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THE ADAPTATION PROCESS OF SOMALI REFUGEES IN WINNIPEG:

THE ROLE OF ADULT EDUCATION

by

Nancy Buchanan

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in Partial Fulfillment of
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THE ADAPTATION PROCESS OF SOMALI REFUGEES IN WINNIPEG: THE ROLE OF ADULT EDUCATION

BY

NANCY BUCHANAN

A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the role of adult education in the adaptation process of selected Somali refugees who had settled in Winnipeg, Manitoba between 1985 and 1995. The purpose of the study was to gain insight into the following four questions:

1. What do selected Somali refugees in Winnipeg identify as their adaptation needs?
2. What education experiences do selected Somali refugees identify as important to their adaptation?
3. What obstacles to education have selected Somali refugees encountered and how have they dealt with them?
4. How helpful do selected Somali refugees in Winnipeg feel that their education experience has been in meeting their adaptation needs?

To explore these questions in depth, the researcher conducted interviews with selected Somali refugees. The data from the interviews was analyzed from a qualitative research approach, and triangulated with a literature review and the researcher's involvement with the Somali community.

The findings of the study indicated that non-formal learning experiences were more beneficial to selected Somalis' adaptation to the new culture than were their formal learning experiences. However, participants also identified several areas in which they desired support for educational opportunities. These included: training in English which extend beyond the achievement of basic survival skills, and which also offered English classes in the workplace; employment programs that provided the students with the opportunity to obtain 'hands-on' experience; family life classes and legal information

which addressed the different cultural values between Canadian and Somali societies; a women's support group; and community-operated preventative programs. The findings also suggested that the Citizenship and Immigration could do more to fulfill its commitment to the successful resettlement of refugees. The study also provided insights from Somali participants about cultural, political, social, educational, and religious issues, as well as about family life and gender relations in their culture.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND TO STUDY 1

Somalia 3

Social Factors 3

Political Events Precipitating Migration From Somalia 8

The Somali Community in Winnipeg 14

Agencies Providing Services to Refugees in Winnipeg 22

Statement of Problem 23

Delimitations of the Study 26

Significance of Study 26

Definitions 28

CHAPTER 2

REFUGEE STUDIES AND INVOLUNTARY MIGRATION TO CANADA 29

Refugee Studies 29

A History of Involuntary Migration to Canada 32

Summary 40

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW 41

Adaptation 41

Adult Education 49

Emerging Themes in the Adult Education Literature 55

Summary . . . 58

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY . . . 60

Steps in Qualitative Research . . . 63

Establishing Contact with the Somali Community . . . 63

Data Collection . . . 67

Data Analysis . . . 69

The Role of the Researcher . . . 70

Summary . . . 73

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS . . . 75

Brief Profile of the Participants . . . 77

Preamble to Responses

How the Participants' Perceived Selected Aspects of Somali Life . . . 78

Somali Culture and Politics . . . 78

Educational Experiences in Somalia . . . 82

Marriage, Family, and Gender Relations in Somalia . . . 85

Responses to the Research Questions . . . 90

What the participants identified as their adaptation needs . . . 90

What education experiences the participants identified as important to their adaptation . . . 97

What the participants identified as obstacles in their education 103

How helpful Somalis' felt their education had been in their adaptation process 114

Summary 119

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 122

Adaptation Needs 122

Education for Adaptation 124

Obstacles to Education 127

Educational Experiences 128

Directions for Adult Education Research 128

Conclusion 129

Recommendations 130

BIBLIOGRAPHY 133

APPENDIX A

Letter of Consent 148

APPENDIX B

Consent Form 151

APPENDIX C

List of External Professionals 153

APPENDIX D

Sample of Interview Transcripts 155

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

FIGURE 1

Distribution of Somali Clan-Families in Somalia 6

FIGURE 2

Factors Influencing the Resettlment

Process of Refugees 46

TABLE 1

Somali Landings in Canada by Year and

Intended Province of Destination 16

TABLE 2

Somali Landings in Canada by Year, Gender,

and Intended Province of Destination 17

TABLE 3

Somali Arrivals in Manitoba by Year, Age, and Gender 18

TABLE 4

Level of Education of Somali immigrants in Winnipeg

by Year of Arrival and Gender 19

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND TO STUDY

The arrival of Somali refugees in Canada is a relatively recent phenomenon. Between the years 1985-1992 Somalia has ranked first among refugee claims made in Canada by African countries (Citizenship & Immigration Canada, 1994). In the years 1991, 1993, and 1994, Somali had the second highest number all refugee claimants to Canada (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1994, p. 31). Since 1989, approximately 19,000 Somalis have entered Canada claiming refugee status. Refugee claims, as defined by Citizenship & Immigration, refer to those individuals who have claimed refugee status upon arrival in Canada.

> Refugees are people fleeing persecution and seeking Canada's protection, sponsored by the government, private groups, or who have claimed refugee status upon arrival and whose claims have been determined to be valid (Citizenship & Immigration, 1994).

In addition to those Somalis entering Canada as refugee claimants, since 1985, another 20,000 Somalis have entered Canada as landed immigrants. In the case of Somali immigrants, this means that they applied to immigrate to Canada from a country of asylum, most often Kenya or Ethiopia, where they may have been living in refugee camps. It is important to note that although these individuals do not fit the legal definition of 'refugee', most of the Somali immigrants are refugees in the common understanding of the term, described succinctly by Rogge (1987) as persons who have fled their homelands and sought refuge elsewhere because of perceived threats to their well-being. The term 'refugee' in this study reflects Rogge's definition. (The

significance of the distinction between refugee and immigrant, as well as the difficulties associated in making the distinctions, will be discussed later in the thesis.)

A small number of the total Somali population in Canada has settled in Manitoba (approximately 0.25 percent in constrast to the 39 percent of Somali refugees who have settled in Ontario). Between 1985 and 1995, approximately 98 Somalis took up residence in Winnipeg; 90 entered Canada as landed immigrants and 8 entered Canada as refugee claimants. This study explores the adaptation process of Somali refugees in Winnipeg, (which includes Somalis who have settled in Winnipeg either as landed immigrants or as refugee claimants) and, in particular, examines the role of adult education in the adaptation process. The research questions are:

1. What do selected Somali refugees in Winnipeg identify as their adaptation needs?
2. What education experiences do selected Somali refugees identify as important to their adaptation?
3. What obstacles to education have selected Somali refugees encountered and how have they dealt with them?
4. How helpful do selected Somali refugees in Winnipeg feel that their education experience has been in meeting their adaptation needs?

Although multiculturalism is not the critical focus of this research, an underlying assumption of the study is that adaptation of new ethnic groups in Canada extends beyond the newcomer to the wider society, which, in the author's view, has an obligation to learn about new ethnic communities in Canada.

Before turning to the research questions, it is useful to briefly explore some background questions in order to provide a context in which to understand the adaptation process of Somali refugees in Winnipeg. What, then, are the circumstances that have led Somalis to Canada? What are the major differences between Somali culture and Canadian culture?

Somalia

Social Factors

This section provides a brief overview of some of the social, political, cultural and economic factors in Somalia. Excerpts from the research data in Chapter 5 will offer deeper insights into the issues raised below.

Somalia, located in the Horn of Africa, covers approximately 246,000 square miles and has a population of approximately 8 million. Unlike other African countries south of the Sahara, Somalis share a common culture and language, they believe in the same religion, and belong to the same ethnic group. However, although Somalis share a common culture, within this culture there exists a great range of diversity among clans and regions. The clan-family system, traditionally, was the basis of Somali society and provided a source of internal solidarity and external division. Although a number of external factors have played a significant role in exasperating tensions in Somalia, currently the distortion of the traditional meaning of clan identity and loyalty has had tragic consequences for Somalis.

Kinship groups are based on two founding ancestors and are traced through male lines. Six major clan-families have originated from the founding ancestors; four

families, the Daarood, Dir, Hawiyya, and Isaqq constitute about 75 percent of the country's population, and are primarily from the northern pastoral regions of Somalia. The Digil and Rahanwiin families are primarily agriculturally based in southern Somalia. However, the matter of clan identity and loyalty is complex. Sub-clans, marriage alliances, regionalism, and economic concerns all play a role in clan identity and loyalty. Traditionally, kinship patterns were so central to Somali culture that most Somalis could describe their genealogy as far back as twenty generations (Cassanelli, 1982). Although kinship patterns continue to play an important role, the clan system has eroded and today many Somalis are familiar with their geneology as far back as six or eight generations. Figure 1 illustrates the regions that different clans occupy in Somalia. However, the regions are not exclusively populated by any one clan.

