed against immigrants from select countries of origin. This was the beginning of the quantitative restrictions of immigrants. These restrictions were codified in The Quota Law of 1921 later reinforced by the National Origin Second Quota Act or Johnson-Reed Act 1924. These laws not only restricted immigrants from Asian and Pacific countries, but also from Eastern and Southern Europe, including Italy, Poland, and Russia. Immigration to US came to a virtual standstill during the Great Depression and the Second World War, when economic circumstances suppressed the need for cheap labor

and geopolitical forces undercut physical mobility. However, starting from the 1940s, the winds of change were evident in a series of laws that reversed racial bias in US immigration policy. This phase included the Chinese Exclusion Repeal Act of 1943; the Luce Celler Act of 1946; and the Immigration and Nationality Act also known as the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952.

Ultimately the golden age of immigration policy in the US was heralded with the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 which dismantled forty-five years of discriminatory national origin quota system and nine decades of racial bias against non-European immigrants. It brought about an era of phenomenal immigration from non-European countries, known as the second great wave of immigration to the US. This period continued with the Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1975 which facilitated settlement of Vietnamese and Cambodian immigrants in the US in the wake of Vietnam War and ended in 1984.

However, in a new set of policy reversals, immigration control and limitations on immigrants' rights began with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. It was reinforced by three particularly punitive immigration laws passed in 1996. Most recently, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 precipitated a new phase of restrictions, when the Federal government linked immigration control to national security and targeted immigrants of particular nationalities (Ewing, 2008). This trend continues to the present.

Core Principles

The exclusionary laws enacted following 1875, spanned almost 70 years. They set the core principles of political citizenship in an emerging immigrant nation still in the process of defining itself. The dominant theme across the spectrum of immigration

policies was the inclusion or exclusion of certain immigrants over others through bright or blurred boundaries (Alba, 2005) and a reconfiguration of "ethnic dimension of nationhood" (Zolberg, 2000, p. 62). Even though the US views itself as a country of immigrants, fear of immigrants was and continues to be a recurrent theme. It is reflected in immigration policies that constantly seek to balance opportunity with exclusion and a shifting emphasis from welcome to ambivalence and even fear (Immigration Policy Toolkit, National Association of Social Workers, 2006).

Zolberg (2000) argues that immigration policies of major receiving countries such as the US are shaped by a global context of interaction between world capitalism; local economic and political circumstances within various nation states; and world population dynamics. Developed countries pursued restrictive immigration policies and border control to keep most of the world population out. It enabled them to preserve a privileged position as "core" entities, while the least developed countries remained at the periphery. The result was extreme inequality between the most and the least developed countries. This is described as the Westphalian International State System (Zolberg, 2000; Wallerstein, 1974; Nett, 1971; Petras, 1980; Hamilton & Whalley, 1984). At the same time developed nation-states constructed their national identities by engaging in discursive practices premised on differentiating them from cultural "others" (Barth, 1969). The conception of political citizenship framed by this discourse entailed a concept of core ethnicity that represented nationhood. However, it sprang to life in the presence of cultural "others," often reflected in the momentum in favor of excluding the undeserving immigrants from entrée (Zolberg, 2000). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes the right of any individual to leave his or her native country

and return to it (United Nations, 2004). It also ascertains the right of an individual to leave any other host country, albeit without any guarantees of reentry. Consequently, the immigration policy of a receiving country ends up protecting the privilege of its political citizens against "others," consolidating cultural uniformity.

Historically, immigration theory and research have been linked to the policy initiatives, their contexts and ramifications. The timeline of major immigration legislation and court decisions (See Appendix 1) illustrates how legislation and court decision in the US have impinged on certain groups of immigrants more than others and how the nation's priorities shaped the way in which different groups adapted and incorporated into the US. For example, The Naturalization Act of 1790; Article 1, Section 8 of the US Constitution and The Naturalization Act of 1795, set the stage for a hundred and seventy years of exclusionary policies towards the people of non-European origin. The Naturalization Act of 1870 singled out the Asians, who were allowed to live in the US without the right to become citizens. Subsequently, the first set of "exclusionary" laws between 1875 and 1920 confined the scope of citizenship exclusively to the inner circle of whites creating an insider-outsider dichotomy. The National Origin First Quota Act, also known as Emergency Quota Act of 1921, imposed a yearly quota for the immigrants. It favored people from Northern and Western European countries, including England, France, Germany, and Ireland, whose predecessors had already defined the American mainstream as Anglo-Saxon. The National Origin Second Quota Act or Johnson-Reed Act 1924 reinforced the quota system; it not only restricted immigrants from Asian and Pacific countries but also from

Eastern and Southern Europe, including Italy, Poland, and Russia. Intriguingly, African immigrants were also excluded (Abrams, 1984; Seller, 1984).

At this time anti-Asian sentiments swept the American West, interethnic tension between new immigrants brewed in the East. These strains reflected growing concerns that new immigrants would take away the jobs and drive down wages for native-born Americans (Levine, Hill, & Warren, 1985). Italian and Jewish immigrants, who came from Eastern and Southern Europe became subject to discrimination. The 1911 US Commission on Immigrants formed by congressional mandate reported that immigrants from Eastern and Southern European countries were not as desirable or as adaptable as Northern and Western European immigrants (Morris, 1985; Drachman, 1995). However, eventually the descendants of Eastern and Southern European immigrants, including Jews, reshaped the American mainstream from a Protestant Anglo-Saxon to Judeo-Christian tradition.

The Changing Context for Asian Immigrants

Major immigration policies in the US illustrate historic attempts to exclude Asian immigrants to the United States. Chinese immigrants had arrived in California following the upheavals of the Opium Wars and flocked to San Francisco after the 1948 Gold Rush. Although the riches they anticipated fizzled out with the rapid disappearance of easily mined gold, Chinese migrants from a small group of countries west of the Pearl River Delta flocked to the US as mine and railroad workers. Ultimately poorly paid Chinese and Native American workers laid the rails and dynamited the tunnels for the Central Pacific Railroad, which connected the Union Pacific to existing eastern rail lines. Once the golden stake that connected these lines was driven, the need for Chinese labor dried

up. Their cheap labor competed with white working class men who migrated west following the Civil War. The subsequent conflicts led to legislation that prevented legal migration for new Chinese and barred citizenship for those already in the US (Keefe, 2009).

Emigrants of Asian origin were prevented from entering the country early during the phase of first "exclusion" laws and centralized control of immigrants (1875-1920) and through four major cumulative legislative measures: The Naturalization Act of 1875; The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, The Geary Act of 1892, and the Asiatic Barred Zone Act of 1917. In addition, the "Gentleman's Agreement" between the US and Japan in 1907 effectively prevented immigration of Japanese laborers. The Naturalization Act of 1875 described certain groups of "undesirable" immigrants; among them were Chinese contract laborers who were described as "coolies" (Ewing, 2008). The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 went beyond the construction of the cultural "other" and suspended immigration of all Chinese workers to US for ten years. It prevented Chinese immigrants from becoming naturalized citizens of US and made provisions for deporting Chinese immigrants living unlawfully in the country. The Geary Act of 1892 extended this ban for an additional ten years (Ewing, 2008). The Immigration Act of 1917, also known as Asiatic Barred Zone Act, barred immigrants from the Asia-Pacific triangle from entering the US. This triangle included South Asia, South East Asia and the islands in the Indian and Pacific oceans. These laws underscored the desire of a nation to retain cultural conformity through racial exclusion.

During this period, the Asians who were already living in the US were denied citizenship through two landmark Supreme Court decisions, Takao Ozawa v. United

States (1922) and United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind (1923). In the Takao Ozawa case, the Supreme Court denied naturalization to a Japanese-born immigrant who spent most of his life in the US by using the term "white" interchangeably with "Caucasian" (Wong, 1993). However, when a South Asian Indian immigrant, Bhagat Singh Thind, applied for citizenship based upon his claim the following year that he was a Caucasian, the Supreme Court turned him down by reverting to the more popular definition of the word "white," as a person of European descent. The premise of these court decisions reinforced the notion that unlike the European immigrants, Asians were not sufficiently white and their descendants were unlikely to lose their distinctive alien identity to melt into the American mainstream (Feagin & Feagin, 1996).

The construction of a cultural "other" in the legal framework applied largely to immigrants from China, Japan, and India, contributing to the racialization of people of various national origin identities as "non-white" (Alba, 2005) in the US. Zolberg (2000) contends that construction of "other" in the politics of US immigration policy historically involved race, language, and religion. In terms of race, Asiatics, blacks, and people of mixed race were often designated as "others." Regarding language, German was viewed in the 18th century in much the same way Spanish at the present time. Currently, Muslims and Arabs occupy the space designated as the "other" occupied by Jews a generation ago. These alignments have shifted contingent on the prevalent mood of the nation at a particular point in time.

The recent reversal of immigration restrictions towards Asians reflects that shifting alignment. This trend began to unfold with the Chinese Exclusion Repeal Act of 1943, sixty-four years after Chinese immigrants were barred from entering US at all. It

allowed the Chinese immigrants already in the US to become naturalized citizens. The Luce Celler Act of 1946 reversed the effect of the Supreme Court decision in US v. Bhagat Singh Thind (1923) and granted Indian-Americans eligibility to become naturalized citizens. The McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 reversed the thirty-one year First Quota Act of 1921 and twenty eight year old Second Quota Act of 1924, which had historically considered people from Southern and Eastern European counties inassimilable "others." Despite formal elimination of national origin as the basis of exclusion, this law still retained the racial basis of national origin quota system by favoring immigrants from Ireland, Germany, and England.

Ultimately McCarran-Walter paved the way for a major breakthrough in US immigration policy with the Hart-Cellar Act of 1965. This landmark legislation exposed generations of racial bias in US immigration policies in selecting some groups of immigrants over others (Fuchs, 1990). Most significantly, it abolished discrimination against Asian immigrants and marked the beginning of an ideological shift from the notion of the US as a homogeneous white society (Takaki, 1993). Evidently, as an "imagined community" (Anderson) the nation was on the threshold of a new "narrative" (Bhabha, 1995) that embraced more egalitarian values.

Although Asian American immigrants have never been able to earn "white privilege" in the American mainstream, they did acquire the label of "model minority." Asian-Americans, who were viewed for decades as inassimilable "other," became ultimately identified with entrenched American values such as the Protestant work ethic and self-reliance. Takaki (1993) debunks the "model minority myth" associated with Asian-Americans by arguing that it serves the political interests of the US to further

isolate African-Americans as an underclass and undeserving "other." Conservatives contrast Asian-Americans and African-Americans to illustrate their belief that blacks have been "losing ground" during decades of government social services that failed to arrest social deterioration and poverty (Takaki, 1993). Asian American immigrants are a natural foil to support continuing racial bias against native blacks.

Upheavals of the 1960s

Cultural upheavals of the 1960s associated with the Civil Rights, Anti-Vietnam War, Women's Liberation, and International Human Rights Movements challenged the prevailing notions of social justice in the US. This decade laid the groundwork for greater sensitivity to immigrant diversity and provided the foundation for the Immigration Act of 1965 (Glazer, 2004; Kivisto, 2005; Ueda, 2004). Together with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights act of 1965, it was one of the major achievements of The Great Society that introduced a new era of identity politics, multiculturalism, and pluralism. Following a decade and a half of the Cold War (1945-1960), the first half of the 1960s were characterized by hope, idealism, and liberalism in the American body politic (Anderson, 1999).

The Immigration Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-649) extended the scope of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 through a diversity program to encourage immigration from sending countries which are poorly represented in the US (Congressional Budget Office Paper, 2006). It was intended to offset the imbalances created by the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (Numbers USA Education & Research Foundation Report, 2003). These Diversity Visa (DV) lotteries administered by the State Department every year since then facilitated immigration from countries such as

Bangladesh and Ethiopia, which were traditionally underrepresented in the demographic makeup of the US.

The Pendulum Swings Back

The pendulum of immigration policy swung towards its most liberal end in the 1960s and continued its momentum through the Refugee Act of 1980. The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 marked the beginning of a very different era characterized by the rise of immigration control and limitations on immigrants' rights (Ewing, 2008). This legislation purported to stem the tide of illegal immigration through a carrot and stick approach. The carrot consisted in granting illegal immigrants who already resided in the US, permission to apply for legal status. The stick was to sanction employers who knowingly hired illegal immigrants (Ewing, 2008). The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act of 1996 (P. L 104-193) cut eligibility for the means-tested Federal benefit programs, including food stamps, Medicaid, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) even for the legally admitted immigrants by making these provisions contingent on their citizenship (Urban Institute, 2004). Two other laws, the Illegal Immigration Reform Act of 1996 (P. L. 208) and the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 (P. L. 104-132) brought forth sweeping changes in the legal framework that affected immigrants. Minor offenses were retroactively reclassified as felonies. Convictions for domestic violence, child abuse, and neglect were considered deportable offenses, and the right to judicial review prior to many deportation cases was removed to make way for "expedited removal" of undocumented immigrants from the airports upon their arrival (Ward, 1999; Medina, 1997; Cooper, 1997). The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) deported 61

illegal Bangladeshi immigrants in 1997, and 81 more were deported in 1998, while 11 were sent home directly from prison under this legislation (Reimers, 2005).

Turn of the Century Challenges

At the beginning of the 21st century following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, the situation became even worse for certain immigrant groups. This era was marked by consolidating immigration control priorities with the national security interest of the US (Ewing, 2008). The 9/11 attacks led to the expedited adoption of the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (US PATRIOT) Act of 2001. This legislation enabled the government to indict immigrants with charges based on guilt by association and incarcerate them simply on grounds of suspicion. Secret evidence could be used against them in immigration proceedings in which they had no recourse to due process. Immigrants, especially young Muslim men from Middle Eastern and South Asian origin, were subjected to intolerance, stereotyping, and ethnic profiling (Matthews, 2002). Under the Homeland Security Act of 2002, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) under the Department of Justice (DJ) was renamed as the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) and placed under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

In a 2005 report filed in the *New York Times*, Bernstein, Rashbaum and Mekhennet wrote about the deportation of a sixteen-year old Bangladeshi immigrant girl from Queens who came to New York at the age of five. This was one of the first terrorism cases which involved a minor. According to the report, the information about how this child was labeled as a national security threat was shrouded in secrecy guarded

by the Federal government. Following seven weeks' detention this Bangladeshi immigrant child was discharged conditionally to be deported on minor immigration charges (New York Times, 2005, June 17).

Conclusion

Before the first decade of the 21st century draws to a close, the evolution of US immigration policy remains uncertain and the direction it will take in the coming years is unknown. Ewing (2008) contends that US will "wrestle with its identity as a nation of immigrants" (p.7) in the years ahead. Zolberg (2000) projects a more complex outcome in which two axes of US immigration policy will continue to crosscut. The first axis represents the physical impact of immigration policy while the second axis deals with its cultural and political ramifications. Since both axes have positive and negative poles with a range of alignments to choose from, if policy makers and analysts take a positive stance on the first axis, it will not necessarily preclude a negative position on the second axis. Such a complex scenario explains why the politics of immigration "straddle the ordinary liberal-conservative divide and the concomitant emergence of 'strange bedfellow' coalition for or against particular proposals" (Zolberg, 2000, p. 64). Distinctive segments of US immigration policy defy integration and consequently different alignments of political and economic stakeholders are likely to continue to function independently and be at cross-purposes (Zolberg, 2000). Regardless of how the immigration policy framework is played out in the future, it will help shape how newcomers acculturate and assimilate in this nation of immigrants. It will continue to create challenges and opportunities for social science researchers and theorists alike.

CHAPTER III: THEORIES OF IMMIGRANT ASSIMILATION

Introduction

Immigration scholarship has developed for more than a century and it parallels the arrival of three waves of newcomers to the US (Foner, Rumbaut, & Gold, 2000). Those who studied the first great wave immigration in the early part of 20th century dealt with controversies over assimilation and nativity versus exclusion and alien origin among various groups of European immigrants. These scholars balanced the consequences of immigration against the causes of emigration. A second generation of immigration scholars emerged in the middle of the 20th century during the four decades between 1920 and 1960 when immigration to US virtually tapered off. These scholars focused their attention on the assimilation of second and third generation immigrants and race and ethnic relations among majority and various minority groups. The third generation immigration scholarship emerged in the wake of the second great wave of immigration that began in the 1970s, expanded in the 1980s and finally "exploded into the growth industry in the 1990s" (p. 3).

The theoretical models of immigrant acculturation in the US which emerged as a result of these three generations of scholarship may be classified in two broad categories: classical assimilation theory and modern assimilation theory. Classical assimilation theory, which originated from second generation immigration scholarship, represented a meta-narrative of irreversible and unidirectional convergence of disparate groups and successive generations of immigrants into one American mainstream. Modern assimilation theories, which developed during the third generation of immigration

scholarship, signified a postmodern condition characterized by “loss of meta-narrative” (Lyotard, 1984) in which there is not one dominant story but many different narratives of immigrant acculturation and assimilation. This tradition debunked the concept of the “melting pot” that first appeared in the title of Israel Zangwill’s (1925) immensely popular play produced on Broadway. It dramatized how different ethnicities melted into one American mainstream when a Russian immigrant still struggling for survival articulated, “America is God’s Crucible, the great Melting-Pot where all races of Europe are melting and re-forming..Germans and Frenchmen, Irishmen and Englishmen, Jews and Russians-into the Crucible with you all! God is making the American” (p. 33). “Straight line assimilation” theory developed by Warner and Srole (1945) showed how the children of immigrants converged into one middle class American way of life. Their view was that second and third generation immigrants would be naturally drawn towards the higher status of the American culture in comparison with their immigrant culture. This intergenerational mobility includes a transition from segregation of the first generation immigrants to integration and Americanization of successive generations of immigrants (Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, & Holdaway, 2009).

Classical assimilation theory, still considered by some as the cornerstone of immigrant incorporation in this country, was pioneered by the Chicago School of Sociology and it is associated with the works of Park (1922; 1928) and Park and Burgess (1921). These pioneering researchers developed foundational concepts of the immigrant experience including assimilation, residential segregation, occupational specialization, marginality, and cycles of race relations rendering immigration an enduring topic of American sociology (Waters, 2000). Milton Gordon (1964), another major theorist in the

classical tradition, vastly expanded the scope of this theory. He redefined the "melting pot" essentially as an Anglo-conformity that valorized, "the middle-class cultural patterns of, largely, white Protestant, Anglo-Saxon origins" (p.72). Alba and Nee's (2003) "new assimilation theory" revived classical assimilation theory in the modern era by comparing similarities and differences of immigrant experiences from both the first and the second great waves. However, they emphasized on how the immigrants remade the American mainstream.

Modern assimilation theories began to emerge in the 1960s with Glazer and Moynihan's *Beyond the melting pot* (1963) in which the authors argued that new immigrants could assimilate into American culture and retain their native culture at the same time. The authenticity of Warner and Srole's (1945) "straight line assimilation" theory was seriously questioned by "Bumpy Line Approach" (Gans, 1992), "Second Generation Decline" (Gans, 1992) together with "Is Assimilation Dead?" (Glazer, 1993) and "Assimilation Today: Is One Identity Enough" (Glazer, 1993). Probably, the most conceptually developed of all modern theories of assimilation is the "theory of segmented assimilation," first introduced by Portes and Zhou in 1993. True to its name, this theory splits second generation assimilation into three different segments: "consonant acculturation," which largely mirrors classical assimilation theory; "dissonant acculturation," that draws from the concept of "second generation decline;" and "selective acculturation," which goes beyond the notion of "beyond the melting pot" to privilege bicultural socialization. More recently, Kasinitz and colleagues (2008) developed the notion of "second generation advantage" that contradicts Gans's (1992) concept of "second generation decline," and Portes and Zhou's (1993) "dissonant

acculturation," but builds on Portes and Zhou's (1993) concept of "selective acculturation." Clearly this is a period of growth in immigration research in which knowledge is contested and no meta-narrative binds various approaches.

Classical Assimilation Theories

Chicago School of Sociology: Four-Step "Race Relations Cycle"

The first major theory of immigrant assimilation in the US followed the first great wave of immigration that occurred between 1880 and 1920. It emerged from ethnographic studies of first and second generation immigrants conducted at the Chicago School of Sociology in the 1920s (Waters, 2000). The "race relations cycle" (Park & Burgess, 1924, p.735) laid the foundation of linear assimilation or the incorporation of heterogeneous groups of European immigrants into Anglo-conformity. According to this theory, immigrants to the US underwent an irreversible cycle in which they moved in a linear progression from contact, competition, and accommodation culminating in assimilation in which "former outsiders shed their immigrant identities to emerge as fully Americanized moderns" (Couvares, Saxton, Grob, & Billias, 2000, p.137).

The work of the Chicago School provided the theoretical underpinnings for the popular notion of the "melting pot." It was a pioneering theory with traditional American roots. Within the framework of Anglo-conformity, diversity was looked down upon as a deficit, and differences between the minority and dominant cultures were resolved at the expense of the cultural heritage of newcomers. This model is unidirectional and symbolized by an arrow pointing to assimilation as the sole outcome of the process (Flannery, Reise & Yu, 2001). Under this framework new immigrants faced a dilemma: they could either maintain native cultural traditions to be totally isolated from the

mainstream or become fully assimilated and cut off from the native cultural tradition (Berry, Trimble & Olmeda, 1986).

Despite the claims of the "Chicago School," Gans (2000) argued that these pioneering researchers focused their studies on second generation immigrants and left out first generation immigrants, primarily because they did not speak English and the researchers never learned their languages. Their hypotheses about first generation immigrants were based on extrapolations from studies of their descendants. Central to this interest in second generation immigrants was how the US affected immigrants and not how immigrants affected the US (Gans, 2000). This vision of ethnic assimilation could not account for the experiences of more recent post-immigrant generations, whose parents came from Asia, Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and other non-European regions. It did not help researchers understand how new immigrants were inclined to preserve elements of their family and group culture through historical, linguistic, racial, and religious differences (Robbins et al., 1998). Consequently, by the 1960s, as sociologists became receptive to a more pluralistic view of ethnicity (Couvares et al., 2000), assumptions about immigrant acculturation mirrored new ideas about how social, cultural, and political factors contributed to unequal access to power and resources for non-European immigrants (Kivisto, 2005). The Civil Rights Movement highlighted that racial and ethnic differences in some groups were less "meltable" than others in a country that had historically excluded non-whites (Kasinitz, et al., 2004).

Gordon's Seven Dimensions of Immigrant Acculturation

Gordon (1964) acknowledged that immigrant assimilation had to be facilitated by a congenial context of reception in the host country. He attempted to bridge the gap

between classical assimilation theory and the pluralist sensibilities of the 1960s with his theory of seven-dimensional adaptation process. It entailed complex dynamics of assimilation through multiple variables: cultural, structural, marital, identificational, attitude-receptional, behavioral-receptional, and civic integration. Cultural assimilation referred to changes immigrants undertook in order to adopt the dominant culture. Structural assimilation represented their penetration into the primary groups of the dominant society. Marital assimilation occurred as a result of intermarriage between members of the dominant society and immigrant groups. Development of identity among minority immigrants that linked them to mainstream society was termed "identificational assimilation." Attitude-receptional assimilation, or the absence of prejudicial attitudes and stereotyping in both dominant groups and ethnic immigrant minority groups, was contrasted with behavioral-receptional assimilation or the lack of intentional discrimination against minority immigrants by the dominant group. Finally, in this model, civic assimilation was defined as the reduction of conflict over values and power between the minority immigrants and the dominant group (Gordon, 1964).

Unlike classical assimilation theory, in which cultural integration was required for structural immigrant assimilation, Gordon's theory assumed that the process of immigrants' cultural assimilation was feasible independently of their structural assimilation (Couvares et al., 2000). In this framework, structural assimilation was the most difficult for immigrants to attain, because it could not be guaranteed without the acceptance of the dominant group. Gordon's model of cultural pluralism assumes that many patterns of cultural adaptation co-exist, and the degrees of assimilation among immigrants may vary (Robbins, et al., 1998). Although civic incorporation remains the

overall goal of assimilation, this is not a stage model representing a linear progression of immigrants from one stage of assimilation to another. These dimensions are a set of variables that operate independently at different points in the process of immigrant incorporation leading variously towards assimilation.

Even though Gordon's theory recognized the salience of pluralism and multiculturalism, it still suggested that diversity was a deviation from Anglo-American conformity and white Anglo Saxon Protestant (WASP) mainstream culture. It failed to account for the reality that assimilation was particularly difficult for people with distinctive physiological and phenotypic markers that made them stand out and appear as outsiders in the dominant society (Padilla & Perez, 2003). Regardless of its multidimensional scope, this conceptualization portrayed the acculturation process as unidirectional moving towards total assimilation into American society (Flannery et al., 2001) affirming the final stage of Park's race relations cycle (Alba & Nee, 2003).

Modern Assimilation Theories

Reframing the Assimilation of Second-Wave Immigration

New paradigms for understanding the incorporation of post-1965 immigrants provided both challenges and opportunities for migration researchers who strove to recalibrate and reinvent the classical theoretical framework. Instead of relying on a unidirectional model of acculturation (UDM), they proposed that immigrants had two independently functioning cultural orientations; one to the home culture and another to the host culture. This is known as a bidirectional or orthogonal model (BDM) (Flannery, et al. 2001). It is a process in which immigrants internalize both home culture and host culture at the same time (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993). Berry and colleagues

(1986) identified BDM as a framework of four ideal types of acculturation illustrating the interplay between the home culture and the host culture: marginalization, assimilation, separation, and integration (See Table 1).

Table 1[1]
Typology of Bidirectional Model of Immigrant Acculturation[1]

Nature of acculturation	Home Culture	Host Culture
Separation	+	–
Marginalization	–	–
Assimilation	–	+
Integration	+	+

[1]Adapted from Berry, Trimble, and Olmeda (1986)

Revisiting Theories of Assimilation and Acculturation in the 1990s

Demographic trends after 1990 produced a re-examination of earlier theories of immigrant assimilation. The diversity and heterogeneity among new immigrants who arrived in droves in gateway cities such as New York, Los Angeles, and Miami prompted researchers to question how they were adapting to the host society. These researchers turned classical assimilation theory on its head by reframing the question as to how the new immigrants were changing the receiving country (Orum, 2005). Rather than focusing inquiry on whether post-1965 immigrants would assimilate or not, the central questions became how new immigrant groups were influencing American society and what new assimilation patterns would emerge (Portes, 2004).

In some instances (Glazer, 2004) theorists questioned the validity of the "melting pot" theory by asking if a single identity could accommodate the vast array of experiences pertaining to non-European immigrants. Zhou (2004) argued that community affiliations facilitated, rather than impeded, assimilation for contemporary Asian immigrants. Others (Mollenkopf, 2005; Levitt & Waters, 2002) compared generational mobility of the first great wave of European immigrants to the second great wave of non-European post-1965 immigrants. Their objective was to understand how different experiences of second great wave immigrants shaped the social mobility of their descendants (Levitt & Waters, 2002). One point of view was that lack of economic opportunities, racial discrimination, poor inner-city schools, and limited job opportunities would result in second-generation decline (Gans, 1992).

These theorists assumed that conditions that were conducive to the economic success of European immigrants during the first great wave were unavailable to descendants of non-European immigrants from the second great wave. Because of the plight of immigrant parents, assimilation for their children, who came to the US before the age of ten (G1.5) or were born in the US (G2), could mean an inevitable decline to the economic underclass (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). In the event that second generation youths embraced the values of the economic underclass in inner-city neighborhoods, shared by some native minorities in the US, they would experience conflict with their parents about retaining features of native culture. Alternatively, immigrant parents could withdraw to a comfortable economic and ethnic niche at the expense of second generation acculturation (Gans, 1992).

Some theorists (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001) claimed that Asian, Caribbean, and Latin American immigrants who arrived during the second great wave experienced more discrimination and a less congenial context of reception than earlier European immigrants. Even upwardly mobile trajectories of assimilation for new, non-European second generation immigrant children would be different from their predecessors. For European immigrants, education alone could be the key to assimilation into the mainstream and incorporation into middle class status in one generation. However, new non-European immigrants would need to overcome many more hurdles, including low socio-economic status, racism, and lack of English language proficiency (Zhou, 2004). Waters (1999) argued that even Anglophone Caribbean immigrants, who were native English speakers, suffered under persistent racism in the mainstream society, resulting in the prospect of second generation decline. She suggested that housing policies in particular pushed people of color into neighborhoods with high crime rates, inadequate social services, and inferior public schools. Even though it appeared counterintuitive, in this context of reception second generation Caribbean immigrants who resisted total assimilation with the host society were likely to succeed the most (Waters, 1999).

The central argument of segmented assimilation theory is not whether the second generation will assimilate at all in the US, but in what segment of American society they will find their place. However, transnationalism provides another theoretical framework alongside segmented assimilation theory to contest classical assimilation theory. This trend is seen in the work of Levitt and Waters (2002), who identified two sub-fields of migration scholarship that attempted to discern the trajectories of second-generation assimilation in the post-1990 era. One emphasized the incorporation of new immigrants

and their children in the US, and the other stressed the attachment of first and second generation immigrants to their countries of origin through the simultaneity of multi-sited "transnational social field" (Levitt & Schiller, 2004). Since segmented assimilation is by far the most conceptually developed among the modern theories it deserves an in-depth discussion.

Theory of Segmented Assimilation

Segmented assimilation is one of the most influential contributions to understanding the experiences of the new post-immigrant generation. It paved the way for a new direction in immigration research beginning in the 1990s. Portes and Zhou (1993) and Portes and Rumbaut (1996) proposed this theory and later tested it through a panel study conducted between 1992 and 2003. The single most important contribution of this framework is that assimilation into the mainstream is no longer the only possible form of assimilation for the new immigrants (Alba & Nee, 2003). Assimilation of non-European post-1965 immigrants hinged on a wide range of variables: parents' human and social capital; mode of intergenerational transmission of native culture; relationship to the ethnic network, and social proximity to native minorities who are experiencing downward socioeconomic mobility. This theoretical approach was particularly sensitive to the uncharted assimilation pathways of second great wave immigrants and their descendants who were exposed to intense hostility and discrimination (Hirschman, 2001; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Although discrimination against the European immigrants was attributed to successive groups of newcomers, phenotypic determinism premised on skin color, characterized a new and variegated context of reception for non-European immigrants. Portes and Rumbaut (2001) described this situation as the "high noon of

ethnicity" (p. 149) to suggest that new immigrants and their descendents had a qualitatively different experience of reception because of how native-born Americans viewed them. This metaphor contrasted sharply with the "twilight of ethnicity" (Alba, 1985) attributed to the assimilative experiences of Italian American immigrants of the first great wave, who were viewed as dark skinned. The accompanying tables show the relationship between the various modes of intergenerational acculturation and the contextual factors that these theorists propose determine the trajectories of post-immigrant generation (Table 2); intergenerational patterns of immigrant acculturation (Table 3a); the trajectories of post-immigrant generation (Table 3b), and ethnic self-identity of the post-immigrant generation (Table 4).

Overview of Contextual Factors that Influence Acculturation

The three contextual factors that influenced new second generation immigrants' acculturation and assimilation were racial discrimination, a bifurcated labor market, and inner city subculture (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001). As indicated in Table 3, these factors interact with various intergenerational patterns of acculturation and assimilation to determine three different trajectories of the post immigrants. Phenotypic difference between the new non-European immigrants and their descendants as opposed to earlier European immigrants and their offspring, who became settlers and formed the American mainstream, creates "bright boundaries" between new immigrants and the dominant culture (Alba, 2005). Because only a few new immigrants are able to acculturate successfully through consonant acculturation, some of the privileged among their descendants will undergo straight-line assimilation and find their ethnicity or ethnic self-identity transformed into a matter of personal choice or symbolic ethnicity. Others, no

less privileged, will find their ethnic community and ethnic self-identity a source of strength and will integrate into the mainstream society through selective acculturation and retention of native culture.

Table 2[2]

Typology of Intergenerational Patterns and External Factors that Determine the Trajectories of the Post-Immigrant Generation

Intergenerational Patterns of Acculturation	Racial Discrimination	Bifurcated Labor Market	Inner City Subcultures
Consonant Acculturation	Post-immigrant generation confront discrimination with family support	Post-immigrant generation overcome the challenges of dual economy with parental guidance and family services	Post immigrant generation achieve upward mobility with countervailing messages based on family aspirations
Dissonant Acculturation	Post immigrant generation faces discrimination without family support because of intergenerational conflict and ruptured family ties	No support system is available for the post immigrant generation who confront the challenges of hourglass economy individually	Post immigrant generation cannot count on any countervailing messages from parents and family against the adversarial culture resulting in their downward mobility
Selective Acculturation	Post-immigrant generation filters discrimination through ethnic network and count on parental and community resources	Parental, family and community support system is available for the post – immigrants to overcome the hurdles of dual economy	Countervailing messages are readily available for post-immigrant generation through family aspirations and community network to secure upward mobility

[2]Adapted from Portes and Rumbaut (2001)

Still others, who are unfortunately less privileged, will discover their ethnicity as "a mark of subordination" (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001) and experience a downward trajectory.

Table 3a[3]

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Typology of Intergenerational Patterns of Immigrant Acculturation

Intergenerational Patterns of Acculturation	Parents Learn English and American Customs	Children Learn English and American Customs	Parent Insertion into Ethnic Culture	Children Insertion into Ethnic Culture
Consonant Acculturation	+	+	-	-
Consonant Resistance to Acculturation	-	-	+	+
Dissonant Acculturation Type One	-	+	+	-
Dissonant Acculturation Type Two	-	+	-	-
Selective Acculturation	+	+	+	+

[3] Adapted from Portes and Rumbaut (2001)

Table 3b [4]

Typology of the Trajectories of the Post-Immigrant Generation

Intergenerational Patterns of Acculturation	Family Acculturation Outcomes	Mobility Trajectory of Post-Immigrant Generation	Ethnic/Racial Identity Trajectory of Post-Immigrant Generation
Consonant Acculturation	Family seeks to integrate into mainstream American society	Upward mobility with intermittent discrimination	Unhyphenated American identity
Consonant Resistance to Acculturation	Family isolated in ethic community	Downward mobility and marginalization	Unhyphenated national origin identity
Dissonant Acculturation Type One	Family ties ruptured	Downward mobility	Unhyphenated American identity
Dissonant Acculturation Type Two	Loss of parental control and native language; intergenerational conflict	Downward mobility	Unhyphenated American identity; limited native language skills
Selective Acculturation	Family seeks acculturation without assimilation	Upward mobility with family ethnic community integration	Hyphenated identity; fluent bilingual skills

[4] Adapted from Portes and Rumbaut (1996)

The settlement patterns of new immigrants based upon their socio-economic condition, referred to by Massey and Denton (1985) as "spatial assimilation," also influenced the pathways of second generation acculturation. If immigrant families settled in inner city poor neighborhoods among native ethnic minorities who were experiencing downward socioeconomic mobility, their children would be exposed to the values of

these groups. Since members of native minority communities historically did not achieve socio-economic success because of racial discrimination, new second generation immigrants living among them might experience similar outcomes.

In addition, labor market trends triggered by de-industrialization made it more difficult for new post-immigrant generation to achieve upward mobility. Portes and Rumbaut (1996) drew a comparison between pyramidal and hourglass economies to suggest two discrete economic realities. A pyramidal economy was associated with industrial society that traditionally facilitated successive generations of immigrants to gradually move up the pyramid from blue-collar to white-collar jobs (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). On the other hand, hourglass economy, associated with post-industrial society, made upward mobility extremely difficult to achieve because of a substantially different mode of production and distribution. The metaphor of the hourglass indicated a bifurcated labor market divided by a very narrow opening in the middle. The bottom half of the hourglass represents the secondary sector in the economy with openings for dead-end service jobs that are filled by the least educated and minimally paid workforce. The top half of the hourglass signifies the employment sector occupied by the most educated and highly paid workforce. This distinction had ramifications for the post immigrant generation:

> Increasing labor market inequality implies that to succeed socially and economically, children of immigrants today must cross, in the span of few years, the educational gap that took descendants of Europeans several generations to bridge. They cannot simply improve on their parents' typically modest skills but must sharply increase them by gaining access to advanced education (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001, p. 58).

Segmented Assimilation: Typology of Intergenerational Acculturation and Trajectories of the Post Immigrant Generation

Portes and Rumbaut (2001) established three ideal types of intergenerational patterns of immigrant acculturation and their subcategories within the analytical framework of segmented assimilation (See Table 3a). Both consonant acculturation and dissonant acculturation have two subcategories. Selective acculturation is a two dimensional process that balances retention of native culture with strategic acculturation to the mainstream society. Consonant acculturation mirrors classical straight-line assimilation and the stage of assimilation in the bidirectional model of immigrant acculturation (Table 1) in which immigrants and their descendants adopt the host culture and reject the culture of origin. Consonant resistance to acculturation, a variant of consonant acculturation, resembles the stage of separation in Table 1 for both first and second generation immigrants who embrace the native culture and rejects the host culture. Type 1 Dissonant acculturation is similar to the category of separation in the bidirectional model only for the immigrant parents, who choose to reject the host culture and fall back on the culture of origin. Type 2 dissonant acculturation parallels the concept of marginalization for immigrant parents who reject both the native and host cultures. In both types of dissonant acculturation the second generation immigrants are dissociated from their parents and assimilated into the culture of the native minorities far from the mainstream. Selective acculturation is comparable to integration in the bidirectional model of immigrant acculturation (See Table 1).

Dissonant acculturation is not deterministic leading inevitably towards downward mobility for children of immigrants (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). Rather, intergenerational

dissonance increases the risk factors for second generation decline, because the lack of family support system that can provide a buffer for external barriers including racial discrimination, a bifurcated labor market, and inner city subcultures (See Table 2). These intergenerational patterns correspond with various family acculturative outcomes, upward or downward mobility and ethnic identity trajectories of second generation immigrants (See Table 3b).

Typology of Ethnic Self-identity Trajectories of Post-Immigrant Generation under Segmented Assimilation Theory

In segmented assimilation theory, the ethnic self-identity pathways of the children of immigrants do not follow a straight route to assimilation to an unhyphenated American identity. Instead, it proposes a range of trajectories for descendants of second wave immigrants that hinge on their mode of adaptation in the host country.

Based on their longitudinal study, Portes and Rumbaut's (2001) found ethnicity of the new second generation immigrants to be malleable. However, this acculturation process did not resemble a trajectory in which children of immigrants moved progressively from a less American to more American self-identity illustrating straight-line assimilation. Conversely, the foreign national origin identity, also described as a "thick" or less acculturated self-identity, was found to be high on stability and salience because of the dissimilarity of context, while plain "American" identity, also known as a "thin" or more acculturated self-identity, had low stability and salience. Their ethnic self-identity trajectories went in two different directions: gradual reaffirmation of immigrant identity based on the nationality of the sending country or, in some cases,

identification with a pan-ethnic minority group; both of which served as alternatives for straight line assimilation.

Using an example from the study reported in this dissertation, Bangladeshi youth could either identify with their country of origin or see themselves as South-Asian or Asian. These ethnic self-identities were contingent upon contextual variations they encountered. Table 4 illustrates four ideal types of ethnic self identity which include: foreign national-origin identity, (e.g. Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani); hyphenated American identity, in which a single foreign national origin is recognized (e.g. Bangladeshi-American, Indian-American, Pakistani-American); plain or unhyphenated American identity (e.g. American), and pan-ethnic identity based on a minority group affiliation (e.g. South Asian, Asian).

Types of language adaptations could also lead to different identity formations among the post-immigrant generation. For example, bilingualism was associated with pan-ethnic identity; English dominance was related to unhyphenated American identity, and limited bilingualism was correlated with unhyphenated national origin identity. However, it was generally recognized that third generation ethnic identity shift among the descendents of European immigrants diluted their ethnic self-identity through the attrition of their native language and culture and rapid shift to English. This path was not quite as applicable to the children of post-1965 non-European immigrants (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). In other words, the linguistic shift from the first to the second generation to English was unlikely to result in an acculturative shift of ethnic self-identity. According to Portes and Rumbaut (2001), the ethnic self-identity of second generation post-1965

immigrants did not fall into a simple fixed or a fluid category. Their pathways were shaped in far more complex ways than native language retention or English acquisition.

Table 4 [5]

Typology of Ethnic Self-Identity of the Post Immigrant Generation

Type of Self Identity	Close to Country of Origin	Close to Host Country	Newly-Formed Post-Immigrant Identity	Bridge between Old and New	Post-National Identity
Foreign National Origin	+	-	-	-	-
Hyphenated American	-	-	-	+	-
Unhyphenated American	-	+	+	-	-
Pan-Ethnic	-	-	+	-	+

[5] Adapted from Portes and Rumbaut (2001)

Parent's self-identities influenced their children through mirroring, but only un-hyphenated immigrant identity was validated in the intergenerational setting (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Although immigrant parents' ethnic self-identity influenced the children through early socialization and similar context of reception and discrimination, it attenuated over time as they grew up. Their self-identity trajectories were eventually played out on a larger stage than the family context (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Portes & Rumbaut (2001) also argued that first generation immigrant parents were particularly unsuccessful in transmitting their native language and racial self identity to their descendants. Because they lacked full exposure to mainstream society and its racial

categories, these parents misconstrued their national identity as a racial identity; it was always the second generation immigrants who bore the brunt of discovering themselves within the racial discourse of American culture. In this formulation pan-ethic identity was a post-immigrant and post national identity; hyphenated identity was a bridge between the new and the old identity, and foreign national origin identity remained close to the country of origin (Table 4).

Transnationalism: An Alternative Conceptual Framework

Segmented assimilation theory was not the only conceptual framework posed as an alternative to classical assimilation theory to analyze the assimilative outcomes of second great wave immigrants and their descendants. Revivalists attempted to reinvent and reinterpret classical theory of assimilation. They argued that segmented assimilation theory was a sociological perspective based on caricatures, stereotypes, and unexamined assumptions about historical developments that followed the two great waves of immigration to US (Gerstle & Mollenkopf, 2001). The transnationalists examined the impact of globalization on immigrants' incorporation in the host society. They focused on how national boundaries faded under transnationalism, enabling immigrants to straddle the influences of home and host country at the same time (Portes, 2006). It facilitated dissimilation instead of assimilation in the host country through the simultaneity of transnational social field spanning across deterriorialized national entities (Levitt & Schiller, 2004).

According to Kivisto (2005), transnational immigrants occupied a position between settlers and guest workers, who exemplify two other types of immigrant assimilation. The settler model, which resembled classical assimilation theory, applied to

European immigrants to the US during the first wave of immigration. These immigrants settled in the host country and eventually lost contact with the sending country. The guest worker model applied to migrant farm laborers in the US and others who maintained only limited relationship with the host country. The transnational model fell between these two pathways with a global social space that shaped the horizon of immigrant communities through ties to the sending country without detracting from experiences in the host country.

The Impact of Transnationalism on Segmented Assimilation

Researchers in America and Western Europe eventually branched into two different directions (Wessendorf, 2005). The first group retained Park's (1924) older concept of the race relations cycle, which remains a centerpiece of immigration research in the United States (Padilla & Perez, 2003). The second group drew attention to the transnational connection of a completely new group of second-generation immigrants who experienced different challenges to assimilation. Instead of focusing on assimilation, researchers in the second group were interested in dissimilation associated with the complexities of structural, social, and cultural integration of second-generation immigrants (Wessendorf, 2005).

Portes (2006) postulated that in today's more globalized world, traditional modes of unidirectional assimilation, reflected in socioeconomic and political adaptation, was problematic. He argued that because of economic, political, and socio-cultural transnationalism, immigrants did not necessarily have to abandon enduring ties with sending countries in order to integrate into the host society. Portes and Rumbaut (2006) outlined three pathways of immigrant assimilation in the US that were accelerated, rather

than hindered, by transnational practices. First, skills learned by immigrants from political activism for their home country in the Diaspora expedited their political incorporation in the host country. This feature was exemplified by Colombian and Dominican immigrants in New York City. Second, legislation in home countries that granted dual citizenship or nationality encouraged immigrants to seek incorporation in the host country without forfeiting their allegiance to the sending country. Finally, in a reverse trend, immigrants' transnational civic and political practices could become geared towards promoting egalitarian values of civil society and political practices of the host country in the home country.

Kivisto (2005) noted that globalization informed every adequate theory of present day assimilation of immigrants. Others (Levitt & Waters, 2002) applied a transnational lens to propose that trends in international migration enabled new immigrants and their descendants to travel between countries of origin and sites of migration in a veritable transnational social field. This trend was reflected in dual citizenship; remittances; internet communication; availability of home language television and print media; international telephone calls and return migration that helped immigrants maintain links with the sending countries.

Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt, (1999) proposed that the transnational social field was composed of an increasing number of people who lived dual lives. They spoke two languages, maintained homes in two countries, and earned livings through continuous, regular contact across national borders. This divided loyalty was facilitated when both host country and sending country recognized the right of immigrants for dual citizenship and the privilege to retain native ethnic and religious identities (Morawska, 2001).

Guarnizo (2001) distinguished two kinds of transnationalism that affected immigrants: one was described as bottom-up and another was categorized as top-down. Bottom-up transnationalism represented the immigrants' attempts to retain ties with their countries of origin. Top-down transnationalism signified the policies of the sending countries to construct deterritorialized nation states for the consumption of immigrants in order to retain their continued allegiance. Clearly, these developments had ramifications for immigrant assimilation in the host country.

Some immigration researchers (Foner, 2002; Waters, 1999; Kasinitz, 1992) also suggested that existing racial discrimination in the US reinforced transnationalism and motivated members of the post-immigrant generation of color to stay involved with their countries of origin. While class status was generally more salient than racial status for migrants in the country of origin, racial status was more pertinent than class status for immigrants in the US (Glick-Schiller & Fouron, 2001). In other words, the context of reception facilitated segmented assimilation. Others (Levitt & Waters, 2002; Alba & Nee, 2003) doubted whether the level of transnational involvement of the first generation post-1965 immigrants would result in selective acculturation among children of immigrants. They believed that the autonomous centers of selective acculturation generated by transnationalism would function at the social margins as a first-generation phenomenon and were unlikely to outlive a peripheral influence.

Foner (2002) compared second generation transnationalism between the first great wave immigrants and the second great wave immigrants. She postulated that the latter group would be more privileged because they would benefit from the complementary relationship between assimilation and transnationalism. Nonetheless, she cautioned

against overemphasizing the centrality of transnational social ties among the new second generation.

On a different note, Eckstein (2002) argued that first and second generation immigrants in the post World War II period were embedded in a very different socio-economic-historical-political context compared with the two generations of immigrants in the post-1965 era. The post World War II era was marked by "straight line assimilation," in which greater economic opportunities were available for immigrants, media and schools emphasized on assimilation, and territorial view of nation state prevailed. However, in the post 1965 period, there was a sea change brought about by diminished economic opportunities for immigrants as a result of reduction in manufacturing and service sector which was compensated by the cost-effective and technologically driven rise in transnational transportation, communication, and cross-border contacts. Additionally, in the wake of various social rights movements of the 1960s there was an increase in societal acceptance of cultural pluralism and diversity (Eckstein (2002). She suggested that attrition of transnational social ties among post 1965 second generation immigrants should not be derived from intra-family dynamics of adaptation and assimilation alone by mirroring the experiences of second generation immigrants of the post World War II era; the comparison must reckon historically grounded and generationally variable contextual experiences which divide the two great wave immigrants. She concurred that immigrant experiences in the post-1965 era demanded a paradigm shift in theoretical framework from straight line assimilation to transnationalism, in which homeland ties are consistent with assimilation.

Revival of the Classical Theory of Assimilation

Many noted researchers acknowledged the validity of classical theory of assimilation by postulating that integration of new immigrants continued to be a linear and intergenerationally-driven process (Morawska, 2002; Alba & Nee, 1999, 2006; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters & Holdaway, 2008; Foner, 2005, 2006). They argued that assimilation was still a master trend for second great wave immigrants to the US, and reactive ethnicities would be much more diluted among the majority of Asian post-immigrants in comparison with one or two generations ago (Alba & Nee (2006). Asian immigrants were also considered to be moving along the twilight zone of their ethnicity to assimilate as they became "honorary whites" instead of "forever foreigners" (Tuan, 1998).

These revivalists also postulated that the hypothesis of second-generation decline based on the premise that the descendants of European immigrants did not experience unhindered, uniform progress and upward mobility was premature (Perlmann & Waldinger, 1997). Kasinitz and colleagues (2008) found out that despite considerable variations both across and within ethnic groups in New York City, second generation immigrants were largely in an advantageous position to select the best of native and host culture to remake the mainstream. Perlmann (2005) compared the second generation experiences between the Italian immigrants a century ago and the Mexican immigrants now to drive home the argument that the slow but steady socioeconomic progress of the latter group might eventually bring about a parity of mobility to the American middle class, similar to the former group.

Foner (2006) debunked the myth of "straight line assimilation" by presenting both sociological and historical perspectives on the first and the second great wave immigrants to New York City. She claimed that both eras were characterized by large number of immigrants who arrived with poor command of English language skills and inadequate transferable skills. Following both waves, the immigrants clustered in ethnic niches which served as bulwarks against economic constraints and prejudices. In both periods individuals were employed within ethnic businesses or found jobs in the mainstream labor market through their network in the ethnic community, she argued. Intergenerational acculturation gap resulting from parents' unrelenting affiliation to the native culture and children's incorporation in the host country, parent-child conflicts, subalternity of immigrant women as the "second sex," and even transnationalism of the second great wave immigrants existed among the first great wave immigrants (Foner, 2006).

According to Foner (2006), the most important difference between the immigrants of these two eras in New York City, is the sea change in the demographic landscape in which the old group was replaced by the new group. More importantly, unlike the previous era, many new era immigrants came to US with college degrees, good command of English, and transferable skills that enabled them to find mid-level or even high-end jobs in the mainstream economy. Many settled immediately in mixed or predominantly white neighborhoods far from their ethnic enclave. Immigrant women in the later era benefited far more than their counterparts in the previous era by changes in the status of women in the last hundred years; social welfare programs did not exist for them before. Instead of being particularly disadvantaged, as the segmented assimilation theorists so

convincingly argued, some second generation immigrants of the second great wave were more advantaged than their predecessors in the previous era (Foner, 2006).

Explaining the difference between the two great waves from the historical perspective Foner (2006) also argued that Southern European Italians and Eastern European Jews and their descendents who immigrated to in New York City during the first great wave of immigration, did not follow linear pathways. Instead, the descendants of both groups were eventually able to assimilate by overcoming discrimination and the acculturation divide that separated them as new immigrants from the mainstream society. She saw a parallel between Jewish and Italian immigrants of the first great wave of immigration and immigrants from Asian, Latin American, and the Caribbean countries of the second great wave of immigration. The first group struggled to remake the American mainstream (Alba & Nee, 2003) by successfully replacing its Anglo-Saxon, pan-European and Protestant core with a broader Judeo-Christian tradition (Kasinitz, 2004). It is claimed that the children of second great wave immigrants also remade New York City's "ethno-racial landscape and the very way that race is constructed" (Foner, 2006, p. 41).

Alba and Nee (2003) and Alba (2005) postulated that the American mainstream was never rigid. Instead, it was a flexible construct historically expanding itself incrementally by blurring boundaries to embrace previously marginalized immigrant groups. However, phenotype would continue to be a problem or a "bright boundary," and some immigrants would be more privileged than others to remake the American mainstream (Alba, 2005).

Revivalists also claimed that immigrant assimilation was not a phenomenon of the second generation; it usually occurred in the third or fourth generation. Time was a key variable in this equation, as intergenerational trajectories progressively shifted from more ethnic older immigrants to less ethnic younger immigrants or post-immigrants. Evidently, later generations embraced the increasing influence of mainstream culture, while the impact of ethnic affiliations attenuated over time (Wildsmith, 2004).

Conclusion

The two major theoretical perspectives presented in this chapter were classical and modern theories of immigrant assimilation. Classical assimilation theories created a meta-narrative of immigrant assimilation in the US, while the two strands of modern assimilation theories, segmented assimilation and transnational theory of assimilation, developed alternative models representing the post 1965 era immigrant experience. The researchers who revived the classical assimilation theory also had strong counter claims in their favor. The modern era of immigrant acculturation and assimilation theory in the US may safely be characterized as contested knowledge in spite of transformation in immigration research in the 1990s described by scholars (Foner, Rumbaut, & Gold, 2000) as a “growth industry.”

The following chapter will review the research literature on various post-1965 immigrant groups to the US. However, a huge gap remains between the conceptually rich theoretical frameworks and the empirical research on immigrant acculturation and assimilation. Clearly more research, especially with underrepresented groups, would be necessary to either bolster or question the salience of existing immigration theories.

CHAPTER IV: REVIEW OF CONTEMPORARY IMMIGRATION RESEARCH

Introduction

This chapter is a review of empirical studies about the experiences of the new wave of second generation immigrants to the US. Many studies examined the relationship among independent variables such as immigrants' country of origin, ethnicity, race, and gender, their socioeconomic status, residential settlement, and dependent variables including employment patterns, labor force participation (Waldinger & Feliciano, 2005), and educational attainment (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Hirschman, 2001; Schwartz & Stiefel, 2006). Other studies included examination of the nativity gap or the difference between native born and foreign born children, parent-child relationships and family cohesion (Harris & Chen, 2004; Schwartz & Stiefel, 2006). Still others considered whether acculturation in the host country determined intergenerational family patterns over time (Wildsmith, 2004). Transnationalism among the second generation immigrants also became a focus of attention for a large number of immigration researchers who were interested in its impact on the pathways of their incorporation in the host country.

A number of qualitative studies explored the lived experiences of acculturation among second generation immigrants. They revealed how the children of Asian immigrants in New Orleans and Northern California achieved upward mobility through retention of intergenerational ties and acculturation through accommodation without assimilation or selective acculturation in the mainstream society.

A growing body of research examined how ethnic self-identity anchored and shifted among post-immigrant generation as part of their acculturative experiences in the

US. This review will focus on the variables of the Theory of Segmented Assimilation, described in the previous chapter, which provides an organizing rubric for presenting research about second generation assimilation patterns. It will also illuminate the methodological choice for the present study.

Country of Origin

Historically, the immigrants' country of origin determined the context of their reception and, in effect, mode of incorporation in the US. The Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey (CILS) study (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001) of seventy-seven immigrant groups including Chinese, Korean, Cuban, Haitian, Mexican and Vietnamese immigrants, examined the relationship between parents' nationality and assimilative outcomes of their children. Regression analysis controlling for parental socioeconomic status (SES), family structure, geographic region, birthplace, length of residence in the US, and ethnicity of friends, indicated a correlation between the national origin of the immigrant parents and the educational attainments of their children. For example, Chinese, Korean, Cuban and Vietnamese immigrants had generally positive educational outcomes, while Haitian and Mexican immigrants had overall negative ones. The first group demonstrated high educational achievement among the second generation immigrant students as measured by math scores, reading scores, and grade point average. However, the second group manifested low educational achievement among the children. The ethnic segmentation was reflected in generally high GPA and low dropout rates among the Asian immigrants, and low GPA and generally high dropout rates among the Latin American immigrants.

The CILS researchers (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006) explained that a positive context of reception represented by public sympathy and governmental assistance during the early stages of their arrival in the US enabled refugees from two communist countries, Cuba and Vietnam, to achieve economic assimilation and develop sustainable ethnic entrepreneurial enclaves such as “Little Havana” in Miami and “Little Saigon” in Orange county California. Chinese and Korean immigrants, who came to the US legally with a generally high level of human capital, but did not enjoy the same privilege, also benefited from a neutral context of reception in the host country. Some of them became professionals, and others took advantage of their ethnic enclaves in “Chinatowns” or “Koreatowns” to establish them in the US. Conversely, Haitian and Mexican immigrants, who experienced a negative context of reception because of their status as illegal aliens, suffered setbacks in assimilation. As parents they had inadequate community resources and insufficient ethnic entrepreneurial enclaves to draw upon; this resulted in lack of academic success for their children. These findings validate Portes’s (2004) contention that not all immigrants are equally selected for assimilation in the US.

Among others, Waldinger & Feliciano (2003) examined the relationship between the country of origin and acculturation among Mexican immigrants; they were not a privileged group in terms of human capital or context of reception. These researchers conducted within-group comparisons, across-generations between first generation Mexican immigrants, born and raised in Mexico, and second generation Mexicans, born in the US of Mexican parents. They also carried out an across group comparison with native-born whites, native-born African-Americans; and mainland born Puerto Ricans. Both comparisons looked at the differences of outcome across gender. This study did not

support segmented assimilation theory, because country of origin did not impede incorporation of Mexican immigrants in finding and keeping employment. The findings did not suggest that country of origin related to the context of positive or negative reception in the US would result in upward or downward acculturative outcomes of the second generation immigrant children (Waldinger & Feliciano, 2003). However, this contention was not borne out by other studies.

On the contrary, an analysis of 1990 census data (Hirschman, 2001) on foreign-born children between the ages of fifteen and seventeen years from thirty-three different immigrant groups and their school enrollment in the US indicated a strong relationship between country of origin and educational outcomes for the second generation. However, the higher rates of school enrolment among Asian origin students and above average non-enrolment in Hispanic and Caribbean students were ascribed less to the context of reception and more to native cultural features. It was described as the "Asian advantage" or "model minority" factor for the first group and "Hispanic-Caribbean and Mexican deficit factor" for the second group. This study revived Oscar Lewis's (1968) hypothesis of "the culture of poverty," in which children are socialized into the values and attitudes of their impoverished parents in a self-perpetuating cycle of deprivation (Jary & Jary, 1991) explaining the differences of acculturative outcomes among the second generation immigrants coming from different countries.

Socioeconomic Status

Study after study indicated that socioeconomic status (SES) was one of the most significant independent variables that correlated with acculturation and integration of immigrant families and their descendents in the US. For example, the CILS study (Portes

& Rumbaut, 2001, 2006) found that high SES of immigrant families in a cohesive ethnic community niche served as a vantage point for the post immigrant generation to successfully achieve upward mobility. In contrast, children from poor economic backgrounds were handicapped on three counts: the low-status of their families, less cohesive co-ethnic communities, and failing schools. The parental SES of immigrant families had a strong positive influence on all measures of educational achievement of second generation immigrant children, including math scores, reading scores, and grade point average. Taken together, these findings suggested that SES and cultural factors of the immigrant families combined in complex ways to determine the trajectories of post-immigrant generation illustrating selective acculturation (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001, 2006).

The researchers (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001, 2006) argued that human capital of first generation middle class immigrant parents predisposed the second generation to full acculturation and helped them achieve professional and entrepreneurial occupations. This process illustrated consonant acculturation. However, working class immigrant parents who had strong ties with their ethnic communities in the US could also achieve middle class status for their children through educational achievement. This mode of assimilation exemplified selective acculturation. Conversely, working class immigrant parents, who had weak ties with co-ethnic communities in the host country, precipitated second generation decline because of low educational achievement. This pattern of dissonant acculturation led post-immigrant children to downward assimilation and reactive ethnicity. Within the framework of segmented assimilation theory, successful assimilation of the children of immigrants required parents' human capital, reflected in

educational and professional skills; and social capital, represented in their access to ethnic community networks and resources to reinforce normative parental control over their children (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006).

Immigrant families with higher SES were likely to be more motivated to enroll their children in school in comparison with their counterparts with low SES (Hirschman, 2001). Interestingly, native cultural factors countervailed SES to determine positive outcomes for certain groups. For instance, even Asian adolescents from low SES families tended to have higher school enrollment rates than their native white counterparts, but Hispanic-Caribbean adolescents demonstrated no such tendency (Hirschman, 2001).

For children of immigrants in New York City (Waters, Mollenkopf & Kasinitz, 1999), parental SES was found to play a pivotal role in determining the labor market experiences of the next generation. Family resources, including the human and social capital of the first generation, facilitated upward mobility of their children and protected them from downward assimilation. Social capital, the ability to relocate in desired neighborhoods without having to face housing discrimination, and a congenial context of reception for their children in public schools were particularly important for Chinese immigrant families; they were able to stave off second generation decline. Despite low SES, this immigrant group benefitted from ethnic enclave and network (Waters, et al., 1999).

The correlation between SES and mode of acculturation was also observed among Mexican-American families (Wildsmith, 2004). Their changing intergenerational patterns over time indicated how SES and cultural factors determined various second and

third generation patterns of assimilation. A regression analysis of original data showed that SES correlated strongly with the trajectory of marriage followed by divorce among the Mexican-American women before they became heads of household. This pattern demonstrated an acculturative convergence with non-Hispanic native white females. In other words, when SES was controlled for, the cultural differences between the second and third generation Mexican origin women and non-Hispanic native whites ceased to exist regarding marriage-divorce-female head of household status (Wildsmith, 2004).

Although this progression validated linear assimilation theory, in which cultural factors became increasingly insignificant over time and across generations among Mexican-American women, other patterns contradicted this finding. For instance, cultural factors strongly influenced the trajectory of non-marital fertility among Mexican-American women illustrating their divergence from non-Hispanic white females. Controlling for SES and factoring in a three generational trajectory for non-marital fertility among Mexican-American women, the findings provided some support for segmented assimilation theory. For example, second generation Mexican-American women who were never married showed a decline in non-marital fertility compared with their first generation counterparts. This trend was similar to non-Hispanic white American women who demonstrated low level of non-marital fertility as a reflection of attenuated family orientation in the mainstream culture. However, third generation Mexican-American women brought non-marital fertility up to the level of the immigrant first generation, after SES was controlled for, invalidating linear assimilation theory. This study portrayed contradictory theoretical frameworks (Wildsmith, 2004).

Residential Location or Spatial Assimilation

Massey and Denton (1985) described "spatial assimilation" or distribution of ethnic and racial immigrant groups in different residential neighborhoods as a reflection of their human capital as well as the state of assimilation. Acculturation and socioeconomic mobility of these groups ultimately led to residential incorporation into the mainstream, exemplified by their eventual relocation from inner city neighborhoods to the suburbs.

The premise of segmented assimilation theory was that inexpensive housing in inner city locations or poor neighborhoods with inadequate resources traditionally attracted immigrant families with low SES. It exposed second generation immigrant children to cultural orientations adversarial to the mainstream and failing public schools. In this context, where parents lived became a key predictor for the downward assimilation of their children, resulting in intergenerational transmission of social deprivation. The CILS study (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001) indicated that attendance in inner city schools correlated strongly with low test scores in math and reading for second generation immigrant students, an indicator of the importance of community features on the experiences of children of immigrants.

One of the key hypotheses of Hirschman's study (2001) was that residence in central metropolitan cities, as opposed to suburban or rural areas and small towns, exposed adolescents to uncongenial neighborhoods and unfriendly schools. In this setting the prevalence of adversarial subculture undercut their prospects of achieving socioeconomic mobility through educational success. However, this study also revealed that despite central city residence and lower SES, second generation Asian immigrant

children did very well because of immigrant optimism or determination of the first generation Asian immigrants to be successful in the host country (Hirschman, 2001).

However, for Mexican immigrants, country of origin and location of settlement interacted in more complex ways (Waldinger & Feliciano, 2003). Spatial factors were expected to account for a modest gap between native whites and native minority groups across all metropolitan areas, while the least skilled immigrant workers were considered most vulnerable to the location of their residence. Nonetheless, Mexican immigrant men provided a counter example. The effect of residential location on this group contradicted the notion that proximity to metropolitan areas or inner city increased the likelihood of second generation decline (Waldinger & Feliciano, 2003).

Even if second generation immigrant high school dropouts showed a very slight disadvantage nationwide in all the metropolitan areas compared with native whites, a crucial finding of Waldinger and Feliciano (2003) was that Mexican immigrants' high school graduation rates compared very favorably with the native minority men. However, regarding chronic joblessness, second generation Mexican men generally displayed a slightly higher rate than native white men. The balance shifted equally in favor of the least educated and high school graduates among Mexican second generation immigrant men in central cities. Chronic joblessness was found to be far more prevalent among blacks and Puerto Ricans compared with native whites and Mexican immigrants (Waldinger & Feliciano, 2003) in these settings.

Ethnicity and Race

Few studies revealed race and ethnicity as deterministic factors in assimilation as strongly as the CILS study (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). According to this study,

discrimination in mainstream American society, based upon enduring phenotypic differences of various ethnic and racial minorities by whites, hindered occupational mobility and social acceptance of new immigrants and their descendents. The 1992 CILS survey indicated that 31% of all the respondents with the average age of 14 years expected they would experience discrimination regardless of their educational attainment. However, this figure rose to 48% among Haitian-American and 60% among West Indian respondents. Notably, these immigrant groups had the most phenotypic proximity to African-Americans.

Other studies demonstrated how race and ethnicity affected the acculturative outcomes and experiences of the new second generation in different ways. However, not all findings were consistent with the CILS study. A data mining study of second generation immigrants (Hirschman, 2001) revealed that the relationship between race and assimilation of immigrant children, so critical for segmented assimilation theory, was not always very definitive. Afro-Caribbean adolescents from Haiti, Jamaica, and the West Indies were considered at risk because of their phenotypic proximity to African-Americans and the likelihood of living in single-parent households with less favorable social background in comparison with the native born population. However, they were found to have low rates of non-enrollment in school compared with native minorities. In contrast, Hispanic-Caribbean children and adolescents-from Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic all of whom have tangible phenotypic differences from African Americans, had higher levels of non-enrollment, regardless of how long they lived in the US. Even though school enrollment rates of white Puerto Ricans was higher than that of black Puerto Ricans, family composition, central city residence, and socioeconomic

background were found to be significant intervening variables that could explain these different outcomes. Cuban and Dominican adolescents demonstrated significantly higher drop-out rates compared with native-born youths. Since Cuban immigrants are largely white and Dominican immigrants generally black, the role of race in school non-enrolment was not easy to determine (Hirschman, 2001).

Other studies demonstrated how racism and discrimination in the host society interacted with other independent variables to determine upward or downward mobility for immigrant children. A longitudinal study of children of immigrants in New York City (Waters, et al., 1999) indicated that West Indians, Haitians, and Dominican respondents found the benefits of education always undercut by discrimination and racism in mainstream society and a racially divided job market in the US. Native black and white parents in the study shared a strong conviction that private and parochial schools facilitated success for their children by providing a viable escape routes from the adversarial environment in the public schools. Nonetheless, first generation Chinese immigrant parents were beneficiaries of the same public education system; a very large number of them sent their children to three elite public magnet high schools and not to private and parochial schools. Since the Chinese parents were less segregated residentially than West Indians or native black parents, they could translate this racial privilege into the academic success of their children by moving to locations with better public schools (Waters et al., 1999). Additionally, the Chinese immigrant ethnic network provided parents access to information about better performing public high schools (Waters, et al., 1999).

The congenial structural context of reception was extremely important in shaping acculturation and incorporation patterns of Chinese second generation children in the US (Waters et al., 1999). Initially, they took advantage of their ethnic enclave, parental self-employment, and co-ethnic employment, but eventually left the ethnic enclave to join the mainstream economy. Chinese immigrant parents in New York City served as a model example of selective acculturation (Waters et al., 1999).

Another eminent immigration researcher (Mollenkopf, 2005) argued that phenotype was not necessarily the only determining factor to explain second generation decline among the immigrants. His study revealed that native Hispanic groups, especially Puerto Ricans and some Dominicans, who had the lowest mean household incomes were the most adversely affected by the context of reception and discrimination in New York City. This was not true of African-Americans or Afro-Caribbeans, Anglophone Afro-Caribbeans were more successful than native blacks because West Indians were more educated than the African-Americans. Mollenkopf (2005) also provided a counterintuitive conclusion by suggesting that some African-American families in New York City served as positive role models for many non-European immigrants. According to Mollenkopf (2005) the strategy of intergenerational transmission adopted by immigrant parents interacted in complex ways with the existing perception about race and neighborhood conditions to determine the trajectories of the immigrant children.

Nonetheless, Molenkopf (2005) did not deny that race was the single most powerful force for intergenerational transmission and second generation trajectories among new immigrants in New York City. He postulated that the influence of nativity

and family played second fiddle to race. Contrary to segmented assimilation theory, race alone did not overcome the influences of ethnicity, family background, gender, and other factors in determining how second generation youths acculturated. In a setting that was not particularly adversarial, ethnicity and family background could circumvent the impact of racial discrimination (Molenkopf, 2005).

Qualitative insights into the process of acculturation of immigrant groups not large enough and consequently less appropriate for quantitative design revealed interesting facts about selective acculturation. For example, such a study of the Vietnamese community in New Orleans (Zhou & Bankston, 1994) revealed how strong intergenerational ties, the Catholic Church, and their nexus with the ethnic enclave effectively regulated the lives of second generation immigrants. Immigrant parents sanctioned transgressions and facilitated successful educational outcomes for their children. These families were able to create conducive environment for retaining parental norms and native cultural values. The study provided an example of upward mobility of second generation Vietnamese immigrants despite the economic hardship of immigrant parents. Although members of this community lived near inner city neighborhoods and native minorities and their children attended public schools, selective acculturation process helped second generation immigrants avert downward assimilation.

An earlier study of the Punjabi Sikhs in Northern California (Gibson, 1989) highlighted how fervently this community sought acculturation through accommodation without assimilation in the US. The first and second generation Punjabi immigrants were met by an unwelcome context of reception marked by a high degree of discrimination from the white residents of their "redneck county." Despite the odds against upward

mobility and linear assimilation, Punjabi Sikh children did much better in schools than their native white counterparts. Punjabi boys had higher grade point averages than their white counterparts, and they demonstrated a greater inclination to take advanced science and mathematics classes. Their parents promoted retention of native culture among their children by pressuring them to avoid close contact and socialization with native students. It was also a strategy to avert the ignominy of racial discrimination.

Among this group, the parental *modus operandi* was reflected in accommodation of mainstream values of upward mobility by attaining educational goals together with resistance towards assimilation into the mainstream culture and retention of native culture among children. Girls and boys maintained traditional gender roles in which Punjabi boys aspired for careers in science and engineering, but girls enrolled in business classes and postponed career plans to meet their parents' expectations to get married soon after graduation (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996).

Gender

Although segmented assimilation theory was not a gender-neutral analytical framework, one of its major limitations happened to be the lack of gender sensitivity. A cross-generational and cross-gender study (Waldinger & Feliciano, 2003) filled this gap by revealing that unlike Mexican immigrant men, who enjoyed a high level of employment and labor force participation, Mexican women had a remarkably low level of employment. Employment rates among second generation female Mexican immigrants contradicted the hypothesis of segmented assimilation, specifically the assumption that immigrant children would shift to the norms of native minorities as a result of dissonant acculturation only to undergo second generation decline. High labor

force participation of African-American women countervailed the notion of second generation decline of native minorities, especially people of color, and provided a role model for second generation female Mexican immigrants. In this study gender crosscut race to invalidate segmented assimilation.

Another research indicated that gender played a far more complex role in immigrant incorporation. This interesting comparative study between Mexican immigrant women in the US and non-immigrant Mexican women (Parrado & Flippen, 2005) revealed how the former group resisted egalitarian gender norms of the US. This group continued traditional gender roles and sexual division of labor and retained a patriarchal value system to neutralize the effects of migration. Perhaps the most intriguing finding of the study was that Mexican women in the US exhibited a higher level of compliance with traditional gender roles than their non-immigrant Mexican peers. The former group faced greater obstacles in altering traditional household arrangements in comparison with the latter group. Similar gender inequities were reported in a study of Chinese women in New York (Zhou, 1992) and a study of Vietnamese women in Philadelphia (Kibria, 1993).

A study of Chinese-American college students (Ting-Toomey, 1981) suggested that these women had a greater orientation towards native culture than men. Among Russian Jews, Dominicans, and English speaking West Indian second generation immigrants in New York City, the educational attainments of women were better than their male counterparts (Waters, et. al., 1999). However, the Chinese children of immigrants showed a reverse trend. In one of the few comparative studies between Bangladeshi women in Queens, New York, and women living in Bangladesh, Baluja

(2003) found the immigrants acculturated selectively by retaining some elements of home-country gender-roles. For example, women took on child care and domestic responsibilities, and depended on their husbands for financial support and decision making. At the same time, they broke away from native cultural norms that restricted their freedom of movement. There was a constant interplay between the conflicting demands of native culture and host culture.

Foreign-Born and Native-Born Immigrant Children

Some studies showed that nativity, or the difference between foreign-born and native US born immigrant children, had as an impact on their acculturative outcomes and trajectories. A comparative study of parent-child relationships among native or US-born adolescents living with foreign-born immigrant parents, and foreign-born adolescents living with foreign-born immigrant parents representing nine different sending countries (Harris & Chen, 2004) revealed interesting results. Except for immigrants from Central and South American counties with African and Afro-Caribbean backgrounds, native born adolescents in all other immigrant groups demonstrated a lower level of family cohesion. For example, the native born spent less time sharing weekly family dinners compared with their foreign born counterparts. In addition, unlike Cuban, Mexican, and African and Afro-Caribbean immigrants, Central-South American, Puerto Rican, Chinese, Filipino, other Asian, and England-Canadian native born adolescents experienced less parental control in comparison with their co-ethnic foreign born adolescents. Foreign-born youths experienced higher intergenerational conflict. In addition, younger age at arrival and increased length of stay in the US correlated positively with less family cohesion, less frequent sharing of family dinner meals with parents, decreased parental

control over adolescents' activities, and increased parent-child conflict (Harris & Chen, 2004).

Native born adolescents of immigrant families from the Philippines and other Asian countries also demonstrated a lower level of family cohesion compared with their counterparts from Europe and Canada. Immigrant adolescents who came to the US under 6 years of age had a lower level of family cohesion compared with those who arrived at an older age. Native born adolescents were less likely to share most of their weekly meals with their parents, and they enjoyed more autonomy and less parental control to make decisions about activities as compared with foreign-born adolescents. Native-born second generation youth also experienced more parent-child conflict than their foreign-born counterparts (Harris & Chen, 2004).

Other studies that examined the difference between the foreign-born and the native-born immigrant adolescents suggested a more complex trajectory. For example, a study on the academic performance of students at New York City public schools (Schwartz & Stiefel, 2006) indicated that foreign-born students had a significant edge over their native born counterparts in reading and math tests. However, foreign-born Asian students did worse than their native-born ethnic peers, while there was no significant difference between the foreign-born and native born blacks. On the other hand, Hispanics students demonstrated inconsistent results (Schwartz & Stiefel, 2006).

One of the most interesting findings of this study was that students who lived in homes where a foreign language was spoken scored higher grades in English compared with those who live in homes where only English is spoken (Schwartz & Stiefel, 2006). Another study in the Texas schools (Berg & Kain, 2003) indicated that while the

Hispanic immigrant students performed better than their native US born co-ethnics, no such difference existed among Asian students.

Transnationalism among Immigrant Children

Transnationalism, or immigrant contacts with the native country, among the children of immigrants caught the attention of many researchers. Younger immigrants from Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru (CEP) in New York City had higher levels of transnational connections compared with older respondents (Kasinitz, Waters, Mollenkopf, & Anil, 2002). Membership in ethnic organizations had significant correlation with their transnational interactions. Unlike these second generation CEP immigrants, children of Dominican and West Indian immigrants in the City were influenced by ethnic media to keep transnational contacts with their country of origin. More interestingly, it was found that the involvement of West Indian second generation immigrants with New York politics or US affairs had a complementary relationship with their ties with the native country. A small minority of these children of Caribbean and South American immigrants in New York City were embedded in a transnational social field. This was reflected in their trips to the native country once or twice every year and by planning to resettle in the native country. Some of them even went back home to live temporarily with relatives in order to escape the influence of the dangerous street culture in the poor neighborhoods of New York City. Others found schooling in the native country more worthwhile than education in New York City public schools to prepare them for jobs in the US (Kasinitz, Waters, Mollenkopf, & Anil, 2002). Through trips back to homeland, Mexican children in New York regained self-esteem that helped them reject the negative stereotype of their co-ethnics as powerless illegal immigrants or

dangerous gangsters. Oftentimes they returned to New York with a better self-image of what it meant to be Mexicans (Smith, 2002).

However, a different trend was observed among most post-immigrants from other sending countries in New York City; transnational ties were more of an exception. These children of immigrants were not ambivalent Americans with strong ties with native country: they were here to stay. Some found trips back to the native country a learning experience of how closely they were affiliated to the culture of New York. They felt deeply embedded in their identity as New Yorkers within a multicultural setting, which was different from native-born white "American" represented primarily in television. The children of Chinese and Russian immigrants had the least transnational contacts (Kasinitz, Waters, Mollenkopf, & Anil, 2002). Homeland trips might have brought Chinese and Korean second generation immigrants in Boston and Los Angeles closer to their parents, but also made them more aware of their distinct American identity (Kibria, 2002).

Trajectories of Ethnic Self Identity among New Post-Immigrant Generation

Research on ethnic self-identities of post-immigrant generation indicated both intergenerational decline of ethnic group identity (Constantinou & Harvey, 1985; Fathi, 1972), and lack of intergenerational attrition of ethnic self-identity (Wooden, Leon and Toshima, 1988; Ting-Toomey, 1981). However age at arrival, length of stay in the host country (Garcia & Lega, 1979; Rogler, Cooney, & Ortiz, 1980) and education (Rogler et al., 1980) were found as determining factors for ethnic self-identity of the post-immigrant generation. The CILS study (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001) found that second generation immigrants demonstrated a shift in self-identity during adolescence because of growing

ethnic awareness. They replaced unhyphenated American identity of early adolescence. Symbolic abandonment of ethnic self-identity among this generation was reversed when they adopted either their parents' ethnic identification of unhyphenated national origin or a pan-ethnic identity. This process was shaped by the growing awareness of their place in the ethnic hierarchy of the US. Age was the key variable in this shift of ethnic self-identity.

Since the context of reception was marked by anti-immigrant sentiment against Mexicans and Filipinos in California and Haitians and Nicaraguans in Florida, the ethnic self identity trajectory among their children shifted away from the mainstream towards an oppositional reaffirmation of identification with the country of origin. For other non-European immigrant groups, less vulnerable to such an inimical environment, the racial formation was exemplified by pan-ethnic identity, in which the second generation adopted the ethno-racial markers projected by schools and other US institutions (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001).

Ethnic identity was more stable and salient among the children in cohesive families, even when they perceived significant discrimination in mainstream society. In most cases both parents were born in the same foreign country, they spoke the native language at home, and adolescents were generally less acculturated. When it came to gender, girls had more stable and salient identities compared with boys from the same ethnic group. Such stable and salient identities were unavailable to more acculturated second generation immigrants who experienced a negligible amount of discrimination. Portes and Rumbaut (2001) claimed that it was the dissimilarity of context that heightened the salience and stability of ethnicity. Their research created a template for

analyzing other studies of identity trajectories of the post-immigrant generation in the US.

As indicated earlier, four ethnic self-identities of the post-immigrant generation emerged from the CILS study (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). These were country of origin identity, hyphenated-American identity, pan-ethnic identity, and plain American identity. Nativity made a big difference: more US born descendents of immigrants demonstrated a preference for plain-American or hyphenated American identity in contrast with foreign born second generation children who showed a preference for identification with their parent's native country.

Three other studies on new second generation immigrants in New York City also demonstrated how ethnic identity was constructed by immigrant groups with phenotypic and spatial proximity to African Americans living in inner city neighborhoods. A study of second generation West Indian and Haitian adolescents in New York City (Waters, 1999) identified three different identity pathways: African-American racial identity, ethnic or hyphenated American identity, and immigrant identity. First generation Caribbean immigrants constructed their ethnic identity by recreating the existing inequality in the mainstream society. They distanced themselves from African-American racial formation and protected themselves from the prevalent racial discourse by emphasizing their immigrant identity. This pattern resembled the immigrant national origin identity in Portes and Rumbaut's (2001) typology. An ethnographic study of second generation Indo-Caribbean youths in New York City (Warikoo, 2004) found that the participants created contextual identities by resisting negative stereotypes or identities ascribed to them by *others*.

Ethnic identity could be more fluid in some groups than others. For example, second generation West Indians had flexible racial identities that were amenable to construction and negotiation in complex and multiple settings (Butterfield, 2004). Similarly, South Asian immigrants from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal were amenable to constant adaptations to proximate and distal environments. Despite living in a suburban white middle-class neighborhood with good educational systems, linguistic skills and occupations, the racial identity of second generation immigrants was experienced as neither "white" nor "wholly Asian" in Purkayastha's (2005) study.

Summary

The Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001) legitimized segmented assimilation theory as a reliable analytic framework to account for the pathways of new second generation immigrants in the US. However, not all empirical studies validated this theory. Other researchers contributed additional concepts to the immigration literature, including Asian advantage, Hispanic-Caribbean deficit, immigrant optimism, familism, and transnationalism. Ethnic self-identities of post-immigrants which evolved over time also reflected a complex adaptation process. However, research on recent immigrants calls for a more nuanced understanding of the acculturative processes and outcomes for various groups of immigrants. Like all sociological knowledge, findings from research on the new wave second generation remains contested and incommensurable from one theoretical framework to another.

For example, the study on Mexican immigrants in the US (Waldinger & Feliciano, 2003) contested the salience of segmented assimilation theory derived from CILS (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001) by emphasizing the need to avoid broad generalization

within the intergroup settings even when context of reception in the host country was similar. However, other studies (Hirschman, 2001; Waters et al, 1999; Zhou & Bankston, 1994) demonstrated how the interplay between intergenerational characteristics of immigrants and their external context of reception led to successful selective acculturation of the second generation immigrants. Empirical studies on transnationalism among the children of immigrants in New York City also revealed interesting trends challenging and dovetailing the premises of classical assimilation and segmented assimilation theories.