Pastoralism is central to the cultural and economic life of Somalia. Two-thirds of the population is engaged in pastoralism as their economic occupation. In nomadic, pastoral society, the inter-dependence of clans and sub-clans was critical to survival. Clan loyalties provided protection for the highly valued livestock - camels, horses, sheep, and goats - against theft and disease. Drysdale (1994) provided some insight into the questions that are pertinent for a Somali pastoralist.

> An elder, for instance, in an all-male nomadic encampment, together with his sons and nephews, one-hundred kilometres from their home wells perhaps, would forever be juggling with variables that would determine profit or loss, life or death. The question might be asked: Is it time to break camp? Do the camels need salt grazing? Was a stranger who passed by yesterday friend or foe? Are enemies about to strike? Should elders be consulted? Have the sheep been marketed for export? Are prices favourable to repay debts to merchant-creditors in

> the city? Are there enough camels, ewes and goats to sustain a family with milk through the dry season? (p. 101)

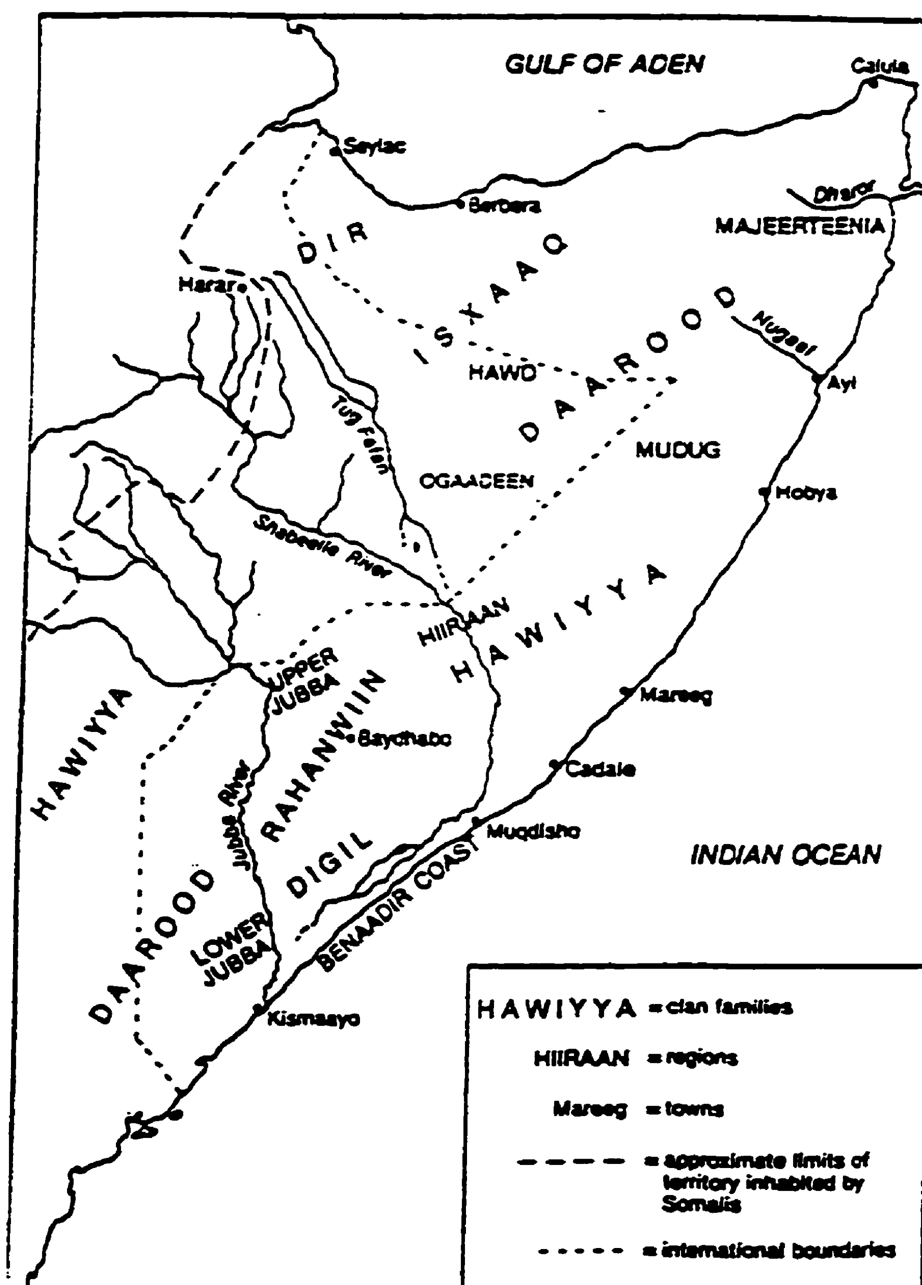
Although the identification with and reliance on clan play a less significant role in the southern, urban centres of Somalia, the safety net of interdependence does continue through the multi-occupation system developed among extended families within Somalia

and abroad. The exchange of pastoral products for consumer goods, or credit with urban family members is essential. In the last two decades, many Somalis have found work in the Gulf States where they earn high wages. According to Drysdale (1994), these funds are entrusted to clan brokers who deliver the earnings to their families in Somalia.

A combination of clan, political, and economic factors traditionally played a key role in marriage. Traditionally, Somali marriages were arranged by clans. Upon marriage, a woman does not change her family name to her husband's. She retains her father's name and his clan identity and, at the same time, is expected to support her husband's clan. The potential bride must come from a clan that is worthy of the husband -- and her worthiness is associated with the husband's clan's perception of the bride's tribe. Although practiced less frequently now, depending on education, region, and clan perspectives, arranged marriages continue today. Somalis are Sunni Muslims and their interpretation of the Qu'ran supports polygamy, so long as the husband is able to provide for each of the families equitably. In practice, this

Figure 1.

Distribution of Somali clan-families in Somalia



Reprinted from L. Cassanelli (1982). The shaping of Somali society. Philadelphia :PA, University of Pennsylvania Press.

provision is difficult to achieve. The practice of polygamy has decreased significantly in the last two generations of Somalis.

Mothers are primarily responsible for younger children and girls, fathers for boys when they are over the age of eight. "Traditionally, Somali children do not talk back to or show anger towards parents and elders. Family ties are never cut, and children and relatives cannot be disowned" (Opoku-Dapaah, 1995, p.15).

Traditionally, only boys attended school in Somalia, but in the last thirty years or so girls have also attended. Yet, more than twice as many boys as girls are enrolled in school. Primary school consists of eight grades and is compulsory. High school takes four years and is optional. The school year lasts six months. Somali became the official language of education in 1972 when the government adopted the Roman alphabet as the official writing system for the language. Most students in high school, especially those who attended before 1972, also learn English, Italian, and Arabic. Arabic is the second language of many Somalis, and is taught in schools as part of Islamic instruction.

The combined forces of urbanization and industrialization have effected the social and economic framework of Somalia. Many people have re-located from rural areas and moved to the urban centres, such as Mogadishu, Hargesia, and Baidoa. Urbanized pastoralists who have re-located to the city work in the armed forces and in commercial enterprise. Women make up one-third of the labour force and many are independent business owners. The country is heavily dependent on external aid and

loans, and by 1987 its foreign debt repayments were estimated to be between 120 and 130 percent of total export earnings (Opoku-Dapaah, 1995).

Political Events Precipitating Migration From Somalia

Prior to colonization, the political structure of Somalia was based on patrilineally traced kinship. Kinship and Islamic law established the basis for decision-making. According to Samatar (1994) pre-colonial kinship was composed of two principle elements: (1) blood ties that referred to shared identity through male lineage and, to a lesser extent, marriage ties; and (2) a general legal and social code that guided conduct in intra- and interkin relations (p. 109). Although feuding, competition over limited resources, and gender inequalities were not uncommon characteristics of precolonial Somalia, sustainable social institutions and political organization did function. Social norms and laws - called Xeer - regulated civil society and ensured political stability. The role of Xeer was to identify the poltical responsibilities of the inter- and intra-clans who collaborted socially and economically to share certain labour, to defend or extend grazing areas, and to redistribute basic subsistence to individuals in need.

> In this context, the Xeer kinship system served both as a cohesive and divisive factor, depending on the dictates of the prevailing social, political, and economic relations of the society, ie. whether they were antagonistic or cooperative. The nature of these relationships were largely moderated by the Xeer between the different groups (Mohamed, 1994).

In the past century, Somalia has been twice partitioned - first during the late nineteenth century scramble for Africa, and again after the collapse in 1941 of

Mussolini's East African Empire. The result of the partitioning has created a legacy of border disputes in Somalia. As trade and commerce were introduced into Somalia, the old moral order began to dissolve. Social differentiation became more prominent with the establishment of regional trade and urban centres. The following outlines the key political events since Somalia Independence in 1960 which precipitated the migration of Somali people to Canada.