This researcher was not able to locate any empirical study that examined acculturation of children of Bangladeshi immigrants in the US. The proposed study intended to fill this research gap by exploring a number of premises: how the children of Bangladeshi immigrants constructed their social realities as post-immigrants in the multicultural setting of New York City; how the parents portrayed their side of the story as first generation immigrants and made sense of their children's acculturation; how female children redefined construction of gender roles in patriarchal Bangladeshi immigrant families; how these two generations influenced the demographic setting of New York City and were influenced by it; and how the immigrant children constructed and negotiated their ethnic self-identities in this setting.

The next chapter will discuss how grounded study has offered a methodological goodness of fit for this exploratory study. It includes the developmental stages of collecting data through in-depth interviews and putting them through a rigorous and sequential process of analysis to build mid-level theories. Since access to the field turned out to be more challenging than most of these steps, it was also dwelt upon.

CHAPTER V: METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Study

This purpose of this dissertation was to examine the acculturation of first generation Bangladeshi youths in New York City. The subjects of the study were adolescents and young adults between the ages of 16 and 24, who either came to the US before the age of 10 (G-1.5) or were born in the US to Bangladeshi immigrant parents (G- 2). The study was intended to capture their lived experiences of constructing social realities and carving out ethnic self-identities. It was anticipated that the developmental experiences of these late- and post-adolescent youths would reveal how they outgrew parental influences to pave the way for their incorporation in the host country.

The original design of this qualitative study involved in-depth interviews of young informants. However, the researcher was not only able to interview the children, but had the opportunity to observe parent-child interactions in the naturalistic setting of their home environment. Serendipitously, during the course of conducting the interviews, parents evinced great interest in this research. Before and after the interviews with their children, they recounted personal experiences of immigrant life and expressed their views about how their children were adopting the host culture. Their spontaneous participation in this study provided an opportunity for triangulation and made it possible for the researcher to explore the vantage point of one generation from the vantage point of another through constant comparisons. This unanticipated access into the parents' lived experiences expanded the scope of cross-generational perspectives that led to a nuanced understanding of the differences of *intentionality* between the two generations.

This chapter serves as a prelude to four analytical chapters and illustrates how this qualitative research design has unfolded as "an act of interpretation from beginning to end" (Janesick, 2003, p.73) and continuously served the purpose of the study in unforeseen ways.

Despite the phenomenal growth of immigrants from Bangladesh in New York City between 1991 and 2008 that contributed to the City's demographic transformation, this community continued to be an understudied group. None of the major studies conducted about children of new immigrants in this gateway city (Waters, Mollenkopf, & Kasinitz, 1999; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf & Waters, 2004; Mollenkopf, 2005; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, & Holdaway, 2008) included South Asians, let alone Bangladeshis. Additionally, the lack of comparative studies between first generation immigrant parents and their children (including G-1.5 and G-2) on adaptation in the host country remained one of the major "holes in immigration research" (Gans, 2000, p. 77). The present study was designed to fill the gap in research about acculturation patterns among Bangladeshi youths, in New York City. However, because of unanticipated access to observations and informal conversations with parents, the researcher was able to incorporate an important cross-generational element into the study.

The research questions for this study were consistent with the grounded theory (GT) tradition of qualitative research "built gradually from the careful naturalistic observation of a selected social phenomenon" (Jary & Jary, 1991, p. 200). Consistent with GT, the phenomenon of acculturation in both generations was premised on the ways in which they constructed social realities in everyday lives; these were examined through idiographic or inductive instead of nomothetic or deductive approach associated with

quantitative research and the positivist paradigm. This process entailed building theory from the bottom up instead of testing any theory from top down. Nonetheless, the researcher began the study with a sensitizing theoretical framework particularly salient to the study and drawn from immigration research and theories.

Sensitizing Framework

The sensitizing framework for this qualitative study drew on an array of contested theories of second generation acculturation in the US. Most of these theories emerged in the post-1990 era, when immigration research became a growth industry (Foner, Rumbaut & Gold, 2000). This era was marked by "the post-modern condition" (Lyotard, 1984) in which the grand or meta-narrative embodied in the classical assimilation theory was lost, leading to several "theories of the middle range" (Merton, 1968) reinvigorating immigration research. Researchers who contributed to the middle range immigration theories were prompted by the need to redefine the new context and patterns of acculturation for non-European, especially Asian and Latin American, immigrants. Gans (1992) debunked the myth of Warner and Srole's (1945) "straight line assimilation theory" by proposing second generation decline for post-1965 non-European immigrants, particularly for those who were poor or dark skinned. He theorized that their ethnicity would produce a bumpy line instead of a straight line pattern of assimilation. Glazer (1993) postulated the demise of "assimilation" as a master narrative for new immigrants because of its inability to incorporate non-European immigrants and minority groups in the US. The analytical framework of segmented assimilation theory (Portes & Zhau, 1993; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001) was a core sensitizing framework for this study, because it drew upon the marketplace of fresh ideas and theories about the assimilation of post-

1990 immigrants. Segmented assimilation theory envisioned a multiplicity of outcomes for the descendents of new immigrants: a variant of "consonant acculturation" resembled straight line assimilation; "dissonant acculturation" was interchangeable with "second generation decline;" and "selective acculturation," balanced the retention of native culture with the adoption of host culture's values and behaviors as the most preferred mode of incorporation for the second generation immigrants. This theory was contested by the revived model of classical or linear assimilation (Alba & Nee, 2003; Waldinger & Feliciano, 2004), and problematized by the concept of transnationalism or "transnational social field" (Levitt, & Glick-Schiller, 2004). The concept of second generation advantage (Kasinitz et al 2008), challenged the notion of second generation decline (Gans, 1992) and dissonant acculturation (Portes & Zhau, 1993). However, it rehabilitated the concept of selective acculturation proposed in segmented assimilation theory (Portes & Zhau, 1993).

These frameworks were deployed as sensitizing concepts for a grounded theory study where the researcher anticipated the possibility that mid-level theory would emerge from second generation immigrants as they responded to interview questions and prompts (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995; Fontana & Frey, 2003). Sensitizing concepts used in grounded theory differ substantially from the conceptual and operational definitions of measurable variables in testing hypothesis of quantitative study. Definitive concepts are normative and prescriptive and provide clear attributes and benchmarks in quantitative studies. Conversely, sensitizing concepts are interpretive devices that suggest directions and starting points for qualitative studies (Blumer, 1954; Glaser, 1978; Patton, 2002; Bowen, 2006).

Positivist research is premised on “verification” or “falsification” of existing theory. However, interpretive research, including grounded theory uses existing theory as a “sensitizing devise” through which one concept or cycle of interpretive results leads to the next round of interpretative categories (Habraken, 2005). In comparison with the fully operationalized and definitive concepts employed in positivist research, sensitizing concepts in grounded theory only suggest directions of inquiry. Sensitizing concepts served as a starting point to orient the researcher to fieldwork by helping him organize the complexity of experiences prospectively and avoid entry into the field with a blank slate. However, it was the actual experiences of the social world, or more precisely, the lived experiences of the participants, that were instrumental in shaping and modifying the researchers’ conceptual framework (Jary & Jary, 1991; Patton, 2002; Habraken, 2005).

Patton (2002) has argued that highly experienced qualitative researchers do not necessarily need a formalized conceptual framework to begin with because they have already internalized a sensitizing framework. However, less experienced researchers benefit from a formalized sensitizing framework to organize and guide the fieldwork at least at the initial stage of inquiry. Nonetheless, this researcher was cautious about overusing the sensitizing framework least it should suppress the emergence of theory from observations in the field and the discovery process. Patton (2002) contends that sensitizing concepts are “loosely operationalized notions” (p.278) instrumental in orienting researchers to fieldwork and assisting them to organize complex experiences at the initial stage of inquiry. Consequently, it was essential for the researcher to move from the *primary stage* of deploying sensitizing concepts to the *intermediate stage* of experiencing the social world of the informants in order to transform the conceptual

framework (Denzin, 1978) based on the researchers own perceptions of events by deploying grounded theory.

Grounded Theory

Grounded theory (GT) is an inductive methodology that facilitates systematic guidelines for gathering, synthesizing, analyzing, and conceptualizing qualitative data for the purpose of theory construction (Neimeyer, & Levitt, 2001). True to its name, GT is generated and confirmed through fieldwork; it evolves directly from field research and is intimately ”grounded” or linked with the particular context or phenomenon under study. The detailed grounding of GT takes place through analyzing data, including field notes, interviews, and other narrative documents, systematically and intensively, phrase by phrase and sentence by sentence (Strauss, 2003).

GT is synonymous with a constant comparative method to derive theory from the narrative data obtained directly from informants through various levels of abstractions. It involves a cyclical process of iteration between data collection and analysis generating subsequent cycles of iteration. This process draws to a conclusion only when successive stages of data collection and analyses, yielding emergent theories in the process, reach a plateau of theoretical density or saturation, so that additional observations and analyses cease to contribute to any new core category.

Instead of focusing on particular theoretical content as an end product, GT emphasizes the process of generating theory from bottom up. It strives for objectivity through a rigorous lock-step process that includes designing the study; collecting and analyzing data by constant comparison; and organizing the integrated theory through production and sorting of the core category (Glaser, 2001; Patton, 2002). In this process

of cumulative analysis and abstraction, the data for this study included transcriptions of interview with youths, field notes of informal interactions with parents, and observations of parent-child interactions. Taken together, they contributed to conceptual ordering and theorizing culminating in formulation of a coherent and logical explanatory scheme (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Patton, 2003).

This analytic process included four developmental phases: exploration, or discovery of concepts; specification or development of concepts; reduction or determination of core concept; and integration, or development of theory (Habraken, 2005). Strauss and Corbin (1998) contend that GT methodology requires researchers to engage in constant interaction with the data through a rigorous coding procedure or analytical process; it is a systematic as well as creative process. They outline six attributes of a researcher who employs grounded theory: a capacity for critical thinking and analysis to avert unexamined assumptions; the ability to recognize self biases; a flair for abstract thinking, flexibility, and openness to accept constructive criticism; sensitivity towards the denotation and connotation of the respondents' words and actions, and dedication to the endlessly demanding task of GT methodology.

Strength of Grounded Theory

GT has brought about a revolution in empirical research by challenging the hegemony of the quantitative research in social sciences (Danzin, 1997). Some researchers consider it the most comprehensive form of qualitative methodology (Haig, 1995). The rich ethnographic tradition of qualitative research reinforced by the Chicago School of sociology in the 1920s was marginalized by the advent and ascendance of the positivist tradition in quantitative research that put a premium on objectivity and

verification (Charmaz, 2003). Although quantitative research is purported to test theories by using a logico-deductive model, much of it remains a-theoretical because theory testing is only secondary to controlling variables, in effect, widening the gap between theorists and researchers. Charmaz (2003) argues that GT has challenged the prevailing concepts of quantitative research by bridging the arbitrary division between theory and research. It also dispelled numerous myths about qualitative study. These presumptions included the ideas that qualitative research was a prelude to more "rigorous" quantitative methods; the quest for rigor made qualitative research illegitimate; qualitative methods were impressionistic and unsystematic; and qualitative research could produce only descriptive case studies rather than theory development. GT reclaimed the merit of qualitative research exclusively for the development of theory through a rigorous method.

GT aspires to build middle range theoretical concepts by collecting and analyzing data systematically through inductive method (Charmaz, 2003). The analytical framework developed during the present study was used to recalibrate further data collection and constantly refine theoretical analysis of the collected data. An analytic process, consisting of development, refinement, and interrelation of emerging concepts, were central to this venture. In this study, the researcher not only adopted analytic approaches associated with GT, but also developed methodological strategies. It included simultaneous collection and analysis of data; a three -step data coding process; comparative methods; memo writing aimed at the construction of conceptual analyses; sampling to refine the researcher's emerging theoretical ideas; and integration of the theoretical framework (Charmaz, 2003). While grounded theory specifies analytic strategies, it does not specify data collection.

Research Design

Unit of Analysis

In other traditions of qualitative inquiry an individual, a group, an entire organization, or different parts of an organization or program may be the unit of analysis. However, "an incident" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), or more precisely a specific social phenomenon is the unit of analysis in GT (Jary & Jary, 2000). Following the tradition of symbolic interaction theory, that also influenced GT, social phenomenon entail construction of meaning in social interaction, or social construction of reality, by the informants. In other words, unit of analysis in GT pertains not to the "raw data" or "surface structure," but to the conceptualization of observed or reported activity, event, or incident that serves as indicator of an underlying phenomenon (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Pandit, 1996) or "deep structure." In a qualitative study the unit of analysis plays a central role in determining the kind of data to be collected, the focus of the data to be analyzed, and the level of statements required in findings and conclusions (Patton, 2003). Additionally, the qualitative researcher's ability to say something about the study at the final stage, when an integrated set of concepts emerge, is always contingent on the selected unit of analysis (Patton, 2003). In the present study the phenomenon of acculturation in New York City conceptualized from the narratives of Bangladeshi immigrants and their children and observations of parent-child interactions by the researcher became the unit of analysis.

GT crosscuts phenomenology and symbolic interactionism. Phenomenology begins with the "fundamental problem of describing accurately and completely the essential features of everyday lived experience" (Kelly, 2003, p. 112). The objective of

GT methodology is to understand phenomenological experiences by constructing and elaborating theories derived inductively from data; it involves value neutral observation and naïve Baconian induction (Haig, 1995). GT also draws its theoretical basis from symbolic interactionism as it relates to the ontology of social construction of reality. In comparison with phenomenologists, symbolic interactionists do not subscribe to the view that meanings are essential resulting from individual consciousness through intentionality. Instead they emphasize micro-social processes that involve "active, interpretive, and constructive capacities or competence possessed by human actors, as against the determining influence of social structures" (Jary & Jary, 1999, p.509).

Following the methodology of GT, the experiences of the participants reported, including the vantage points of the parents interpreted from the vantage point of the children and vice versa, and the researcher's observations recorded in field notes were analyzed through constant comparisons at different levels of abstraction. The emerging concepts and their relationships were represented as propositions. In compliance with the tradition of GT the researcher adhered to the systematic method of theory generation. Taking cue from its post-positivist method, an interpretive coding process was used at progressively higher levels of abstraction eventually to map the "deep structure" from the "surface structure" and eventually generate four analytical chapters for this study.

Subject Recruitment: Entree into the Field

The proposed informants for this study were the adolescent and young adult children of Bangladeshi immigrant parents. They could have been born in the US or arrived with their families as immigrants before the age of ten. Even though the researcher was himself a Bangladeshi immigrant, his first two attempts to gain access to

informants for the study proved unsuccessful. In his third attempt, three community resources were located and drawn upon to successfully recruit the first five informants from Brooklyn and Queens. Recruitment for all the other respondents was made through snowball sampling from the original group. Entrée for every in-depth interview was negotiated through a culturally appropriate and family friendly strategy discussed later. The researcher began with the naïve belief that a native is already an insider because of his implicit insight into the world view of his co-ethnics. However, he found himself an outsider looking in through an impenetrable wall during his first two rounds of efforts to recruit subjects. The entire ritual of entrée into the field and recruitment evolved as an exploratory process in itself.

The researcher's first recruitment strategy involved placing an advertisement in a Bengali language weekly newspaper published in Queens; this initial attempt provided a preview of what lay ahead. When contacted about placing the advertisement, the editor of the newspaper expressed personal interest in the topic of the study; he was a stakeholder in the ethnic community. Even though the researcher and the editor agreed on a paid advertisement that would run in one issue of the weekly, he published it in three consecutive issues without any extra charges, unbeknownst to the researcher. When the researcher enquired about it, the editor unapologetically explained that he decided on the rerun without prior permission because he wanted to facilitate the researcher in recruiting participants for a study of vital importance to the Bangladeshi Diaspora in New York City. He also wanted to encourage Bangladeshi immigrant parents to take advantage of a study germane to their stake in the continuity of native culture among the second generation. Needless to say, this editor wanted to gain a wider circulation for his weekly

by claiming to serve the ethnic community. However, the researcher parted company with him by embracing the critical need of connecting with the identity group, but also distancing from it in the same vein, to balance the "emic" or subjective perspective with the "etic" or objective standpoint (Kanuta, 2000).

Nonetheless, the advertisement that appeared in three issues of the weekly for the price of one generated three telephone calls from Bangladeshi immigrant parents, two from Queens and one from the Bronx. In each case the father of the children sought advisement from the researcher on how to retain native Bangladeshi culture among their children. One parent attempted to put his sixteen-year old daughter on the telephone to receive counseling on how to "stay away from the adverse influences of American culture." Another parent indicated that he was not interested in allowing his son or daughter, who were otherwise eligible for the study, to be interviewed for any research, whether the researcher was a native Bangladeshi or not. The third parent, who presented himself as a leader of the Bangladeshi Hindu Community in the Bronx, asked the researcher to speak to his thirteen-year old son and twelve-year old daughter because they were getting "out of control." None of these three parents provided information about other parents whose children would be eligible for this research. They expressed general distrust and suspicion about any researcher who wanted to learn about "their private lives, only to make it public" even if anonymity and confidentiality were promised as a precondition for their participation.

Following the lack of success during his first effort to recruit study subjects, the researcher contacted a community leader in Staten Island who had access to a network of Bangladeshi Muslim religious centers in the five boroughs of New York City. In order to

help the researcher recruit study participants, he arranged for the researcher to speak in three different parents' meetings in Bangladeshi community mosques at Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx. However, despite repeated requests to the contrary, the community leader presented the researcher as a resource for the parents could count on in order to retain their native culture, including religion, among the next generation.

During these meetings, many parents expressed their concerns about the attrition of native language, culture, and religion that resulted in parent-child conflicts and disruptions. Nonetheless, in an effort to recruit subjects from these parents, the researcher explained that the purpose of the study was to learn about the differences in acculturation between them and their children, not to advise them about intergenerational transmission of culture or restoration of their religion. The researcher did provide appropriate information about where to find help for status offenders, parent-child conflicts, and family disruptions. Evidently, the researcher's unwillingness to play the role of a community resource and particularly his lack of interest in religious discourse during these meetings turned these parents off. Although several of them initially expressed a desire to provide informed consent so that their eligible sons and daughters could participate in this study, the responses fizzled out abruptly. Subsequently, the community leader who was the researcher's contact to this network also vanished into the thin air.

Islam (2000), a first generation immigrant and native researcher, described her predicament as a "translator and a betrayer" (p. 57) in studying the Bangladeshi community at Los Angeles. She was disappointed when some stakeholders in her community wanted to control the findings of her research by pressuring her to validate

the "model minority myth," and to document their victimization through racial discrimination. At the same time, they wanted her to withhold information about how they actually engaged in racism and racial discourse of the mainstream society. Since insider status gave her privileged entrée into the community, she was expected to leave its image untarnished to the outsiders, even at the expense of her commitment as a researcher.

Following the second setback, the researcher contacted several well-connected sources in the Bangladeshi communities in Brooklyn and Queens and successfully located and recruited the first five informants for the study; this proved a major breakthrough. The next rounds of recruitment were generated from these informants and their parents through a snowball sampling method. Henceforth, every recruitment process that involved an in-depth interview, observations of parent-child interactions, and parental experiences shared with the researcher before and after the interviews, followed a scripted ritual.

First, the referral sources validated the authenticity of the researcher to the prospective parents. Then the researcher contacted the male parent by telephone and explained what the study was about before requesting recruitment of eligible adolescents. Invariably, the father wanted to know about the researcher's marital status and family composition, including the number of children he had. Verbal agreements on informed consent were obtained from them on two conditions: the researcher's wife must accompany him during the visit to the family's home, and they must eat at least one meal, either lunch or dinner, with the parents and children, prior to conducting in-depth interviews with the children. One parent clearly stated, "Unless you and "Bhabi"

(brother's wife) eat lunch with us, I will not approve of this interview with my son." In another instance, the wife of an affluent community leader spoke to the researcher and his wife before requesting the researcher to explain the topic of the study to her two daughters separately for recruitment. After her daughters agreed to participate in the study, she extended a formal invitation to the researcher and his wife for a weekend lunch; the interviews with her daughters were scheduled right before lunch.

The researcher's marital status played a key role in gaining access to Bangladeshi families, especially with daughters eligible for the study. Interestingly, it also applied to two young women college graduates; their parents were the gatekeepers for them before they participated in this study. During the time the researcher was conducting the interviews with the participants in this study in a separate room, his wife usually socialized with their parents. In addition to allowing the researcher to stay at the family's home longer, the presence of his wife facilitated observation of parent-child interactions in a natural setting and created a more trusting environment for the female participants to respond to the researcher's questions. This family-to-family approach was a catalyst for the researcher to gain the parents' trust and establish greater rapport with their children. Every interview appeared to be a by-product of a culturally compatible family visit in which the researcher was never intrusive; he was no longer an outsider.

Shelton and Rianon (2004) also modified their recruitment strategy for Bangladeshi immigrant women who refused to participate in focus groups and in-depth interviews for their study of spousal abuse. These researchers finally achieved success using a three-pronged approach. They hired a Bangladeshi investigator and allowed her ample time to establish rapport with key informants and community representatives and

remained in contact with people in the community even after the project was competed. Gans (2000) contends that the advantages and disadvantages of an immigration researcher are not confined to the insider versus outsider status. He argues that a native researcher does not necessarily have better access to their community in comparison with a non-native researcher. At the same time it is wrong to assume that all non-native researchers are detached and without any personal stake in the research. Contrary to the general assumption that immigrants feel more comfortable speaking openly with native researcher, some are more likely to share information with an outsider, particularly when that person never returns after a single interview. Still other immigrants are less concerned about the co-ethnicity of the researcher than other characteristics such as age, gender, or class (Gans, 2000).

Following the interviews, some parents attempted to use the researcher to find out about their children's noncompliance with native culture. The researcher reminded them that the interviews were confidential. It was not possible to recruit parents known to the community for experiencing conflicts with their children or any other family disruptions. A community activist reported to the researcher that parents who underwent negative experiences with their children moved away from co-ethnics and it was extremely difficult even for him to reach out to them. One parent who was particularly active in the community showed a keen interest in having his sixteen-year old son interviewed for this study. But his reaction was atypical. The researcher subsequently learned that the boy had rejected the ethnic community and its values and was disrespectful to his parents. Since the adolescent refused to take part in the study, the researcher recommended appropriate services for him.

Demographic Characteristics

The participants of this study were twenty male and thirteen female Bangladeshi post-immigrants between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one years. Eight were born in the US (G-2) while twenty seven immigrated to the US with one or both parents before the age of ten (G-1.5). Thirteen were high school students; eight were college students; and two had completed college. All the participants lived in two-parent households and intact families. Ten lived in Brooklyn; eight in Staten Island; thirteen in Queens; and two in the Bronx. Twenty-four lived in homes owned by their parents, while nine lived in rented apartments. Among the fathers, one was disabled; one unemployed; one retired; one worked with NYPD; five owned businesses; four worked with construction firms; two were employed with MTA; two worked for the Department of Education (DOE), and one was a Certified Public Accountant. Of the mothers, two were employed part-time with minimum wage; one was a teacher's assistant and the rest were homemakers. Among the fathers two had high school diplomas; eight had two years of college; six had four years of college; and two of them had two years of graduate school education. Of the mothers one had an elementary school education; one had a junior high school education; seven had high school diplomas; eight had two years of college; and one had four years of college.

Interviews

The researcher explored the phenomenon of acculturation among Bangladeshi post-immigrants using an interview guide informed by sensitizing concepts drawn from various existing theories of immigrant acculturation. The in-depth interviews unified the principles of exploration and hypothesis-testing (Kvale, 1996). The topics included the

similarities and differences in outlook between the children and their immigrant parents over acculturating in the host country and retention of home culture and ethnic self-identities. The questions ranged from introducing questions, follow-up questions, probing questions, specifying questions, direct questions, indirect questions, structuring questions, silence, and interpreting questions (Kvale, 1996).

In order to explore the life world of the participants and how they constructed the meaning of their social realities, the challenge for the researcher was to balance overly directed interviews, which could undercut potential or actual theoretical leads and other rich data, with open-ended conversational interviews, which could fail to follow the leads on emerging theoretical issues that warranted more directed questions for GT.

The interviews were tape-recorded before transcribing them verbatim. Subsequently, open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Strauss, 2003) were mapped onto the core categories. These strategies helped develop meaningful patterns and themes from the narratives of participants. The interviews gradually moved from semi-structured formations to negotiated texts (Fontana & Frey, 2003). Triangulation of interview data with two other data sources, namely observations of parent-child interaction, and parents' own accounts, served "to clarify meaning by identifying different ways the phenomenon is being seen" (Stake, 2003, p.148).

Sample Size

Thirty-three youths were interviewed for this study. The sample size was limited to the saturation of data until a plateau was reached and each additional interviewee added little or nothing to what was already learned (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Patton (2002) argues that "there are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry (because it)

depends on the purpose of the study." (p.244). In a trade-off between breadth and depth a small sample with pertinent in-depth information was found to be as good as a large sample with less depth of information (Patton, 2002).

Data Collection and Analysis

All the in-depth interviews were audio recorded before being transcribed while elaborate field notes of parent-child interactions and conversations with the parents were kept. There was a dialogical relationship between data collection and data analysis in the tradition of GT. Unlike any other tradition of qualitative research, in which data collection led to data analysis and theory sequentially, data collection and analysis in GT contributed to the emerging theory that, in turn, generated another round of data collection and analysis through theoretical sampling until the final theoretical finesse was achieved. Analysis of narrative data through coding and memoing continued to raise new questions about emergent theories and were addressed by gathering new data or re-examining the previous ones (Strauss, 2003). Additionally, in the tradition of GT, there was a parallel process that occurred during data gathering and data analysis. For example, at the initial stages of research both data collection and analysis were more confusing and chaotic compared with the more refined stages that followed as core categories or theories emerged and triggered additional rounds of data collection and analysis. Following the conceptual framework of GT organization and analysis of data were conducted through three stage of coding process: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.

Open coding

Open coding was the primary stage of analysis concerned with identifying, naming, and describing the phenomena by assigning various conceptual codes to different pages of the transcribed interviews and field notes. Strauss (2003) considers this stage of coding an open process for a number of reasons. It is unrestricted in coding the data from interviews and field-notes, word-by-word and line-by-line. It opens up various lines of inquiry in which every interpretation is tentative and it creates various concepts—however, these dimensions are entirely provisional. It is a process of conceptualization at the primary stage of abstraction.

The researcher needed to move away to the next level of abstraction by grounding himself more by breaking down, examining, comparing, and categorizing data, which were broad and inclusive rather than specific and selective (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Smith & Stewart, 2001). During the course of open coding constant comparisons of the available data proved very useful for sharpening and modifying the emergent theory while working on the next level of analysis or coding.

Axial coding

Axial coding was the secondary stage of the coding process. Here the emphasis was on linking the emerging codes with each other through a combination of inductive and deductive methods in addition to constant comparisons. Strauss (2003) contends that even though open coding is loose and axial coding is more goal-directed, axial coding is an essential component of open coding. In the stage of axial coding for this study the analysis of data took place around the axis of one category or dimension at a time. It was

a very important phase of the inquiry process before the researcher decided on the core categories by moving to the stage of selective coding.

Selective coding

In selective coding, or the tertiary stage of the coding process, the researcher focused on finding the core codes that related to other subservient categories. Strauss and Corbin (1991) indicate that during this third and final stage of coding there are always some concepts that remain ambiguous, underdeveloped, but not prematurely foreclosed.

The researcher employed inductive reasoning to explore the individual voices of the members of the post-immigrant Bangladeshi generation and their parents before making inferences or general conclusions about their lived experiences. In other words, the inductive analysis in this qualitative inquiry moved progressively from exploration and confirmation to creative synthesis through "immersion in the details and specifics of the data to discover important patterns, themes, and interrelationships" (Patton, 2002, p. 41). The core code became a guide to further theoretical memoing and theoretical sampling through data collection (Strauss, 2003).

Theoretical memoing

In any qualitative study, memos are important tools for refining and keeping track of the evolving concepts and ideas which finally yield to fully fledged theories. Charmaz (2006) considers memo-writing the analytic break in the research process or a "pivotal intermediate step between data collection and writing drafts of the paper (p.72). Theoretical memos are usually notes or sketches to self with theoretical spins inscribed alongside the transcribed data as the researcher gains increasing foothold on the discovery, development and formulation of a grounded theory (Strauss, 2003). The

whole process of theory development for this study was recorded in memos indicating how it was grounded. In other words, the progression of memos from less focused to conceptually dense stages represented the time line of the researcher's interpretive strategies in developing grounded theory. Memoing continued along with coding as an analytic process. At the stage of open coding frequent interruptions were made to write theoretical memos, but during selective coding more focused analytic memos were incorporated to help integration of a theory (Strauss, 2003).

Theoretical sampling

Theoretical sampling, or data collection controlled and driven by emerging theory, is a hallmark of grounded theory. It evolves from selective coding processes in qualitative research. It entails building interpretive theories from the emergent data and selecting new samples to examine and elaborate this theory (Marchall, 1996). Theoretical sampling is used to choose new participants, modify interview guides, or to add new data sources as a study progresses. The researcher used this method to decide on the analytic grounds necessitating the next round of data collection. The key question for theoretical sampling was what groups or sub-groups of youths should be included for future interview and for what theoretical purpose (Strauss, 2003). Theoretical coding was used to apply theoretical model to the emerging data while theoretical comparisons were made among the list of properties pertaining to a conceptual construct to tease out its essential characteristics. Theoretical sampling for testing and confirming the emergent concepts with additional subjects and sampling continued until a point of theoretical saturation was reached in which the concepts ceased to indicate any additional development in terms of dimensions, properties, and relationships (Patton, 2002).

Nonetheless, the researcher was severely constrained by the availability of particular types of subjects for this study. For example, it was unlikely that parents would agree to have any errant child interviewed; even if they did, the child would not have agreed to participate in this research.

Reliability and Validity

The terms reliability and validity are rooted in experimental studies of quantitative research. In positivist epistemology of quantitative research reliability refers to a measurement that consistently yields the same answer regardless of how and when it is carried out and validity signifies the truthfulness about what it claims to measure or if it gives the correct answer (Kirk & Miller, 1986; Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1994). This gold standard of reliability and validity of quantitative study assume new meanings in qualitative research paradigm. In the interpretive tradition of qualitative research, reliability indicates interpretive awareness and reflexivity of the researchers while validity is represented by defensible knowledge claims (Werner, 2004). Since observations are not repeatable and it is not possible to replicate a qualitative study (Janesick, 2003; Stake, 2003), reliability construed in positivist parlance loses its salience. As there are more than one correct ways to interpret an event in qualitative research, validity pertains to the consonance between the description of events and their explanations (Janesick, 2003). The concept of validity in qualitative research is intertwined with the nature of reality constructed intersubjectively. Throughout various phases of qualitative research the researcher's value orientations are inherent in all observations and interpretations making all truth claims to be negotiated within the framework of multiple realities (Cohen & Crabtree, 2008). Consequently, the criteria of

validity and reliability in qualitative studies are generally met by the richness of in-depth information obtained from smaller group of selected informants rather than an adequately large sample size, and observational and analytic skills of the researcher (Patton, 2002). The present study followed these criteria.

Patton (2003) contends that qualitative and quantitative research use different criteria to ascertain credibility of findings. For example, quantitative studies that conform to traditional scientific criteria minimize investigator bias by emphasizing objectivity through rigorous and systematic data collection and analysis. However, in qualitative research data collection involves cross-checking and cross-validation of sources during fieldwork, and data analysis entails use of multiple coders and intercoder consistency to accomplish validity and reliability of emerging patterns and themes. Sometimes qualitative research employs triangulation with quantitative data for consistency of findings across the two methods of inquiry. But these findings must correspond to the lived realities of the informants. One of the key criteria of this tradition is to provide adequate and complete description and explanation of all phenomena, so that they correspond to the naturalistic setting and life-world of the informants (Patton, 2003)

Social construction or the constructivist tradition of qualitative inquiry follows a different set of criteria. Lincoln and Guba (1986) contrast credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability in the constructivist tradition of qualitative inquiry with internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity of scientific tradition of quantitative research. This tradition of qualitative inquiry explains realities as socially, politically, and psychologically constructed (Patton, 2003), so that researchers who

follow this path use a different kind of triangulation for data collection purposes. In the absence of a singularity of truth, the plurality of informants' viewpoints is presented through multiple perspectives. Unlike a nomothetic or didactic approach, idiographic or inductive inquiry delves deep into individual cases and their unique contexts to acknowledge particularity, integrity, and subjective biases. In this tradition *Verstehen,* or enlightened understanding of individual perspectives, leads to dialogical criteria of truth construction which defies causal hypothesis and generalization (Patton, 2003).

Reflexivity

It was essential for the native researcher to exercise reflexivity throughout the process of the study. By definition, reflexivity is accomplished in qualitative research by maintaining an objective distance from the project and its participants, but constantly balancing this perspective with an awareness that such an emotional and intellectual disengagement may very well be counterproductive in achieving *Verstehen* or insight into how the participants construct meaning about their lived realities and how those meanings affect their lives (Habraken, 2005; Kanuha, 2000).

As an insider, the researcher would have overlooked important observations and taken many assumptions for granted without the help of the adviser and dissertation chair who acted as an external guide for the construction of alternative theoretical approaches. Both the researcher and the chair were immersed in the qualitative data collected for the study. The researcher initially established two analytical frameworks for the study: crossroads of acculturation between the two generations and the trajectory-repertoire of the second generation acculturation. In this formulation the gendered socialization of the participants and the role of City of New York as both context and character were shown

as sub-categories under the crossroads of acculturation. Throughout the process of coding, data-analysis, theoretical memoing, and sampling, this collaboration enhanced interpretative awareness and reflexivity and contributed to the reliability for the present study.

Protection of Human Subjects

Since this study involved human subjects, prior approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), CUNY, had been sought to protect the interest of the individuals and the population under study. No informant was interviewed before the proposal received final approval following a full review. The investigator submitted the certificate of Completion of for the CITI computer training course required for all CUNY investigators.

Adler and Clark (1999) identified three principles regarding protection of human subjects in research: protecting study participants from harm; requirement of voluntary participation and informed consent; and the need of anonymity and confidentiality. Protecting participants from harm pertained to a principle not to "harm them physically, emotionally, legally, socially, or financially as a result of their participation in the study" (Adler & Clark, 1999. p. 66). Voluntary participation related to the principle of allowing the participants to take part in the study of their own free will. Informed consent referred to the precept of providing adequate and accurate information to the client before they participated in the study and anonymity ascertained that nobody, including the investigator, would know the identity of the research subjects. Confidentiality required that no third party will have any access to the identity of the participant.

The investigator obtained signed informed consent from young adults (ages between 16 and 21 years) and parents of adolescents (between 16 and 18 years). Additionally, assent was obtained from the adolescents following their parental informed consent to participate in the study. The investigator provided appropriate explanation of the topic of the research to all the participants and encouraged questions about their participation in the study. The participants were duly informed that they were free to participate, decline to participate and withdraw from participation in this research. It was explained to them that while there was no penalty for declining or withdrawing from this research, anonymity and confidentiality would be maintained about the source of information as well as on the information provided on the survey-study.

In order to avoid deception the participants were made aware of the limits of confidentiality in the event of reporting requirements for suspected child abuse and neglect and indications that informants were at risk of harming themselves or others. The investigator was prepared throughout the process to make appropriate referrals to address any condition that required intervention and to report any situation that mandated a breach of confidentiality. No inducements were provided to the informants for their participation. The parents and the informants were made aware that discomfort might arise from the embarrassment over disclosures regarding possible parent-child conflicts, ruptured family ties and role reversal or immigration status. However, it was reiterated that the benefits of the study would outweigh any harm by providing insights into the acculturative experiences of children of Bangladeshi immigrants in New York City, helping social work practitioners and program administrators develop better strategies of intervention to prevent second generation decline.

Conclusion

The following chapters will focus on four analytical frameworks developed from grounded theory which illustrate the acculturative experiences of two generations of Bangladeshi immigrants. These chapters include: acculturation gap between parents and children, gendered socialization of children in patriarchal families, context and character of New York City as a shaping influence on parents and children, and acculturative identity trajectory and repertoire among children.

Summary of the Findings

Acculturation of children of Bangladeshi immigrants in New York City spans four different interdependent domains: intergenerational modes of adaptation, children's gender roles in patriarchal families, shaping influence of the context of reception on parents and children, and identity construction and negotiation among children.

Parents and children found themselves at the crossroads of acculturation resulting in two different narratives. The parents rediscovered their native culture in the gateway city through ethnic enclaves, which served as "home away from home thousand of miles away" for them, but also as "an extension of home environment for children." The push-pull factors of parents were reversed for their children. For example, parents were pulled by the need to rediscover their ethnic culture and to retain it through their children. Despite serious commitment to native culture they conceded limited or selective acculturation to children so that they could attain educational and career goals in the mainstream society. In contrast, the children gradually moved away from their parents' cultural influences through increasing access to secondary socialization, distance from ethnic enclave and attrition of native language.

The daughters, more often than the sons, renegotiated the values of their patriarchal families. Disproportionate parental oversight kept the girls away from the influence of street culture and helped them focus more on educational attainments, in comparison with the boys. Even though parental expectations generally privileged the boys over girls in terms of setting educational and career goals, the boys bore the brunt of family responsibilities if anything happened to the primary breadwinner. While girls were expected to be purveyors of intergenerational continuity of native culture, boys were required to live with parents after marriage. When boys underperformed in comparison with girls, parental expectations shifted in favor of the girls. In families with both boys and girls, the girls were more likely to be treated unequally. When it came to arranged marriages the girls took more active part to rewrite its unwritten rules to secure greater voice than the parents were willing to grant otherwise, while the boys largely acquiesced.

New York City played a pivotal role as a context of reception for the two generations of Bangladeshi immigrants who remake it in two different narratives. The parents transformed the physical and demographic landscape of the city by adding to its increasing diversity or Pluribus while their children brought about unity or unum in that pluribus without having to give up any of the two. The children were amenable to the transformative influences of the city while the parents were not. Put differently, the children of immigrants transformed the city and the city transformed them in a dialogic interaction. Although the parents transformed the city they were less open to its transformational influences because of their intentional monologic interaction. Immigrants wanted to live up to the expectations of New York City even when they

migrated out of it. Experiences of the immediate aftermath of 9/11 brought mixed feelings among immigrant parents, but their children got over this stumbling block because they believed that it was not the true spirit of the city which eventually prevailed.

The children carved out their ethnic self-identities to become new New Yorkers, unlike their parents, who are beholden to primordial national origin identity. However, not all these children were equally acculturated. Their identity construction took shape both as a trajectory, shown as a line moving up horizontally, and as a repertory, signified by an expanding spiral around the path of the trajectory. The trajectory represented progression and the repertoire indicated level of complexity in their acculturation.

CHAPTER VI

TWO GENERATIONS AT THE CROSSROADS OF ACCULTURATION

Introduction

This study draws on the narratives of second generation immigrant Bangladeshi adolescents and young adults captured through in-depth interviews; informal discussions with their parents before and after the interviews; and observations of parent-child interactions recorded in field notes. Major themes and patterns which emerged illustrated how the experiences of second generation youth contrasted with those of their immigrant parents in New York City. The prevailing metaphor for this chapter is the "crossroads of acculturation." It was used by an immigrant Bangladeshi mother who described her journey as "a fork in the road and divergent paths" that the two generations took in the host country. As new immigrants, parents coped with feelings of estrangement by retaining their ethnicity and replicating features of native culture in various Bangladeshi communities of New York City. Within the setting of primary socialization, they wanted to insure that their children retained a sense of belonging to the native culture facilitating intergenerational continuity amid the daunting prospects of change in the host country.

In contrast, as post-immigrants the children's journey was marked by reinvention of their parents' native culture and inherited ethnicity. During the course of interaction with the wider neighborhood, schools, and cultural institutions of New York, they underwent a process of secondary socialization and acquired reconfigured identities that synchronized with the pace of their acculturation. Portes and Rumbaut (2001) have postulated that children of immigrants represent a turning point in ethnic self-identity as a result of exposure to multiple reference groups in the host country unlike their first

generation immigrant parents who are largely confined to a single reference group. Evidently, Bangladeshi children's experiences with multiple reference groups in New York City were off limits to their immigrant parents, both by default and by design. The crossroads between the two generations were captured in two contrasting storylines of the parents and their children. Although the focus of this study was the second generation acculturation in the host country, the intergenerational angle revealed how each generation constructed its social reality in light of lived experiences. The comparison served to highlight the experiences of the young informants.

The Storyline of First Generation Immigrant Parents

The present study found that the intergenerational setting of acculturation among immigrant Bangladeshi families entailed an interlocking set of systems: the parents, the ethnic community, and the children. All were nested within the larger framework of the host society, commonly known in immigration literature as the "context of reception." The parental system coupled with the ethnic enclave formed the core of the Bangladeshi Diaspora in New York City. Hoffman (1998) describes the Diaspora as "the symbolic center in an indifferent world to keep intact a vision of a lost paradise" in which people "retreat to their community as a place of refuge" (p 53). The metaphors of "symbolic center" and "lost paradise" resonated with these parents and accounted for their strong inclination to seek refuge in the ethno-cultural space of the Diaspora. It served as a powerful reference group from which the children could internalize the values of native culture to represent continuity in the host country amid change, discontinuity, and dislocation brought about by their immigration to the US.