Much of the historical writing on Somalia has been written from the perspective of those with a vested interest in the colonization of Somalia. Since 1970, however, Somali historians have documented their country's struggle against European and Ethiopian colonization. These historians emphasize that the most discernible elements of the colonial impact was that Somalia was divided into five colonies; two for Britain, one for France, one for Italy and one for Ethiopia; and that a tenacious Somali resistance emerged (Samatar, 1994). Where colonial interpretations of Somali history undeniably misrepresent the experiences of the Somali people, a nationalist perspective that seeks political unity may fail to integrate the distinct and subtle regional differences amongst Somalis.

The period between 1940-60 marked a significant landmark in Somali history and cultural development. The nationalist movement, headed by Mohamed Abdille Hassan, strengthened political awareness and broadened kin loyalties to a Pan-Somali nationalism. The Somali Youth League in Southern Somalia, and the Somali National League in the North, as well as other independence groups, spearheaded efforts towards ending colonialism in British Somaliland and the Italian trusteeship of

Southern Somali. On July 1, 1960, these two Somali territories formed a democratic government and become the new Somali Republic. Still three groups of Somalis, those in Kenya, Dijbouti, and Ethiopia were separated by old colonial borders. The interpretation of the new collective identity was a complicated matter; for some the new state was the opportunity to reassert traditional values and identity (although the modern world was a different one from the one in which traditional values had functioned); for others the new identity meant acquiring powers and wordly goods that had been denied by colonialism. Northern Somalis felt that they did not have fair representation in the new democratic government. By the end of the 1960s, poor civilian leadership, economic difficulties in the face of a growing population, regional and tribal antagonisms, and an openly corrupt government resulted in a military takeover.

In 1969 the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) headed by Mahammad Siyaad Barre assumed control of the Somali government. Through governing by 'scientific socialism' Barre and his government pledged to guarantee everyone the right to work, strengthen principles of social justice, stimulate economic growth, establish orthography for the Somali language, clean up corrupt behavior, eliminate 'tribalism', and conduct free and impartial elections at a suitable time (Samatar, 1994). Although the first few years of the SRC saw a reawakening of pride for Somalis, through the development of literacy, language, and new schools, serious problems were developing. The SRC declared itself the sole authority and silenced, often by public shooting, any dissent. By the time the Somali-Ethiopian war occurred in 1977,

Siyaard Barre's leadership was identified with abusive power, fear, clan favoritism, intimidation, and disregard for any form of law and due process. Somalia's defeat in the war with Ethiopia delivered a massive blow to the dreams of nationalism.

Suffering the effects of defeat in the war and the accompanying national humiliation, a troubled economy, and a corrupt government, Somali politics turned inward and clashes between the regime and resistance raged until Barre was overthrown on January 27, 1991. With no central authority, Somalian politics shifted inwards and several clanistic (and inter-clanistic) organizations struggled to gain power (Lyons, 1994). A year later the Somalian National Movement declared northern Somalia an independent state, called Somaliland, critically damaging the agenda for a Greater Somalia. Somaliland is not recognized by the United Nations. The trauma of the violence from the civil war was compounded by drought, depleting agriculture and herding, which were Somalis' primarily ways of life. In July 1992 the United National Security Council adopted a resolution to stabilize the situation in Somalia. In January 1993 a cease-fire was announced by the United Nations and U.S. troops were sent into Somalia to maintain peace. In October of the same year, eighteen American soldiers were killed and 75 were wounded by the forces of a Somali war lord, General Aideed, when American soldiers attempted to capture him. The U.S. decided to withdraw its troops from Somalia.

Scholars, political analysts, and Somalis all have difficulty understanding the complexities that are responsible for the Somali tragedy. Drysdale (1994) suggested that the slow response of the United Nations, and, later, the UN's "ill advised pursuit

of the doctrine of peace enforcement" contributed to the disaster (p. 2). Lewis (1988) suggested that unresolved regional conflicts which were unresolved at Independence contributed to the conflict.

> British exclusiveness and empiricism, the accent on quality rather than quantity in educational and social advancement, attachment to British concepts of justice and ideals of administrative conduct, and the strict separation of politics from administration, all contrasted in northern eyes with the apparently less rigorous standards of political and public service morality in the south and with the involute Italian bureaucratic tradition ... Shortly after the flush of patriotic enthusiasm which marked independence and union had abated, a certain disenchantment became apparent in the north. That the north should take the initiative in questioning the value of the union require little explanation. The north had sacrified more than the south. The south, with the capital and National Assembly at Mogadishu, was still the hub of affairs; but from its former position as the capital of a small state Hargeisa had declined to a mere provincial headquarters remote from the centre of things ... northern pride found it hard to stomach this reduction in prestige (p. 132).

Campagnon (1992) pointed to the "lack of far-sighted leadership and political planning" as crucial factors in the Somali crisis (p. 8). He also attributed Barre's régime which, over his twenty-two years as President, changed from one of bureaucratic authoritarian rule in the early 1970s, towards personal rule and manipulation of clan rivalries in the 1980s, and eventually into a corrupt form. Samatar (1994) claimed that the superpowers, who supported different regions by supplying them with arms, contributed to the tragedy. Kapteijns (1994) pointed to clan hatreds, and questioned the arbritrary construction of clan identity. She claimed that the phenomenon of clan identity had been "forged by Somalis in their interaction with each other and the colonial and postindependence states in the context of

patriarchy and the capitalist world economy" (p. 15). Still others pointed to the Somali people who, in 1989, abandoned a democratic government and supported Barre's dictatorship of "scientific socialism" (Mocellin, personal interview, August 22, 1996).

All of these reasons (and undoubtedly many others) have contributed to the tragedy in Somalia. The results, however, are less ambiguous. Samatar (1994) noted that:

1. 350,000 have died since the inception of full-scale civil war in 1988
2. 25 percent of children under the age of five have died, and 80 percent of those alive are suffering from malnutrition
3. 70 percent of Somalis are surviving on emergency assistance
4. Almost 2 million have been displaced internally
5. 80 percent of all social services, including schools and hospitals, are non operational
6. 30-40 percent of livestock have been lost
7. social and political institutions have been shattered
8. without formal government, widespread banditry and the proliferation of weapons have terrorized the country (Samatar, 1994, p. 3)
9. the civil war and famine have resulted in one million refugees; most of whom fled to neighbouring countries. According to the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR), approximately 400,000 Somali refugee fled to Ethiopia in 1992, another 320,000 to Kenya, and 85,000 to Djibouti.

Another 250,000 refugees relocated in Asia, Europe and North America. In addition, about two million people were internally displaced (UNHCR, 1993).

The Somali Community in Winnipeg

This section provides an overview of Somali migration to Canada, and a profile of the Somali community in Winnipeg. Many of the themes taken up in this profile will be expanded on in the research findings.

Since 1989, thousands of refugees from Somalia have entered Canada (Tables 1 and 2). Determining the accurate number of Somali refugees in Canada is a difficult endeavour. Figures used by Statistics Canada indicate that 20,000 Somali refugees have entered Canada, however, settlement agencies believe that this figure is low. Somali Associations in Toronto report that 120,000 Somalis reside in Canada and that approximately 60,000 have settled in Toronto, 30,000 in Montreal, and 25,000 in Ottawa. Based on field studies, Opoku-Dapaah (1995) estimates that 25,000 Somalis have entered Canada since 1991 (personal communication, March 1, 1996.). Approximately 90 Somalis, or 40 families, have settled in Winnipeg. In exploring the Somali community, it is important to recognize that a range of ideological and political perspectives exist among the refugees, which have developed along clan and regional lines in their traditional culture.

Prior to 1991, there were only about 20 Somalis residing in Winnipeg. After the fall of the Barre government in Somalia in 1989, Somalis migrated to Kenya, Djibouti, Ethiopia, the United States, Europe, and Canada. Somali refugees came to Winnipeg as Convention refugees, or through private sponsorship, applying for

relocation from their country of asylum, often from refugee camps. In these cases the Somali refugees are categorized by Citizenship and Immigration as landed immigrants. Some Somalis who were living (often studying) outside of Somalia prior to 1989, also applied to Canada as independent landed immigrants. The breakdown of Somali arrivals by gender in both the immigration and convention refugee class is illustrated in Table 3. The Somali refugees in Winnipeg are from both rural and urban areas in Somalia. In considering the adaptation of Somali refugees in Winnipeg, it is very important to keep in mind that it is a new, and small, community, which has not yet achieved the numbers or level of organization necessary in attracting the interest of government.

The age distribution of Somali refugees in Winnipeg is much more limited in its range than in the general Canadian population. Most are under 45 years of age with the largest group being 25-29 years of age. Approximately one-third are under 19 years. A few of the single adults are enrolled at the University of Winnipeg and one married Somali male also attends the University of Winnipeg. About 80 percent of the population are married and live in nuclear families consisting of spouses and children. Unlike the social structure in Somalia where members of the extended family share accommodations and family responsibilities (particularly in the rural regions), only one Somali family in Winnipeg lives with members of their extended family. As Somalis in Winnipeg become more established, they may be able to assist

Table 1.
Somali Landings in Canada by Year and Intended Province of Destination
Landed Immigrant Status

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	Total
Totals	22	61	188	231	467	1161	3224	5227	3651	1728	1998	18,258
Newfoundland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
PEI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Nova Scotia	0	1	0	1	0	4	11	10	17	29	6	79
New Brunswick	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	1	4	5	3	17
Quebec	3	11	81	133	199	327	714	591	370	190	75	2694
Ontario	12	40	94	81	233	791	2347	4655	3080	1275	1760	14,368
Manitoba	2	3	4	6	4	4	14	16	15	21	7	94
Saskatchewan	0	0	1	1	2	0	5	13	13	21	11	67
Alberta	4	4	6	3	24	29	79	142	98	108	71	568
British Columbia	1	2	2	4	6	5	52	99	53	76	64	364
Yukon	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
NWT	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	3

Statistics obtained from Citizenship and Immigration, Ottawa, 1996.

Table 2.
Somali Landings in Canada by Year, Gender, and Intended Province of Destination
Convention Refugee Status
Age 18 years and older*

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	Total
Totals	1839	2526	2202	2066	1408	1189	991	12,221
Newfoundland	0	66	108	8	0	0	0	182
PEI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nova Scotia	2	2	10	1	1	1	1	18
New Brunswick	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	3
Quebec	484	388	327	331	72	67	45	1,714
Ontario	1339	2041	1726	1647	1303	1091	928	10,075
Manitoba	2	0	1	0	2	1	1	7
Saskatchewan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alberta	1	6	4	6	5	1	1	24
British Columbia, Yukon, NWT	11	23	26	71	25	27	15	198

*7,325 Somalis under the age of 18 years of age have entered Canada through Refugee Status between 1989 and 1995. (Citizenship and Immigration, 1996)

Table 3.
Somali Arrivals in Manitoba by Year, Age, and Gender

Age	1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		1990		1991		1992		1993		1994		1995		TOTAL		GRAND TOTAL
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
0 - 19	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	4	5	2	3	2	5	4	0	0	17	14	31
20 - 24	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	10	4	14
25 - 29	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	3	0	2	0	2	2	1	2	3	4	1	1	15	9	24
30 - 34	0	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	6	2	8
35 - 39	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	3
40 - 44	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	6	1	7
45 - 49	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
50 - 54	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
55 - 59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
60+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1	1	3	0	4	0	5	1	2	1	3	0	9	5	9	7	8	7	11	10	1	2	56	34	90

Citizenship and Immigration, 1996.

Table 4.
Level of education of Somali immigrants in Winnipeg by year of arrival and gender.

Level of education	1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		1990		1991		1992		1993		1994		1995		TOTAL		GRAND TOTAL
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Doctorate	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Master's	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Bachelor's	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	4	1	5
Trade Certificate	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	3	2	5
Other with diploma	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other without diploma	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	3	4	7
Secondary or less	0	0	0	0	4	0	5	0	2	0	1	0	7	2	8	5	2	1	3	2	2	4	34	14	48
None	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	1	1	3	3	4	8	0	1	9	17	28
TOTALS	1	1	3	0	4	0	5	1	2	1	3	0	9	5	9	7	8	8	9	11	2	5	58	41	95

Citizenship and Immigration, 1996.

their relatives to enter Canada in the future, however, the requirement to guarantee sponsorship of relatives for ten years is an unrealistic ambition for Somali refugees at this time.

Four Somali families live at the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM) apartment complex. IRCOM House was established in 1991 as transitional housing for newcomers. It is significant in that it crosses ethnic boundaries and places an emphasis on cooperation among ethnic groups residing in the complex, while providing social, recreational, and educational programs. Initially, residents would stay for a period of one year in which time support and direction was made available to help them adjust to their new culture, however, most residents now continue to live at IRCOM well beyond one year. Other Somalis in Winnipeg live in apartments in the downtown area on Langside, Edmonton, and Donald Streets which are often shared by two or three adults.

Somali refugees in Winnipeg have a variety of educational backgrounds, but most have secondary education or less (Table 4). Somali women have less education than men. Schooling in Somalia is compulsory for eight years (elementary and intermediate). High school is optional, and more males attend than females. In addition to the Somali language, many speak Arabic and Italian. The Somali language is most frequently spoken at home.

The lack of proficiency in English is a major hurdle for Somalis in their adaptation to Manitoba. Approximately one-third of Somali refugees in Winnipeg knew some English before they arrived in Canada, and, to my knowledge, only one

Somali in Winnipeg speaks French. Gender and education levels appear to be important factors in participation in ESL programs. English is a requirement in secondary school in Somalia, and since more males attain this level than females, more men are proficient in English than are women. In a study of the Somali community in Toronto, Opoku-Dapaah (1995) reported that just over half of Somalis in Toronto have some proficiency in English, while 48 percent either speak it with difficulty, or have no proficiency in it whatsoever. Sixty-one percent of males reported some proficiency in English compared with only 40 percent of females. Women are also less likely than men to attend language programs for a variety of reasons. As men are perceived to be the 'primary breadwinners', they are encouraged to attend classes whereas women often are not. In some cases, cultural barriers prevent women from participating and in others, their responsibilities for children make their attendance difficult. Transportation and child care limit women's participation in language programs.

Most Somalis in Winnipeg have participated in ESL programs which include Community Based Literacy Training, the Adult ESL Program through the Winnipeg School Division No. 1, and the ESL Program at Red River Community College. Individuals who complete English training programs usually do so within the first two years of their arrival in Canada. Many drop out when entry-level jobs become available. However, since most of employed Somalis work for small businesses, they have not been able to take advantage of language proficiency programs offered by the

government and, typically, larger businesses, that are directed towards occupational adaptation.

Specific figures about the employment status of Somalis in Winnipeg could not be obtained through either the Manitoba Department of Labor or the Department or Culture, Heritage and Citizenship. However, unemployment is a serious concern within the Somali community. At least half of Somali refugees in Winnipeg are unemployed. This corresponds with the 56% unemployment rate of Somalis in Toronto (Opoku-Dapaah, 1995). Very few women work outside of the home. The men are employed as taxi drivers (three brothers own a cab), laborers, and service providers. Average annual incomes are estimated at $10,000 per year. Their previous occupations in Somalia included the military, management, banking, and administrative positions. Consequently, in addition to a high rate of unemployment, those who are holding jobs are underemployed, that is, not working in positions for which they have been trained.

Members of the Somali community in Winnipeg have established a Somali Association of Manitoba. The organization is just getting started, and is experiencing a number of political tensions. Much of the tension relates to the politics in Somalia as well as to different ideological positions towards adaptation. The Association is open to both men and women, however, it is primarily a male-attended organization.

Agencies Providing Services to Refugees in Winnipeg

A number of Winnipeg agencies provide services to refugees in Winnipeg. The Citizenship and Immigration - Settlement Unit is responsible for admitting refugees

and providing adjustment assistance to them for up to one year. They also provide funding to non-government agencies that assist in refugee resettlement. The provincial government, through the Citizenship Division, also plays a significant role in providing support for refugees, such as language programs for housebound women and seniors. They also assist refugees in establishing education equivalency. A number of non-government organizations also provide settlement services. Citizenship Council of Manitoba Inc. (formerly the International Centre and the Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council) provides initial settlement services, a host program, and short-term accommodation. In addition, Planned Parenthood, the Immigrant Women's Association of Manitoba, and the Immigrant Women's Employment Counselling Service provide services to refugees and immigrants.

Statement of Problem

Significant differences between Somali culture and Canadian culture suggest that Somalis' process of adaptation is particularly challenging. In a research study of the Somali community in Toronto, Opoku-Dapaah (1995) found that the limited exposure of some Somalis to advanced technology and the English language have impeded their participation in socio-economic activities. Yet, Somalis who have acquired academic qualifications and professional skills have been unsuccessful in utilizing these accomplishments for their social and economic progress in Canada. CBC's Newsmagazine (August 22, 1994) documented serious racial tensions occuring in the Dixon Road area of Toronto, where the number of Somali refugees now exceeds the number of Anglo-Canadian residents. Other factors that have slowed

integration include the post-traumatic symptoms of the effects of violence that precipitated their departure from their homeland.