Rediscovery of Bangladeshi Culture in New York City

The stories of Bangladeshi immigrant parents revealed how they rediscovered their national origin and ethnic identity in an alien environment. This process was shaped by a vibrant community consisting of large numbers of their co-ethnics who settled in various enclaves in New York City, primarily in the boroughs of Queens and Brooklyn. During the course of consolidating their anchorage in the Diaspora, these new immigrants renewed their identification with Bangladesh in the new country. One parent described this process as the "survival strategy of the first generation non-white immigrants in the US," substantiating the contention that new immigrants from non-European countries generally found their niche as new ethnics (Portes & Rumbaut, 2003). Orum (2005) distinguishes between the "immigrants" and the "ethnics." According to this formulation, immigrants represent an unsettled group, caught between the push of settling in the host country and the pull of returning to the native country. Because of this duality, this group can influence the host society minimally, if at all. Conversely, ethnics reconcile these push-pull factors by establishing native organizations in the host country to perpetuate their cultural heritage and tradition, significantly influencing the host country. Through increased participation in ethnic activities the immigrants eventually turn into ethnics.

The Bangladeshi parents who spoke with the researcher were caught between immigrant and the ethnic affiliations in New York City. Some longed to return to Bangladesh despite living in the city for decades. They exemplified the first generation immigrant parents described by Portes (2004) as "birds of passage haunted by the dream of return" (p.157) to the country of origin. However, others were disinclined to visit the

native country after two or three trips because of what one parent called "a growing concern about insecurity." Another parent confided that since all his siblings and members of the extended family immigrated to New York City, it was expedient for his wife to visit Bangladesh occasionally as long as her siblings did not immigrate to the US. "I do not have to travel to Bangladesh any more, because Bangladesh has come to New York City," remarked yet another parent.

Regardless of their socioeconomic or professional status, all the parents expressed ethnic pride as "Bangladeshi immigrants in the United States." Despite their strong affiliation to the native country, the economic and political instability of Bangladesh propelled many of them to develop social and economic capital and participate in a host of community affiliations within ethnic enclaves of New York City. They joined various cross-cutting alumni, cultural, religious, social, hometown, semi-professional, and professional associations. Some of them became actively involved with New York City chapters of major home county political parties, illustrating that the politics of new immigrants were still linked to their native soil. It is possible that these first generation immigrant parents established their distinctive Bangladeshi cultural space in New York City as "the first effective step in their social and political incorporation" (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006, p. 166).

The Ethnic Enclave: "A Home Outside of Home Thousands of Miles Away"

One Bangladeshi parent explained to the researcher that the primary purpose of an ethnic enclave in the host country was to find "a home away from home thousands of miles away." She emigrated from Bangladesh with her husband, son, and daughter about ten years before. At that time her family settled in a small county at upstate New York

because her brother-in-law, a physician who sponsored the family to get an immigration visa, also lived there. After two and a half years, she and her husband seriously considered returning to Bangladesh with their children. A family friend recommended that they relocate in Astoria, Queens; a thriving Bangladeshi ethnic enclave. Recounting the experiences of relocation and its anticipated intergenerational impact she reflected: "Since we couldn't return to Bangladesh, I and my husband figured that the best alternative for us in New York State would be to relocate to Astoria, Queens, where a mini-Bangladesh was in the making… It was like a home outside of home, thousands of miles away."

Building on their positive experiences in the ethnic community, this couple became actively involved in various social and cultural activities in the Bangladeshi community. Four years after the family settled in Astoria, the father assumed a leadership position in an ethno-cultural political organization. Reportedly, this organization had influence with the local congressman. The father explained, "Our attempt is not to take part in US politics directly, but to make sure that the voice of our growing ethnic community in this neighborhood is heard." A community worker reported that in Brooklyn and Queens, members of Bangladeshi organizations invited local congressman and leaders of the City Council to their annual meetings and cultural gatherings to make their presence felt as constituents. They were following the practices of Indian and Pakistani immigrants from South Asia.

Bharati Mukherjee (1999), a writer and immigrant from West Bengal, India, who claims to be an American and not a Bengali-American, captures the essence of the Bangladeshi first generation immigrant experience in the US by explaining, "[a]

Bangladeshi immigrant …asks only that the host culture permits him or her to retain an alien core that will not be compromised or surrendered." She describes it as a "bargain" to turn the host country into an "imagined homeland built on reclaimed land" (p 72).

However, this imagined homeland was not without its problems for the parents who shared their experiences with the researcher. The father of a college student captured the theme of "paradise lost revisited" by commenting on the divisiveness inherent in the Bangladeshi ethnic community. He provided an insider's account of the dynamics of internal fragmentation that went hand in hand with its external growth. He believed that this concurrent process of community fragmentation and growth in the US replicated rural Bangladesh:

> As the Bangladeshi community in Astoria is increasing in size and complexity, we see community mosques almost at every nook and corner, not because we are very religious, I don't think. Typically, a dispute over any trifle will split the board of management resulting in a breakaway mosque just across the street and many more in the neighborhood over time as the process continues, dividing the community into small fragments and geographical catchments by default. Paradoxically, as the community is getting bigger, it is also becoming smaller because of lack of cohesion. It is like rural Bangladesh where just about every little fragment of a community is defined by a mosque at its center. Sometimes it is not the contiguity so much as the region or the sub-region of Bangladesh one comes from that becomes a deciding factor for someone to choose a particular mosque over others for prayer services.

According to this parent, these developments were inextricably linked with the dynamics of an expanding ethnic enclave that had little or nothing to do with the events in New York City.

The Ethnic Enclave: "An Extension of Home Environment for Children"

Nearly all the parents considered the ethnic community an extension of their homes and counted on it to have a positive impact on their children. If the home of a Bangladeshi immigrant parent in New York City was the text, the ethnic community was

the context for transmission of native culture to the children making up for their distance from the native country. Both were sources of primary socialization for their children. "The burgeoning ethnic community here allowed us to take advantage of a native community that served as an extension of the home environment for our two children," explained a mother who moved from upstate New York to Astoria. She and her husband were happy to take their very young children to community events; religious and secular festivals; and observances, including Eid-ul-Fitr; Eid-ul-Azha; Bengali New Year's day; Bengali Language Movement Day; and Bangladesh Independence Day. Their children socialized with other Bangladeshi children in the neighborhood public school, improved their skills in spoken Bengali, and practiced the rituals and tenets of Islam. One parent added:

> They knew early on what it means to be Bangladeshi children from socializing with other children of Bangladeshi descent in Astoria even in public schools, where they also became equally friendly with the children from many other cultures and nationalities. Now my children can speak Bangla fluently, but do not read or write it very well. They read the Koran, offer prayers and fast during the month of Ramadan.

Another parent, who earned his living driving yellow taxicab, moved from the South Bronx to Astoria many years earlier. He was extremely concerned about the possibility that his children would grow up repudiating their native culture. His wife was worried about the adequacy of their home to provide an appropriate setting for the children to be groomed in native culture. They protected their children from "adverse influences" of the neighborhood. This couple looked for a congenial community in which their daughters could interact with other Bangladeshi children on a regular basis and continue to learn and practice the rituals of the native culture and religion. Astoria turned out to be their best choice, and they were happy to draw upon the twin sources of

Bangladeshi culture in New York City: the religious and the secular. They were able to pray and observe religious rituals in ethnic Bangladeshi Mosques and celebrate Bangladeshi national holidays and ethno-linguistic Bengali cultural festivals in the ethnic enclave. Astoria was a perfect match for this mother:

> On Saturdays my daughters go to the nearest Bangladeshi mosque only five blocks away with other immigrant children primarily from Bangladesh to recite from the 'Holy Koran;' offer the midday prayer and learn how to read and write Bengali. On Sundays they attend a Bangladeshi Cultural Center, not too far away to learn how to sing and dance. To me it is the best of both worlds: they are learning our religion and our secular culture at the same time. They are very happy to take advantage of the opportunity to socialize with other immigrant Bangladeshi children everyday. To me it is far better than raising the children in a totally alien environment.

A third couple also relocated to Astoria, in this case from Parkchester in the Bronx; this was years before a new Bangladeshi enclave developed in that neighborhood. The husband was a certified public accountant, and the wife a school teacher. About a decade ago their pre-adolescent twin daughters and adolescent son were able to attend a Bengali school located in a Bangladeshi Hindu temple "without having to commute many hours during the weekend." Consequently, their daughters learned to read and write Bengali, perform classical Bengali/Indian dance, and practice Hindu religious rituals. These parents strongly felt that the ethnic community in Astoria provided a supportive environment for the continuity of the native (Bengali-Hindu) culture for their children and largely compensated for the displacement and disruption caused by emigration from the native country and the resultant dissociation from the culture of origin. They also accompanied their children to the annual festivities held in Astoria. Expressing his opinion about the salience of the Diaspora the father of the children recounted:

> Many of our children participate in the whole spectrum of Bengali cultural activities including performance in dance, drama, instrumental music, recitation

> from poems, and songs. It is very important for us and our children to renew our pledge to Bangladeshi culture through these rituals. While *Pohela Baishakh* [Bengali New Year's Day], *Ekushe* (21st) *February* [Bengali-now International-Language Movement Day] and "*Bijoy Dibosh*" [Independence Day of Bangladesh, December 16] especially renew our commitment to Bangladesh, seven seas away, it makes our children feel proud about their native language and culture. These are more effective than live programs telecast by NTV and ATN from Bangladesh. Instead of watching something analogous to virtual realities on the television screen, they actually experience tangible realities that unfold before their eyesight and within the earshot in real space and time.

Like many other Bangladeshi immigrants in New York City, this couple subscribed to a number of 24-hour Bengali-language TV channels broadcast from Bangladesh and Calcutta, the capital of West Bengal and a Bengali speaking state of India. The mother of the children believed that the eleven weekly Bengali language newspapers published in New York City catered exclusively to the needs of ethnic immigrant parents, while the six 24-hour Bangladeshi television channels helped create a sense of belonging to the native country among her children.

The extension of the home environment through a vibrant ethnic enclave was largely confined to the early socialization of these immigrant children, when they were young and the parental influence was dominant. As these second generation immigrants grew older, this imagined homeland no longer held sway on them. According to a parent, the context of primary socialization reinforced by him and his wife in collaboration with the enclave was replaced by the secondary sources of socialization as their children were exposed to the life experiences beyond the confines of home and ethnic environment. The storylines that follow describe the growing effects of these experiences on the children.

Ethnic Enclave: A Vulnerable Sanctuary for Immigrant Children

Some parents questioned whether the Diaspora could realistically serve as the symbolic center for their children. A Brooklyn mother of two adolescents compared her ethnic community to "an oasis in the middle of a neighborhood prone to drug related crimes and gang violence." Her husband agreed that without the presence of the Bangladeshi community in the neighborhood, the progress of their children would have been compromised under the influence of youths from other ethnic and racial groups. He felt that street corners and even neighborhood public schools distracted immigrant children and undermined the goals their parents had set for them. He lamented that the ethnic community was not a sanctuary for both parents and children and "not every child benefits from it." His fifteen-year old daughter was a role model for many adolescents of Bangladeshi descent in the neighborhood, while his sixteen-year old son fell far short of that expectation.

Although this parent gave the researcher consent to interview his son, the adolescent declined to give assent. Subsequently, the boy's mother told the researcher a painful story of her son's transformation from a gifted student at one of the best public schools in Brooklyn to an underachiever struggling with failing grades under mounting peer-group pressure. The family moved to another neighborhood with a strong Bangladeshi presence, but the boy did not part company with his friends who used illegal drugs and were involved in gang-related activities. The parents tried to redeem the stigma of their son in the ethnic community through the achievements of their daughter. They sought refuge in a mosque-based ethnic organization and played more responsible roles in it than ever before. However, their son continued to be recalcitrant and he never

ceased to reject the ethnic community. This situation exemplifies a variation of dissonant acculturation in which the parents embrace the ethnic community, but the children denounce it.

Nonetheless, the mother of the same child reported that through parental oversight her daughter embraced the ethnic community, socialized with multicultural friends outside of the community and excelled academically at the same time. In this illustration of selective acculturation, she balanced conflicting demands of her parents' native culture and American culture. This couple explained the reason why some Bangladeshi immigrant parents left their neighborhood. When adolescent children demonstrated socially unacceptable behavior or academic failure that resulted in bitter parent-child conflicts and family disruptions they withdrew from the ethnic enclave to avoid embarrassment and ignominy. Another variant of dissonant acculturation was exemplified when adolescent children disowned their native culture to embrace the local youth subculture while the parents chose to avoid the ethnic community out of shame.

The Chaudhuri family moved away from a Bangladeshi enclave in Brooklyn to a largely white neighborhood in Staten Island to "save the three adolescent children from an unwholesome neighborhood." Mr. Chaudhuri expressed his conviction that parents always have more leverage with their children than the ethnic community, which was by no means sealed off from the negative influences of the wider neighborhood. He observed that some parents were more successful than others in keeping their children away from bad influences. According to him, less educated parents and economically disadvantaged families always ended up paying a higher price. Although his family relocated to a better neighborhood in Staten Island, Mr. Chaudhuri was gratified that it

was only twenty minutes' drive from the community. "We can still take full advantage of Bangladeshi community rituals in Brooklyn for our three sons without being influenced by the depressed neighborhood," he added.

Another parent, who lived only ten blocks away from Mr. Chaudhuri's, attributed his inability to buy or rent in or around the Bangladeshi ethnic community either in Brooklyn or in Queens, to the "unreal state of the real estate." He found out that the demand for real estate in these ethnic enclaves far outweighed the supply for immigrant Bangladeshis who drove up the prices of homes and rentals and put them beyond the reach of many families. His wife shared the conviction that ethnic enclaves "centered around the places of worship, including ethnic Mosques and temples, and dotted with ethnic grocery stores and other businesses" might look secure to the parents, but they could be booby-traps for the children unless the parents were particularly careful about the pitfalls that always stemmed from contact with youths in the wider neighborhood.

Some parents voiced concern about the diminishing role of the ethnic community and the Diaspora as children became adolescents and young adults. A former college teacher in Bangladesh indicated that she was increasingly pitted against her growing children. The two generations had different narratives, even though they were living in the same place. She imagined telling her grandchildren "a tale of two stories" about a "fork in the road and the divergent paths" her children took as they came of age in New York City. During an informal conversation with the researcher before an interview with her sixteen-year old daughter, another parent argued that continuity of native culture could be achieved across the generational divide in the native country. But this was far too difficult to accomplish in a country in which the "generational divide was

exacerbated by the acculturation divide." According to this father, the rift between the parents and the children, as first and second generation immigrants, was extremely difficult, if not impossible, to bridge, and the ethnic community "can do little or nothing to undo this damage." He was particularly concerned about the insurmountable "acculturation gap" between himself and his children in New York City. "It feels like we are waging a losing battle," he despaired.

Parents' Push-Pull Factors and Trade-off: Selective Acculturation for Children

Despite their ethnic pride and contribution to the growing diversity of New York City during a period of demographic transition, a number of parents acknowledged that their ethnocentric worldview created a bubble of homogeneity that hindered rather than helped their children's adaptation to the US. The tension between the push of their children's felt need for acculturation and their pull of retention of native culture through the next generation warranted a trade off through selective acculturation. In this scenario, second generation immigrant children were required to embrace acculturation selectively without giving up their native culture. Some college educated or financially well to do parents expressed their conviction that the second generation immigrant children would emerge from the bubble of ethnic homogeneity and become a part of the host country without abandoning the native culture.

After interviewing a sixteen-year old participant, the researcher had a casual exchange with her father, who happened to be one of the most affluent parents in the study. He expressed his desire to raise the two daughters by "combining the best of both worlds: Bangladeshi and American culture." As a community leader and philanthropist he regularly made large donations to community organizations in the ethnic enclave.

Reportedly, his socio-economic status earned him special privileges in the community so that he could bring up the two daughters without fear of sanctions by other Bangladeshi immigrants. He confided that not all the Bangladeshi parents in the enclave enjoyed this prerogative. His daughters attended a private school and brought home Irish-American, Italian-American, and Jewish classmates and girlfriends in addition to Bangladeshi friends from the neighborhood; the parents ascertained that their children were immersed in both cultures to secure upward mobility for them in mainstream society as hyphenated Bangladeshi-Americans. In response to a question whether the parents and their children were pursuing the same path of acculturation, the mother responded unhesitatingly, "We are too much into our native culture because we grew up in Bangladesh; it is unbecoming of us to expect the same for our children since they are growing up in the US."

Two of the major goals of selective acculturation for the children were education and career achievement. Bangladeshi immigrant parents used the ethnic media and other resources to learn about admission to the most competitive public high schools such as Stuyvesant, Bronx Science, and Brooklyn Tech. One parent explained to the researcher how a Bangladeshi Tutorial Center, founded by a first generation Bangladeshi immigrant with a Ph.D. from the US opened its four branches in the ethnic enclaves in Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx to meet the growing needs of the community. "It is playing a significant role in materializing Bangladeshi parents' dream to have their children admitted to the best schools and colleges in the US, unlike ever before," he added. According to this parent, Bangladeshi immigrant parents who had the wherewithal to pay for other mainstream tutorial homes took advantage of this community resource.

Bangladeshi immigrant parents in New York City who aspired to academic and professional achievements of their children sought it through selective acculturation (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). They wanted their children to internalize the norms and values of the host society and at the same time retain elements of native culture. Nonetheless, some parents were more ambivalent than others in this regard. One father compared his predicament to "walking a tightrope" between his desire to transmit his native culture to his children and the possibility that it would hinder his children's upward mobility in the US. His wife was overwhelmed with the challenges her children faced in straddling Bangladeshi culture and the culture of New York City. Her husband, consistent with parents of similar socioeconomic backgrounds, indicated that they experienced push-pull factors in order to facilitate their children's selective acculturation. The push was to support the child's need to take advantage of US culture, education, and citizenship while the pull was to retain Bangladeshi culture. In a mirror-image of the parents' struggle, these push-pull factors were often reversed in their children. Even this father recognized that parents' push factors became their children's pull factors and vice versa. This dichotomy could set off parent-child conflicts and disruptions in the family.

The Story Line of the Second Generation Immigrants

The adolescents and young adults interviewed for this study told very different stories from their parents. Even though the two generations were rarely observed in open conflict with each other, the parents wanted their children to retain the influence of native culture while adopting the norms and values of the US. In other words, they accepted selective acculturation so their children could achieve upward mobility. If it was difficult for the parents to balance their own push-push factors over how much native culture their

children could shed in order to succeed in the US, it was even more challenging for their children to do so. This was particularly problematic during late adolescence and young adulthood, as parental control and oversight diminished under the growing influence of secondary socialization.

Reinvented Ethnicity

The context of the host country and conditions in their countries of origin generally keep new immigrants tethered to their nationalities of origin (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). This was characterized by the pull for the old world and the push for the new among the Bangladeshi immigrant parents. In contrast, their children moved away from their parents' new immigrant status and reinvented their own ethnicity as they embraced the realities of the new country. Although the children in this study may have begun as ethnic Bangladeshis under the dual influence of their parents and the ethnic community, they eventually grew beyond that circle of influence and reinvented their ethnicity in hybridized or hyphenated identities as "new New Yorkers." Some would even reclaim their Bangladeshi heritage, but primarily as New Yorkers.

As they became adolescents and young adults, their social realities differed markedly from their parents, chiefly because they interacted with other ethnic groups. At times they confronted their parents' negative views towards people of other races and ethnic groups in the neighborhood. For example, when Mr. and Mrs. Karim made insensitive remarks about African Americans and Latinos in the neighborhood, their two sons admonished them "not to act like racists." The parents openly admitted that they learned a lot from their children, but could not always think like them because of the differences in their "upbringing and socialization." Again, ethnicity served as an anchor

of de-territorialized national identity for these parents. But for their children, ethnic identities were negotiated and constructed in a context of diversity. The vibrant and diverse setting of New York City served as the larger stage on which their reconfigured identities were played out.

Shift from Primary to Secondary Socialization

All the young informants spoke about the influence of native Bangladeshi culture from childhood to early adolescence through their parents and the Bangladeshi community. However, during adolescence and young adulthood they became more open to the influences of other reference groups through multi-ethnic peers they met in their neighborhoods and schools. At this point, the dominant role of their parents began to attenuate, and their attempts to perpetuate unilateral transmission of Bangladeshi culture were challenged. Although they were not observed denigrating their native culture, these adolescents and young adults developed new relationships between the old world and the new. Unencumbered by their parent's bridge to the native country, the children paved the way for a future in the US in the span of a single generation.

The stories of the children began with the same push-pull factors as their parents. The pull to the culture of origin mirrored their parents' mindset, because of the key role they played in transmitting Bangladeshi culture to them at the impressionable age. This was reinforced by the ethnic community. The push factors consisted of features in the external environment including multi-ethnic neighborhoods; public and private schools or colleges; and parental expectations for high career achievements. As the children became older, their push-pull factors underwent major realignments. The influence of the external environment increased, and the dominance of the parents and the ethnic

community decreased. Intergenerational tensions became more prominent, and the shifting power relationships in the family led to minor parent-child conflicts over native language, religion, ethnic food, clothing, music, ethnic TV channels, parental expectations, and affiliation with the ethnic enclave. Female adolescents and young adults questioned the gendered socialization of children and sexual division of labor in families undergirded by patriarchal norms. More girls than boys expressed serious concerns about the possibility of arranged marriages in which their parents would determine their future husbands, and some found prudent ways to wrest the decision making power from their parents.

The immigrant parents' propensity to retain their native culture in the US drew mixed reactions among their children. One adolescent referred to his parents as "prisoners of native culture." However, another young woman, who empathized with her parents' point of view believed that they would be "like fish out of water" without the ethnic community to count on. A sophomore in a four-year CUNY college described his parents' negative attitudes towards acculturation as a strategic attempt to have their children retain Bangladeshi culture so that they would not become lost in the US. Another college student indicated that he was better off with his parents who were embedded in the native culture because it gave him the opportunity to draw directly upon both his native culture and his life world as a New Yorker. Most informants strongly distanced themselves from the ethnic community while a small number of them tried to reinvent it.

Critique of the Ethnic Community

Eventually, most adolescents and young adults, already socialized in multiple reference groups, confronted the juggernaut of their ethnic community that had served as an extension of their parental system. Both the parents and the community were committed to facilitating intergenerational continuity of the native culture. Although some younger informants demonstrated various degrees of acceptance, critique, and rejection, none were as beholden to the ethnic enclave as their parents.

Nazwa, a seventeen-year old girl who was about to enroll in New York University, spoke about her need to disassociate from her Bangladeshi neighborhood. She separated herself from an externally imposed identity in order to achieve her own personal growth in New York City. Without expressing any resentment towards the Bangladeshi community, she chose to stay away from it because "everybody there is kind of nosey." The concept of "the other" emerged within her intra-ethnic context. "Other people, who are not members of my family, want to keep an eye on what we are doing and who we are socializing with," she observed. This youth felt that her ethnic community thrived on "gossip" about the Bangladeshi children in the neighborhood. A nineteen-year old male college student expanded on the idea of the "other." In consonance with his parents, he was reasonably comfortable among other ethnic Bangladeshis, but could not be more disappointed by their spiteful attitudes towards the second generation immigrants. Describing how they viewed him, he said:

> At times it feels like someone is watching you from your back, only to find fault with your gesture, body language or mannerism. In other words, it's like they own you just because your parents are from Bangladesh. It's like being discriminated by your so-called 'own people.' If I put on an oversized baggy pant, listen to loud rap music, put on an earring, or even hang out with other boys and girls from the

> school, who are visibly different from Bangladeshis, all eyes would be fixed on me.

In other words, this process of distancing the "self" from the "other," represented by his parents' ethnic community, marked the beginning of this young adults' identity trajectory in a multicultural setting.

Similarly, Shupti, a high school senior, was shocked to discover that her parents' generation was critical of immigrant children like her. They assumed that she and her co-ethnic friends were disingenuous and could not be genuine Bangladeshi:

> The Bangladeshi community is very critical of our generation. The members of this community question how genuine we are as Bangladeshis. They are always quick to find out if we are too Americanized and assume that we are Bangladeshi in name only. Even if we dress like Bangladeshi girls in those parties, we never speak in Bengali and we carry ourselves as if we are in America, not in Bangladesh, which is a reality.

Here the ethnic community served as an extension of her home environment, in which what other co-ethnics thought about her mattered more than what she thought about herself.

Other young informants expressed similar criticisms of the community. Imran, a college sophomore, felt that the primary purpose of ethnic community was to serve the parents at the expense of their children: "The Bangladeshi ethnic community in this neighborhood gives them a new sense of purpose to continue their tradition in a foreign country like the US. It creates an opportunity for them to give us a clear idea of what it means to live and to grow up among the people of our ethnicity." However, he assured the researcher that was not the whole story. Since increasing numbers of Bangladeshi immigrants recently moved to his neighborhood, parental pressure mounted for him conform to "Bangladeshi values" even when he was socializing with his non-Bangladeshi

friends. The expansion of the ethnic enclave made him feel isolated and uncomfortable. But when he tried to distance himself from the Bangladeshi community, his parents took away privileges he had taken for granted. He remembered dressing, "like other kids in the neighborhood and in school without any problem not too long ago" as long as he was outside of his home. He thought it was "cool to do so," and it did not seem to bother his parents before.

Imran's father owned a grocery store ten blocks from his home and insisted that his son avoid questionable behavior in the neighborhood because it would make his family "look less than good in the eyes of the members of the Bangladeshi community." For the boy, these were people he did not "even know or will never know," and the situation made him feel as if he were "walking a tightrope." Although he avoided major conflict with his parents, he kept in touch with friends from other ethnic groups surreptitiously. This particular young man appeared to straddle his American and Bangladeshi identities effortlessly. He blamed his parents for being driven by the need to "look good in the eyes of the Bangladeshi community" at his expense. He wanted to fit in with the multiethnic community in the neighborhood. Unfortunately, two months after this researcher interviewed Imran, he was beaten by a group of local Bangladeshi adolescents for not looking like one of them. The researcher later learned that these youths were the informal enforcers of community norms and values in the ethnic enclave. They came to New York City around the age of sixteen, and therefore would not be considered second generation immigrants.

As a freshman in college, Parvez weighed the pros and cons of his community. On one hand, he believed that it provided opportunities for immigrants to socialize in an

ethno-cultural space while in the US. On the other hand, he recognized that it could undercut access to multicultural socialization, bilingual skills, and greater integration with mainstream American society by making Bangladeshi immigrants prisoners of their own ethnicity:

> It makes you feel that you are in a small piece of Bangladesh in New York City: people speak in Bengali mostly about Bangladeshi politics and political parties. They sell Bengali newspapers, imported Bangladeshi clothes especially for women, fish, and groceries. People show real closeness. But it makes you blind too. You forget that this is America, not Bangladesh. You socialize only with Bangladeshis, and you don't know how to get along with people from other cultures even if you can speak in English. Some people never learn English because they do not have to. This is really bad. It's like they are in a prison. Many people in this community have a very narrow view about the Bangladeshi children who are growing up in New York City. They want them to be only Bangladeshi like them. If they see us hanging out with boys from other cultures, not to speak of girls, they will spread rumor.

Parvez's classmate and friend, Asheek, also tried to weigh the strengths and weaknesses of the ethnic community. He argued that in collusion with some parents it set unrealistic expectations for the second generation immigrants by refusing to embrace change in the US. He recommended growth and development for the ethnic community and wanted his parents to come to terms with the reality of living in a new country:

> It has a good side and a bad side. The good side is that Bangladeshi immigrants can connect with other people from their country living in New York City. The bad side is that it prevents them from learning English. The good thing about this community is that it shows respect to the children who are doing very well in school, and going to the top schools or the best colleges. The bad thing is that it is very critical about the kids, who are doing poorly in school and hang out with African-American or Latino kids or who, in their words, have turned into 'Americans.' I think that the Bangladeshi community in New York City, like most of our parents, wants us to be one hundred per cent Bangladeshi. It's like we will go to the best schools, best colleges in the US and work in the best jobs in this country, but will not become Americans even by ten percent. They do not know what they are talking about. They need to grow up too.

Kanta, an eleventh grader, expressed outrage about the unwarranted interference of the ethnic community in her life. She distanced herself from the community because it represented a state of stasis, but doggedly reclaimed ties with native culture and refused to acknowledge that her generation was embracing acculturation and integration as New Yorkers at the expense of reality principle the members of Bangladeshi enclave seemed to lack:

> …. friends of our family and even strangers in the community may make it their business to tell me how to become a Bangladeshi girl. I am not a fool. I know what I am doing. They are in denial, but I am not. It looks like I live in a multicultural City of New York, they still live in Bangladesh. I guess, I am a Bangladeshi-American, but they are not. They need to smell the coffee and wake up. I kind of tell them, 'mind your own business' without being rude.

Born in Brooklyn in an apartment complex with fifty Bangladeshi families, Imitiaz was now seventeen and about to enter college. At younger age, he had positive attitudes towards his native community. But as he became more aware of the city around him, he developed a different perspective. At this point he was less proud of the Bangladeshi community; he blamed the adults who distorted reality and cast aspersions on the second generation immigrants remorselessly:

> If Bangladeshi adults watch me walk down the street with my friends, they will assume something and make up a story to tell other people in the community. If anything, I want them to come forward and tell me what they think about me. They always assume something bad and get the kick out of it. If the untrue story is about me they will never tell anything to my parents, not to speak of me, but spread the rumor to other people in the community without any remorse.

Still another young adult, Nandonik, believed that adults in the ethnic enclave could help Bangladeshi parents by being prudent watchdogs instead of hurting children with untoward criticism even if they appeared to be too Americanized for them. The community's *modus operandi* prompted him to stay away as a rational choice:

> I don't really have much interaction with the Bangladeshi community. Over here if you hang out with girls the parents will get the report that you have something going on with them, even if it were anything but true. Bangladeshi parents will trust the rumor spread by their community over their child's account. It will affect arranged marriage more for the girls than for the boys because you are not supposed to hang out with someone of the opposite sex. I think in Bangladesh they do it very discreetly, but over here it's not that secretive. The native community here may help the Bangladeshi parents keep watch on their children, but it does not help the children at all; they are very critical of the community and the role it plays. Some parents may think that it helps them keep watch on their children, but it's not true. Again this isn't Bangladesh and so kids can do bad things outside of the view of the community.

Drawing an analogy between the South Asian-Indian ethnic community and the Bangladeshi ethnic community in New York City, Najwa argued that her parents' community was too divisive and self-destructive to be supportive of the second generation. She recommended that it emulate the Asian-Indian community, which she found more supportive of their youths:

> I feel that if we all come together and become united we can help Bangladeshi students in New York City. I know that the (South Asian) Indians raise money in parties to help the college students in their communities. But the Bangladeshi community is known for politics for personal gratification of many parents and non-parents. They fight for the control of organizations that always end up splitting into many smaller and more ineffective segments. They do nothing to help the career advancement of the children in the community. I believe they should learn from others and do better.

Kavita expressed her pride about the Bangladeshi immigrant community. However, she was mindful of its capacity to sanction the detractors. Consistent with the participants who had negative views about the ethnic community, her story illustrated how it could act as an agent of social control. By monitoring deviant behavior, it sent a message to young people about the consequences of violating community norms. She alluded to a girl who rejected her native culture so that she could be identified as an "American" instead of a "Bangladeshi." This transformation occurred soon after she had

immigrated to New York City; both the girl and her family paid an exorbitant price. They lost respect in the community, and in this instance, the girl's educational achievements suffered a setback:

> I know some boys and girls in this neighborhood who came from Bangladesh and were carried off by what they saw in the streets: free-mixing and freedom to do anything they want without caring for parental authority and control. One of them lives close by. Her parents are having a very difficult time to have her go to school. Everybody in the community knows about it. It is a disgrace to her family. This is the price you pay for forgetting your native culture. ..The girl is paying the price, but she will realize it later. Her family is paying it big time.

Kavita distanced herself from such newcomers from Bangladesh; she described them as "fresh off the boat or FOB." She decided to stay the middle course, represented by a hybridized Bangladeshi-American identity. According to her, this was the most sensible choice for second generation Bangladeshi immigrants.

However, not all young informants were so dismissive of the Bangladeshi community. Many identified specific ways in which it supported their families and promoted their own aspirations in the US. They also demonstrated great passion for native food and festivities. Meghla, an eleventh grader, was more circumspect about why she avoided participating in community events. However, she appreciated that it gave her "a great sense of belonging" and a native habitat for her parents. Aseef was transferred to a high school at Staten Island after his family relocated from Brooklyn. Nonetheless, he never missed the opportunity to attend the Brooklyn and Queens Bangladeshi Street Fairs every year with his parents and siblings. He proudly considered this ethno-cultural space a proof of ownership, his native community shared with other ethnic communities of New York City:

> … I liked the food and music. I was moved by the enthusiasm of Bangladeshi young generation. It always feels really great. It also makes me proud about New

> York City. I don't know; it gives me a kind of ownership of this country. ..When I am in a Bangladeshi street fair in New York City, I feel proud that the Bangladeshis are also an important part of this multicultural city. It looks like we also share a piece of the great pie of New York City. Like every other ethnic group in this city who hold such street fairs.

The Parent-Child Acculturation Gap

Bangladeshi immigrants and their children reflected different perceptions of the role of the ethnic community and the Diaspora. This difference pertained to the gap in their levels of acculturation. Shupti, an honor student in a Brooklyn public high school, expressed "mixed feelings" about how her parents tried to retain the native culture in her at home:

> Respecting parents unquestioningly, eating Bangladeshi food, wearing the traditional clothes of a Bangladeshi-Muslim girl, offering daily prayers and observing the tenets of Islam are very important to them. ..I have a mixed feeling [about them]. Although I respect my parents without any question, I don't agree with them on everything one hundred percent.

She was reluctant to wear traditional Bangladeshi clothes in and out of her home environment or to observe religious rituals as her parents oftentimes demanded. Time and again she protested and finally succeeded in making them understand her side of the story. She achieved a symbolic victory when her parents finally appreciated that by wearing traditional dress outside of her home she actually stood out, and it was incompatible with her need to merge with other multicultural American girls, who loved to dress alike.

> Even when I went to stores my parents made sure that I wore the traditional dress of Salwar-Kamiz. I always protested to them that I do not want to stand out among others, but they did not listen when I was very young. They listen to me now after all these years. Now I do not have to wear Salwar-Kamiz when I go for shopping. Finally! (she heaved a sigh of relief).

These experiences could be very painful and result in a widening parent-child divide. Nilanjana, a freshman in a four-year CUNY college, recounted how the tension in the relationship with her parents evolved over time as she gradually came of age. She clearly remembered her distress upon arrival at JFK with her mother and younger sister about thirteen years before. She held her father's hand tightly while waiting in the arrival lounge after being checked by US immigration. Even though she described her feelings at that time as a filial attachment that could never be severed, this relationship changed as the language and cultural gap widened between her and her parents. This participant thought that an unbridgeable parent-child language divide might eventually lead to her emotional detachment from the parents. Nonetheless, as she constantly socialized with non-ethnic friends, in which English was the sole language of communication, this young adult prized the privilege of privacy and personal space this language helped her create at the expense of her family cohesion:

> My reading and writing skills in Bengali were excellent when I came here, but I am so sorry to say that after all these years I have lost these skills. Even my spoken Bengali is not that great any more. I communicate with my parents in Bengali, but I can't express my complex feelings and emotions in this language any more. My parents don't speak English well. When they explain anything complex in Bengali, I only pretend to understand it. It will cause hurt feelings if I do not. It looks like I am moving away from my parents emotionally because of my poor Bengali and their equally poor English. And it feels like there is no bridge across this divide (her eyes became somewhat red and tearful, before she wiped them). .. When I am speaking to you in English very comfortably, my parents are not able to understand anything even if the door is ajar and they are not sitting too far away from this room. It is good and bad at the same time. Good because I can create my own little space and privacy when I speak in English with anybody. It is bad because I cannot share my complex feelings with them.

Because native culture and religion were sacrosanct to her parents, she chose not to hurt them by any means. Nonetheless, her poise and equanimity about conforming to parental

values concealed the cognitive dissonance between what she practiced to please her parents and her personal convictions:

> I question everything that they have done so well to teach me and my younger sister. I cannot tell them that I now question why we have to have a blind faith in a particular religion we are born into. Since I am taking college courses in philosophy now, I am learning to question many things about my religion. They have no clue on what I am going through. But I try not to upset them by showing my differences from them. I pray like before and I speak to them in broken Bengali as if everything is fine, while it is not.

Although Nilanjana confided to the researcher that she was emotionally adrift, her parents did not notice her transformation since her arrival in New York. They cherished the memory of the little girl who fluently recited from a famous modern Bengali poem three months into her arrival in Brooklyn at a family get-together. Her father, whose avocation was acting in Bangladesh, taught her a poem with this refrain: "Shuranjana, don't you dare go out there/ Don't talk to that young man/Come right back, Shuranjana/When the night is fully illuminated with the silvery fire from the stars." The irony of this verse for Nilanjana, and other children of Bangladeshi immigrants for that matter, who had to address traditional gender roles in their lives as New Yorkers, would be explored in the next chapter.

Both her parents were strongly rooted in the Bangladeshi Diaspora in New York. They had little or no knowledge of their daughter's inner struggles and inability to disclose her authentic feelings about religion. She rejected the myths of Adam and Eve; the role of Satan in the Fall of Man from Paradise, or Paradise Lost, as portrayed in Islam. Nilanjana was also critical about the religious sanctions against eating pork. She complied with her parents' traditional prayer offerings despite rejecting their religious convictions. The emptiness of the rituals dawned on her in physical terms:

> I am seriously questioning the value of my religion. My mom says that I have to believe in Islam blindly because it was handed down to us by our forefathers. I do not know why Satan has been characterized as the enemy of the humanity when he helped Adam and Eve gain self-knowledge by eating the apple from the forbidden tree of knowledge. I grew up not eating pork but I question what is so bad about it and how does it affects one's belief in God. There was a time when I didn't want to talk to them for a while to deal with my disagreement. Now, I get along with what they say without ever ceasing to talk because I have found out that they aren't very narrow-minded parents and they always give me some freedom to breathe. It works out OK. My mom tells me to pray and I pray, but I have to tell you that it's funny because I get a tingling feeling inside. I feel no real urge for the prayer and when I do anyway to please my mother, my body and my mind appear to be at two different places.

Although for some children of ethnic immigrants the divergent paths from their parents represented a rejection of spiritual beliefs, for others it involved a desire to embrace Bangladeshi cultural symbols. For example, Moushumi and Meghla resorted to religious practices because they accepted their parents' native rituals at face value. On the other hand, Asheek and Aseef embraced the underlying value of spirituality that drove those practices. In other instances, youths reinvented spirituality within their native religion. Iqbal, a sophomore in an Ivy League college, started off disliking the parental expectation to attend a weekend Islamic school in a community mosque in his Brooklyn neighborhood for prayer services and reading the *Qur'an* in Arabic; a language he never understood. His parents did not find out that these rituals had no meaning for him. At one point during the process of his spiritual exploration Iqbal considered himself an atheist. "Yes, there was a point in which I considered myself an atheist. It's really hard for anyone. The thing is that you can have a lot of small questions and then you could question God's existence altogether, but at that time God's existence became apparent and it made me happier. I'm still not certain that you can entirely prove or disprove his existence. Even scientists wouldn't question this."

However, in his senior year at a selective New York City public high school he met some young Ivy League college graduates who taught him about Islam. This was a transformative experience for him. Unlike his parents or the Imam of the community mosque, who constantly reminded him that questioning his religion was a sacrilege, they encouraged him to raise questions and freely express doubts about religion. He embraced a transcendent view of God within the framework of Islam "without malice towards any other religion…I would say that my experiences with those people transformed me, and that was another major factor in my identity." Iqbal compared his young Islamic teachers with his charismatic high school history teacher who "unveiled the mystery of history" to him by presenting it as an unfolding human story that sustained his abiding interest. "Before I met him I never knew that history is as interesting as physics, and my score in history jumped from mid-80s to higher 90s for the first time," he reflected. He found himself thinking "outside of the box of race, ethnicity and nationality" to discover a post-ethnic and post-national identity in this new found spirituality. It set him apart from his parents, who remained entrenched in the Diaspora. Nonetheless, despite their divergent trajectories in terms of religious beliefs, both Nilanjana and Iqbal concealed their differences with their parents' beliefs system behind a veneer of unquestioned compliance. They represented extreme responses in this study, where other participants followed the middle course fraught with dialogic tension between themselves and their parents.

Similarly, Aneek articulated his differences with his parents over food, music, and social relationships:

> Actually I have a lot of conflicts with my parents over food and music. My parents eat rice and chicken every night for dinner, but I don't like that anymore.

> Every night we have an argument about what to eat and my parents insist on keeping the native culture through eating culturally approved food. I can not hide that oftentimes I like fast food. They dislike the American music that I like and I do not like the Bangladeshi music that they like. I also have conflicts with them over who I hang out with. They don't like if I'm with anyone outside of my own culture for a long time.

As a freshman in college he acknowledged the differences with his parents over the role of religion. Nonetheless, he chose a middle course between Nilanjana and Iqbal by acknowledging his differences openly and renegotiating his relationship with his parents:

> They think that respecting God is the key to being a good person. They also think that respecting yourself and others around you is also equally important for me to be a good person. If you pray to God he'll give you everything you want and make sure you're all right. I can't consider myself very religious, but my parents feel that if I am engaged with some religious activities I'll be a better person. At this age right now, I think I know what is best for me. They still think that they know what's best for me, and there are big differences in what we think. I still believe in Islam but I don't feel that I have to pray five times to respect God or to be a good person…

Nandonik, who had already expressed discomfort about life in the ethnic enclave, also explained his disagreements with his parents over native food, clothing, and music in addition to watching Indian movies or Bangladeshi soap-operas. These issues were generally resolved when parents and children avoided each other or when each side expressed appreciation for the opposite viewpoint without resorting to conflict:

> Sometimes we try to avoid each other. At times I try to understand what my parents have to say. Sometimes they listen to what I have to say. There are times when we appreciate what the other side has to say. For example, I sit down with my parents at times to watch Indian movies and I enjoy not so much the movies but sitting down with my parents to watch something interesting to them. With them I actually finished a whole Bengali drama series which was pretty funny; like I understood it pretty well.

This young man believed that as a sophomore in a four-year college, with easy access to New York City social life, he could separate himself from his traditional parents. But the enduring reciprocity in their relationship constantly reminded him of where he came

from. He interpreted his parent's attitudes towards life in the US as a strategy, or the "name of the game," that enabled them to transmit and retain native culture among their children. However, he believed total conformity of the post-immigrant children to native culture was simply unattainable:

> This is the name of the game. I don't think that my parents want to adopt American culture, not because they can't, but because they think doing so will decrease their credibility as Bangladeshi parents who want to continue their native culture among their children in the US. They know that we will become Americans even if they put enormous pressure on us to be one hundred percent Bangladeshis in US. It is impossible.

The researcher spoke to his parents, both college graduates, after the interview. They admitted that it was unrealistic to expect their children to be "one hundred percent Bangladeshi in New York City." "Thirty percent will be just fine," his father explained. "But it is not going to happen if we give up," his mother added.

Not all parent-child conflicts resulted in compromise or concession. Parvez's story was more dramatic. At the time of the interview this young adult was a freshman at a four-year CUNY college, but he still remembered an incident that occurred five years earlier. His father became angry with him after he spiked up his hair in a punk-style at a neighborhood Italian barber shop. This parent immediately had his haircut redone by a Bangladeshi barber in the ethnic enclave in Brooklyn, regardless if the son's utmost humiliation and hurt feelings. Within a month, the father had sold the family home and moved them to a rented apartment in the enclave. These actions represented a very strong desire of the Bangladeshi parents to retain native culture in the Diaspora through their children.

After five years, Parvez was able to put these events in perspective. He no longer wanted his parents to acculturate in the host country. Instead, he was interested in

drawing upon the two sources of his hyphenated Bangladeshi-American identity separately. He wanted to "mix them" at his own discretion and of his own free will. This young adult remained convinced that Bangladeshi parents were in denial, foolishly trying to raise their children as if they were in Bangladesh, not in America. He concluded that when the post-immigrant children came of age parent-child disagreements were no longer settled inevitably in favor of the parents. He recommended a common sense approach for the children of Bangladeshi children in New York City by avoiding parent-child conflicts and not antagonizing them by any means:

> We have to deal with our parents who try to teach us to be like Bangladeshi boys. This is not Bangladesh, it is America. It is impossible to give in to their demands, but we have to be nice to them because they are good parents. They want us to get good education in US to be in a good profession; like doctor, engineer, or lawyer. As we grow older, we do not have to agree to everything they say any more. I think they understand that. As long we don't disrespect our parents and elders and not speak against Bengali language, culture and Islam and bring home high grades from school and college exams, they are very happy.

Reaching college age appeared to give immigrant youths some leverage over parental demands for cultural conformity. Asheek described how his parents usually came to terms with his physical and mental growth and development by ignoring minor distractions and focusing instead on his core values of mutual respect, educational motivation, work ethic, and desire to pursue an upward mobility. On the eve of entering college he heaved a sigh of relief:

> They want to push too much of Bangladeshi culture when we are young, that's fine. But as we grow up they realize that it does not work, that's even better. I don't always pray five times a day. I know that my parents do not like it, but they don't mind as long as I show respect for the values and traditions of Bangladeshi culture, and tenets of Islam. I always had little excuses as a student in one of the top public schools in New York City. I avoid confrontation with my parents by any means. It is a value that they have taught us. My parents already know that it is difficult for me to accept everything that they tell me as I am growing up in New York City. I guess they kind of admit that accepting my changes more and

> more as long as I do not do something crazy, like hanging out in the street in the after hours, drinking alcohol and smoking drugs, is not a bad idea after all.

Nonetheless, many children saw their parents as conservators of their Bangladeshi heritage. Parvez, similar to other youths interviewed for this study, relied on his parents to preserve his cultural heritage. Aseef, his older brother, wished there were "a bridge across the American culture and the Bangladeshi culture" that would link his generation and his parents' generation in the future. Analogous to the metaphor of the "fork in the road" used by a parent, this bridge was an idealized metaphor signifying the diverging paths of the immigrant parents and their children who were brought up in New York City. Intriguingly, only the children appeared to be able to cross the bridge that spanned these two cultural islands.

Attrition of Native Language

The tropes of a "fork in the road" and "bridge across cultural islands" epitomized the loss of native language and culture among most of the young Bangladeshi informants. All participants in the study understood Bengali, primarily because their parents never used any other language at home. They reported that English was the primary language of communication among their siblings at home and with co-ethic peers in the neighborhood or in school. However, the youths interviewed for the study spoke their native language at different levels of competence generally depending on their age upon arrival in the US. For example, Aneek, who immigrated to New York City with his parents at the age of nine, was very fluent in speaking Bengali, but he admitted substantial loss in his ability to read and write over the last nine years. Abinash's two sisters, who went to a Bengali school in Astoria in their childhood, completely forgot how to read and write their native

language. The attrition of native language among the post-immigrant Bangladeshi youths centered around two basic skills: reading and writing.

Only Moushumi and Nirupama, both of whom were born in New York City, were fluent in all the four basic skills of Bengali: understanding, speaking, reading, and writing. Both demonstrated a strong passion and determination to learn the native language, without much of assistance from their parents and the community. However, competence in native language did not foster a common world-view or cohesion with their parents.

Some parents took the attrition of native language among their descendents as a given. Others expressed a growing concern about the ramifications of lost linguistic skills. One parent described it as "a disadvantage" for the second generation immigrants and a beginning "sign of disconnect from the native culture." This father expressed doubts if the ability to understand and speak Bengali would endure among the third generation unless his son and daughter were willing to marry "Bangladeshis from Bangladesh," or first generation immigrants from Bangladesh. A third generation shift towards English is common among all other groups of non-English speaking immigrants to the US without revitalization of native culture through new immigration from the native country (Veltman, 1983, 1988). Although most of the children of Bangladeshi immigrants seemed to care little about attrition of their native language skills, one parent doggedly tried to defend his thick Bangladeshi accent while speaking in English as a means of retaining "the flavor of Bengali." His college educated daughter criticized him and took umbrage at his unwillingness to change by describing it as an excuse, not an inability, to rid himself of speaking English with a strong Bangladeshi accent.

Summary

The two contrasting narratives of the Bangladeshi immigrant parents and their parents signified two interrelated but contrasting constructions of social reality for the two generations. If the parents were sojourners in their host country, their children were the new settlers in the gateway city of New York. The parents agonized about the "fork in the road" where they feared that their children parted company with them. At the same time, their children found it increasingly difficult to bridge the "two cultural islands" as they reclaimed their share of the host country. The two intertwined narratives were played out in the home environment, the ethnic community, and the larger American society, reflecting a parent-child acculturation gap, attrition of the native language, and selective acculturation among the children. This chapter portrayed how immigrant parents labored the point that continuity of their native culture has an overriding value, while their children dovetailed continuity with change to facilitate their acculturation in the host country. These contrasting narratives serve as a prologue and an overarching framework for the following chapters which delve into more specific domains of the experiences of these parents and their children.

Two powerful analytic categories captured the experiences of parents and children as they took divergent paths in the host country: gendered socialization of the children and the context of reception in the host country. The first category refers to culturally ascribed parental expectations for male and female children within a patriarchal value system and how these children, especially the girls, reinvented their gender roles by internalizing the values of the host society. It also reveals how the boys were more inclined to retain their allegiance to the patriarchal values learned during their primary

socialization, on the contrary. In some cases, they embraced the traditional male role even if it circumscribed their educational and career aspirations and prospects. The next chapter examines the full scope of gendered socialization and acculturation in this study.

The second domain of analysis is the character and the context of New York City and the unique role it played in transforming the lives of these immigrant families while these actors, in turn, transformed this historical gateway city. The transformation of New York City involved a synergy between the immigrants and the City. Newcomers undergo changes as they resettle, but they also redefine the context of the city. As a result, New York City is always undergoing a process of redefinition and renewal that, in turn, reshapes the mindset of the new immigrants and their children (Foner, 2001).

The third and final chapter reveals how the second generation Bangladeshi immigrants carved out ethnic self-identities as a result of this transformational process. It extends beyond the scope of primary socialization of the second generation immigrants with parents and the ethnic community to their secondary socialization in the multicultural host city. This concluding analytic chapter also proposed a typology of acculturative patterns that evolved in unchartered pathways.

CHAPTER VII: GENDERED SOCIALIZATION OF BANGLADESHI YOUTH

Shuranjana, don't you dare go out there;
Don't talk to that young man;
Come right back, Shuranjana:
When the night is fully illuminated with the silvery fire from the stars; …

From "Akashlina" by Jibananda Das (Translated from Bengali by the researcher)

Introduction

Traditional Bangladeshi families are patriarchal; however cultural expectations for girls and boys are communicated through the mother. All the male and female adolescents and young adults interviewed came from intact, two-parent families in which the father was the head of the household and the primary breadwinner. At the father's behest, the mother was responsible for inculcating intergenerational continuity of traditional gender roles, especially among the daughters.

Other new immigrants also come to the US with entrenched patriarchal values characteristic of their native tradition. For example, Mexican immigrant women play traditional gender roles and conform to the sexual division of labor inscribed in their patriarchal value system, while resisting the egalitarian gender norms in the US (Parrado & Flippen, 2005). They overcompensate for the changes brought about by the immigration to the US through retention of their allegiance to native culture with greater conformity to the traditional gender roles in comparison with women of similar age group and economic status living in the native country of Mexico. Studies of Chinese women in New York (Zhou, 1992) and Vietnamese women in Philadelphia (Kibria 1993) found similar patterns expressed in gender inequities among these groups of new Americans. Immigrant research (Foner, 1999; Levitt, 2001) also indicates how exposure to equitable

gender relations in the US becomes a positive experience among first generation immigrant women, but a negative experience for some men.

Bangladeshi immigrant women enjoyed greater freedom in New York City in comparison with their native country, even if they were subject to traditional patriarchal value system of either Muslim or Hindu religion. Some women expressed outrage at the existing gender inequity in Bangladeshi immigrant families in the City. One felt locked in a marriage of total inconvenience, but could not divorce her husband for fear of sanctions from her family and the ethnic community. Another woman, a third-year law student and mother of three, who ran three businesses, explained that in a traditional Bangladeshi culture, including the ethnic enclave in New York City, a man could not conceive of an independent role for women. She claimed that a Bangladeshi married woman in the City could not initiate a divorce because the community would unquestionably side with the husband and blame the wife, who would have to live with its consequences. If a wife pursued a divorce, she would loose the support of her community instantaneously. Other women blamed Bangladeshi men for their "old country mentality," and accused them of perpetuating a "master-slave relationship" in marriage, even if a woman worked and earned a living instead of remaining a homemaker (New York *Times,* 12 October 1990).

In "Can a Subaltern Speak?" Gayatri Spivak, (2000) a Bengali-American feminist scholar, postulated that the paradox of subalternity in a dominant-subservient relationship lies in denying the subservient person the right to any voice, because if a subaltern can speak, she ceases to be a subaltern. In the study reported here, the mothers reflected this subaltern status; most of them seemed to have little voice or interest in raising their

children with gender parity. However, their daughters, second generation Bangladeshi immigrants, rejected this *status quo* for themselves. This chapter explores the gendered socialization of girls and boys interviewed in this study. Although they were immersed in the cultural norms of their parents and ethnic enclave through primary socialization, it was the secondary socialization, particularly in schools and neighborhoods that transformed their ideas about the possibilities for girls in an egalitarian society and exposed the constraints of patriarchal expectations for the girls as well as boys.

The present study found that Bangladeshi parents had different expectations for girls and boys, a feature that remained central to the continuity if their culture. This was reflected in the sexual division of labor in the home; more stringent observance of curfew and parental oversight for girls than for boys; higher educational and career expectations for boys than for girls; and the anticipation of arranged marriage for both boys and girls. The girls were expected to refrain from sex until they were married. In less affluent families they were also required to do domestic work in the home helping their mothers cook, clean, and do the laundry, while the boys were exempt from these chores. On the other hand, the sons were required to work to help their parents through financial hard times even at the expense of their education. To conform to the patriarchal norms, boys were required to live with their parents after marriage, while the girls were expected to move into the homes of their husband's families following marriage. The parents' ascribed gender specific roles to their children that mirrored their own upbringing in the native country. However, as the children interacted with the wider neighborhood, schools and multicultural settings as they came of age in New York City, their ideas about what was appropriate for girls and boys began to change.

Consequently, the parents' gendered expectations were not compatible with the outcomes for their sons and daughters who were subject to growing influences of secondary socialization in the host culture. Contrary to the expectations of their parents, the girls often outperformed the boys in school, and they prudently redefined the conventions of arranged marriage. However, the boys did little or nothing to alter the patriarchal value system and conceded to their parents' gendered expectations. But the sisters, unlike their mothers, became agents of change and sought to bring about gender parity in the context of their adopted country.

The daughters were particularly influenced by the freedom enjoyed by girls in New York City. Sometimes they expected equitable treatment for themselves and their mothers. For example, Nilanjana warned her parents that she had no intention of repeating her mother's subaltern or subjugated status. Allegedly, her mother was constantly suppressed by her father, an otherwise well respected man in the community well known for his liberal ideas, including advocacy for equal status of women in Bangladeshi society. However, a family friend observed that as Nilanjana and her sister Nabanita, came of age, they became the voices of their mother's dissent and it brought about a degree of parity in the husband-wife relationship. At least for the young women, this pattern was consistent with the work of Kasinitz and colleagues (2008), who found that the children of immigrants in New York City differed from their parents over gendered socialization, and they demonstrates increasing tendency towards assimilating the American values of gender equity.

Daughters in the Home and Sons on the Streets

Household Chores and Curfew for the Girls

In this study, girls from these paternalistic households outperformed their brothers in academic achievement. Their school performance and potential for realizing career goals in the future seemed more consistent with their parents' aspirations, particularly since a powerful motivation for immigration was to provide their children with more educational and career opportunities. However, even though some girls focused on achieving high status careers, their parents were more concerned about preparing them to learn household chores so they could play the traditional role of women in the family. In addition, all parents met during the course of this study imposed restrictions on the girls' freedom of movement outside of the home. They imposed curfews for the girls, although the boys were allowed considerable latitude of freedom. A number of girls were indignant about this "double standard." Moushumi, for one, protested that her parents were "sexist," because they treated boys and girls differently. As a straight 'A' student in one of the most competitive public schools in New York City, she aspired to go to medical school after completing four years of college.

Moushumi enjoyed the liberating experiences of her school, where she found that boys and girls were treated equally. In the company of her classmates and peers, she was not subject to the constraints constantly experienced at home. She was outraged by the freedom her parents granted her brothers, who were able to stay out with friends without being subject to a curfew. Her parents curtailed their daughters' freedom in an attempt to ensure that they complied with behaviors traditionally expected of Bangladeshi girls. Encountering restrictions on her comings and goings, Moushumi became a role model for

her eleven year old sister. She and her sister questioned the male-dominated values her family and the Bangladeshi community tried to inculcate. As a common practice, the parental system and the ethnic enclave worked in tandem to uphold the native patriarchal values through sanctions:

> My parents aren't really giving us any freedom, and I think they are sexist (laughs). It's OK for my brothers to hang out with their friends. They can come home late as long as they have a good excuse. It is not the same for me and for my eleven year old sister, who protests more than I do. I guess I am the role model for my sister. It is 7:30 PM now. One of my brothers is out right now, either working or hanging out with his friends. He will come back when he wants to. If I ask my parents why I can't go out like him, they say it's simply because I'm a girl. If they are worried about what I could do, shouldn't they be equally worried about what he's doing at this hour? And their answer to me is that he's a boy, he'll be fine. I guess, if he does something wrong, it will not be that much of a scandal, but if I make a little mistake it will result in a gossip too much for my family and parents to take. ..They follow the traditional Bengali way of thinking. The girls are not allowed to go out.

Although Moushumi was expected to help her mother with household chores after she completed her homework assignments, her brothers were never required to do the same. Because her family was experiencing financial difficulties, her brothers had to live up to a different set of parental expectations: they took low-paying jobs to help the family pay the bills; a responsibility Moushumi was relieved of as a girl. While Moushumi was confined to her home after school, one of her brothers took advantage of his work in a fast-food restaurant in the afternoon and socialized with Latino friends in the neighborhood. His parents were not aware of these activities.

Moushumi's secondary socialization was confined to her friends in school, who were also high achievers. However, Shubachan, her brother, was associated with his Latino friends on the streets in a depressed neighborhood, who were school dropouts and underachievers. Instead of excelling in school, Shubachan fulfilled his responsibility as a

son in a patriarchal family by earning money for his family in dire straits while squandering free time on his friends. Inevitably, his sisters outperformed him academically, and similar to other parents in this situation, his parents displaced their high expectations for academic and career achievement from the son to their daughters.

Moushumi's parents had two expectations for their daughters. First, they wanted the girls to learn the traditional homemaking responsibilities of Bangladeshi women. In this regard, her mother was her father's silent accomplice, who modeled the values of unquestioned submission to patriarchal domination. "My father tells me that it's the girl's job to cook and clean and never to say no, when it comes to the household chores," she alleged. "The boys enjoy all the freedom. On top of that they do not have to do the household chores." The second and perhaps equally important parental expectation for Moushumi was to perform at the highest level in school to fill the void of an unaccomplished brother.

Girls, such as Kanta, who came from a family that enjoyed higher economic status, were not required to perform household chores or any domestic duties. Nonetheless, her parents allowed her younger brother to stay out with friends or to bring them home after school, while Kanta was subjected to constant parental oversight, especially from her mother, who dropped her off at school and picked her up everyday. Although Kanta was always uncomfortable about this level of supervision, she also saw the benefits of her mother's vigilance. She appreciated that it kept her out of trouble and safe from the negative influences of the neighborhood. However, similar to Moushumi she found it difficult to come to terms with an entrenched patriarchal system, where boys had more freedom than girls. In her case too, gender inequality dissipated when she was

in school, where she enjoyed the same freedom as her schoolmates. Consequently, when she was home, she felt as if she were not living in the US any longer. Her primary socialization at home was entirely different from her secondary socialization at school, where boys and girls were treated equally; only at school, she felt like living in America:

> My parents don't allow me to hang out with my friends after school. I have to be home with my family. My mother does not work. She drops me off at school in the morning and picks me up after school. It's kind of annoying. I don't always like it, but it's good for me I guess. I am always safe. What bothers me most is that I do not have friends to hang out with after school because I am a girl, but my brother has friends who come over. He is allowed to stay outside with friends, but I am not. I guess it is difficult to be a girl in a Bangladeshi family; you have no freedom. Only when I go to school I feel I am in the US.

The expectation that girls should return home at the end of the day did not end when they completed secondary school, college or even when they were fully employed. Despite their college degrees and full-time employment, unmarried female young adults such as Farhana and Fahmida were expected to return home after work every day at sundown, unless there were compelling reasons to stay out past nightfall. This situation was particularly galling for Farhana, a graduate from an Ivy League college who had lived in a dormitory throughout her undergraduate years. In college, she made her own decisions about who her friends would be and when she would return to her dorm. But upon returning to her parents' home after graduation, she was unable to convince her parents that it was safe for her to live independently, like other young women she knew in New York City. She refused to be treated as a child, although her parents strived to reclaim control of their adult daughter.

Farhana's strategy for staking out her independence involved negotiating the parents' consent to participate in activities that took her out of their sphere of influence. Shortly after being interviewed for this study, she traveled to Geneva to attend an

International Women's Conference. Before leaving for this weeklong event this young lady had to convince her parents that she would not abuse her "freedom;" ironically while at a conference on the rights of women around the world. She confided to the researcher about the conflicts and tensions between her parents and their two college-educated daughters that continued unabated well into their early twenties. However, they managed to live together without "any showdown or big conflict leading to a disaster:"

> However, small conflicts and tensions never go away. For example, I am a college graduate at the age of 21 years. Nonetheless, my parents treat me and my sister as children who still need some supervision. I have to come home on time from work as if I cannot pursue my interests after work without parental consent. I am trying to convince them that there are many independent women in New York City, who are doing wonderful things without conceding to parental control.

Despite these constraints, Farhana was not overtly rebellious, a characteristic observed among many young female informants. She suggested that her "very liberal" parents tried to accommodate their college educated daughters' needs for independence more than most of the traditional Bangladeshi immigrant parents in New York City. This young lady also rationalized her parents' stance by claiming that they never forced the two daughters' hands to adhere strictly to all aspects of Bangladeshi culture; oftentimes it resulted in a carefully orchestrated compromise:

> I do not mean to walk out of my parents' house to assert my independence. I have to admit that my parents are very liberal. We are not under any obligation to do the chores and strictly follow the tenets of religion. We do not have to dress or eat like Bangladeshis. Nothing is written in indelible ink for us to follow. I know that I can bend the home rules and challenge them. But I do not want to do that. I would rather negotiate with my parents for a middle ground more agreeable to both parties.

Farhana's younger sister, Fahmida, a 20 year old college graduate, was more receptive of her parents' actions, because she strongly felt that their oversight safeguarded the interests of both generations. She appreciated the protection their supervision provided:

> It helps them feel more secure about us, and it keeps us out of trouble… Night-life is part of the youth culture in this city. It is associated with drinking alcohol, abusing drugs, partying and hanging out with friends of the other sex during after hours. I and my sister are not socialized in that culture. It causes trouble. I have no interest in it.

The father of these two young adults defended the values of gendered socialization of his children as "a recipe for saving the girls from the bad influences of the streets in the neighborhood."

The Role of Male and Female Children in Assuring Cultural Continuity

Parents of the Bangladeshi Diaspora went to great lengths to transmit their culture beyond the second generation. They identified their daughters, not their sons, as the principal purveyors of native culture to the next generation in America. Following an interview with her twenty-year old daughter, Mrs. Karmakar, explained why she and her husband sent their only son to a boarding school outside of the City, while their two daughters went to a convent school in India: "We wanted to make sure that our son grows up socializing with non-immigrant white American friends in high school, and our daughters have the firsthand experience of socializing with Bengali-Hindu girls in India."

Mrs. Karmakar was gratified that the multicultural setting of New York City was conducive to the retention of Bangladeshi culture for her children. She was able to groom her daughters in Bengali-Hindu tradition from an early age; they were trained how to dance, sing, and perform the rituals of Hindu prayer in a temple school in Sunnyside, Queens, before being sent overseas. She held a strong conviction that as future wives and mothers, the girls were responsible for handing down cultural and religious traditions to the next generation. She believed that preservation of the traditional role of woman

among her daughters was particularly important if her native traditions were to survive in the host country ("Bidesh Bibhoui") in which "everything is different."

Her approach towards upbringing of the son was anything but the same. Asked how she intended to pass on the same traditions to him, she indicated that regardless of the parental indulgence he enjoyed as a male child, he would be required to marry within his ethnicity and religious group. However, unlike her daughters, he would live with his parents after marriage. Mr. Karmakar reassured that his wife would continue to convey native traditions to her son's children in a patriarchal family. "He will be expected to stay with us after marriage, while the girls will leave us as soon as they tie the knot," his wife added. "It means that we will be able to make sure that the native culture is handed down to our grand children." However, she expressed some skepticism about whether these traditions would endure past the second generation. None of the adolescents or young adults in this study lived in single parent families, even if some of their friends in school and the neighborhood came from broken families. It is unknown how much of the expectations for cultural transmission through intact and extended families could be attributed to the fact that all children in this study came from two-parent households.

Expectations for the Boys

If the parents' aspirations for the daughters were to become homemakers in addition to being highly educated professionals, they raised their boys to become the family breadwinners. This burden could interfere with boys' academic or professional objectives, particularly in low-income families. If a father became incapacitated, his eldest son was expected to take on the paternal responsibilities, but the girls were spared. This expectation was consistent with the norms and values internalized by the fathers in

the country where they were raised. For example, Rahul's father was the first son of his parents in Bangladesh. He was very young when his father died; soon he became responsible for his widowed mother and four siblings. Eventually he turned into "the surrogate father" of his siblings and took care of his mother for more than thirty five years. He wanted his son to follow his example as the first male child in the family.

These patriarchal expectations followed the boys to the US. Intikhab dropped out of high school at the age of eighteen to work in a restaurant full-time after his father became disabled. His father had been the only employed person in the family, but when he was no longer able to work, the responsibility fell squarely on Intikhab. A year or two after dropping out of high school, he earned his G.E.D., but his dream of getting a college degree in hotel management had to be shelved. Nonetheless, Intikhab did not find anything exceptional about his situation; it was the traditional role of a son in a Bangladeshi family; he gradually came to terms with it. Meanwhile, his two older sisters got married and lived with their husbands and children; they were exempt from this responsibility. According to Intikhab, "As a son, and the only son for that matter, I am expected to look after my parents when they are in need. My sisters are married and they live in two different boroughs of New York City. They do not have any responsibility towards my parents except keeping in touch with them and visiting them occasionally." Intikhab's mother told the researcher that one of her daughters, who worked for a while after graduating from high school, wanted to help. However, she rejected this offer because accepting financial assistance from a daughter was dishonorable in a traditional Bangladeshi family.

Similarly, Imran's father, who had two heart by-pass surgeries over a period of five years, was training his son to take on full responsibility for his neighborhood grocery store once he graduated from high school. He acknowledged that his daughters were free to pursue more ambitious educational goals, but not the son. "If anything happens to me, it is my son who will have to assume the responsibility of the family, not my daughters, who will eventually be married off," he explained.

The irony was that although the boys enjoyed more freedom from parental oversight as young men, they were potentially responsible for their families' economic welfare whenever there was a need. In low income families such norms could jeopardize a boy's ability to meet educational and professional expectations in comparison with the girls. This situation created an alternate gender inequity. Whether this will ultimately advantage Bangladeshi girls' career and academic success over boys as they join the labor force as adults remains a question. However, the intense parental supervision of girls during adolescence and young adulthood compared with the indulgence enjoyed by the boys, may advantage girls for greater academic and career achievement in the US. On the other hand, although boys enjoy more personal freedom on the streets, they must become the family wage earners if their families face hard times; this has the potential to derail their educational and career aspirations. This issue emerged in Imran's case as he pursued his desire to be "cool" and to associate with Latino youths beyond his parents' supervision, undermining his academic performance. He was promoted to the senior year after making up his grades in summer school.

Academic and Career Expectations for Girls and Boys

Generally, the second generation Bangladeshi immigrant girls in this study outperformed the boys academically. However, their parents privileged the sons' achievements over the daughters.' Tanmoy recounted how his two older sisters, who proved to be high achievers by surpassing the parental expectations for the girls, set the achievement bar even higher for him and his older brother:

> My parents think that their two sons should strive for the highest academic and professional achievement, but the daughters should get the college education and be successful and happy in life. Fortunately, my two older sisters disproved this stereotype and went for graduate and professional degrees. As far as career goes, they want their male children to have a more aggressive mindset.

Parvez's story was quite different. His parents based their educational and career expectations on the abilities of an individual child, regardless of the gender. Because his sisters were outperforming him in school, the parents shifted their hopes from him to his sisters to pursue high career goals. Nonetheless, they did not give up the expectation that he would to take care of them after marriage:

> They [the sisters] are not going to have to take any responsibility of my parents after marriage. They will go to live with their husbands. I will stay with my parents and my wife will come here. But the expectations about education and jobs are even higher for my sisters. As they are exceptionally good students, my parents are pushing them to be doctors.

As the oldest son in the family, Rahul was expected to be a role model for his sisters and brothers. However, this situation created additional pressures on him because he was afraid of being reprimanded for any failure to measure up to their expectations. "As a son, I have more responsibilities than my sisters in the eyes of my parents. They look at me to lead the rest of the kids and set an example. I try to tell them what I do on a

regular basis; it's a lot of pressure. I'm the oldest kid in the family and if I do something wrong they just tell me I'm a bad kid."

Daughters Only or Sons and Daughters

In immigrant families with only daughters, the parents treated their "girls as boys" and "expected the very best" from them, a sexist attitude on the part of the parents that their daughters did not seem to notice. Instead, they seemed happy to avoid comparison with male siblings. For example, Nilanjana and Nabanita confirmed that they were better off than other immigrant Bangladeshi girls who had brothers; 'because of the unfair comparison." Farhana and Fahmida were also "raised as boys" because their parents had no sons. Parents who had both sons and daughters were more interested in their sons' future achievements. For example, Abinash's parents were grooming their daughters to be good Bangladeshi-Hindu-American future housewives. However, they desired that their son was thoroughly Americanized to maximize his ability to move up the career ladder and compete with the native white colleagues. Other parents also worked on replicating patriarchal values in the lives of their children in light of their personal life experiences anticipating that their sons and daughters would perpetuate their way of life, a tall order for their children.

Arranged Marriage

In a traditional Bangladeshi arranged marriage, parents impose their decisions on their children. The primary objective of this practice is to ensure that the native culture is passed on to the next generation consistent with immigrant parents' strongly felt need for continuity amid change. Kibria's (2009) study illustrates how Bangladeshi immigrant parents in the US strategize their control over children in a changing world. Her subjects'

parents employed “semi-arranged marriages” in which they assumed the role of matchmakers to introduce their marriageable sons and daughters to potential partners whom they had already screened for suitability. Irrespective of whether these children acknowledged their parents’ role as matchmakers, they weighed in on the choices of marriage partners for the sons and daughters. One of the major criteria they insisted on was a bride or groom of Bangladeshi parentage, who came from a good family background. It was intended to build on their social capital in the Diaspora with an extension to the native country. However, unlike Kibria’s subjects who lived in Detroit and Boston, in addition to the outskirts of New York City, the families in this study rarely arranged for transnational marriages, probably because the large population of co-ethnics in New York City provided a large concentration of potential husbands and wives for their children. The sons were more likely than the daughters to choose partners, born and raised in Bangladesh.

One parent in the study expressed concern about the attrition of native language and culture; he felt that marriage between Bangladeshi and non-Bangladeshi children would contribute to the watered down version of the native culture. Another parent wanted to be a matchmaker in a semi-arranged marriage for his college-graduate daughter. An embattled parent obtained a list of male immigrant Bangladeshi professionals in the US, who wanted to get married. He insisted that the potential bridegroom for his daughter should have a high professional status regardless of his family background in Bangladesh. His marriageable daughter, who worked full time for a financial institution and attended graduate school for Masters in Sociology, agreed to look at the list, with reluctance. However, she finally used her discretion to select anyone

from the list and retained the right to contact or reject anyone or all of these potential partners. This unseemly attitude antagonized her already aggrieved parents; they wanted to give her in marriage as soon as possible so that they could work on finding husbands for two younger daughters, already graduated from four-year of college.

For the male and female participants of this study, arranged marriage was a hot-button issue. Although girls were more critical of this practice than boys, some boys also found it objectionable. Shubachan, a nineteen year old boy, opposed arranged marriage in principle; he knew that his parents would coerce him to marry someone of their choice, but he denied this inevitability as long as it was not in the offing:

> The culture is alright, but there are some things that are just plain wrong. I usually call them flaws. For example, arranged marriages are not necessarily good. I know that my parents may force me to marry someone of their choice against my desire even if I am a boy. But they have not yet brought it up. I am not really thinking about marriage right now. I have to get on my feet before it happens.

Intikhab also knew that his parents would have the "final say" on the selection of his wife. His two older sisters were married to immigrant Bangladeshis from their hometown. Since "Sylheti" dialect was the first language of both his brother-in laws and the primary language spoken by his parents at home, his sisters retained their connection to the native dialect. Intikhab would have to follow in his sisters footsteps. But, unlike them he would have to live with his parents after marriage. If he tried to frustrate the parents' expectation by refusing to marry a co-ethnic, his family together with the ethnic community would view it as an act of betrayal. Intikhab believed that continuation of arranged marriages among second generation immigrant Bangladeshis testified how little things had changed. Although his family lived in New York City, all its members spoke

exclusively in their native hometown dialect; his married older sisters who moved away to two other boroughs retained that tradition.

Not all the informants shared his disgruntlement. Other boys underscored the significance of arranged marriage as a means to preserve Bangladeshi culture as it was handed down from their parents' generation to their own. Abinash attended a boarding school outside of New York City where his schoolmates were primarily American-born, a strategic decision on the part of his parents to advantage him in American society. His parents wanted neither to choose a bride for him nor to assume the role of matchmakers in a semi-arranged marriage for their son. However, they made it abundantly clear that he would have to find a "Desi" Hindu girl as his wife. He was convinced that it would enable him to transmit the beliefs and practices of the Hindu religion to his children; he shared this concern with other boys interviewed in the study. In any event, whoever became his wife would be expected to be the primary purveyor of native culture to the next generation: "I guess if I agree to marry a "Desi" girl that will be good enough for my parents. Because they believe that I will retain the native culture through my spouse. I know that I can easily adjust to both cultures."

The daughters of immigrant parents were more forthcoming about their criticism of arranged marriage. Without rejecting the practice altogether, they claimed more decision making power in semi-arranged marriages. This was consistent with their acculturation in American society where they had been exposed to greater gender equity. Najwa was resolved to strike a balance between native continuity and her autonomy as a young New Yorker with a resounding "No," if her parents proposed an arranged marriage. However, she reassured them about her desire to choose a husband of

Bangladeshi descent. She redefined the traditional concept of an "arranged marriage" in order to restore parity between the prospective brides and bridegrooms. Both Intikhab and his sister Najwa were aware of strong sanctions against marriage outside of their ethnic group:

> Arranged marriages do not have to be imposed on unwilling sons and daughters by their parents. It may very well be agreed upon by both sides. I will not marry a perfect stranger just because my parents want me to. I hope they do not force me to say a strong "no" to them. I know of Bangladeshi boys and girls falling in love in NYC and getting married. The parents usually give consent to such a relationship without creating any problem. When a Bangladeshi boy or girl chooses to marry someone from a different culture, it becomes very difficult for the parents to accept. Many parents consider it a betrayal and they break with their children.

Her desire not to have her parents "force [her] to say a strong, 'No,'" represented a consistent theme in this study. Even when secondary socialization reframed their ideas about gender roles in the family, youths almost universally sought to protect the continuity of their relationship with their parents. For example, although Moushumi was against arranged marriage, she was not willing to make her parents unhappy. "I do not want my parents to decide on who I will marry against my will. Sometimes I feel it is up to them; whatever makes them happy will make me happy. I do not want to make my family unhappy." Nonetheless, she protested when her father spoke about giving her in marriage immediately after graduation from high school. He wanted to protect her from bad influences that might result from the freedom she would enjoy as a young adult. Moushumi reminded her father that she wanted to study to be a doctor before getting married. Although her father indicated to the researcher that he did not intend to interfere with his daughter's educational and career goals, he wanted her to pursue them as a married woman.

The drama between Moushumi and her father suggested that a girl with high academic achievements and career goals might have to seek trade-offs in the face of constraints set by parental and community expectations, especially in low-income families. Moushumi told her father categorically that it would be impossible to attend medical school after marriage because of the additional responsibilities in conjugal life. While the researcher observed their interaction, the father objected and she began to cry softly. After she left the room, her father told the researcher that he loved his daughter, but felt insecure about the possibility that she would attend college or medical school as an unmarried young adult. He was worried about a worst case scenario in which she might become involved with a young man of a different ethnic group or religion and decide to marry him. Since these parents would not approve of an interethnic relationship, it would result in serious parent-child conflict and disruption in the family.

In one of the most critical interpretations of arranged marriages in this study, Nirupama examined the pros and cons of an arranged marriage in which the man and woman did not know each other before in comparison with marriages that took place following a romantic relationship. She emphasized that neither situation guaranteed a successful marriage, because it required all couples to constantly work hard in order to maintain a reciprocal relationship of love. From her perspective traditional arranged Bangladeshi marriages against the free will of their sons and daughters were obsolete in New York City. She compared her parents' marriage with the marriage between her aunt and uncle to argue that neither route to marriage assured an unconditionally happy outcome for the couple. This adolescent closed her comments with how arranged marriages are played out in the context of New York City:

> You have to work hard for love throughout your life. Arranged marriages are not necessarily bad, and I have seen romantic love ending up in broken marriages. Many people say that arranged marriages last longer and are better than marriages in which the partners have known and lived with each other many months or years before. I do not support an arranged marriage in which the parents force their sons and daughters to marry someone against their will. I do not think it exists anymore, not certainly in New York City. You may find it in the countryside of Bangladesh. If the boy and girl meet each other and like each other before getting married and the parents on both sides arrange for the wedding, it should be fine. There is no guarantee for happiness in any marriage; you have to work for it all your life. My parents fell in love with each other before they married, my uncle and aunt did not, but they have the same struggle. I see that in many other Bangladeshi boys and girls who married recently in New York City

Nilanjana was concerned about maintaining her identity as a hyphenated "Bangladeshi-American." She viewed it as an anchor of her ethnic continuity. It was in this context that she weighed the advantages and disadvantages of arranged marriage. She wanted to avoid discontinuity and dissonance with Bangladeshi cultural practices by choosing her own Bangladeshi-American husband independently of her parents. However, she did not want to decide on a husband without her parents' blessings. Like many participants in Kasinitz and colleagues' (2008) study, she believed that there was nothing wrong with having a romantic relationship with a boy from another culture in spite of her ambivalence that a mixed marriage would be incompatible with her parents' religious and cultural tradition. Her dilemma was centered on the likelihood that such a marriage might send a mixed message for the children of such a union:

> I think if it works out it is fine, but I don't know how it will work out for me. I just don't think I can consent to marrying a perfect stranger and living with him the rest of life just because my parents arranged for it. As far as I am concerned, it is my life, not theirs. I ask my parents what they will do if I don't like the person they choose for me. They argue that there is no good reason why I will not like the person if they like him; they do not seem to get it. I don't feel like I'm on the same page. I think all they need is trust and someone who is nice and successful. I want to have some kind of commonality. And I can't tell them that I like a guy. I may want to marry a white or an Asian American guy just because we share a lot of things, but I do not want my children to forget Bangladeshi-American

> identity; it is very important to me. Ideally, I may still want to marry a Bangladeshi-American guy I like and my parents don't dislike, so that I can raise my children as Bangladeshi-American. I have not met him yet. The big picture is that I don't want conflicting religious or cultural views to affect my children. I want them to grow up as Americans who have good values and moralities to respect everybody who is or is not like them.

Summary

This chapter revealed how the primary socialization of children of Bangladeshi immigrants in New York City set the stage for their internalization of patriarchal value system under the influence of their parents and the ethic enclave. Central to this value system was gendered socialization in which girls were brought up as the principal conduits of intergenerational native culture in a new country. However, as the children grew into adolescence and young adulthood under the increasing influence of the city, the girls took advantage of the more egalitarian values they discovered in schools and colleges. Consequently, they demanded more gender equity and aspired to pursue high status careers, equal to those of the boys, if not better.

Their parents demonstrated a degree of flexibility by shifting their career-goal expectations from the boys to the girls when their daughters outperformed their brothers. Despite the continuation of disproportionate parental control on the girls, the young women navigated complex pathways without parting from their parents' traditions. They claimed a more independent role of women in their families and reinvented the concept of patriarchy in their lives. One Bangladeshi immigrant parent found this situation alarming. In a casual conversation with the researcher, he stated:

> My son would probably be very happy with a girl raised in Bangladesh as his spouse, because he will find someone like his mother; but my daughters would be totally mismatch for the boys brought up in Bangladesh. First of all, they are very independent. I do not think they want to be as nice as their mother to a demanding husband like me.