A variety of studies on the overall adaptation and resettlement of different ethnic groups in Winnipeg have been conducted. Nyakabwa (1989) developed a survey to research the socioeconomic adaptation of African refugees to Canada. Yoon (1983) studied the problems of adjustment of female Korean garment workers in Winnipeg. Hutton (1993) studied the patterns and predictors of refugee adjustment of Ethiopians, Laotians, Vietnamese, Salvadoreans and Chileans in Winnipeg. All of these studies were conducted using a quantitative approach to inquiry. Although the literature on refugee resettlement is growing, there is a need for research that represents the refugee's perceptions (Robinson, 1990). In this vein, Higgitt (1992) conducted a qualitative study into the perceptions of successful adaptation of Vietnamese men in Winnipeg, and developed a conceptual model of resettlement.

Relative to other ethnic groups in Canada, little is known about Somali refugees, and about the particular challenges that they confront in adapating to Canadian culture. In addition, research that explores the link between refugee studies and adult education has not been conducted. This qualitative study explores the role of adult education programs in the adaptation process of a relatively new ethnic community in Winnipeg, Somali refugees, from the perspective of selected Somalis. The research questions are:

1. What do selected Somali refugees in Winnipeg identify as their adaptation needs?

2. What education experiences do selected Somali refugees identify as important to their adaptation?
3. What obstacles to education have selected Somali refugees encountered and how have they dealt with them?
4. How helpful do selected Somali refugees in Winnipeg feel that their education experience has been in meeting their adaptation needs?

The Somali adult population was selected as the focus of this study for several reasons. The small population of Somalis in Winnipeg enabled the researcher to have access to almost all of the total population, thus obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the community. Somalis in Winnipeg participate in a variety of adult education programs which include ESL courses, secondary education, college, and University programs. Further, the literature on resettlement and adaptation emphasizes the important role of maintaining links with other members of the refugee's ethnic group. Alexander (1969) observed that groups of similar others provide "the newcomers with at least one familiar reference point in an otherwise strange society" (p. 72). David (1969) further noted that a community may serve as both a buffer and a bridge between the old and new cultures, allowing the refugee "to reflect on the novelty of new experiences and to regain the inner security and self-respect so essential to effective continuation of normal life processes" (p. 37). Local studies on larger ethnic groups, such as Eritreans and Southeast Asians have been conducted which confirm the importance of community (Higgitt, 1992; Hutton, 1993). This research is interested in exploring how a new group that forms a very small community

adapts to a different culture, particularly in light of the fact that Somalis have experienced deep internal divisions. Finally, the Somali group was selected because the researcher was involved in a local resettlement program on a volunteer basis, and was familiar with some members of the Somali community.

Delimitations of the Study

The scope of this study is to explore the role of adult education programs in the adaptation process of adult Somali refugees in Winnipeg. For this purpose, information will be sought about the participants' educational background, educational pursuits, access to educational counselling, participation in educational programs, and problems encountered in the course of educational pursuits. In addition, education-related issues of language, employment, social integration, community organization, and racism and prejudice will be explored at the level of individual adaptation. Larger questions pertaining to the structure of Canadian society will not be dealt with specifically in this study. Relatedly, policy issues on immigration will not be specifically addressed by this study. Although one Somali resides in a rural area of Manitoba, the study will be limited to the city of Winnipeg. The education of children is not within the scope of this study.

Significance of Study

This study contributes to the fields of refugee studies and adult education. It is significant for local organizations providing services to refugees. The International Centre, Canadian Mental Health Association, the Immigrant Women's Association, Employment Projects for Women, and the Immigrant and Refugee Community

Organization of Manitoba are examples of organizations that will benefit from a study of the Somali population in Winnipeg. Educational Institutions that offer language programs to refugees, including Winnipeg School Division No. 1 Adult ESL Program, The Adult Education Centre, Women's Employment Centre, Community Based Literacy Program, Red River Community College, will also benefit from this study. It is also important to government immigration departments who, in part, select refugees on their ability to adapt to Canadian culture. The study will be helpful for the development of orientation and settlement programming . The study is also useful in multicultural education for exploring the diversity of an ethnic group in Canada. It is hoped that the study will benefit the Somali community by illuminating some of the issues that they face in adaptation. Finally, the study is significant for the knowledge and understanding it can provide about a relatively new ethnic group in Canada.

Definitions

Adult education - Adult education may be broadly defined as the learning endeavours undertaken by a person over the age of eighteen years. This study will focus on those learning endeavours that occur in formal or community education contexts.

Adaptation - in this study adaptation is equated with well-being and consists of three dimensions; psycho-social, economic, and political (Canadian Council on Social Development, 1984). Education is considered to be a key factor in each of these dimensions (please refer to p. 46 in Literature Review for further details).

Immigrant - a person who settles as a permanent resident and has not become a Canadian citizen (Citizenship and Immigration, 1994).

Refugee - in this study a refugee is broadly defined as a person who has fled their homeland and sought refuge elsewhere because of perceived threats to their well-being (Rogge, 1987). This definition is broader than the legal definition, however, it suggests a common understanding of the term. The legal definition of the term has been adopted from the United Nations Geneva Convention. A **Convention Refugee** is any person who, by reason of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political political opinion, is unable to return to their country. In legal terms, a **refugee claimant** is a person who has arrived in Canada and who requests refugee status. If the person is found to be a Convention refugee, he or she may then apply for permanent residence.

Settlement - the process by which a newcomer to Canada acquires skills and knowledge to participate in Canadian society.

CHAPTER 2

REFUGEE STUDIES AND INVOLUNTARY MIGRATION TO CANADA

Refugee Studies

This section considers the global nature of migration and distinguishes between immigrants and refugees. Such an overview is helpful in establishing a context in which to consider Somali migration to Canada.

Throughout history, natural disasters, political, economic, social and religious pressures, have forced people to leave their homes and seek refuge elsewhere. In the twentieth century, as many as 140 million people have been forced to relocate primarily from Europe, Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America (Harrell-Bond, 1988). Usually these movements were understood as temporary events which would dissolve when disorders were resolved. An increased international perspective in recent times has meant that we have begun to recognize the significance of involuntary migration as an enduring part of our environment (Marx, 1990).

In 1951 the Office of the United Nation High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) was established with the mandate of protecting and assisting refugees throughout the world. According to this Commission (United Nations, 1993), there are more than 23 million legally recognized refugees in the world today, displaced by forces beyond their control.

Recently refugee resettlement has been recognized as an independent field of study. Traditionally, research about refugees was situated within immigrant and ethnic studies which did not distinguish between voluntary and involuntary migrants.

Refugee studies focus specifically on involuntary migrants, most of whom come from developing countries.

Although voluntary and involuntary migrants share common experiences, the literature on refugee resettlement argues that there are important differences between refugees and immigrants. Most immigrants voluntarily leave their homelands to seek a better life. Refugees, however, are persons who have fled their homelands and sought refuge elsewhere because of perceived threats to their well-being (Rogge, 1987). According to Kunz (1973; 1981), the uniqueness of the refugee is primarily a function of having been "pushed" to flee; "It is the reluctance to uproot oneself and the absence of positive original motivation to settle elsewhere which characterises the refugee from voluntary migrants" (1973, p. 120).

Traumatic events, such as political upheaval, ideological disparagement, or fear of death, usually precipitate refugee movements. Migration is usually hasty and difficult. Most refugees do not have the opportunity to choose their destination and are unaware of their destination when they depart their homeland. Often they are unable to bring with them any material resources or personal belongings. They leave behind family and friends who they may never see again, and with whom communication is often difficult or sometimes impossible. They usually arrive in a country in which the culture is significantly different than their own.

Although many immigrants experience some of the same incidents as refugees, they seldom experience the same degree of trauma. They generally choose to migrate,

feel in control of their lives, have the opportunity to select and prepare for a life in the new environment and anticipate upward mobility as a result of migration.

Refugees are less prepared for the resettlement process than immigrants. They usually hope to return to their country of origin and consequently maintain a greater commitment to that country. They are more likely to experience both emotional and physical stress associated with their losses and with their sense of apprehension about the future. Additionally, refugees are less likely than immigrants to have established links in the country of resettlement. Because of the important differences in process and outcome in immigrant and refugee resettlement, contemporary research is beginning to distinguish between immigrant and refugee resettlement as separate fields of study (Kuhlman, 1991; Robinson, 1990).