CHAPTER VIII: NEW YORK CITY AS CONTEXT AND CHARACTER

Introduction

This chapter describes the unique contribution of New York City to the acculturative experiences of Bangladeshi immigrants and their children. Although the parents' experiences were different from those of their children, in both instances the city was instrumental in how each generation constructed its social realities. Cities often played an important role as both context and character in great fiction, notably London in Dickens's novels or Dublin in James Joyce's short stories. Similarly for Bangladeshi immigrant parents and their children, New York City was more than a simple context of reception—it became an important character in an unfolding novel that depicted their lives in the US. New York City provided an opportunity for the immigrant parents to create a niche in the ethnic enclave. In the process they transformed neighborhoods and remade its demographic landscape. In contrast, their children distanced themselves from the ethnic enclave and "melt [ed] into the multicultural mainstream," as one participant put it, without disowning their native heritage. The Bangladeshi youths' relationship with New York City was more complex. They not only reshaped the city, but the city remade them through a transformative experience that was off-limits to their parents.

The city's vibrant multi-ethnic character together with congenial and immigrant-friendly setting provided opportunities for both generations to reinvent the city along two very different story lines. The immigrant parents contributed to the growing diversity of the city, while their children initiated a shift towards unity within that diversity. The parents relied on relationships they developed within intra-ethnic confines where they tried to reinvent the *habitus* or "durably installed generative principles" (Bourdieu, 1984)

of their native culture in the Diaspora. Unlike their parents, their adolescent and young adult children were more amenable to the influences of the city. They ventured out as agents of change and established relationships with youths from other ethnic groups without forfeiting their relationships with co-ethnic peers. The children of immigrants reconfigured and redefined their ethnic heritage as they adapted to the multicultural and egalitarian public schools and their increasingly ethnically diverse neighborhoods. In contrast, their parents' concept of ethnic identity was predefined and static, consistent with the worldview of the ethnic enclave. They deployed "reactive ethnicity" to cope with the ethnic diversity of their neighborhoods over which they believed they had little control. Nonetheless, their adolescent offspring remade their ethnicity within a unique "majority minority" city (Kasinitz, Mollenkpof & Waters, 2004).

The adolescent and young adult participants of this study refuted the historical concept of the "melting pot" for immigrants in New York City. Even when they used the phrase, "melting pot," its meaning was very different from what was conveyed by Zangwill's (1924) popular play on Broadway that described the assimilation of first great wave European immigrants in the US. They did not express the need to relinquish their parents' Bangladeshi identity in order to build new alliances or allegiances with youths from other ethnic groups. Instead they forged original identities that combined elements of their native heritage with their "New Yorkish" experiences. The "majority minority city" played a catalytic role in this process of transformation. A seventeen-year old male participant described himself as a hyphenated "Bangladeshi-American," but immediately explained that his "American identity was made in New York City."

Two Narratives of the Same City

Bangladeshi immigrant parents remained rooted in the identity they brought from their native country; it was impervious to the transformational influences of multicultural and multiethnic New York City, irrespective of how they participated in the transformation of the city. In order to replicate their sense of "home" in this setting they forged intra-ethnic affiliations across and within the various boroughs in the Diaspora. It was shaped in a number of ways. They established hometown Bangladeshi associations: Barisal Samity, Chattagram Samity, Comilla Samity, Chandpur Samity, Dinajpur Samity, Noakhali Samity, Habiganj Samity, Sandwip Samity, and Sunamganj Samity, to name a few. According to one parent, this phenomenon developed in a parallel process with the growth and development of the Bangladeshi community in the city, resulting in "its inevitable fragmentation." Progressively, New York City also became home to two major Bangladeshi political parties, the Awami League and Bangladesh Nationalist Party. Eleven weekly Bengali language newspapers were published in New York City, and a host of ethnic television channels catered exclusively to the needs the first generation immigrants. Parents also maintained transnational social contacts with the native country by telephone, online services, remittances, and even charitable organizations, which only reinforced their Bangladeshi identification. The cultural and social nexus maintained in New York City enabled them to reclaim their primordial ethnic identity, which they wanted to retain among their children.

One parent considered living in New York City's Bangladeshi ethnic enclave as good as residing in Bangladesh. "Because Bangladesh has come to New York City, I do not have to go to Bangladesh any more; no English, no problem," he observed.

Moushumi's parents, similar to other first generation Bangladeshis, whose children were interviewed for the study, provided an interesting example of the Bangladeshi transformation of New York City. Their home contained a number of artifacts brought from the native country to their New York apartment. When the researcher arrived to interview the daughter, he found a 20 x 28 inch black-and-white framed picture of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Bangladeshi leader and father of the nation, mounted on the wall and a 24-hour ethnic Bangladeshi NTV Channel broadcasting the Bengali evening news of the day in her family living room. Their home was a two-bedroom apartment in a tenement house in which many Bangladeshi immigrant families lived. The father, a former high school teacher in Bangladesh, was employed as a temporary worker in an American store. The family had lived in New York City for more than seventeen years.

According to this parent, were it not for the Bangladeshi ethnic enclave in his neighborhood, it would have been extremely difficult for him and his wife to reconcile with the "multicultural mess in the vicinity." His "bread and butter issues" allowed him to take advantage of New York City's labor market, but his heart and mind were at home in his Brooklyn community. He was gratified to live in the home country setting of the ethnic enclave while earning his livelihood in New York City. This parent reflected on the diminishing prospects of his return to Bangladesh and expanded on the two circles of his life in New York City:

> I do not have to return to Bangladesh, because there is a mini-Bangladesh in Brooklyn, New York City, now. I can say that I earn my bread and butter from New York City, the big circle, but I can still live in mini-Bangladesh, the small circle, or the inner circle, without having to leave this city. This is really great about New York City.

Moushumi's father was actively involved with the hometown ethnic association of Sandwip, an offshore island of Bangladesh presently eroding under the crosscurrents of the Bay of Bengal. He had a beginning understanding of a "different kind of relationship" his Brooklyn-born daughter might have with New York City as she came of age. Although he wanted his own narrative to prevail, he understood that her experiences outside the ethnic enclave might yield a different result:

> It is very important to safeguard our children from the bad influences of New York City. Everything will be lost if we fail to retain Bangladeshi native culture among our offspring under the adverse influences of so many different cultures. We try to win the hearts and minds of our children to be involved with Bangladeshi ethnic community, but it does not seem to work. That's very painful.

The researcher observed this parent cast a sidelong glace at his daughter, and she looked back at him in anger. However, the child quickly concealed her emotions and walked out of the room in silence. Her father turned ashen in response to what he explained as an "unwarranted impudence." Later, during the interview, Moushumi provided her side of the story:

> My parents are never going to get it. It's like we are taking an expressway and going somewhere, but they are marooned in a cul-de-sac in the same city; they are not going anywhere anytime soon, I don't think. But it does not make sense to argue anymore. They will not listen to us and we will not fully agree with them. They think we are wrong, but I think they are wrong too.

Her parents appeared to ignore or underestimate the vital role New York City played in her acculturative experiences in school. In contrast, she was poised in balancing the conflicting demands of bicultural socialization, which involved expanding her cultural repertoire in New York City without rejecting her native culture. This was a complex undertaking her parents were unable to appreciate: "I think I am enough of a Bangladeshi. I follow the norms and traditions of Bangladeshi culture thousands of miles

away from Bangladesh, but my mother seems to forget that I am growing up in New York City…with many other girls from other cultures. I can neither be totally Bangladeshi nor totally American."

Instead of yielding unconditionally to the parental demands, Moushumi tried to steer a sensible course and situate herself between the pull of parental influences and the push of her acculturative drive in the city. At the threshold of adolescence, the influence of her primary socialization was eroding under the growing influence of the bigger circle of New York City life:

> Sometimes their expectations are very high, but they also have a little too much of control on my life. I guess that's how most Bangladeshi families are. They want me to pull more towards Bangladeshi culture and less towards American culture. I'm not into anything stupid. I just socialize with my friends, many of whom are not from Bangladesh. I want the balance between the two. I think and compare the two lifestyles. If they pull me more towards Bangladeshi culture, I will tell them to go back to where they came from. I doubt if they can do so.

Farhana's college educated parents also managed life in New York City by remaining close to the ethnic enclave. In addition to their untiring interest in ethnic print and electronic media, they were critical consumers of the mainstream US media including ABC, CNN, NBC and PBS. Information on US politics and economy were important for them because it directly affected their livelihood. Similar to the Bengali parents of Jhumpa Lahiri's short story, "The Third and Final Continent," Farhana's parents visited Dhaka "every few years and…decided to grow old here." As naturalized citizens and registered Democrats they cast their votes in the Federal, State, and City elections with enthusiasm and encouraged their Bangladeshi friends to do the same. The Presidential election of 2008 was particularly significant for them after eight years of what they portrayed as "Bushocracy and Bushonomics." They were enthusiastic about

President Obama's victory and celebrated it with close friends from Bangladesh living in Brooklyn. On the other hand, when the long awaited Bangladeshi National Election Day was declared by the caretaker government, their attention was totally diverted in that direction. In the family living room the ethnic NTV took the center stage sidelining CNN cable news. Interestingly, when the embattled "Awami League" won a landslide victory in Bangladesh, they declared "double victory," since both their US and Bangladeshi candidates of choice had prevailed. Some of their co-ethnics, who were affiliated to Bangladesh Nationalist Party, another dominant political party, that lost precipitously, took umbrage. However, both groups remained glued to the ethnic media coverage of the polls that took place thousands of miles away.

Farhana and her sister were alienated by their parents' intense interest in the Bangladeshi election. They found it difficult to believe that her parents "have never left Bangladesh despite living in New York City for a long time." Her father wanted to return to Bangladesh after retirement while her mother, who was no less enthusiastic about the native country, talked him out of it by finding excuses not to return. Their comfortable life in New York City prevailed over the nostalgia of returning to Bangladesh. According to Farhana, her parents had become Americans through a risk benefit analysis:

> Occasionally, my father talks about returning to Bangladesh after his retirement. 'I will not abandon my daughters, who will never leave US to live in Bangladesh with us,' my mother protests. My father ends up becoming silent and the discussion dies down. I guess they are not returning to Bangladesh. Probably, they use us as excuses not to return to their native country. They have been here for a long period of time. I feel that they became Americans without even knowing about it. They are used to the comfort of middle class life in the US. It is hard to find anything close to it in Bangladesh.

Farhana claimed that she was proud of her native country too, but, unlike her parents, "not just crazy about it." Although she clearly defined herself as a New Yorker, she did not disown her ethnicity:

> I am unwilling to say that Bangladesh is the best country in the world just because I was born there and my parents came from that country. I will rather argue that this is my country now because I was raised here and I went to school and college in this city. I socialize with people, who come from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. They are all New Yorkers like me. It means something that our generation, children of immigrants from many different countries and ethnicities in this city, share and develop as we go through our school and college life experiences.

New York City as Context

Foner (2001) contrasts New York City with Los Angeles and argues that the nation's two premiere immigrant cities provide very different contexts for new immigrants. New York City far exceeds Los Angeles in terms of heterogeneity and multiculturalism. Diversity is an expectation in New York City rendering it "America's quintessential immigrant city" (Foner, 2001, p. 6). Her comparative study of West Indian immigrants living in New York City and London revealed more positive examples of integration in New York City, primarily because of the absence of any one dominant immigrant group (Foner, 2001). Both the context and character of New York City was instrumental in shaping the acculturative experiences of Bangladeshi second generation immigrants in the current study.

The participants of this study engaged in a dialogic relationship with New York City. In this process, New York City incorporated them as "new New Yorkers" without requiring them to disown their native culture. In comparison with the "meting pot" theory, which assumed that new Americans must shed identification with their ethnicity and culture of origin, these contemporary "new New Yorkers" were able to remake both

the city and their identities in entirely different ways. A more appropriate metaphor might be that New York City was a veritable flower blossoming with diversity in which Bangladeshi youths were able to add a new petal.

New York City provided a sanctuary for these second generation youths who reinvented *unity* through *diversity;* here *pluribus* did not belittle *unum*; instead there is reciprocity between *pluribus* and *unum*. They discovered the city as a vibrant, multi-cultural, and unique locale. These new New Yorkers variously characterized it as "a melting pot primarily for the people of color;" "a city that never discriminates;" "a city in which discrimination does not work;" and "a city that looks hard from the outside but soft from the inside." Some of them described it as "nobody's city, but everybody's city;" "stranger-friendly;" and "unfriendly from the outside, but friendly from the inside." Nirupama, a sixteen-year old native born girl, went even further in her portrayal of New York City as a Utopia "inside the US, but outside of US--it is the World." She claimed that "as a citizen of New York City," she was in fact "a citizen of the world," by extension. Expressing her passion for the city, Nirupama also identified herself as a "Bangladeshi-New Yorker," instead of a "Bangladeshi-American," contrary to the ethnic identification favored by the majority of participants.

The remarkable ethnic and racial diversity of New York City contributed to an expansive notion of its character as an unparalleled context compared to other sites of reception in the US. A seventeen-year high school student approved of a statement his social studies teacher made in this regard: "what happens in New York City today will happen to the rest of America tomorrow and to the rest of the world a day after; New York City shows what the future of the world is going to look like." This comment is

almost identical to Foner's statement that "What happens in New York has the potential to affect the change elsewhere in the nation" (2006, p.184). Tanmoy considered New York City as an exceptional "melting pot" in which all ethnicities coalesced. He was convinced that such a transformation would not have been possible in any other place in the US outside of New York City. He was particularly sensitive to the possibility that his phenotype could make him vulnerable to marginalization in other parts of the US, such as the Midwest. This young adult considered himself a "new New Yorker" rather than a "new American:"

> New York City is the melting pot of the world in my opinion. People from all ethnicities come to New York City and assimilate into American culture. I guess I am more of a New Yorker than an American. If I live in the Midwest, I cannot assimilate to that culture because it is completely different. My skin color would probably make me be treated differently, but in New York everyone is different. People in New York City are in contact with many people around them, but in the Midwest I will have to deal with marginality because they will treat me differently even if they didn't mean to. It is not that they think any less, but it may be just a difference of culture.

When youths had actual experiences outside of New York City, they were in a better position to understand how New York was different from other parts of the US. Aseef had relatives who lived in the Midwest. He described the New York City as the epicenter of change and dynamism and contrasted it with the Midwest or "the American backyard," which is static and confined to the small world of its inhabitants.

> I had been to Midwest and other places in US. People there live in their own little world. I am not talking about the American backyard that will never change. I travel to the Midwest with my parents to visit my relatives every once in a while. From what I see and hear it doesn't change much over there. Here in New York City everything changes everyday.

Even without direct experiences with life outside of New York, some informants imagined a homogeneous world beyond the city. Fahmida dismissed the "real white

America" as an "outer circle" or the periphery of New York City, a distant place she had no experience of living: "I am talking about a place in which nearly everybody is an immigrant, even if he or she is born in the US. The real white America that we read about in books and see in TV and other news media is probably an outer circle. I can't speak for it." Similarly, Kavita found New York to be "one of the most liberal cities of US." She assumed that her acculturative experiences would have been very different in any other city, especially if she had lived in the South:

> I love it here. I feel that if New York City is more liberal than many other states in the US. New York City is perhaps one of the most liberal cities in the nation. Maybe, if I had lived in the South I would have a very different experience. I love the fact that New York City is very diverse. People from almost every culture and language in the world live here. There is no other place in the world that I'd rather be. Even for a college I'm thinking about going to Manhattan.

Not surprisingly, none of the participants wanted to live anywhere outside of New York City. They had a generalized fear of the unknown and a desire to avoid possible racial discrimination and marginalization. A twenty-year old male college student, who liked to describe himself as "every inch a New Yorker," shared a common narrative with many other participants who located their identities within the growing body of diversity of New York City. Some informants had specific experiences with all-white schools, which deepened their understanding of the significance of diversity in their unfolding acculturative experiences. For example, Fahmida attended two different schools in Brooklyn; one was almost all-white, and the other was multi-ethnic. Although she established friendships with her white classmates, she could not avoid feeling like an "outsider looking in." She was more comfortable in the multi-ethnic school:

> I went to an all-white high school for a year or two, and I felt like I didn't fit in because it made me feel like I did not know who I was. Many of my very good friends were white, but I strongly felt that I was an outsider looking in. But when

> I moved to another High School in Brooklyn during the junior and senior years, where the students were from every ethnic group you can imagine, the experience was totally different. It was like a melting pot. Everybody was different from every other--but that was exactly the reason to sink our differences to be so much alike. The term discrimination does not work in this environment; it embraces differences and thrives on it.

Another informant had a unique experience among all-white students. Abinash attended a boarding school outside of New York City where he described himself as "an-outsider." As the only non-white individual among his fellow students, he felt less than a "complete American." He dismissed the transformational experiences of his co-ethnics in New York City. This young adult felt that the current state of race relations in the US was a given he would have to contend with for the rest of his life. Unlike other participants, Abinash accepted the structure of ascribed identity without exercising his agency or negotiating his identity. He left New York City during his high school years and returned home only to attend college in Long Island, but his view of the city in which he grew up remained unchanged:

> My white-American classmates won't accept me as a full American because my skin color and physical features stand out. I hear from Bangladeshi friends that in New York City high schools that there is no such discrimination. I tell them that they are in a fool's paradise. They have no idea what it is like to be among all-white classmates. They are not necessarily bad, but it cannot be helped. It is how it is. I mean, I can be friends with them, but they cannot help change my role as an outsider looking in. Most of my friends are white. It's difficult to explain how they won't like to classify me as a different person, but they somehow know that I'm not a complete American. To some extent they know that I am who I am. I know that too.

New York City as Character

New York City was more that a cityscape in the narratives of the youths in this study. Just as Dickens described London as a "living and breathing entity for which he had an enduring fascination" (Saunders, 2004, p.1), some of the informants explicitly

anthropomorphized this gateway city. Among others, Nirupama imagined New York City as if it were constantly counseling her on how to integrate into an egalitarian society of "the stranger friendly capital of the world." In her own words, "Apart from diversity, New York City teaches us not to look down upon anybody who does not look like you, eat like you, speak like you and believe like you. Probably, it is the stranger friendly capital of the world. You cannot find it anywhere else. I have to admit that I cannot find this in Bangladesh." As a character New York City constantly reinvigorated Nirupana's hyphenated "American" identity:

> A New Yorker is someone who is naturally capable of multitasking among various ethnic and cultural identities in a very diverse environment, but an American may not be able or willing to deal with so many differences. I do not think the term "American" means much in New York City, unless you put something before to describe the person. For example: African-American, Chinese-American, Hispanic-American or Bangladeshi-American.

It was Niruapama's New Yorker identity that motivated her to work with underprivileged youth in Bangladesh in the future. The character of City of New York sat at the core of her identity:

> I wouldn't trade New York City for any other city in the world. I want to go back to Bangladesh and do something for the underprivileged youth, but I will carry the spirit of New York City with me in that country. Currently, I am on an internship in a summer youth program to help the mentally and physically challenged children in New York City. We are learning a lot from this program. It helps us develop engagement and leadership skills. I want to do something like that in Bangladesh because a lot of children are in jeopardy. I feel that Bangladeshi people do not treat handicapped children well.

Dialogic interaction with the character of New York City encouraged these young informants to set high expectations for them. Fahmida's American dream eventually blended with her Bangladeshi dream until the two became inseparable. She conceived of New York City as a "melting pot" in which discrimination did not work;

ethnicity was never an excuse for failure, and diversity had to be embraced in order to survive:

> I believe that my American dream is also my Bangladeshi dream. I don't know why they call it an American dream. I think that everybody in the world wants to lead a better life. My dream is to always better myself; it is an American and a Bangladeshi dream at the same time. I think that people in all cultures in the world really want to achieve and better their condition; it is a common human aspiration.

In Kavita's story of transformational experiences of New York City the boundaries between her Bangladeshi identity and American identity blurred creating unity in diversity. She believed that the ethnically diverse boroughs of the city guaranteed that "nobody is an outsider" any more. This adolescent discovered her own voice through socialization in such a multicultural setting as a liberal Bangladeshi-American, whose ethnicity could not be reduced into subalternity.

> Here all of us want to work together as one group and the differences among us are strengths, not weaknesses, for the group. In other words, nobody is an outsider in this city. I always identify myself as a Bangladeshi first. I am a young American too, but once I start talking about the importance of my Bangladeshi identity my American friends realize that I have a different way of expressing myself as a liberal American. Because I am different from them and they are all different from me. No one wants to dominate the other in a group that benefits from unity in diversity.

The acculturative experiences of all these youths were played out through interaction with the context and character of a unique city. It made the children of immigrants skeptical about whether this unique phenomenon represented the experiences of other immigrants outside of the city.

Migration To and From the Center Stage

New York City also played its role as a center stage from which Bangladeshi immigrants continued their internal migration to other places within the US. Some of

them staged reverse migration in a full circle back to New York City. Many others described this gateway city as their hometown or a common frame of reference in an attempt to measure up to its expectations. In 2001, a mini-exodus of first generation Bangladeshi immigrants took place against the backdrop of skyrocketing New York real estate prices, particularly in Astoria, Queens (New York *Times*, 8 March 2001). The story, "Queens to Detroit: A Bangladeshi Passage," described the ethnic enclave in Queens as a reliable, secure ethnic community. However, one migrant from Queens indicated that only the fittest could survive in New York City. Most of the first generation Bangladeshi immigrants who migrated to the east of Detroit and nearby Hamtrank continued to describe New York City as the hometown. Nearly all the people interviewed were ambivalent about leaving Queens. "There's a life over there. The city never sleeps. I think Michigan sleeps after 7 o'clock," remarked an interviewee. Reading this article one gets the impression that these are immigrants from New York City; not from Bangladesh. During an informal discussion with the researcher one Bangladeshi parent spoke about surviving in the ethnic enclave of Astoria despite "the unreal state of real estate." He also described how Bangladeshi immigrant community transformed their neighborhood with ethnic mosques, temples, grocery stores, community centers, and other businesses that carry Bengali names and hired all Bangladeshi immigrants.

Migration outside of New York City could create problems for children and ultimately influence their family's decision about the best place to live. Ayub, a seventeen-year old boy, recounted the story of his family moving from New York City to Hudson, New York, before returning to New York City, "making it a full circle." He

remembered the trauma of being singled out in an all-white school in Hudson, which resulted in a school phobia and propelled the family back to New York City:

> My experience of growing up in New York City in a Bangladeshi family is really very good from the start. I found great people to get along with and I always had good friends in school. But when my family moved to the City of Hudson, upstate New York, with three or four other Bangladeshi families I was in for a big trouble. It is perhaps my worst experience ever in the US. I was picked on by bullies in the school every day. I was afraid of going to school. It was an all-white neighborhood with a very small number of Bangladeshi families. My parents felt very helpless. Finally, my father decided to move back to New York City.

His experience of moving back to New York City was equivalent to returning from a foreign country:

> It was a big difference from NYC. I felt like a total stranger in a really foreign country. It's kind of weird. Everybody treats you like you are nobody and as if they don't want to be bothered by you. In school they looked down on me, joked about me and even threatened me. I had no friends. Kids were unfriendly to me. The neighbors never spoke to us. They looked away from us. I don't want to think about it any more. All I can tell you is that coming back to New York City was like returning to sweet home.

This adolescent redeemed his pride and honor after his experience outside of New York City by becoming an activist. He fought discrimination against undocumented students in the City public schools and helped them prevent possible deportation. He thrived on unity in diversity by rediscovering a comfortable home in a multicultural setting:

> Yes, I think diversity helps people understand others better. Someone may not look like you, speak like you and believe like you, but you cannot judge them before knowing them well. In a multicultural place like New York City we learn to look at our similarities in spite of differences. We also learn how discrimination and harassment put someone down unfairly. At this time I am involved with an organization that works to prevent discrimination against undocumented students in New York City. We file petitions and organize meetings with the Department of Education to obtain safe zones to make sure that the undocumented immigrant students, who have no access to social security numbers, can continue their education with dignity. We are fighting for the rights of illegal student immigrants so that they are not deported. We also fight against any form of discrimination in schools in this area.

Another young man, Habib, also played a key role in his parents' decision not to keep him and his siblings in Bangladesh. He went to the native country with his mother, older brother, and younger sister about five years ago under duress. This return migration was precipitated when his older brother, previously an outstanding student in a competitive public school, abruptly turned into a failing student. He allegedly abused drugs after becoming friends with multi-racial and multi-ethnic youths in the neighborhood. His father, a well-respected community leader in the ethnic enclave, remained in New York City. One year into his stay in Bangladesh, Habib convinced his parents that he should not be penalized for his brother's faults. It took him another year to prevail upon his father that rote-learning extensively used in Bangladeshi schools were causing him more harm than good. Although the rest of his family continued to live in Bangladesh, his father brought him back to New York City. When Habib returned to Queens, he performed very well in all subjects at his school. The father of the adolescent confirmed to the researcher that his son was not only more comfortable living in New York City than in Dhaka, Bangladesh, he was also delivering on his promise of attaining educational success.

In another family, a brother and sister, Rahul and Shupti, forestalled their father's attempts to relocate from Staten Island to Buffalo, New York. These two high school students, made a bargain with their father that they would score a cumulative average of over 95% in exchange for not leaving New York City. They also offered prayers, assisted with household chores and worked part-time to help the family financially and more importantly to keep their side of the bargain with the parent. Apparently for Habib, Rahul and Shupti "nothing like something happens anywhere" outside of New York City.

Experience of 9/11

The memories of 9/11 brought mixed feelings among many Bangladeshi parents about what happened in the aftermath of an unprecedented terrorist attack in history. Among more than three thousand killed on that day were six Bangladeshi nationals who worked at the World Trade Center. They included a newly married couple who lived in Brooklyn and worked for Marsh and McLennan, a brokerage firm. The Mayor of New York City named the southeast corner of 3rd Ave and Ervington Avenue in Brooklyn after this martyred Bangladeshi couple; it was close to the apartment building where they lived. "Telling Nicholas" an HBO documentary about a seven year-old boy that lost his mother in the aftermath of the attacks included footage about a Bangladeshi family who had the same experience. This family lost the father, husband, and only breadwinner. He switched his shift at the Windows of the World with a co-worker and went to work on the morning of the attacks to be able to take his pregnant wife to the hospital for the delivery of their child in the afternoon. A Bangladeshi parent, whose children took part in this study, lived and worked in Brooklyn. He watched the Twin Towers go up in flames before they collapsed. Referring to 9/11 as an apocalyptic moment he described its aftermath as monumental when "New York City became the world." According to him, "the sacrifice of Bangladeshi lives was a reminder of how much we belonged here." Nonetheless, he complained that the great moment when the world came together against the terrorists was very short lived. He found himself a victim of discrimination in the neighborhood and at workplace. This parent also cited examples of how undocumented Bangladeshis in the city were subject to more scrutiny by the authorities in wake of that

tragedy. Other immigrant parents in this study were not comfortable talking about the condition that followed 9/11.

The informants alluded to discriminatory remarks from classmates and peers for a short period of time in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. Rahul was picked on by a fellow student who called him "a terrorist" because of what he perceived as a "politically incorrect name." However, the "mischief monger" apologized after being reprimanded by the school administration. There were no lingering hurt feelings between the two boys; they moved on and became friends again. Supti and Tasfia suffered similar hurt feelings following 9/11, when their schoolmates treated them unfairly. The girls interpreted these episodes as arbitrary, in which ordinary people, who did not know any better, overreacted to a great tragedy that affected all New Yorkers alike. They claimed to have no grudges against those fellow students. These adolescents wanted to reclaim their share of the city as best they could through academic performance and a strong work ethic.

Summary

As reported in this chapter, New York City was the center stage on which the two generations constructed two different realities, both of which transformed its physical and demographic landscape, context and character significantly. While the parents invested in replicating their native culture in the Diaspora to draw sustenance from it, their children not only inherited the city; they remade it and were remade by it. Unlike their immigrant parents who attempted to rebuild their past, the children of immigrants wanted to build a future in the new land by reintegrating the old. Nowhere was this transformation more evident than in how the second generation immigrants carved out

their self identity, a topic that will be discussed in-depth in the next chapter. Their acculturative experiences were confined to New York City; all the participants in the study were sensitive about different immigrant experiences outside of New York City. The critique of a young adult that "New York City is a fool's paradise," in comparison with the rest of the Unites States, had no salience with the experiences of other participants who discovered themselves within the context and the character of New York City as a dance where one cannot "know the dancer from the dance" to borrow from Yeats' "*Among The School Children*."

CHAPTER IX: ACCULTURATION AND ETHNIC SELF-IDENTITIES OF THE BANGLADSHI POST-IMMIGRANTS

Introduction

A recurrent theme in the previous chapters was the acculturation divide between Bangladeshi immigrant parents and their post-immigrant children seen through the lenses of generation, gender, and New York City as context and character. The present chapter extends the scope of this acculturation divide by using the analytical framework of ethnic self-identity. The crux of the acculturation divide between the two generations entailed the difference in *intentionality* between the parents and their children in carving out their ethnic self-identity as new immigrants. The immigrant parents rejected dual (e.g. Bangladeshi-American) identities as corrupt and they bracketed "Bangladeshi" ethnicity, premised on their national origin, as a nonnegotiable anchor. Consequently, this chapter focuses exclusively on the post-immigrants. Unlike their parents, the children contested the meaning of ethnicity handed down by their parents and reinterpreted it as a site for construction and negotiation of new and contextually salient identities.

One young adult participant, a sophomore at an Ivy League college, compared his ethnicity to a "palimpsest" on which his identity was open to re-inscription within multiple reference groups in New York City. He contrasted it with the "stone tablet" on which his parents inscribed their indelible identities within ethnic community as their single reference group. The general premise of this chapter is that immigrant parents' lack of intentionality effectively foreclosed the possibility of reinvention of ethnic self-identity. This contrasted sharply with their post-immigrant children who viewed their identity as a fluid category.

Acculturation Trajectory and Repertoire

This chapter centers on the trope of the "palimpsest" on which the children of Bangladeshi immigrants rewrote or creatively reinscribed their identities. Consistent with recent immigration research (Kasinitz, et al., 2008; Portes & Rumbaut, 2004), most young participants in the current study reported that their ethnicity began as a nonnegotiable, unhyphenated "Bangladeshi" identity that their parents transmitted during early socialization. But the parents' "Bangladeshi" identity gradually lost its centrality, especially during their adolescence and young adulthood, under the growing influence of secondary socialization. The youths constructed, reconstructed, negotiated, and renegotiated their identities through acculturative experiences that offered wider vistas for exploration.

For these children the synergy between their acculturation and construction of ethnic self-identities were shaped along two axes: diachronic, or changes over time, and synchronic, or changes at a single point in time. Self-identities constructed diachronically were termed *trajectories* marking the distance traveled from the original "Bangladeshi" ethnic identity inculcated by the parents and reinforced by the ethnic enclave, to their present self-identity. The youths' self-identities that evolved synchronically were *repertoires* and represented a range of personae embedded in newly constructed and negotiated ethnicities in the multicultural setting of New York City (See Table 5 & 6).

The level of acculturation of any individual participant was reflected at the intersection between a youth's identity trajectory and identity repertoire (See Table 7).

The researcher proposes that the degree of complexity of an identity repertoire parallels the length of identity trajectory to indicate the level of acculturation of an informant.

The accounts of participants revealed that the driving forces behind their ethnic self-identities were the interplay between structure and agency. The intra-familial and intra-ethnic context that surrounded the youths represented the structure, while their intentionality to remake the context of reception in New York City signified agency. Their capacity to draw on both the multicultural setting of New York City and their native culture to serve the need for adaptation has been referred to as the "second generation advantage" in immigration research (Kasinitz et al., 2008). However, not all participants interviewed in this study were equally proficient in utilizing this opportunity; consequently, some were more acculturated and advantaged than others. Those who were minimally acculturated developed shorter identity trajectories together with a smaller repertoire of identities. The more acculturated informants moved further away from their parents' ethnicity through an extended identity trajectory by developing a more complex and diverse repertoire of multicultural characteristics.

Table 5.

Dimensions Influencing Acculturation

Dimension	Definition
Ethnic Context	Level of dependence on the structure of the ethnic community
Intentionality	"Agency" or level of interaction within the context of reception
Identity Trajectory	Distance from ethnic-parental ethnicity (Diachronic identity)
Identity Repertoire	The range of roles individuals are able to take on concurrently or situationally (Synchronic identity)

The impact of acculturation on immigrants' self-identities is well documented in sociological research. Portes and Rumbaut (2001) have described them as malleable, without fixed or fluid categories. Others (Birman and Trickett, 2001) have integrated self-identification with two other markers of immigrants' acculturation: language competence and behavioral participation. Language competence reflected communication skills in the native and host cultures. Behavioral participation is the capacity to draw on the repertoire of behaviors characteristic of the native, host or both cultures, while self-identification is the degree of affiliation to one or both.

Although the self-identities of most participants in this study proved to be malleable, competence in "Bangla," or Bengali language, was not always an index of their acculturation. Two participants, both female high school seniors born in New York City, reported that they were competent in all the four basic language skills in "Bangla": understanding, speaking, reading, and writing. Nonetheless, they had put aside the parents' "Bangladeshi" identity and constructed a more flexible "Bangladeshi-American" identity consistent with their high level of acculturation. In contrast, two male participants, who were closely aligned with Bangladeshi culture, had limited proficiency in Bangla. However, most informants had shifted away from their native culture to some degree, but they retained communicative competence in the native language. The shift towards increased acculturation and incorporation in the multicultural society was also reflected in the nature of their participation and socialization in the ethnic community, neighborhood, and schools. These shifts of linguistic and group affiliations indicated how far they moved away from their parents' ethnic identity along a trajectory and the complex repertoire of multiple identities they acquired in the process (See Table 7).

The ability and willingness to draw on both Bengali and American culture and the capacity to adapt behavioral patterns to suit particular circumstances varied among these youths. It suggested different levels of acculturation and incorporation of their identities as "new New Yorkers."

Table 6.

Typology of Acculturation Levels of Bangladeshi Post-Immigrants

Level of Acculturation	Ethnic Context	Intentionality	Identity Trajectory	Identity Repertoire
Minimal	+	−	−	−
Moderate	+	+	−	−
High	−	+	+	+

Categories of Acculturation

Adolescents and young adults interviewed in this study fell into two broad categories, those who were less and others who were more acculturated in American society and its values. The less acculturated participants fell into two subgroups: the first maintained a strong identification with their parents' ethnicity and the Bangladeshi ethnic community. These youths exercised low agency or intentionality. Similar to their parents, they did little to reinvent their ethnicity, remake the City, or allow themselves to be reinvented by it. They had a short identity trajectory as well as a limited repertoire of identities. Intikhab is an example of this first subgroup.

The second subgroup disassociated completely from their parents and the ethnic community as a strategy to survive in a tough neighborhood. For example, Subachan

became immersed in Latino youth culture, but he did not outgrow affiliation with the ethnic self-identity of his parents. He knew how to blend in with youths from other racial groups which enabled him to continue along a slightly longer identity trajectory with a moderately complex identity repertoire. But both Intikhab and Subachan retained their identification with the proximal environment that surrounded their parents.

Intikhab and Subachan contrasted with the second group of adolescents and young adults, who represented a much more advanced as well as diverse set of acculturation patterns. Their identity trajectories were longer, and their identity repertoires became increasingly complex so that they defied categorization. Intentionality played an important role in accounting for the differences in identity trajectories and repertoires even among siblings regardless of their gender. For instance, unlike Subachan, his younger sister, Moushumi, found "Bangladeshi" identity inadequate, if not incompatible with her "Bangladeshi-American" identity in New York City. The two sisters, Farhana and Fahmida, both began by presenting themselves as South-Asian "Indians," concealing their "Bangladeshi" identity. But ultimately they moved along different trajectories and carved out divergent repertoires. One embraced a pan-ethnic "Desi" identity, and the other found her place as a "Bangladeshi-American." Nilanjana was less affiliated with her ethnic community, native language, religion, and culture than her younger sister Nabanita. Likewise, Nandanik was more attuned to American culture than his younger brother Tausif.

Some of the more acculturated youths evolved from a "Bangladeshi" to a "Bangladeshi-American" identity in which the "Bangladeshi-American" identity repertoire was constructed in various alignments and degrees of emphasis. Others hid

their “Bangladeshi” identity and masqueraded as Americans at some points before settling on a “Bangladeshi-American” identity. In another pattern, one informant reached for an “American” identity in a trajectory that also began as “Bangladeshi, but was punctuated with “Bangladeshi-American” identification depending on the context.

In one instance, an informant described herself as a “Brooklynite” in early adolescence. However, she described her repertoire of at least four self-ascribed identities as a young adult: Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi-American, Asian, and American. Even though some informants discarded the pan-ethnic “Desi” identity in favor of “Bangladeshi-American” identity, one informant in particular presented a South-Asian “Indian” identity strategically to conceal her “Bangladeshi” origin in adolescence. In young adulthood, she embraced “Desi” identity not only for greater acceptance in the larger South Asian community of New York City, but also to reconcile herself with a “Bangladeshi” identity. Some children established trans-national identities. Finally, a few informants revealed highly complex and evolved repertoires of identities resulting in unusually long advancement along an acculturation trajectory.

Acculturation Patterns in Depth

Less Acculturated Participants: Stuck in “Bangladeshi” Identity

Study informants with short trajectories and simple repertoires of identities were less likely to reject their culture of origin and embrace the New York City life. Intkhab and Subachan lived in two different boroughs. In both cases, English was their dominant language, and they had limited proficiency in Bangla. However, neither of them moved far from their parents’ Bangladeshi identity. Intikhab claimed that through extensive socialization with his parents and co-ethnics in the enclave at Astoria, Queens, he was

"stuck" in Bangladeshi identity. Despite his exposure to multicultural institutions such as New York City public schools, and a racially and ethnically mixed neighborhood, he did not have the will or the desire to venture beyond the norms and values represented by his family and the ethnic enclave. In this respect, he followed in the footsteps of his parents. It resulted in a stagnant self-identity along a short acculturation trajectory. He dropped out of high school and worked full time in a Bangladeshi restaurant to help his family. Although his father was previously a well-to-do entrepreneur, he had to go on disability because of deteriorating health condition. As the only son, Intikhab assumed the responsibilities of his family. Eventually, he completed his G.E.D. and waited tables in an Italian restaurant to earn money for his family. He was waiting for his parents to select a Bangladeshi bride for him in an arranged marriage. Consistent with the patriarchal values of Bangladeshi immigrant families, this would ensure that he and his wife would live with his parents after marriage.

Nonetheless, Intikhab was not exactly like his parents. They often talked about returning home to Bangladesh and considered New York City as "Bidesh," or a foreign country, but he regarded Astoria as his "hometown." He did not share his parents' enthusiasm about watching ethnic Bangladeshi television programs in New York City. Although his parents gravitated towards programs broadcast from Bangladesh, Intikhab showed no interest in them. In the presence of the researcher, his parents asked him to watch a Bangladeshi show; but he appeared detached. Compared with other participants this study, he traversed a very short distance along a trajectory that began with his parents' ethnic identity. Congruent with a short identity trajectory, his identity repertoire was simple, and he was one of the least acculturated youths interviewed.

Embracing "Bangladeshi" Identity

Another young man with a simpler identity repertoire was Shubachan. He also had to leave school to help his family through economic difficulties. After his father was laid off from a minimum wage job, it became Shubachan's responsibility to support his family. However, in contrast to Intikhab, he stopped socializing with his Bangladeshi friends from the community and hung out exclusively with Latino friends in a "rough neighborhood in Brooklyn." His physical features allowed him to "blend with them" effortlessly, and it did not bother him if Bangladeshis in the neighborhood mistook him for a Latino. This was a "secret" he guarded from his family, especially his father.

However, there was more to his acculturation process than met the eye. When the researcher asked how he would identify himself, Subachan unequivocally claimed that he was a "Bangladeshi," notwithstanding his "passion for American music and television" and poor skills in Bengali. When he watched a Bengali television program called "Close-Up One--Talent Search," a version of "American Idol," with his parents, Subachan pretended to enjoy it only to please them. Since all his predictions about the winners came true, they felt reassured that he cared about the native culture. However, Subachan confided to the researcher that he had never enjoyed the Bangladeshi "American Idol;" he was just lucky to pick the winners.

Unlike Intikhab, Subachan was unhappy that his parents would arrange his marriage. There were other major differences between these two less acculturated young men. Intikhab's path did not take him very far away from his parents' world. He was constrained by the prevailing structure of the Bangladeshi ethnic community and

exhibited limited agency and intentionality. In contrast, Subachan took advantage of his agency and intentionality to recreate his context of socialization, even if his ventures outside of the native culture were anti-social. Unlike Intikhab's parents, Subachan's father did not want to return to Bangladesh because "Bangladesh has come to New York." Both these young men were "new New Yorkers" embedded in a second generation narrative, but they did not traverse a route too far from their parents'.

F*rom "Bangladeshi" to "Bangladeshi-American"*

In this study the majority of Bangladeshi adolescents and young adults located their ethnic self-identities along a trajectory from immigrant "Bangladeshi," identity reflecting the parents' essential ethnicity transmitted during their childhood, to "Bangladeshi-American" identity. However, the relationship between the identities on each side of the hyphen was in a constant state of flux (Sengupta, 2008). Sometimes they valorized the pre-hyphen racialized ethnic identity, and at other times they privileged the post-hyphen "American" identity.

They constantly sought to balance two compatible selves. For example, after she moved away from her parents' "Bangladeshi" identity, Moushumi established herself as a "Bangladeshi-American." Despite her proficiency in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing Bangla, she challenged her parents' expectations and claimed that she could not be "one hundred percent Bangladeshi in New York City." She was "neither totally Bangladeshi nor totally American," or more precisely "seventy-five percent Bangladeshi and twenty five percent American." The adolescent was also comfortable as a "Bangladeshi-Muslim-American," incorporating the three authentic elements she identified as her own. However, she denounced the "Desi" identity, because it was

inauthentic to her. She incorporated her "Muslim," identity without considering herself very religious. Unlike other Muslim girls in the neighborhood, who were overtly religious, she did not wear a *hijab* and "only prayed occasionally." Moushumi was very sensitive about how a particular situation influenced the way she described herself. Among her parents and multi-cultural peers, she was a "Bangladeshi-American," but in the company of South Asians or "Desi" friends Mosuhumi presented herself as a "Bangladeshi- Muslim-American." This illustrates how many youths in this study deployed alternative identities depending on the context of socialization.

For some informants, religion was an integral part of their identities, whether or not they chose to engage in religious activities. Asheek discovered that religion was embedded in his "Bangladeshi-American" identity. He did not need to label himself as "Muslim," but the salience of religious identity was evident in his observance of Islamic rituals. On the other hand, Abinash acknowledged that the "Hindu" religion was intertwined with his "Bengali-American" identity, but he chose to be discreet about it. It contrasted with the "Bangladeshi-American" identity of other participants, but accounted for his extended family's recent migration from Bangladesh to West Bengal, India. His father, a wealthy entrepreneur who immigrated to New York City twenty-five years ago, provided financial assistance for his family to emigrate from Bangladesh because of religious discrimination of the Hindus as minorities.

Many informants were adept at navigating Bangladeshi and American identities on both sides of the hyphen. Parvez relished himself as "Bangladeshi-American," particularly because he did not have to relinquish his "Bangladeshi" heritage to be an "American in New York City." He socialized largely with "Bangladeshi-American"

friends, who shared a common interest in American food, music, and films. Kavita, for one, could not speak or write Bengali, but she was settled in her "Bangladeshi-American" self-identity. She compared her situation to someone walking a tightrope between her close "white American" friends from school and her Bangladeshi friends in the neighborhood, especially those who were "fresh off the boat or FOB." She maintained a strong connection with her familial heritage and was aware of how the ethnic enclave could punish its detractors. She embraced the hyphenated "Bangladeshi-American" identity as a symbol of continuity with the past and change in the future.

Some youths in the study were very specific about their journey from identification as "Bangladeshi" to "Bangladeshi-American." For example, Pia knew that this transformation occurred as a result of her interactions with multiethnic peers. Following that discovery she found that the epithet "Bangladeshi without a hyphen" reduced her to "less than myself," or to a less than acculturated immigrant. Youths who took on Bangladeshi-American identities contrasted with Intikhab and Subachan, who wanted to be identified as "Bangladeshi" and did not move far enough along the acculturation trajectory.

From "American" to "Bangladeshi-American"

A few informants reversed the general trend and began by embracing an American identity right from the start. For example, Rajeev, a seventeen-year old boy, who was about to start college, narrated his experiences of early adolescence as a "New York City/American" so he could "ride the bandwagon." However, it eventually dawned on him that "Bangladeshi-American" identity made more sense in a multicultural city like New York. In this newly located identity, he shared American values with everybody

else without having to give up his parents' native cultural practices. He enjoyed Bangladeshi food and was proud of his parents' value-system in which the interest of the family took precedence over the interest of individual members. In his final year of high school he had more "Bangladeshi-American" friends than ever before.

In contrast, Nirupama underwent a more complex reverse trajectory. She also began her journey as an "American," in New York City so that she could socialize with friends from many different cultures. At one point he claimed a "Bangladeshi-American" identity, briefly before rebounding to her core "New Yorker" identity, in which she was also embedded as a "Bangladeshi:"

> I started off as an American, but I became a Bangladeshi-American for sometime, before I became a Bangladeshi. But I was denying something very important in me: I am a New Yorker by heart. Probably, I am a Bangladeshi-New Yorker, I mean a native of New York City who happens to be a native Bangladeshi too. Probably, I am more of a New Yorker than an American.

New York City was not only a site of construction of her self-identity; it was also the centerpiece of her complex identity repertoire. She described New York City as "the center of the world and outside of the US" that enabled her to be a "citizen of the world." This complex acquisition of multiple roles shaped Nirupama's aspirations. She felt privileged by her opportunities in New York City and wanted to work for underprivileged children in Bangladesh, who were often showcased on ethnic Bangladeshi television programs available through the Cable TV or the Dish network. Nonetheless, similar to other participants in this study, she continued to distance herself from the ethnic enclave as a matter of personal choice and conviction.

Becoming an "American"

Only one participant in the study drew out his acculturation trajectory to the point where he identified himself as American-only, but he was constrained by his general feelings about the rest of America outside of New York City. During adolescence, Tammoy joined his co-ethnic friends in New York City on a pathway to become a "Bangladeshi-American." Although his friends were complacent about their hyphenated identity, he wanted to explore further. During the interview with the researcher, he explained this motivation as "pushing the envelope towards more and more American identity." His best friend was of Eastern European descent; these boys felt they became members of each other's families. However, this young adult strongly felt that this "American" identity was feasible in New York City only; he experienced its cultural space as the "melting pot of the world." In spite of his positive acculturation experiences as a "new New Yorker," his perspective was projected against the backdrop of an imagined American mainstream, represented by the Mid-west, in which "skin color" made a difference.

> New York City is the melting pot of the world in my opinion. People from all ethnicities come to New York City and assimilate into American culture. I guess I am more of a New Yorker than an American. If I were in the Midwest, I could not assimilate to that culture because it is completely different. My skin color would probably make me be treated differently, but in New York everyone is different. People in New York City are in contact with many people around them, but in the Midwest I will have to deal with marginality because they will treat me differently even if they didn't mean to.

His passion for the "melting pot" echoes Nirupama's enthusiasm for New York City, a city that never required immigrants to renounce their ethnicity to assimilate into the mainstream. Through a constantly iterative process, Tonmoy was able to accommodate a

complex repertoire that included "Bangladeshi," "Bangladeshi-American," and "American" identities.

From "Brooklynite" to "Bangladeshi-Asian-American"

In her complex odyssey Nilanjana epitomized the synergy between trajectory and repertoire in self-ascribed identities. A kindred spirit with Moushumi, a young woman she did not even know, Nilanjana constructed her identity historically as a trajectory and situationally as a repertoire. She habitually embarked on an uncharted terrain informed by her questioning mind. Early on this young adult crafted herself as a "Brooklynite" instead of a "Bangladeshi" to avoid being labeled in her predominantly African-American and Latino neighborhood. She claimed that other choices, including South Asian "Indian," and "Bangladeshi," had to be suppressed in the depressed neighborhood in which she grew up. Only when she attended a predominantly white high school, far away from her neighborhood, did she assert her "Desi" identity and eventually reclaimed a "Bangladeshi-American" affiliation. Ultimately, at the most advanced stage of her acculturative trajectory, she found herself in command of a repertoire that was "split among three identities: "Asian," "Bangladeshi-American" and "American." As an "American-New Yorker" she differentiated herself from her co-ethnics by embracing a diversity that included all groups, including whites:

> I guess I do not generalize people by their color of skin and by the country they or their parents have come from. I stay away from Bangladeshis who tell me not to hang out with white friends because somehow they are "bad people." It is clearly stereotyping the white kids by wrongly thinking that they are born in very rich families and they live off their parents' wealth to go to expensive private schools. As an American I treat everybody, from all skin colors and creeds, equally and respectfully.

Although Nilanjana's best friends were "white" or "Chinese," she did not lose touch with Bangladeshi culture in her emerging identity. The delicate dance between continuity and change was captured in her narrative:

> As I told you before, probably I have nothing in common with any other Bangladeshi kid in New York City. I feel closeness to white and Chinese friends, but I can't say that I'm purely American. There is something in me that won't let me reject Bangladeshi culture. I still go to Bangladeshi cultural events in New York City partly to please my parents and partly to respect what I still consider as my own. If I didn't care about Bangladeshi culture I would have just rejected it. I guess it is still an important part of my self.

Nilanjana was the only participant in this study who sought continuity of native culture beyond her own generation. Her capacity to reintegrate "Bangladeshi" identity regardless of the very long acculturation trajectory and compatibly complex repertoire made her exceptional in comparison with others youths in this study.

From "Bangladeshi" to "Desi"

Since the youths in this study lived in the same neighborhood as other South Asians, their cultural similarity could draw them together. It also enabled them to disguise their Bangladeshi heritage, even though their parents disapproved of this stance. At other times, like their parents, they asserted their uniqueness as "Bangladeshis" as distinguished from other South Asian groups. Fahmida began with a South Asian "Indian" identity, obscuring her Bangladeshi identity "as a matter of convenience rather than comfort." However, through extensive secondary socialization with members of the "Desi" club, she changed. Ultimately, she rejected the "convenient" South-Asian "Indian" identity and reclaimed herself as "Bangladeshi" and eventually reconciled herself with a "Bangladeshi-American" identity under the liberalizing influence of the context and character of New York City. At the time of the interview, she was poised as

"two-in one," or a "Bangladeshi-American," who could draw sustenance from this gateway city without abandoning her ethnicity. Mousumi passionately disapproved of the pan-ethnic "Desi" identity. For her, "Desi" was a label for anyone from India, Pakistan, or Bangladesh that diminished her identification as Bangladeshi immigrant.

When describing her experiences of growing up in New York City, Farhana explained to the researcher that she had introduced herself to her friends in junior high school as a South Asian "Indian" instead of a "Bangladeshi" to avoid being considered a stranger. Since her friends knew where India was, it saved her the trouble of providing additional information about her native country and ethnicity. However, there was a dichotomy between how she identified herself ("Bangladeshi") outside of the school and how she presented herself ("Indian") in school. In an attempt to address this dichotomy and consolidate her acculturative thrust, she "experimented with "white American identity" in her high school, which was located in a predominantly Russian-American neighborhood. However, it had mixed results: in spite of her Russian friends' efforts to accept her as one of them, her culture, skin color, and Asian features stood out. "I gradually discovered what I was not," she reflected in hindsight.

Farhana spent four formative years as an Ivy League undergraduate living in the college dormitory with second generation South Asian "Indian-American" girls. She was struck with how much she had in common with those "academically very bright students" and embraced a "Desi" identity unawares. Although she always spoke English with her "Desi" peers, Farhana had a working knowledge of spoken Hindi from watching Bollywood movies with her mother. This enabled her to connect with the Indian-American girls better. As a "Desi" New Yorker she was inspired to take a beginners'

course in “Bengali,” offered in her college and felt reinvigorated about her identity as a “Bangladeshi,” while she continued to be a “new New Yorker.” In this acculturated role she no longer experienced low self-esteem as a second generation “Bangladeshi.” Additionally, she was not constrained by her “Desi” identity. It gave her a vantage point beyond her ascribed ethnicity. She wanted to work for the United Nations on international women’s issues. The accumulation of these experiences enabled her to segue to a transnational identity.

The pan-ethnic identity did not prove to be such a liberating experience for other participants. Unlike Farhana, her younger sister Fahmida denounced “Desi” identity in favor of “Bangladeshi-American” selfhood. She thought she must decide on the most relevant category to represent her acculturative experiences in New York City. Moushumi also rejected a “Desi” identity on the grounds that it would undermine her claim as “Bangladeshi-American” and impair her ability to continue to count on her parents’ self-identity as “Bangladeshi” immigrants. In spite of his membership and role as an advocate in a second generation “Desi” club in Queens, Ayub discovered himself as a Bangladeshi-American. Nilanjana, found the “Desi” category too simplistic to capture the complexity of her experiences as a member of the new generation of New Yorkers.

Transnational Identities

The combination of experiences in New York City, both within the ethnic communities and enclaves and in the “majority minority” mainstream that informants described as a “multicultural melting pot” shaped transnational identification among a number of adolescents and young adults. It propelled them towards career aspirations that embodied visions for changing the larger world. One of them was Farhana, who

planned a career in women's development in Third World countries. This came about as a result of her multicultural socialization experiences in New York City and an internship at the United Nations during her senior year as an undergraduate. She attended an International Women's Conference in Geneva to familiarize herself with the emergent issues. According to Nirupama, since "New York City is the capital of the world," her citizenship in the city, the center stage of her identity, made her a "citizen of the world"--including Bangladesh. She acknowledged the influence of ethnic Bangladeshi TV as a site for recalibration of her identity repertoire. This was borne out by her desire to work on improving the conditions of disadvantaged children in Bangladesh. Unlike Moushumi, she used her native language skills to reconnect with her native culture:

> When I went to junior high school, I became very good friends with Chinese and Indian students. I found that they are very proud of their native culture, some of them spoke their native language fluently too. It opened my eyes. I began to ask myself if I had any reason to be proud about my native culture and what was so unique about it. I began to develop my fluency in Bengali. It was an 'a-ha' moment for me. It was fascinating to discover the richness of my Bangladeshi native culture. Bangladeshi television channels that are available in New York City helped me a lot in this discovery. I fell in love with Bangladeshi children, who are living in poverty. I want to work for them after graduating from college. When I went to Bangladesh last year, for the first time, my determination to work in Bangladesh to improve the condition of poor kids only became stronger.

Not all the participants had similar experiences in this regard. Other participants reported mixed feelings about their first trips to Bangladesh and were less animated by their experience. During their maiden voyage, Ayub and Najwa were unhappy to learn that they were no longer considered "Bangladeshis" by members of their extended family. They were repeatedly called "Americans" despite their sincerest efforts to disprove it. Nandonik also had a negative experience during his first trip to Bangladesh,

but not a painful one. It only confirmed his conviction that he was more "American" than "Bangladeshi" as a "Bangladeshi-American in New York City."

Rajeeb had an entirely different experience in Bangladesh. He shared his passion for American fiction, music, and movies with his cousins and online friends, all of whom were from affluent families. He found out that they had common interests:

> I thought that we had a lot in common with the kids from the rich families in big cities of Bangladesh; we spoke English, read the same fiction, watched the same movie, and listened to the same music. You may call it a Shakespeare and Harry Potter connection.

One of his cousins tried to impress Rajeeb with how "American" he already was before even visiting the United States. This illustrated "anticipatory acculturation" in which prospective emigrants from sending countries oriented themselves to American culture (Gans, 2000). Rajeeb found this attitude disingenuous and inauthentic. Interestingly, the transnational identities of these post-immigrants were very different from the "transnational social field" (Fouron & Glick-Schiller, 2002) and the "remittance culture" (Levitt, 2000) of their immigrant parents.

Exemplars of Complex Identity Repertoire

Four post-immigrants in this study were exemplars of complex identity repertoires that measured up to the extension of their acculturative trajectories. Each captured the complexity of their particular situation through a signature metaphor. The girl who considered herself a "Russian Doll;" the boy who wore "Many Hats On The Same Head;" the youth who constantly found himself in the role of a "Juggler;" and the young adult who sported himself as "a Palimpsest, not a Stone tablet," illustrated their complex subject positions. These young people were highly acculturated, and their unique ability

to take advantage of the diversity of the city mirrored their capacity to adapt to numerous roles within the variety of situations they encountered.

Russian Doll

Even though Meghla described herself as "Bangladeshi-American" in her early adolescence, she discovered that the hyphenated identity could not capture the fluidity with which she deployed different facets of herself depending on the changing circumstances. While other participants of this study reported on their rites of passage from "Bangladeshi" to "Bangladeshi-American" and other formulations of new ethnicities along a linear path, Meghla preferred to describe herself in a-historical terms. She referred to her enactment of various subject positions and roles with multi-ethnic peers as a "Russian Doll." This allowed her to assume different vantage points, including "Bangladeshi," "Bangladeshi-American," or "American" depending on the particular situation. She deftly engaged in "code switching" from one subject position to another:

> Basically, I can easily switch roles from one to the other. When I am home, I perfectly fit into the role of a Bangladeshi girl, but when I am in school or in the company of my friends, I am a Bangladeshi-American or American in a multicultural society. I mean to say that I belong to a native culture through my family, but it does not limit my capacity to see eye to eye with other young New Yorkers who have shared aspirations and goals, common likes and dislikes? We like the same movies, love to listen to the same music. Additionally, we like to dress alike, not immodestly though (laughs). I have no problem in playing these two roles which are not necessarily different. … It's like a Russian doll. My Bangladeshi identity sits inside my American identity.

This complex and plastic identity repertoire developed over time. It was the result of Meghla's intentionality and ability to navigate in a multiethnic setting in order to socialize effectively. She achieved this astonishing feat developmentally through a culturally iterative process.

> Before I knew anything, I was in a mixed neighborhood in Brooklyn with a large presence of Bangladeshi immigrants in the midst of West Indians, Pakistanis, Latinos, African-Americans and some Whites, I assume, who left in course of time. I knew early on how to adjust myself to Bangladeshi environment at home, the neighborhood and the multicultural environment in school with my friends.

Meghla did not perceive her "Bangladeshi" identity as incompatible with her American" identity; instead she found them complementary. The "American" identification was too abstract for her in a multiethnic context of New York City:

> It's like when I am both Bangladeshi and American: Bangladeshi because of what my parents are and American because of what I came to be in a country where I grew up in. There is no conflict between the two. I believe that one makes the other richer. In New York City when you call somebody just American, it becomes very difficult to know who the person really is. It does not mean much. You feel that something is missing somewhere. When you say that somebody is a Bangladeshi-American or an Indian-American I can actually put a human face on it and know who that person may look like.

Similar to other study participants, this young woman sought unity in diversity and chose a path of non-discrimination as a rational-choice. The alternative for her was a situation in which everybody found an excuse to discriminate against others to nobody's advantage.

Wearing Many Hats on the Same Head

Following a bumpy and circular road from New York City to Hudson, New York and back to New York City, Ayub honed his skills in socializing with multi-ethnic peers. When interviewed for this study he was far too acculturated to be bound by a "Bangladeshi" identity: "I have a wide range of friends and I get along with everybody. I have a lot of similarities with other Bangladeshi kids, but I do not want to close my mind by not socializing with kids from other cultures. I try to get to know other people's issues too."

Not even his membership in a "Desi" club in Jackson Heights, Queens, could foreclose his identity repertoire. "It makes me a South Asian-American, but it does not prevent me from socializing with friends who are not "Desi," Ayub remarked. He used the analogy of donning or doffing different hats to describe the way he presented himself in everyday life: "It may look different from outside, but when we hang out we find too many similarities and we forget our differences. I wear different hats, but it is always on the same head." He represented himself with the trope of one head wearing different hats that consisted of a core identity crowned with a multitude of peripheral identities.

The metaphor of "many hats" signified a diversity of social contexts in which he had to interact by taking on appropriate, but variant, roles. The core of one head revealed his ability to maintain continuity among these divergent roles. He was never put off by the complexity of his peripheral roles, because they gave him access to the underlying commonality of all "new New Yorkers." More and more he became intrigued with the similarities between the "Desi" youths in his Jackson Heights' South Asian Club and second generation "African" immigrants in his neighborhood in Jamaica, Queens. Ayub claimed that despite differences in ethnicity and national origin, all of them were equally friendly and motivated by the same ambition of "doing well in the United States." However, it did not make the process of acculturation any easier or his repertoire any simpler. In order to perform at the peak of his identity repertoire he not only had to "talk the talk, but also walk the walk."

The Juggler

As an adolescent, Nandonik was discouraged with the attrition of his native language and culture, but gradually he was convinced that "you win some, you lose

some." But this balancing act was lost during his late adolescence when he felt "strongly driven in one direction: American culture. In retrospect, he had no idea about what the future would hold. Even if he tried to strike a balance as a young adult, it was short-lived:

> But now I try to keep a good balance between American and Bangladeshi cultures; I always believe that balance is the right thing in everything. I try to keep it so that I am not too absorbed in American culture and not forget my Bangladeshi heritage. Sometimes I feel as if my Bangladeshi identity is questionable because I am not very proud of it except for the fact that my parents are from Bangladesh. I'm more proud about my American identity than my Bangladeshi identity.

Further along his trajectory, he distanced himself totally from the ethnic community; weaned himself of the parental influences on retaining native cultural identity; and became steeped in a very diverse setting that required him to develop a complex identity repertoire. In this iterative process, he saw himself as a juggler of different facets of his identity to suit the particular circumstance:

> My friends come from many different cultures and races. I have white American, African-American, Latin American, Indian, Chinese and Caribbean friends. I always pick up different things from them. This is like the melting pot of American culture. I think people come to US from many other countries of the world and they make their mark here. For example, I really enjoy Chinese, Mexican food and American fast food and American music like rock and roll, Jazz and the Blues. It feels like they are all different parts of my personality and I am constantly juggling them to show my skills.

In his role as a "juggler" who could display all the skills of his repertoire at any particular point in time, Nandanik counted on "multicultural melting pot" of New York City for sustenance.

A Palimpsest Not a Stone Tablet

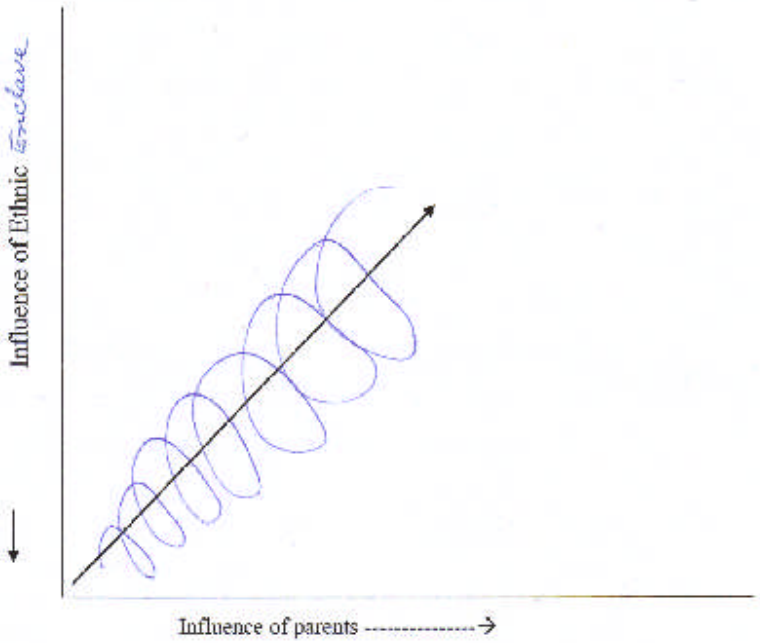
The initial metaphor set out in this chapter came from a highly enlightened and remarkably astute young man who drew an analogy between the ethnic self identity of his

parents' generation with that of his own generation as the difference between the "stone tablet" and the "palimpsest." Iqbal grew up among many siblings "like canned sardine fish" in a small apartment. What he learned from his parents was the value of education and the dignity of his Bangladeshi ethnicity and culture. He always found himself on the receiving end of self-identity construction, including his parents' "Bangladeshi," immigrant identity; his co-ethnics' "Bangladeshi-American," "Desi-American," "Asian-American," and "Muslim-American" identities. Initially, this was difficult for him to endure, but eventually he mastered the art of constructing various identities to match his survival needs.

Drawing upon his experiences, Iqbal compared the multivalent framework of his self-identities to a "palimpsest," on which his old and new identities could be written side-by-side. Even if some old identities were partially erased on the palimpsest, there was room for newer identities that he might assume on his own or were ascribed to him by others. He compared his palimpsest to the "stone tablet" on which the ethnic self-identity of his parents was etched once and for all. Unlike his parents and some of his co-ethnic friends, his identity was open to change and growth. The provisional nature of writing on the "palimpsest" stood in sharp relief against the immutability of inscriptions on the "stone tablet." This accentuated the acculturation gap between the first and the second generation immigrants. Iqbal refused to accept his race and culture as his destiny. In the trajectory "from a 'Bangladeshi' to a 'Bangladeshi-American' identity and beyond," all the anchors of his self-identities contributed to a rich mélange of identities that not only sustained his acculturation but enabled him to achieve substantial academic, and presumably career success, in the future.

Table 7.

Level of Acculturation Reflected in Length of Trajectory and Complexity of Identity Repertoire



Key:

Trajectory –

Repertoire –

Summary

This chapter presented how the level of acculturation of the participants was inversely proportional to their dependence on the influences of the first generation immigrant parents and their ethnic community. In other words, if their reliance on the

pervasive structure of the ethnic context was high, the level of their acculturation was low and vice versa. The developmental stages of post-immigrants' acculturation was reflected in enhanced agency and intentionality, which enabled them to stave off the influences of the ethnic context and to interact more fully with the life in New York City. The level of acculturation achieved by the participants of this study marked the distance from their parents' primordial identity and reflected their own broader identity repertoire. Many accumulated skills that enabled them to position themselves in a range of different situations. Identity trajectory and identity repertory were complementary, and they involved an iterative process through which the post-immigrant Bangladeshi youth constructed and negotiated new anchors beyond the ethnicity of their parents. Unlike the "straight line theory of assimilation," in which the precondition for integration into the mainstream is the renunciation of ethnic identities, this process did not prevent the new New Yorkers from reintegrating the ethnic identities they inherited from their parents as new identities continued to emerge.

CHAPTER X: FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The study was conducted in the qualitative research tradition of Grounded Theory. It developed mid-level theories about the acculturation of Bangladeshi second generation immigrants in New York City that spanned four complementary and intersecting domains. These domains included intergenerational modes of adaptation; gendered norms of primary socialization in a culture imbedded in a patriarchal value system; the role of a multi-ethnic context of reception in youth acculturation; and developmental stages of ethnic self-identity that resulted in different levels of incorporation in the host society. The first domain revealed the dynamics of adolescents' and young adults' acculturation gap with their parents. This divide was also reflected in the second domain which illustrated how Bangladeshi immigrant girls negotiated and redefined their ascribed gender roles within traditional patriarchal families, while in some instances boys were circumscribed by the demands parental expectations placed on them to assume familial responsibilities. A third domain was the pivotal role New York City played as a majority-minority site of acculturation. It transformed Bangladeshi second generation youths into new New Yorkers. They in turn remade this gateway city. This was in contrast with their immigrant parents who established ethnic enclaves New York City to reproduce native cultural features. By far the most important transformation was represented by the final domain. It illuminated how these children of immigrants constructed and calibrated their ethnic self-identities and kept pace with developmental stages of acculturation in this great immigrant city. Immigrant parents considered New York transitional; for them this host city was a "figment of space" that conjured up their

identities as a “figment of time” (Aciman, 1999, p. 34). In contrast, their children moved along a continuum between the City and their evolving identities unfolding in real space and time. This reciprocity transcended their parents’ aspirations for intergenerational cultural continuity.

Across these four interconnected domains of acculturation, parents were driven by overriding feelings of departure from their origins. This separation justified their desire to maintain continuity in the host country through rediscovery of their native culture. However, their children were prompted by a growing sense of arrival in their new country. Their “second generation advantage” (Kasinitz et al., 2008, p. 15) consisted of an ability to integrate the norms and values of their new home without having to forsake their native culture. Needless to say, not all informants kept up the same pace, and some were more acculturated than others.

The findings of this study have two major sets of implications; one for social welfare research and another for social work practice. It provides the researchers who intend to study this immigrant community with a foundation based upon the concepts and mid-level theories developed here. For the native researcher, it reveals both the challenges and opportunities of accessing his or her own community. Although the findings of this project can, by no means, be generalized to other immigrant groups, or even other Bangladeshi families outside of the present study, the concepts developed here may challenge how scholars and practitioners understand South Asian immigrants’ acculturation patterns and experiences. With regard to social work profession, the revelations of this study can inform practice, policy, and program design to effectively serve the needs of this new immigrant population.

Domain Specific Findings

Intergenerational Mode of Adaptation

With the onset of adolescence, the second generation Bangladeshi children began to deviate from the paths of their parents. Although their childhood is largely shaped by the primary socialization experiences in the home and the ethnic enclave, they changed in their teens under the influence of New York City. The City served as a source of secondary socialization in which the process of acculturation and integration to its multiethnic setting began. It resulted in an intergenerational acculturation gap represented by a two-tier narrative. The parents' storylines captured how they established Bangladeshi native culture in the host country through burgeoning ethnic enclaves in the city. Bangladeshi immigrant community network served as a sanctuary for them by creating a de-territorialized ethnic space outside of the home country. It also established an extension of their home environment for the children to draw upon. However, even within the confines of ethnic enclave, these parents continued to worry about its ability to safeguard their children from the adverse influences of the surrounding communities. They were particularly concerned about the influences of depressed neighborhoods on their children. Although examples of second generation decline (Gans, 1992) and dissonant acculturation (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001) are not rare, it was very difficult, even for a native researcher, to recruit families who experienced parent-child conflicts and other disruptions because they were embarrassed by their children's behavior or lack of accomplishment.

The parents wanted their children to internalize the values and practices of their native culture and resist the influences of the host culture. At the same time they were

aware that the social and economic mobility of their children in the US hinged on good American education and skills to integrate into mainstream American society. Many of the youths reported being pressurized by their parents to become doctors, engineers, or lawyers to conform to the model minority myth. However, parents were afraid that their children would embrace the American culture at the expense of their native culture. They considered selective acculturation an ideal mode of acculturation for their children. Instances of consonant acculturation or, in other words, intra-familial settings in which both parents and children were either assimilating into the host culture by disowning their native culture or rebounding to the native culture by rejecting the host culture, were unavailable.

The Bangladeshi youths were situated along a different storyline. In what could be considered a first tier narrative, they underwent rites of passage to incorporate the attributes of American culture. As parental influences attenuated, especially during adolescence or young adulthood, they distanced themselves from the ethnic enclave and drew more sustenance from secondary socialization with multiethnic youths in the city. During this developmental stage they outgrew their parents' desires to retain native culture and became critical of the role the ethnic enclave played in suppressing their acculturation. Attrition of native language or exceptionally poor native language skills among the children of immigrants contributed to a parent-child communication gap. As the children became more fluent in English and their parents clung to the Bangladeshi dialects of their home country, widening the intergenerational gap. Contrasting push-pull factors between the parents and their children also exacerbated this separation. For the children, acculturation in the host country was the pull factor, but for their parents the

push was the retention of their native culture. Parents and children moved in diametrically opposing directions. In the language of the informants, parents and children parted ways at a fork in the road, and children took the path across a bridge that led them to a new New York City.

Gendered Socialization in Patriarchal Families

In this study, a typical Bangladeshi immigrant family was a compact two-parent household in which the father was the primary breadwinner and the mother a homemaker. However, it was the mother who took the key role in inculcating the values of gendered socialization and patriarchal norms among her children, especially to ensure that their daughters continued to be purveyors of intergenerational cultural continuity. Intriguingly, gendered parental expectations proved to have equal opportunity disadvantages for both male and female children in contrasting ways. Boys enjoyed more freedom from parental supervision and were oftentimes exposed to street culture, while unmarried girls, even if they were college educated and employed full-time, never enjoyed the same freedom. Instead, they were restrained by curfews and parental oversight. Girls were focused on educational or career goals and better performance in school. In contrast, their brothers were particularly susceptible to the subculture of the neighborhood.

Unlike the girls, the boys were expected to take over the responsibility of the family when the father, or the primary breadwinner, had any life-threatening or disabling condition; even if it came at the expense of their high school or college education. Boys were also expected to live with their parents after marriage, while the girls could leave the parental home to live with their husbands. In families with children of both sexes,

boys were expected to make more challenging career choices than girls, whose primary role was considered to be the agents of native cultural continuity in the domestic realm. Interestingly, when it came to arranged marriage, it was the girls who became more vocal about their agency in renegotiating and redefining its norms. The boys were more inclined to acquiesce to their parents' authority to select a spouse.

New York City: The Multi-Ethnic Context of Reception

Both generations of Bangladeshi immigrants observed in this study were in the process of remaking New York City, but in strikingly different ways. On the one hand immigrant parents transformed the demographic landscape of the city. They added to its diversity with ethnic enclaves and bonding relationships with co-ethnics in a sustaining community network. On the other hand, their children separated themselves from ethnic enclaves and community networks in the city to become new New Yorkers. They forged bridging relationships with multiethnic cohorts in public schools and their neighborhoods.

Unlike their parents, these new New Yorkers found unity in diversity through a new "melting pot," which was qualitatively different from the traditional concept of the American "melting pot." This New York City melting pot did not require the children of immigrants to give up their native identity. They contributed towards a novel rendition of *e pluribus unum*. The traditional American melting pot hardly captured the way in which numerous national, ethnic, and racial groups became a part of the whole while celebrating the features of their cultural origins. Some informants felt that they were particularly unmeltable in the white American mainstream. The unique multi-ethnic nature of the gateway city was reflected among those who carefully distanced themselves

from the US outside of New York City. For some, New York City was inseparable from their self-identity. It was the center stage on which they were constructing and negotiating self-identities.

The context of this gateway city was intertwined with its unique character to forge that New York identity. While the children of Bangladeshi immigrants were transformed by the evolving context and character of New York City, they continued to remake the city and themselves through their affiliations with youths from many different national, ethnic, and racial backgrounds. Their parents foreclosed such a transformation of identity. On the contrary, they reclaimed primordial Bangladeshi self identity within the confines of the ethnic space recreated in New York City.

The children played a critical role in preventing their parents from migrating out of New York City and influenced them to accomplish reverse migration. The first generation Bangladeshi immigrants wanted to live up to the expectations of diversity of New York City even when they migrated out of it. Experiences of the immediate aftermath of 9/11 brought mixed feelings among some parents, but the children knew that it was not the true character of the city, which eventually prevailed upon them.

Developmental Stages of Self-Identities

Ethnic self-identity was by far the most important domain in which Bangladeshi second generation youths demonstrated a growing edge of adaptability over their parents. These parents sought refuge in their primordial “Bangladeshi” national origin identity to cope with the changes brought about by living in New York City; they never outgrew this mindset even after becoming US citizens. In contrast, their children grew out of a singularity of Bangladeshi identity through a progression represented by an interaction

between a trajectory and a repertory. The trajectory signified a linear movement from the parental self-identity, reinforced by the ethnic enclave, to a more acculturated identity. It included hyphenated (e.g. Bangladeshi-American, Bangladeshi-Muslim-American, or Asian-American) or unhyphenated (American) identities. This progression from less acculturated to more acculturated ethnic self-identity took place concurrently with an increasingly complex identity repertoire.

The trajectory was illustrated by a line moving upwards, while the repertory was described as an expanding spiral around it. Ethnic self-identity of any Bangladeshi youth in the study could be represented by the cross-section between the stage of acculturation on the line of trajectory and the spiral of repertory. Put differently, the researcher proposes that the higher up a youth is on the identity trajectory the wider and more complex will be his or her identity repertory; the greater their potential to reintegrate the wide range of affiliations. This progression is mediated by the interplay between agency and structure that is never the same for all children even in the same family, regardless of their gender. Theoretically, the more complex the identity repertoire, the greater the potential for the youth's successful acculturation. The transnational identities among a small number of informants were part of the self discovery process that had nothing to do parental influence.

Implications of the Study

Implications for Future Research

This study underscores the need for additional research about an immigrant community that continues to be underserved and understudied despite its growing visibility and vibrancy in three boroughs of New York City: the Bronx, Brooklyn, and

Queens. It prompts immigration researchers to conduct follow-up studies on the children of Bangladeshi immigrants, including a longitudinal study on the participants of this study, in order to trace their trajectories through their adulthood. In subsequent studies more efforts should be made to expand the sample size and age groups of children and the socio-economic status of their parents. One of the serious limitations of this study was the researcher's inability to recruit informants from a range of socio-economic groups. In particular, parents were exceptionally reluctant to consent to interviews with children who exhibited anything but the most exemplary behavior. The fates of children who dropped out of school, became involved in illegal activities, or behaved in ways that brought shame to their families through extreme rejection of parental values, were only available to the researcher indirectly or through hearsay.

Based on how the informants compared their actual experiences of coming of age in New York City with plausible explanations of growing up in other parts of the US led the researcher to theorize unique outcomes for Bangladeshi youths' acculturative experiences in this location. Comparative studies between second generation Bangladeshi immigrants in New York City and other gateway cities in the US and Canada, including Boston, Los Angeles, Houston, or Toronto, with large Bangladeshi immigrant populations, may reveal more about what is unique about New York City as a context of reception. Comparison between Bangladeshi and other immigrant children of South Asian descent, presently living in different boroughs of New York City, will provide a better insight of the similarities and differences of acculturation among various South Asian immigrants with contiguous national origins.

The role of ethnic enclave among Bangladeshi first generation immigrants needs further research. Currently, there are two opposing sociological viewpoints about ethnic enclaves. One group (Borjas 1986, 1990; Bates 1987, 1989) characterizes it as a "mobility trap" that perpetually disadvantages ethnic immigrant minorities. Another group (Wilson & Portes, 1980; Portes & Bach, 1985) considers ethnic enclaves "mobility machines" that facilitate economic incorporation of various immigrant groups into the mainstream. In this second group, the third generation surpasses income parity and occupational status of the native white population. Future researchers should explore whether the ethnic enclave is a mobility trap or a mobility train for Bangladeshi immigrant parents.

Even though the enclave is generally interpreted as "a distinct form of economic adaptation" (Portes & Shafer, 2006, p. 4), the Bangladeshi ethnic enclave in New York City appears to be more than a "distinct economic sector, separate from the 'primary' or 'secondary' sectors of the mainstream labor market" (Portes & Shafer, 2006, p. 4). It has the social, cultural, and political footprints of the Diaspora understudied in the existing literature. The ethnic enclave has other features that may anchor or disrupt the acculturation of their children. Although the young informants felt constrained by the hyper-vigilance of first generation inhabitants of the enclave, their enduring connection with the cultural practices of the community and their desire to retain features of Bangladeshi culture in their lives might have served as protective features and promoted their integration into the larger life of the City. This complex relationship between the second generation and the ethnic enclave requires further study.

Many parents in this study who were observed during a period of dynamic political realignments in both the US and Bangladesh, were equally engaged by politics in both countries. The present study indicates that local councilmen were invited to attend ethnic community meetings in Queens and Brooklyn by the first generation Bangladeshi immigrants. Future Researchers should explore if native country politicking in the Bangladeshi ethnic enclave helps first generation immigrants to become politically savvy constituents in US local, national and political process too.

This study has raised important issues for this native researcher over recruitment of informants. Initially, the researcher developed a recruitment strategy premised on the assumption that his status would facilitate identification of a range of informants. In fact, his identity as a first generation Bangladeshi immigrant man may have constrained his ability to recruit children beyond a circumscribed group. On a more positive note, the expectations for cultural conformity among his first generation peers may have resulted in the researcher's unusual access to parents who were interested in allowing their children to participate in this study. His status as a married man, proven by the presence of a co-ethnic wife, helped the researcher gain added credibility for invaluable observations. It is highly unlikely that a non-native would have had this exceptional entrée into the personal spaces of parents and children he observed and interviewed.

Clearly, native researchers may need to be more innovative in gaining access to their own communities and not take anything for granted. The socioeconomic status, gender, religious belief or absence thereof, and political orientation of the researcher could provide both opportunities and impediments. Additionally, as Islam (2000) has pointed out, there are many different stakeholders in the ethnic enclave who may be

interested in redirecting the content of the research in their favor. Recruitment efforts should be strategized to reach out to Bangladeshi families undergoing negative experiences of their children's acculturation. The strategy adopted by this researcher may not be particularly useful for another native researcher. Innovation is the key word here, and this researcher echoes Gans's (2000) call for more research regarding the advantages and disadvantages of native and non-native researchers.

Mid-Level Theories for Future Research

When Glaser and Strauss (1967) first proposed Grounded Theory as an approach to qualitative inquiry, they not only succeeded in shoring up the credibility of constructivist inquiry, but also suggested an inductive method specifically designed to generate mid-level theory. The study reported here was unusually productive in generating mid-level theories about the acculturation experiences of Bangladeshi youths in New York City and, serendipitously, the intergenerational relationships of first and second generation immigrants. These mid-range theories provide useful guides for researchers interested in pursing studies of first and second generation Bangladeshi immigrants.