As Neuwirth (1987) noted, the exodus of Southeast Asians in 1979 and 1980 marked a turning point in the history of refugee resettlement in Western societies. Prior to the migration of this population, theories about cultural adaptation were based almost exclusively on the experience of European refugees to North America. These immigrants arrived in the early part of the twentieth century under different structural conditions. Rex (1973) pointed out that arrival of the European immigrants coincided with industrialization of Canada, when the technological gap between industrialized and developing countries was not as great. The European immigrants to Canada provided the human resources behind Canada's industrialization and eventually formed the main labour force. Although they experienced linguistic and ethnic discrimination, a technological gap was generally not a barrier to their adaptation process. Today 70

percent of immigrants to Canada come from Asia, Africa, or Latin America. In 1986, 1.6 million Canadians, or 6.3 percent of the population were considered to be members of visible minority groups (Bowen Stevens, 1993). A declining Euro-Canadian population, and an increasing immigrant population means that within the next two decades the minority population will become the majority (Cummins, 1988). Theories of adaptation which were appropriate for European immigrants and refugees in Canada, do not adequately address the multidimensional aspects of adaptation of refugees from developing countries.

A History of Involuntary Migration to Canada

This section reviews the history of involuntary migration to Canada. An long-standing debate has existed within Canada about the types and numbers of people who should be admitted as immigrants (Palmer, 1984). Some of these debates have included the preferred ethnicity of immigrants, the country's absorptive capacity as measured by a variety of criteria, and the economy's projected labour market requirements (Dirks, 1995). Arguments in favour of, or in opposition to, admission of immigrants has varied depending upon the prevailing social values and economic picture of the era.

Prior to Confederation, Quakers, Mennonites and Amish people from the United States were among the first refugees to seek sanctuary in Canada. These people left the United States to escape religious discrimination and persecution. When the government of Upper Canada legislated free entry and settlement of American

slaves in 1833, approximately 50,000 Blacks entered Canada to escape racial and economic oppression.

The period between Confederation and the end of the 19th century was one of unrestricted entry for migrants from Great Britain, European countries, and the United States. Interested in developing agricultural settlements, the government paid little attention to the reasons for migration (Dirks, 1977). Immigrants from other parts of the world were not well-received. Driedger (1989) noted that Chinese immigrants, most of whom entered Canada to work on the railroad, experienced discrimination in the form of an increasingly severe head tax imposed by the Canadian government. Other refugees who were accepted for resettlement in this period included Russian Mennonites, Mormons from the United States, and Russian Doukhobors. It was also in this period that Canada's first Immigration Act was approved and an Immigration Branch was established within the Department of Agriculture. The alliance of Immigration with Agriculture reflected the view that resettlement and agriculture were closely connected (Dirks, 1977).

From the turn of the century until 1914, free land was made available to newcomers, most of whom came from Europe (Driedger, 1989). As Canada was anxious to develop agriculture, immigration policy was quite flexible. Many immigrants spoke a different language, had different physical characteristics, and had differerent customs from either French or English Canadians. Anti-foreign pressures rose, which, in 1919, resulted in the passing of an order-in-council preventing the admission of "undesirables" (Dirks, 1977, p.38). As Canada did not classify

immigrants according to their motivation, it is not known how many immigrants were economic migrants, or how many were seeking asylum.

The order-in-council preventing "undesirables" was rescinded in 1922, however, a negative view towards immigrants and refugees continued in public perception. Soon after the the order-in-council was rescinded, more than 100,000 Jewish refugees from Russia and Eastern Europe were admitted to Canada and approximately 20,000 Mennonites from Russia entered the country. As more and more "undesirables" arrived, the Canadian public grew increasingly hostile (Higgitt, 1992). Growing economic problems were attributed to the Canadian newcomers. Provincial governments became increasingly involved in federal plans for resettlement.

Immigration to Canada was severely restricted during the two World Wars, primarily to American citizens and British subjects. In the post-War period, Canada's Immigration policy reflected the nation's growing demand for labourers. More than 240,000 eastern Europeans and their families were admitted into Canada to help deal with the labour shortage. In spite of the need for workers, however, immigration regulations continued to favour Anglo-Saxons and other western Europeans while discriminating against others (Neuwirth & Rogge, 1988).

The new Immigration Act passed in 1952 was characterized by tighter control and enforcement. In spite of new Act, however, the government responded to public pressure when it admitted thousands of Hungarians who had been displaced by Soviet invasion in 1956.

In 1966 the Canadian government produced a White Paper on immigration. This Paper was significant because it outlined non-racist immigration legislation. The Paper introduced a point system, which is still used today (although some modifications have occurred), for people seeking admission to Canada. Under this system, points are awarded according to education, personal qualities, occupational skill and demand, age, arranged employment, knowledge of official languages and the potential for successful resettlement (Higgitt, 1992). The point system is mandatory for immigrants, and is used as a guideline for refugees.

A combination of factors has contributed to the relatively small number of African refugees admitted into Canada. Before the Immigration Act of 1976, the largely rural and pastoral African population was considered to be lacking "educational and vocational skills necessary for their resettlement in the industrialized nations that have traditionally received immigrants" (Rogge, 1983. p.24) In addition, both the United National High Commission on Refugees and the Organization of African Unity have a policy that encourages local integration of refugees into countries close to the refugee-producing state, and eventually repatriation (Dirks, 1995, p. 75). Consequently, fewer than one thousand African refugees have entered Canada annually, and those who have entered have typically been people from urban centres. Most African refugees in Canada are from Ethiopia, but others have arrived from Mozambique, South Africa, Uganda, Sudan, and Somalia.

A Green Paper on immigration policy and practice in Canada was developed in 1974. The paper outlined the principles which support immigration policy: non-

discrimination, family reunification, humanitarian concerns for refugees, and the promotion of national goals. The paper also stressed the link among immigration, population, and the needs of the labour market. As a result of the Green Paper, the 1976 Immigration Act was proclaimed in 1978 (Higgitt, 1992).

The Immigration Act was significant legislation in several important ways. First, it distinguished between refugees and immigrants and formally adopted for the first time the definition of refugee established by the 1951 Geneva Convention which states that:

> Convention refugee means any person who, by reasons of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his [sic] nationality and is unable or, by reason of such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country, or not having a country or nationality, is outside the country of his former habitual residence and is unable or, by reason of such fear, is unwilling to return to that country (Immigration Act, 1976, article 2).

Second, it expanded upon the legalistic Geneva Convention definition of refugee and established designated classes:

> any person who is a member of a class designated by the Governor in Council as a class, the admission of members of which would be in accordance with Canada's humanitarian tradition with respect to the displaced and the persecuted may be granted admission subject to such regulations as may be established with respect thereto and notwithstanding any other regulations made under this act (Immigration Act, 1976, Section 6).

Third, the Act introduced the private sponsorship of refugees whereby private citizens are able to share responsibility for resettling refugees with the government (Higgitt, 1993). This change meant that any group of five or more adult Canadian

citizens is eligible to sponsor refugees. The groups assume responsibility for the general orientation, moral support, and material assistance of the sponsored refugees in the first year of resettlement.

As the result of the Act, three criteria were established to recognize refugees and to set quotas for their admittance: humanitarian grounds, Canadian self-interest, and the legal definition of refugee under the 1951 Geneva Convention. The "point of balance in this triad of determining factors" determines the specific policy at any particular time (Adelman et al. 1980, p. 140).

Finally, the passing of the Immigration Act was highly significant because it marked an important change in the perspective of the Canadian government. Rather than continuing the practice of admitting refugees through a "tap-off, tap-on" process (Dirks, 1995, p. 15) that reflected narrow national self-interest, Canada demonstrated a more international commitment to refugees, that moved beyond its narrowly defined economic goals.

However, the formulation of annual immigration and refugee plans is a complex process that falls closely under policies of national interest. It considers the often conflicting demands of levels of population growth adopted as yearly statements, immigration policy, governmental fiscal year planning, and international developments. The levels of overall immigration are the result of a plan that involves provincial economic and social concerns, as well as forecasts about natural replacement and net immigration. Refugees are considered as one component of the overall immigration plan. Yet, refugee movements occur independently of national policy, the degree of fit

is uncertain during periods of substantial pressure for refugee intake. Annual quotas are adjusted in response to international crises.

The admissibility of refugees into Canada is measured by government officers in a far less precise or exacting way than when applied to ordinary immigrants to Canada. The latter are selected under a system which tests ability to establish themselves successfully in relation to labour market conditions, with points awarded on a series of social and economic indicators. In the case of refugees, the immigration officer must take these factors into account, yet the additional assistance available to refugees by government, sponsors, and voluntary agencies mitigate adaptation difficulties. Admissibility, therefore, involves a certain amount of discretion, even though the ultimate criterion remains the potential success of establishment in Canada (Lanphier, 1981, p. 117).