The researcher has identified a powerful acculturation gap between Bangladeshi immigrant parents and their children. He theorizes that this gap is shaped by the differences between first and second generation immigrants in intentionality and general attitude towards the ethnic enclave. Additionally, this gap hinges on the ability of the children, as opposed to their parents, to shift from primary socialization (in familial setting and ethnic community) to secondary socialization (wider New York City). For the immigrant parents, the push-pull factors in the host country represent the mirror

image of the children's push-pull factors, especially as they approach adolescence and young adulthood. For example, rediscovery of the native culture in the host country and its retention through children constitute the primary pull or a driving force for parents while acculturation (barring selective acculturation for their children) is their least compelling push factor. In contrast, acculturation is the overriding pull factor for the children while retention of native culture is a push factor that attenuates over time. This dynamics inevitably result in intergenerational acculturation gap. Needless to say, this theory also requires further testing.

This study suggested insights into how patriarchal gender expectations were played out among this group of informants. The question whether these expressions will hold good among a larger population of second generation Bangladeshi girls and boys or among other immigrant groups remains an intriguing platform for further study. In addition, it remains unclear how maturation of these subjects will help retain or erode their current perspectives. This question may only be addressed by a follow-up study of these informants.

In traditional Bangladeshi culture, girls are considered the purveyors of intergenerational continuity of native culture; they are expected to uphold patriarchal family values. However, unlike their mothers, the second generation immigrant girls are interested in de-inscribing their subservient role in contracting arranged marriages, while the sons largely acquiesce reinforcing the patriarchal value system. The parents' gendered expectations regarding educational and career goals are reversed when girls outperform their brothers in school. In addition, parents with both girls and boys tend to be more punitive towards girls in comparison with parents who do not have boys.

Because boys are responsible for supporting their family if anything happens to the primary breadwinner, often forfeiting their high school or college education, their gender disadvantages them resulting in second generation decline. In contrast, girls are the beneficiaries of gendered expectations, resulting in upward assimilation, because of various protective features, such as hyper-vigilant parental oversight. However, it remains to be seen how they will be able to pursue career goals once they marry and move in with parents-in-law. The researcher theorizes that patriarchal value system in Bangladeshi immigrant families is an equal opportunity discriminator for both boys and girls, in dissimilar ways.

New York City is a unique context of reception for both parents and children, but they transform the City in different ways. Parents remake its demographic landscape through their ethnic enclave. It helps them replicate Bangladeshi culture as "home away from home" and serves as an "extension of home environment" for their children. However, the children remake the multicultural mainstream of New York City. The gateway city turns into a site of construction and negotiation of their self-identities. In a dialogic interaction New York City also transforms the children of Bangladeshi immigrants through its context and character. One of the mid level theories developed from this study suggests that intergenerational acculturation gap is contingent on how the two generations relate to New York City.

Parents are beholden to the primordial national origin identity reinforced by their ethnic enclave, but the children's acculturative experiences are reflected as both trajectory and repertory progressively developing from less acculturated to more acculturated self-identity. The researcher theorizes that the greater the number of self-

identities a youth accumulates along the acculturative trajectory, the farther the youth progresses in the acculturation process.

Implications for Social Work Research and Practice

Notwithstanding the emergence of a multidisciplinary perspective in immigration research, all major disciplines, especially anthropology, sociology, history, and political science contributed immensely to the growing body of knowledge by developing their own niche. Anthropology examined the link of immigrants with host societies, while sociology focused on assimilation, residential segregation, occupational specification, marginality, and ethno-racial relation. Studies in political science dealt with immigration policy, political incorporation of migrants, citizenship and meaning of nation state, and history informed by the assimilation process, transplantation of immigrant culture to America, and the role of race in newcomers' adaptation (Foner et al., 2000).

Despite its insistence on the centrality of diversity in social work practice, this applied discipline did not develop parity in immigration research with sister disciplines in social science. Currently, immigration studies in social work are descriptive if not captured by the evidence-based practice that focuses on high level research and systematic reviews which promote a narrow empirical basis for directing practitioners' activities. In relation to immigration, its strength centers on praxis by drawing upon various disciplines to improve the condition of the lives of immigrants. The current limitations of social work scholarship in immigration theory and research are even starker when contrasted with the significant role early social workers played in assisting new immigrants. Regardless of their country of origin, social work luminaries helped immigrants transition and settle into American society and embrace the values of

increasing diversity and multicultural society (De Silva, 2006). These activities were pioneered in settlement houses located in immigrant neighborhoods. They included Hull House in Chicago, founded by Jane Addams and Ellen Starr in 1889, and Henry Street Settlement in the Lower East Side of Manhattan founded by Lillian Wald and Mary Brewster in 1895, which served generations of European immigrants in the late 19th and early 20th century. Addams (1930) described how the Hull House helped new immigrants "preserve whatever of value their past life contained and to bring them in contact with a better type of Americans" (p. 231) by building "a bridge between European and American experiences" (p. 235). Unlike other disciplines that contributed to understanding the condition of generations of immigrants, social work, from its very inception, has been instrumental in bringing about social justice and equality through advocacy, activism, and policy change. This role has been challenged by waves of anti-immigrant sentiment in American society and immigration policies particularly unfriendly to certain groups (De Silva, 2006).

The present research reiterated the salience of social work education and research on cultural competence and social diversity; discrimination; and oppression of immigrants based on race, ethnicity, national origin, and religion. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics promotes social and political action to prevent and eliminate domination or exploitation of vulnerable people, including immigrants. It also emphasizes the value of research for social work professionals. This is particularly important for work with understudied and underserved immigrant communities in New York City, a unique context of reception in the US in which the minority claims to be the majority in the absence of any dominant majority.

Social workers must be knowledgeable about how the sweep of immigration policy framework in the US created an evolving context of reception affecting the lives of immigrants and their children. Social work practice continues to be based on social policy framework in which immigration policy and other social policies intersect. New immigrants experience twin stressors that result from leaving their family, friends, relatives, and community in the home country and adjusting to the challenging needs of the host country. They must find housing, develop skills in spoken English, and secure employment (Drachman, 1995). In New York City and across the country, social work practitioners work with new immigrants in hospitals, mental health organizations, schools, and workplaces. They deal with issues of economic hardship, marital discord, domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, dug and alcohol abuse, truancy, and parent-child conflict (Drachman, 1995; Drachman & Ryan, 1987). This study contextualizes these issues for a specific group of immigrants.

Clearly South Asian community based resources are inadequate in New York City. Bangladeshi immigrant families, especially where parents have little or no command of English, are unable to access appropriate services in times of need. It is also difficult for public and private social service agencies to reach out to this community without adequate knowledge about the unique aspects of Bangladeshi culture. As a Bangladeshi-American practitioner in a public social service agency, the researcher encountered many Bangladeshi parents who were reluctant or unwilling to reveal information about private issues including parent-child conflicts or family disruptions related to the parent-child acculturation gap. Even though the researcher did not know these families when they presented themselves at his agency, his command of native

"Bangla" and firsthand knowledge of Bangladeshi culture and society created a barrier for them to accept services from him. They appeared to be afraid of being exposed in their native communities in New York City.

The immigrant parents felt more comfortable with practitioners who were not from Bangladeshi heritage or unfamiliar with Bangladeshi culture, even if the interactions were conducted through a Bengali translation service over the phone. During the recruitment phase of this study a parent who was involved with a mosque based cultural and social service organization told the researcher that Bangladeshi families with problems in family functioning attributed the conflicts between parents and children to adverse neighborhood influences. They shied away from community social service outreach programs, particularly when they were located in the ethnic enclave. As a result of these experiences, the researcher questions whether Bangladeshi parents in New York City are open to services from Bangladeshi-American social workers or if they would actually prefer non-native workers and mainstream social work agencies. It is possible that they would benefit more from empathetic and culturally competent non-native social workers in public or private service agencies.

Nonetheless, this study revealed that a different set of criteria applied to the parents' inherent need for intergenerational continuity. After a recruitment flyer for this study appeared in a New York City Bengali weekly newspaper, a number of Bangladeshi parents from Queens and the Bronx called the researcher to request counseling for their children. Their objectives were to take advantage of the counseling service from a native professional to reinforce their children's attachment to Bangladeshi culture. Even though the recruitment flier clearly stated that the purpose of the contact should be related to

research, the parents who called the native researcher saw him as a source of support for their deeply felt need for intergenerational continuity of native culture. In addition, all the parents who allowed their children to participate in this study were motivated by the desire for cultural transmission and retention despite their conflicts with the acculturation of their children in New York City. The implication for social work practice here is that practitioners, administrators, and policymakers should develop a knowledge base on intergenerational transmission and other issues related to Bangladeshi children's acculturation in order to provide effective interventions to accommodate the conflicting needs of these two generations.

Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the findings of this study and an agenda for further research on the acculturation experiences of Bangladeshi immigrants. The researcher was uniquely positioned to respond to three of Gans's (2000) imperatives for immigration research: the need for more exploration of the role of native and non-native immigrant researchers; the lack of incorporation of the voice of first generation immigrants; and increased research on understudied groups. However, the major contribution of this study was to establish a platform for further inquiry in all of these domains. More needs to be done to understand the intergenerational acculturation gap in Bangladeshi immigrant families and its impact on parent-child conflicts and disruptions in the family which require mediation and other appropriate services. There is always a possibility that the parent child divide may widen because of additional stressors generated from the demand of girls for greater decision making power in arranged marriages and redefining the norms of patriarchal value system. Increasingly powerful

agency among Bangladeshi youth, particularly girls, in constructing and negotiating their identity trajectory and repertoire, may create unforeseen tensions with their parents frustrated about their inability to ensure post-figurative transmission in which the older generation traditionally retains native culture among the younger generation (Ovando & Collier, 1998). Bangladeshi parents may find it against their interest to be accommodative about the transformative experiences of New York City on their children and the process in which they become new New Yorkers.

The experience of the researcher in conducting this research has also illustrated that it is particularly difficult, even for a native, to reach out to the families experiencing parent-child conflict and second generation decline. Families experiencing "dissonant acculturation" in which children become adversely influenced by the minority subculture of inner cities and parents either seek refuge in ethnic enclave or reject it altogether, may be vulnerable for child abuse and neglect.

Appendix 1: Timeline of Major US Legislation and Court Decision Affecting Immigrants [1]

Legislation or Court Decision	Impact on Immigrants
The Naturalization Act of 1790, Article 1, Section 8 of the US Constitution	Introduced a system to allow the foreign born to become naturalized as US Citizens. It was confined to "free white persons" of "good moral character." They were required to reside in the US for two years and a current resident of a state for one year.
The Naturalization Act of 1795	Increased the residency requirement of the prospective naturalized citizens from two to five years, three years after the notice of intent to apply for citizenship. The act specified that naturalized citizenship was reserved for "whites only."
The Naturalization Act of 1798	Extended the residency requirement of the naturalized citizens to fourteen years after five years of notice of intent. It was intended to decrease the number of voters who disagreed with the Federalist political party.
The Fourteenth Amendment of the US Constitution 1868	Protected the children of immigrants born in the US as citizens of the US.
The Naturalization Act of 1870	Broadened the scope of citizenship to allow African Americans to be naturalized. Asian immigrants were allowed to live, but were still excluded from naturalization. They were not allowed to own land in California.
The Naturalization Act of 1875	The first federal law to limit the number of immigrants and prohibit the admission of criminals and prostitutes.
Supreme Court declaration of 1876	Gave the Federal Government the exclusive control of all immigration to US.
The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882	Congress passed this law to limit additional immigration of Chinese laborers for ten years. The popular xenophobic expression of "Yellow Peril" justified racism against Asians.

[1] Adapted from A Congressional Budget Office Paper, 2006; NASW Immigration Toolkit, 2006-2008.

Table 1 (continued)

The Immigration Act of 1882	Several categories of immigrants, including “lunatics,” carriers of infectious diseases and those who may become public charges, were ineligible for citizenship.
The Geary Act of 1892	Extended the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 for another ten-year term.
The Naturalization Act of 1906	Standardized naturalization procedures, established the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization and made some knowledge of English a requirement for US citizenship.
Immigration Act of 1907	Gentleman’s agreement reached with Japan to impose limits on Japanese immigrants to US.
The Immigration Act of 1917 (Asiatic Barred Zone Act)	Restricted immigration from Asia by creating an “Asiatic Barred Zone,” including much of eastern Asia and the pacific islands.
The Emergency (or National Origin First) Quota Act of 1921	Introduced a national immigration quota restricted to 3% of the number of foreign born residents of nationalities living in the US in 1910.
The 1922 Takao Ozawa v. US	A Japanese man was denied naturalization based upon the premise that he was not “white.”
The 1923 Supreme Court US v. Bhagat Singh Thind	A south-Asian Indian was treated as non-European white and was denied the right to citizenship on the premise that “not all Caucasians are white.” Based upon this legislation the citizenship of A.K. Mazumdar, another Indian, was revoked and the decision was upheld at the Ninth Circuit of court appeals.
The Immigration (or National Origin Second Quota) Act of 1924 (The Johnson-Reed Act)	In the face of rising immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe the act updated the Quota law and froze the present ethnic distribution. The total annual immigration was fixed at 150, 000. It led to the reduction of the number of immigrants from the Eastern and Southern Europe.
The Chinese Exclusion Repeal Act of 1943	Repealed the Chinese Exclusion act of 1882 and the Geary Act of 1892. The Chinese nationals already living in the US were allowed to become naturalized citizens.

Table 1 (continued)

The Immigration Act of 1946 (The Luce-Celler Act)	Ended discrimination against Indian-Americans and the Philippines. They were given the right to naturalization but had a stringent quota of 100 immigrants per year. The effect of US v. Bhagat Singh Thind was finally reversed.
The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 (The McCarran-Walter Act)	Revised the quota system based on the data of 1920 Census. The major achievement of this legislation was that racial distinctions were omitted from the US code. It somewhat liberalized immigration from Asia, but increased the power of the government to deport illegal immigrants suspected of communist affiliations.
The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (The Hart-Cellar Act) or P.L. 236	This historic legislation abolished the quota system. For the first time limitation on Western Hemisphere immigration was 120,000 a year and on Eastern hemisphere was 170,000. Senator Edward Kennedy, the then-chairman of the Senate Immigration Subcommittee remarked, "The bill will not flood our cities with immigrants. It will not upset the ethnic mix of our society. It will not relax the standards of admission. It will not cause American Workers to lose their jobs."
The Refugee Act of 1980	Defined the status of refugees in conformity with the norms of the United Nations Organization.
The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) P.L. 99-603	Provided Amnesty for 3,000,000 illegal immigrants already residing in the US. For the first time penalties for employers who knowingly hired illegal immigrants.
The Immigration Act of 1990 (IMMACT) or P.L. 101-649	Modified and expanded the 1965 Act and significantly expanded the total immigration limit to 700,000and increased visas by 40%.
Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act (PRWOA) 1996 (P^2.L. 104-193)	Made means tested benefits conditional on citizenship, cut eligibility for a range of benefits such as food stamps, Medicaid, and supplemental security income. The traditional distinction between legal and illegal immigrants was recast into a difference between citizens and legal immigrants (NASW Immigration Policy Toolkit, 2006).

Table 1 (continued)

The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRaIRA) (P.L. 104-208).	Imposed harsher policies for both legal and illegal immigrants. Vastly increased the categories of criminal activities for which immigrants, even green card holders, can be deported and imposed mandatory detention for certain types of deportation cases. As a result well over 1,000,000 individual have been deported since 1996.
Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-132)	Made provisions for death penalty for immigrants for their involvement of in terrorism.
Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act (US PATRIOT) Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-56)	Authorized the government to impose guilt by association on immigrants and the power to lock them on mere suspicion by using secret evidence in immigration proceedings that they cannot confront.
Homeland Security Act 2002	Created the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and all the functions of Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) were transferred to the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Service (BCIS) under DHS.
Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005	Limited to enforcement and focused on both the border and the interior.
Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2006 (CIRA)	The legislature that would have given amnesty to a large majority of illegal entrants in the country, significant increasing legal immigration and increased enforcement won bipartisan support in the senate but was widely unpopular with the American Public. As a result of unprecedented public pressure the bill failed to pas a cloture vote.

Appendix 2

Newspaper Ad and Recruitment Flyer for Parents of Minor Children

Are you a Bangladeshi parent?

Faridul Alam is a doctoral candidate at the CUNY Graduate Center. He is conducting a research study on the children of Bangladeshi immigrants and how they are adjusting to the life in the US and retaining Bangladeshi culture. Are you interested in your child becoming a participant in this research?

If you can answer "Yes" to the following questions, your child is eligible to participate in this study:

- Do you live in one of the five boroughs of New York City?
- Do you have a son or daughter who is between 15 and 17 years of age?
- Did he or she immigrate to US before the age of 10 years or was he or she born in the US?
- Are you interested in allowing your child to participate in this research by participating in an in person interview?

If you want to receive more information about this study, please contact the researcher by telephone or e-mail at 718-698-6395 or 718-260-8556 or Falam126@aol.com.

Faridul Alam
PhD Program in Social Welfare, CUNY
352 Simonson Ave.,
Staten Island, NY 10303
Phones (Res.) 718-698-6395
(Office) 718-260-8556
E-mail: Falam126@aol.com

Appendix 3
Recruitment Flyer for Youth over 18 Years of Age

Are your Parents from Bangladesh?

Faridul Alam is doctoral candidate at the CUNY Graduate Center. He is conducting a research study on the sons and daughters of Bangladeshi immigrants and how they are adjusting to the life in the US and retaining Bangladeshi culture. Are you interested in becoming a participant in this research?

If you can answer "Yes" to the following questions, you are eligible to participate in this study:

- Are you between 18 and 21 years of age?
- Were you born in the US or did you immigrate to the US before the age of ten?
- Do you live one of the five boroughs of New York City?
- Are you interested in participating in an hour long interview about your experiences as the child of Bangladeshi parents?

If you want to receive more information about this study, please contact the researcher by telephone or e-mail at 718-698-6395 or 718-260-8556 or Falam126@aol.com.

Faridul Alam
PhD Program in Social Welfare CUNY
352 Simonson Ave.,
Staten Island, NY 10303
Phones (Res.) 718-698-6395
(Office) 718-260-8556
E-mail: Falam126@aol.com

Appendix 4

Telephone or e-mail response for over 18 year olds who contact for interview

Thank you very much for getting back to the researcher about the research study on the sons and daughters of Bangladeshi parents in New York City. Your interest in learning more about this study and your consideration for participation in an interview are appreciated.

Would you like to know more about the study?

Twenty male and twenty female adolescents and young adults will participate in this study. They will all be between 15 and 21 years of age. Your participation will be voluntary, and it involves an hour-long interview that focuses on how you have been balancing the needs of adjusting to the life in the US with the demands of retaining Bangladeshi culture. During the interview you will be asked to narrate incidents, stories and feelings about growing up in immigrant families from Bangladesh in New York City. The interview will be scheduled at a time and place that is convenient to both you and the researcher.

Are you still interested in being interviewed?

If, “Yes,”: Great, can you and the researcher set up a convenient time and place to meet. The researcher will hand the informed consent to you to sign, and, if you agree, please give your consent for the researcher to audiotape the interview. The researcher will answer any other questions you have about it then. Also, please remember that your participation in this research is voluntary, and you can stop participating at any time. The interview will be confirmed the day before. Would you like the researcher to give you a call? Tell the researcher the best way to reach you? Here is how you can reach the researcher:

Faridul Alam
PhD Program in Social Welfare, CUNY
352 Simonson Ave.,
Staten Island, NY 10303
Phones (Res.) 718-698-6395
(Office) 718-260-8556
E-mail: Falam126@aol.com

If “No”: Thanks for your interest, it was nice to speak with you.

Appendix 5
Informed Consent for the Adult Participants

Faridul Alam is a PhD candidate in Social Welfare at the Graduate Center, City University of New York at Hunter College. He is conducting a research study on how American youth whose parents were born in Bangladesh adapt to American life in New York City. Researchers have studied children of immigrants from many other countries, but they have not included Bangladeshi community in any of their studies.

The researcher asks you to participate in an hour-long interview that will focus on how you have balanced living in the US and retaining Bangladeshi culture. During the interview he will ask you to narrate incidents, stories and feelings about growing up in an immigrant Bangladeshi family in New York City. Twenty Bangladeshi male and twenty Bangladeshi female adolescents and young adults are expected to participate in this study. Information obtained from the interviews will be used for his doctoral dissertation and in papers for professional journals and presentations at conferences. The interview will be conducted after you and the researcher decide on a mutually agreeable time and place.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You may discontinue your participation in this study at any time, and you do not have to answer any questions you choose not to answer.

There is no known benefit or risk for your participation in this study. However, you may feel discomfort and embarrassment personal information in the in-person interview. A list of resources has been provided below in the event that you want more information or help as a result of your participation in the study.

Although there are no benefits for your participation in the study, this study will provide invaluable information about one of the understudied immigrant communities in New York City.

Although the researcher will know who you are, he will take appropriate measures to protect your confidentiality. He will audiotape the interview with your permission, and you will be given a separate form to sign if you agree. He will remove all identifying information after he writes up the interview notes and tapes. He will destroy all original tapes and notes after the transcription is completed. Additionally, he will disguise individual responses by altering identifying information to insure direct quotes cannot be attributed to an individual person. However, he is a mandated reporter and should you say anything that may indicate harm to yourself or others, he will be required to report it to the proper authorities.

The signed consent forms and the transcribed interviews will be kept in a binder in a locked filing cabinet in his home office in Staten Island. Upon completion of this study, the paperwork will be stored in the locked filing cabinet for up to three years, after which all the original completed surveys will be destroyed.

If you have any questions about this study, please call Farid Alam at 718-260-8556 or by e-mail at *Falam126@aol.com* For questions about your child's rights as a research subject contact the Hunter College Office of Research Administration at (212) 650-3053.

I have read (or have had read to me) the contents of this consent form. I have been encouraged to ask questions. I have received answers to my questions. I give my consent for my son/daughter to participate in this study. I have received (or will receive) a copy of this form for my records and future reference.

_____	_____
Signature of Study Participant	Date
_____	_____
Signature of Researcher	Date

List of Resources and Referral Services

1. Asian American Federation of New York, 212-344-5878; www.aafny.org.

2. Asian Lifenet, 877-990-8585; www.mhaofnyc.org

3. Coalition for Asian American Children and Families, 212-809-4675; www.cacf.org

4. NY Coalition for Asian American Mental Health, 212-720-4524; www.asianmentalhealth.org

5. South Asian Health Project, 800-530-9821; www.southasianhealth.org

6. Family Assistance Program, NYC/ACS: Manhattan (212-341-0012); Brooklyn (718-260-8550); Queens (718-725-3244); the Bronx (718-720-0418); Staten Island (718-720-0418).

Appendix 6
Audio Tape Consent for over 18 year old Participant

Protocol # _____

Researcher: Faridul Alam

Title: Intergenerational Patterns of Immigrant Acculturation and Trajectories of Bangladeshi Post-Immigrant Generation in New York City

The researcher would like to record **his** interview with you for this research project by using audio-tape. It will not be used to identify you personally. If you are willing to consent please indicate the use of these audio tapes below.

The researcher may audio tape the interview for the research project.
_____

The researcher may transcribe the audio tape.
_____

Agreement

I have read the description above before giving my consent to have my interview recorded with audio tape for the research as indicated above.

_____ _____
Signature of Study Participant Date

_____ _____
Signature of Researcher Date

Appendix 7
Parent Informed Consent

Faridul Alam is a PhD candidate in Social Welfare at the Graduate Center, City University of New York at Hunter College. He is conducting a research study on how immigrant Bangladeshi adolescents and young adults adapt to American life in New York City. Twenty male and twenty female participants are expected to take part in this study. Researchers have studied children of immigrants from many other countries, but they have not included Bangladeshi community in any of their studies.

The researcher is requesting your cooperation in this study by allowing your child to participate in an hour long interview about their experiences of growing up in the US in a Bangladeshi family. He will need your consent for their participation in this study. Even if you give the researcher written consent for your child to be in the study, his or her participation will be voluntary. If your child does agree to participate, he or she will sign an Assent Form before participation. There will be no obligation for your child to participate in the study. In other words, he or she will be able to withdraw at any time during the course of the interview, even if you have given your permission. The researcher will use the results of the study for his dissertation and for papers in professional conferences or journals.

Your child may feel discomfort and embarrassment disclosing parent-child conflict, lack of family cohesion, and ruptured family ties during the in-person interview. However, he or she may discontinue participation in this study at any time and he or she does not have to answer any questions he or she chooses not to answer. There is no known benefit or risk for your child's participation in this study. Although there are no direct benefits for participation, the study will provide invaluable information about the Bangladeshi community, one of the understudied immigrant communities in New York City. A list of resources has been provided below in the event that your child wants additional information or help as a result of participation in the study.

Although the researcher will know the identity of your child, he will make sure that appropriate measures are taken at every stage of the study to protect his or her confidentiality. He will remove all identifying information after transcribing the interview notes and tapes. He will also destroy all original tapes and notes after the transcription is completed. Additionally, he will disguise individual responses by altering identifying information to insure that the direct quotes cannot be attributed to an individual person. However, if there is any suspected child abuse or neglect, or indication of being destructive to self or others, he will be obligated to report it to the appropriate authorities.

The signed consent forms and the transcribed interviews will be kept in a binder in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's home office in Staten Island. Upon completion of this study, the paperwork will be stored in the locked filing cabinet for up to three years, after which all the original documents will be destroyed.

You have received this informed consent letter and a stamped envelope addressed to me, in which to return this consent. The researcher will only contact your child after he receives a signed consent form back from you. Subsequently, he will telephone your child to see if he or she is interested in participating. He will explain the study and answer any questions your child might have. If your child agrees to participate, he will set up a mutually agreed upon time and place to conduct the interview either a private room in your home or the researcher's Staten Island office.

If you have any questions about this study, please call the researcher at 718-260-8556 or by e-mail at *Falam126@aol.com* For questions about your child's rights as a research subject contact the Hunter College Office of Research Administration at (212) 650-3053.

I have read (or have had read to me) the contents of this consent form. I have been encouraged to ask questions. I have received answers to my questions. I give my consent for my son/daughter to participate in this study. I have received (or will receive) a copy of this form for my records and future reference.

_____	_____
Signature of Study Participant Parent	Date
_____	_____
Signature of Researcher	Date

List of Resources and Referral Services:

1. Asian American Federation of New York, 212-344-5878; *www.aafny.org*.

2. Asian Lifenet, 877-990-8585; *www.mhaofnyc.org*

3. Coalition for Asian American Children and Families, 212-809-4675; *www.cacf.org*

4. NY Coalition for Asian American Mental Health, 212-720-4524; *www.asianmentalhealth.org*

5. South Asian Health Project, 800-530-9821; *www.southasianhealth.org*

6. Family Assistance Program, NYC/ACS: Manhattan (212-341-0012); Brooklyn (718-260-8550); Queens (718-725-3244); the Bronx (718-720-0418); Staten Island (718-720-0418).

Appendix 8
Audio Tape Consent for Parents of Children Under 18 Years of Age

Protocol # _____

Researcher: Faridul Alam

Title: Intergenerational Patterns of Immigrant Acculturation and Trajectories of Bangladeshi Post-Immigrant Generation in New York City

The researcher would like to record his interview with your child for this research project by using audio-tape. It will not be used to identify him or her personally. If you are willing to consent please indicate the use of these audio tapes below.

The researcher may audio tape the interview for the research project.
_____

The researcher may transcribe the audio tape.
_____

Agreement

I have read the description above before giving my consent to have my interview recorded with audio tape for the research as indicated above.

_____ _____
Signature of Study Participant Parent Date

_____ _____
Signature of Researcher Date

Appendix 9

Enclosed Contact Information Form

Please return this card with your consent form, so that the researcher will be able to contact your child about the study.

The best way to contact my child is:

Telephone:

Email:

Child’s Name:

Appendix 10
Minor Child Assent Form

HUNTER

Faridul Alam is a doctoral student in Social Welfare at the Graduate Center, City University of New York at Hunter College. He wants to know how the children of Bangladeshi parents are doing in New York City. It is important because very little is known about them. You can participate in this study if you want to, but you don't have to unless you want. The researcher expects that 20 Bangladeshi girls and 20 Bangladeshi boys will participate in this study. He will use the information obtained from you and other young people to write research papers and a dissertation for his doctoral degree.

The researcher would like to speak with you for about an hour. You and he can meet in a private room in your home or in his office in Staten Island. If you agree, he would like to audiotape the conversation. If not, he will take notes. You can stop talking to him at any time you want, and you don't have to answer any question you don't feel like answering.

There are no known risks for you to participate in my study. There are no known benefits for participation, but it will help us know a lot more about how Bangladeshi children are doing in New York City. If anything in the interview upsets you, there is a list of places and websites below where you may request appropriate information or help.

The researcher will be the only person who will know what you told him. What he learns from you will be put together with what he learns from other participants so that nobody will be able to tell what came from you. He will never use your name, and when he tells others about what your answers are, nobody will know who he is talking about.

Your parent/guardian has already given permission for you to be in my study. It is your turn now to decide if you want to participate or not. If you don't want to be in this study, no one will be mad at you. If you want to be in the study now and change your mind later, that's OK. You can stop at any time. You can skip any questions you don't want to answer.

Please keep a give you a copy of this form in case you want to ask questions later.

Agreement

I have decided to be in the study even though I know that I don't have to do it. If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact me at (718) 698-6395 or e-mail me at Falam126@aol.com. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, you may call the Hunter College Office of Research Administration at (212) 650-3053.

X _____ _____
Your Signature Date

_____ _____
Signature of Researcher Date

List of Resources and Referral Services:

1. Asian American Federation of New York, 212-344-5878; www.aafny.org.

4. Asian Lifenet, 877-990-8585; www.mhaofnyc.org

5. Coalition for Asian American Children and Families, 212-809-4675; www.cacf.org

6. NY Coalition for Asian American Mental Health, 212-720-4524; www.asianmentalhealth.org

7. South Asian Health Project, 800-530-9821; www.southasianhealth.org

8. Family Assistance Program, NYC/ACS: Manhattan (212-341-0012); Brooklyn (718-260-8550); Queens (718-725-3244); the Bronx (718-720-0418); Staten Island (718-720-0418).

Appendix 11
Audio Tape Consent from under 18 year old participant

Protocol # _____

Researcher: Faridul Alam

Title: Intergenerational Patterns of Immigrant Acculturation and Trajectories of Bangladeshi Post-Immigrant Generation in New York City

The researcher would like to record his interview with you for this research project by using audio-tape. It will not be used to identify you personally. He needs your consent even if your parent has already given his/her consent. If you are willing to consent please indicate the use of these audio tapes below.

The researcher may audio tape the interview for the research project.
_____

The researcher may transcribe the audio tape.
_____

Agreement

I have read the description above before giving my consent to have my interview recorded with audio tape for the research as indicated above.

_____ _____
Signature of Study Participant Date

_____ _____
Signature of Researcher Date

Appendix 12

Interview Guide

How are you doing today? Before I begin, I want to tell you that I really appreciate your willingness to be interviewed for this study. I hope that we will have a good time together during this interview. I am really interested to learn about how you are doing as a young American and a young Bangladeshi immigrant in New York City. Please feel free to ask me any relevant question.

Let me begin by asking you a few questions about your childhood

Q. 1. What is your earliest memory of being here in the U.S. from Bangladesh?

Probes: What was growing up in your house and neighborhood like? What does it mean for you to be a Bangladeshi immigrant in New York? What do you remember most about growing up with other children who were also immigrants from Bangladesh? What were some of your struggles as a child?

Q. 2. What is your experience of being socialized as a young American in New York City?

Probes: How does it get along with your socialization as a young Bangladeshi immigrant? Where do you feel the pull? Where do you feel the push? What are the influences of school, neighborhood, ethnic community, and co-ethnic/other friends?

Now let me move over to another equally important question of how your parents are shaping your experience

Q. What has been the role of your parents in giving shape to your experience of growing up in New York City?

Prompts: How are your father's roles different from your mother's? What are your parental expectations regarding your adherence to native culture and American culture? Where do you feel the push? Where do you feel the pull? Where do you agree with your parents most? Where do you disagree most? How does it differ between the boys and the girls in your family or the Bangladeshi families that you know of? How would you describe your home environment? What issues mostly lead to parent-child conflicts? Where do you stand in this conflict? Where do your parents stand? How is discipline handled in your family? How are parent-child conflicts resolved in your family? Describe the nature of your access to your ethnic community and other ethnic communities in the neighborhood? Describe your parents' access to the ethnic community.

I would now like to ask you how you are developing your sense of selfhood from these experiences?

Q. How do you generally identify your ethnicity?

Probes: What do you consider to be your in-group? How do you define your out-group? How important is your ethnic identity and why? How is it influenced by your neighborhood school, ethnic community, co-ethnic friends, native language, culture, religion, gender/other factors? Explain how you have developed your present ethnicity or ethnic self-identity? How does your parents' ethnicity influence your ethnicity? How do other influences (other people from Bangladesh, neighborhood, peer groups, school, work environment and your neighborhood) shape your ethnicity? Explain your experience of the freedom of choice to determine your ethnicity or ethnic self-identity.

Finally, I'd like to ask you some questions about your hopes for the future

Q. If you could imagine the very best thing that could happen to you in the future, what would that look like? What do you think you would need to do to get you to that place? Explain how you are doing generally in terms of your academic success in school/college?

Probes: What are your career expectations? What are your parents' expectations about your career? What are your strengths to attain those goals? What are your weaknesses that may prevent your attainment? Describe how important is the role of education in your life. Tell me where you want to go with your education? What do you want to do after high school/College? Describe what your parents' expectations are about your educational achievement. Have you had any experiences of discrimination in America? What happened?

Appendix 13
IRB Approval

Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects from Research Risks

HUNTER COLLEGE

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
695 PARK AVENUE, ROOM E1426
NEW YORK, NY 10021
PHONE (212) 650-3053 ◆ FAX (212) 650-3055
http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/irb

To: Mohammed Alam
Harriet Goodman
Social Work

From: Sherryl Browne Graves, Chair
Roseanne Flores, Chair

Date: 11/26/2007

Re: Human Subjects Review

Protocol # HC-070712751

Type of Review: Full Review

Project: "Intergenerational Patterns of Immigrant Acculturation and Trajectories of Bangladeshi Post-immigrant Generation In New York City"

The Hunter College Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects has approved your project with the following provisions:

a. This approval is for the period **11/26/2007** through **11/25/2008** You will receive a renewal notice approximately eight weeks before the expiration of this project's approval. This notice will be sent to the faculty advisor for student projects. However, it is your responsibility to ensure that your have an approved protocol at all times during your research.
b. Approved and stamped consent form(s) must be used by all participants. You are responsible for maintaining signed consent form(s) for a period of at least three years.
☑ Consent form(s) attached. ☐ Consent form(s) not attached ☐ Flyer Attached
c. All modifications and/or changes to the approved protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to implementation.
d. All adverse or unanticipated events as a result of this research, must be reported to the IRB at the time of occurrence. The attached form should be used if this occurs.
e. All key personnel must have CITI training certificates on file at the IRB Office. It is your responsibility to submit an updated Key Personnel form should there be a change in the key personnel on this project.

Good luck with your work!

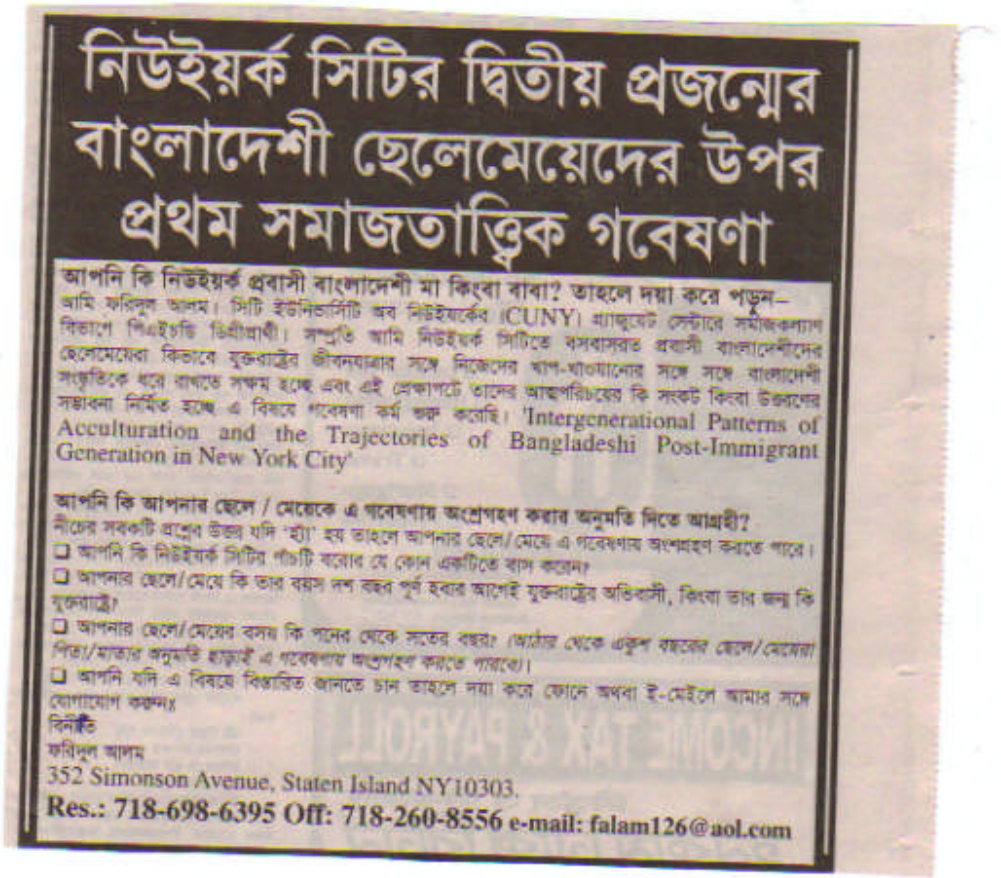
By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received this letter and am aware of and agree to abide by all of its stipulations in order to maintain active approval status, including prompt reporting of adverse events/serious problems and annual continuing review. I am aware that it is my responsibility to be knowledgeable of all federal and state regulations including CUNY's Federalwide Assurance (FWA) with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP).

Signed: _____
Mohammed Alam
Harriet Goodman
Social Work

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN ONE COPY OF THIS MEMO TO CAROLYNN JULIEN
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD, 695 PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY 10021.

YOUR PROJECT WILL NOT BE APPROVED UNTIL WE RECEIVE THE SIGNED COPY.

Appendix- 14
Advertisement in Bengali Newspaper



নিউইয়র্ক সিটির দ্বিতীয় প্রজন্মের বাংলাদেশী ছেলেমেয়েদের উপর প্রথম সমাজতাত্ত্বিক গবেষণা

আপনি কি নিউইয়র্ক প্রবাসী বাংলাদেশী মা কিংবা বাবা? তাহলে দয়া করে পড়ুন–

আমি ফরিদুল আলম। সিটি ইউনিভার্সিটি অব নিউইয়র্কের (CUNY) গ্র্যাজুয়েট সেন্টারে সমাজকল্যাণ বিভাগে পিএইচডি ডিগ্রীপ্রার্থী। সম্প্রতি আমি নিউইয়র্ক সিটিতে বসবাসরত প্রবাসী বাংলাদেশীদের ছেলেমেয়েরা কিভাবে যুক্তরাষ্ট্রের জীবনযাত্রার সঙ্গে নিজেদের খাপ-খাওয়ানোর সঙ্গে সঙ্গে বাংলাদেশী সংস্কৃতিকে ধরে রাখতে সক্ষম হচ্ছে এবং এই প্রেক্ষাপটে তাদের আত্মপরিচয়ের কি সংকট কিংবা উত্তরণের সম্ভাবনা নির্মিত হচ্ছে এ বিষয়ে গবেষণা কর্ম শুরু করেছি। 'Intergenerational Patterns of Acculturation and the Trajectories of Bangladeshi Post-Immigrant Generation in New York City'

আপনি কি আপনার ছেলে / মেয়েকে এ গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণ করার অনুমতি দিতে আগ্রহী?

নীচের সবকটি প্রশ্নের উত্তর যদি 'হ্যাঁ' হয় তাহলে আপনার ছেলে/মেয়ে এ গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারে।

- ❑ আপনি কি নিউইয়র্ক সিটির পাঁচটি বরোর যে কোন একটিতে বাস করেন?
- ❑ আপনার ছেলে/মেয়ে কি তার বয়স দশ বছর পূর্ণ হবার আগেই যুক্তরাষ্ট্রের অভিবাসী, কিংবা তার জন্ম কি যুক্তরাষ্ট্রে?
- ❑ আপনার ছেলে/মেয়ের বয়স কি পনের থেকে সতের বছর? (আঠার থেকে একুশ বছরের ছেলে/মেয়েরা পিতা/মাতার অনুমতি ছাড়াই এ গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারবে)।
- ❑ আপনি যদি এ বিষয়ে বিস্তারিত জানতে চান তাহলে দয়া করে ফোনে অথবা ই-মেইলে আমার সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করুন।

বিনীত

ফরিদুল আলম
352 Simonson Avenue, Staten Island NY10303.
Res.: 718-698-6395 Off: 718-260-8556 e-mail: falam126@aol.com

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