Since the late 1970s, changing national and international circumstances have resulted in amendments to the Immigration Act. The costs of administering Immigration departments and programs, the substantial increases in refugee migrations, the desire of Canadian business to recruit and resettle labourers more quickly, decreasing provincial and municipal budgets, an increase in migrants without papers or with fraudulent papers, and a backlog of appeals motivated the Canadian government to introduce Bill C-86 in 1992. While claiming to abide by the philosophical objectives of the Immigration Act of 1978 that emphasized the goals of family reunification, humanitarian approaches to refugees, and economic benefits for Canada, the Bill altered the Act in significant ways. First, it placed a ceiling on the

number the Immigration Department can accept in any one year. Second, it altered the processing priorities among the classes when considered necessary, so that family and refugee class applicants were no longer guaranteed the highest priority in processing (Dirks, 1995, p. 160). Third, immigrants who agreed to reside in a specific area of the country for a given period of time, would have their applications expedited. In addition, tighter controls were established to reduce the number of migrants with no papers at all or with fraudulent papers.

In 1994 the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration launched public consultations on immigration. As the result of the consultations, a document which set out the framework for immigration objectives was produced titled Into the 21st Century - A Strategy for Immigration and Citizenship (1994). The Report reflects a shift in immigration philosophy from one which emphasized the importance of family reunification to a more formal economic view. The Report states, that a "greater share of immigrants will be selected on the basis of their ability to contribute to Canada's economic and social development, reducing demand on integration services" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1994). Applicants whose skills are considered to be of little or no economic value, will not be considered. In addition, a greater emphasis is placed on the applicant's knowledge of English or French. On February 27, 1995, the Government established a Rite of Landing Fee of $975 for applications in any four existing categories; family, independent, entrepreneur, or convention refugee.

Summary

This section suggests that the needs of refugees are different than those of immigrants, and that the degree of trauma experienced by refugees is a significant variable in the adaptation process. It also discusses involuntary migration in the Canadian context. Until the 1960s, Canadian policy with respect to refugees (as well as immigrants) was biased in favour of European refugees, and discriminated against refugees from non-western countries. Although progress has been made in addressing the racial barriers inherent in the early Canadian Immigration and Refugee policy, current shifts which emphasize the economic benefits for Canada over family reunification and over humanitarian concern, continues to perpetuate racial and cultural discrimination.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

This sections considers the body of literature concerning the adaptation of refugees and the foundations of adult education. The literature on adaptation emphasizes the economic, social, and political dimensions of re-settlement. The adult education research literature outlines the basic principles of adult education, and points to the need for an expanded focus within the discipline of adult education.

Adaptation

Different disciplines have used a variety of approaches to study adaptation of immigrants and refugees in a new culture. In general, anthropologists have studied changes in group cultures. Sociologists have considered the dynamics of relationships among minority and majority groups. Psychologists and psychiatrists have studied the adaptation of refugees from the perspective of mental health, usually emphasizing the psychological pathologies incurred as the result of trauma. Education has considered the gap between the western structure of schooling and different cultures. Although each of these perspectives provides insight into the complex process of adaptation, a holistic analysis and understanding of the process of adaptation has yet to emerge.

Adaptation is a gradual process of resettlement. Refugees may encounter many difficult and complex problems in adapting to their new environment. The general rule is that the greater the sociocultural distance between the refugee and the host country, the more difficult the adaptation process (Kunz, 1981). Inability to

understand the language, differences in behavior, attitudes, and values, occupational deflection, discrimination, are among some of the difficulties that refugees confront.

Studies that focus on refugees' adaptation use a variety of terms such as adjustment, assimilation, integration, settlement, resettlement, and adaptation to describe the process whereby uprooted persons accept the new environment in which they find themselves (Bernard, 1977; Ex, 1966; Lanphier, 1986). A wide range of interpretations of 'adaptation' is evident in the literature, however, most interpretations view adaptation as a sequential process of change.

Brody (1970) defined adaptation as a process of establishing a relatively stable and reciprocal relationship with the environment and having meaningful social and interpersonal relationships with the host community. Lanphier (1986) defined adjustment as the "acquisition of knowledge about the local community, use of some community services, and development of acquaintanceship with Canadians" (p.5).

Bernard (1977) refers to the process of adaptation as integration and says,

> Integration is achieved when migrants become a working part of their adopted society, take on many of its attitudes and behavior patterns, and participate freely in its activities but at the same time retain a measure of their original cultural identity and ethnicity (p. 277).

Hurh, Kim, and Kim (1980) defined adaptation as the process by which, "immigrants modify their attitudinal and behavioral patterns to maintain and improve their life conditions compatible with the new environment" (p. 295). Kim and Nicassio (1980) defined adjustment as a multidimensional process in which social, economic and psychological variables are interrelated. McCubbin and Patterson (1983) defined

adaptation as a dynamic, ongoing process which is achieved through reciprocal relationships between the system and the environment. In this model the system includes individuals, family units, communities, and the society at large. Stein (1979) described adaptation as the complete merging of refugees into the host community with individuals being accepted according to their individual merits. The process is complete when refugees are considered reasonably well-adjusted to the new environment.

In her socio-econmic study of African refugees to Canada, Nyakabwa (1989) considered adaptation as a reciprocal relationship among the newcomers and the environment. Age, language, degree of occupational deflection, employment, individual perception and length of residency were the key variables affecting the adaptation process. Of these key variables, economic adaptation has recently received the most attention among researchers. Samuels (1987) maintained that employment and income are the most important indicators of adaptation because they are easily measured and have a significant influence on life. Finnan (1981) emphasized the social and cognitive components of occupational adaptation. The social component refers to the role the refugee community plays in employment, such as how the community influences the job choices of its members. The cognitive component refers to how refugees shape their identities in relation to their jobs (Higgitt, 1992, p. 70).

Neuwirth (1987, 1988) also emphasized the importance of economic adjustment in the adaptation process. According to Neuwrith, economic adaptation, defined as the ability to find employment and become self-sufficient, is relatively easy

for refugees to attain. However, occupational adjustment, the ability to transfer occupational skills from the country of origin to the country of resettlement is much more difficult to achieve. For Neuwirth, occupational adjustment is the most important aspect of resettlement which impacts on all other aspects of adaptation. Her research indicated that if occupational adjustment does not occur within the first three to four years after arrival, it is unlikely to occur at all.

The factors that lead to migration have a significant impact on the adaptation process. Generally, it is accepted that the refugees and immigrants are influenced by both push and pull factors. Immigrants generally respond to pull factors, and refugees respond primarily to push factors. Refugees who expect to return to their country of origin and who consider their resettlement as temporary may lack the motivation to change and to form meaningful and permanent relationships in the new country. Individuals who migrate against their will may "sabotage themselves" by refusing to succeed in a country to which they have come unwillingly (Pereira, 1981). However, the differentiation between push and pull factors is considerably more complex than it appears and whether the push or pull factor is greater often depends on the migrant's personal perception of the situation (Higgitt, 1992, p. 74).

To explore this complex phenomonen, Kunz (1973; 1981) developed a typology of factors that influence the resettlement process (Figure 2). He proposed two different flight patterns among refugees. The anticipatory pattern is associated with people who are in the position to anticipate danger, usually the educated and economically advantaged. Departure in this case is orderly and they often bring

resources with them. In anticipating departure, these people resemble immigrants, yet they differ from immigrants because of the sense of impending danger and the inability to select their destination. Acute flight patterns, on the other hand, occurs during crisis and are spontaneous and usually disorganized. Kunz further proposed three identification categories of refugees: the majority-identified, the events-alienated, and the self-aliented, which impact on refugees' decision to flee and on resettlement. In the majority identified group, the refugees opposition is shared with fellow citizens, although perhaps not with their government. The events-alienated refugee is marginalized within his/her country and has ambivalent feelings towards his/her fellow citizens. This group includes religious and racial minorities. The self-alienated have no wish to identify themselves with their country of origin: "they may retain some attachments, but their attitudes are overwhelmingly shaped by ideological consideration and their departure is a logical result of their alienation" (Kunz, 1981. p. 43). Because the conflict in Somalia which precipitated their migration involved opposition to government, as well as opposition to fellow Somalis, Somali refugees may identify with aspects of each of the three groups.

Kunz (1981) further identified two attitudes to flight and homeland that impact on the resettlement process: reactive fate groups and purpose groups. Reactive fate groups flee in response to situations which they perceive to be intolerable. Even within this category, ambiguity exists concerning individual motivations and external events. For example, many refugees flee for a combination of reasons that include

Figure 2.

Factors Influencing the Resettlement Process

Home Related Factors

Identification/Marginality
- The Majority-Identified
- The Events-Alienated
- The Self-Alienated

Attitude to Flight and Homeland
- Reactive Fate-groups
- Purpose Groups

Ideological-National Orientation Abroad
- Restoration Activists
- The Passive Hurt
- Integration Realists
- Eager Assimilationists
- Revolutionary Activists
- Founders of Utopia

Host Related Factors

Cultural Compatibility
- Language
- Values
- Traditions
- Religion
- Politics
- Food
- Interpersonal relations

Population Policies
- Augmentative
- Self-sufficient

Social Attitudes
- Monistic - assimilationist
- Pluralistic - integrationist
- Sanctuary societies - tolerant

Kunz, Egon F. Exile and Resettlement: Refugee Theory
International Migration Review, 1981, Volume XV, pp. 42-51.

political or ideological as well as economic. A similar ambiguity exists within the category of purpose groups who flee because of ideological clashes with the government and resulting fear of persecution. Kunz suggested that whether they can be considered refugees or voluntary migrants "depends on how much their ideologies clashed with those of their home country and whether their actual deportment was caused by harrassment and fear of persecution or by their wish to start on the desired way of life" (p. 45). This observation is a significant one. Many refugees, including Somali refugees, have a variety of motivations for leaving their homeland. Kunz's model includes host-related factors in resettlement. He emphasized the importance of cultural compatibility between the country of origin and the new country, as well as the importance of maintaining links with other people who speak the refugees' language, share their values, religion and political views.

Although Kunz's (1981) theoretical analysis is helpful in understanding the complexity of motivations that precipitate resettlement, it does not include the subjective dimension of adaptation. Many refugees experience post-traumatic disorders as the result of physical assault, imprisonment, traumatic departure, violence, rape, intimidation, and the loss of loved ones. Studies of newly resettled Bosnian refugees in the United States indicate that 65 percent of those studied suffered from post traumatic stress disorders, and 35 percent experienced depressive disorders (Weine, Becker, et al., 1995). In studying the Somali community in Toronto, Okopku-Dapaah found that the refugees frequently experienced unresolved grief, anxiety, and fatigue (1995). Twenty-three percent of the community had been

physically assaulted in Somalia, 13 percent had experienced imprisonment, 12 percent reported a traumatic departure, and 11 percent indicated that they had relatives who had been harassed or executed. Psychologist Jane Mocellin, who researched the political or ideological as well as economic. A similar ambiguity exists within the category of purpose groups who flee because of ideological clashes with the government and resulting fear of persecution. Kunz suggested that whether they can be considered refugees or voluntary psycho-social consequences of the tragedy in Somalia, explained to me that, in her view, the fact that many of the people killed in Somalia had not been buried had implications for surviving family members who were blocked in their grieving process (Personal interview, August 22, 1995).

Although holistic views on the process of adaptation in the resettlement literature are scarce, more holistic models of well-being have been developed in other contexts. The Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD, 1984) developed a holistic, multidimensional model of well-being incorporating psychosocial, economic and political participation factors. Psychosocial well-being is defined as a sense of worth and pride; economic well-being means having sufficient, steady income which allows for the realization of some dreams; and political participation refers to the feeling of some control over events in the larger political sphere (i.e. housing). In a similar conceptualization, the Canadian Action Committee on the Status of Women (CACSW, 1989) defined well-being as including physical, emotional, social, environmental, and economic health. Ferguson (cited in Higgitt, 1992) researched successful adaptation from the perspectives of Vietnamese refugees to the United

States. She found that few refugees defined success only in material terms. Most responses suggested that success was living in dignity, having self-respect and peace of mind, feeling settled, secure and at ease with the future and feeling satisfied with life. In addition, the respondents identified education, as well as family unity, to be a sign of success. Many considered freedom to be the most important measure of success as it was a quest for freedom which motivated most to become refugees in the first place.

Adult Education

Although adult education programs are likely to be critical to the successful resettlement of refugees, integrating the principles of adult education within theories of adaptation continues to be a challenge to adult education. Currently, no literature exists within adult education that explores the connection between adult education and the education of refugees. A review of the literature that is concerned with the principles and methods of adult education is useful in understanding the basic assumptions which underlie the teaching and learning of adults in western culture.

Kidd (1973) viewed adult education as a 'second chance' for those who were socially deprived. He identified several concepts of adult learning that were based on the changing conditions over an adult's life-span. These concepts included role changes required by society, the egalitarian nature of adult student-teacher relationships, the self-directing nature of adults, the physical, cultural and emotional meaning of time, and attitudes surrounding aging and the prospect of death (Brookfield, 1988, p. 27).

Knowles (1980) defined adult learning as "the art and science of helping adults learn" (p. 43). To contrast the learning of adults with that of children, he called his formulation andragogy and identified five assumptions which he claimed are characteristic of all adult learners:

1. As a person matures, his or her self-concept moves from that of a dependent personality toward one of a self-directing human being.
2. An adult accumulates a growing reservoir of experience which is a rich resource for learning.
3. The readiness of an adult to learn is closely related to the developmental tasks of his or her social role.
4. There is change in time perspective as people mature - from the future application of knowledge to immediacy of application. Thus an adult is more problem-centered than subject-centered in learning (Knowles, 1980, pp. 44-45).
5. Adults are motivated to learn by internal factors rather than external ones (Knowles, 1984, p. 12).

Knowles' development of a theory of andragogy has had a significant impact on the education of adults. It has also sparked a great deal of controversy. Hartree (1984) observed that Knowles' theory did not distinguish between teaching and learning. Brookfield (1986) argued that Knowles' assumptions were problematic and found that only the assumption about the learners' personal experience to be well-grounded. Davenport and Davenport (1985) reviewed the use of the term andragogy

and noted that it has been classified "as a theory of adult education, theory of adult learning, theory of technology of adult learning, method of adult education, techniques of adult education, and a set of assumptions" (p. 157).

Brundage and Mackeracher (1980) identified thirty-six principles of adult learning. These include the principle that adults are able to learn throughout their lifetimes, and that past experiences can be a help or an obstacle to learning. It is through experience, however, that individuals construct the meanings and value frameworks that determine how they code new stimuli and information. Further, Brundage and Mackeracher claimed that past experience can be directly applied to current situations for good educative effect. Adults possessing positive self-concepts will be more responsive to learning; and environments that reinforce the self-concepts of adults will produce the greatest amount of learning (Brookfield, 1988, p. 29). In addition Brundage and Mackeracher noted that voluntary participation in educational endeavors is highly conducive to learning. They also noted that that adults learn best when they can control the rate of their learning while they enjoy good health.

Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) identified eight principles for the facilitation of adult learning. They observed that adults' readiness to learn depends on their previous learning, on their level of intrinsic motivation, the amount of positive reinforcement received, the organization of the material, repeptition, the meaningfulness of the educational material, and the active participation in the learning process.

James (1983) devised nine principles of adult learning through a search of articles, research reports, dissertations, and other materials on adult learning (p. 132). These principles are applied in different degrees in different adult learning contexts. James' principles are:

1. Adults maintain the ability to learn.
2. Adults are a highly diversified group of individuals with widely differeing preferences, needs, backgrounds and skills.
3. Adults experience a gradual decline in sensory capabilities.
4. Experience of the learner is a major resource in learning situations.
5. Self-concept moves from dependency to independency as individuals grow in responsibilities, experience, and confidence.
6. Adults tend to be life-centered in their orientation to learning.
7. Adults are motivated to learn by a variety of factors.
8. Active learner participation in the learning process contributes to learning.
9. A comfortable supportive environment is a key to successful learning.

A further focus of research in adult education literature is the reasons adults do, and do not, participate in education programs. Houle (1961) developed a typology that identified goal-oriented learners, activity-oriented learners, and learning-oriented learners who pursue learning for its own sake. Subsequent research has expanded and elaborated on Houle's model to reflect the awareness that adult learners often have several motives for participating in learning activities. Cross (1981) identified three obstacles to adult education: situational, institutional, and dispositional.

Situational barriers include lack of income, lack of child care, lack of time due to employment or other responsibilities. Institutional barriers consist of practices or policies that discourage or exclude adults from participating in learning activities and include inconvenient schedules and locations and full-time fees for part time studies. Dispositional barriers are related to attitudes and self-perceptions one has of oneself (Cross, 1981, p. 98).

The adult education literature reveals many perspectives on adult learning which have been shaped by various psychological and philosophical views. The behaviorists of the 1950s saw learning as a change in behavior; the humanists of the 1960s viewed learning as personal development; the cognitive psychologists of the 1970s described learning as changes in memory. "Learning has also been described as change in attitudes or skills; as individuation, as a developmental process of moving from a world of absolutes to a relativistic world, and as a process of constructing meaning or interpreting reality" (Cranton, 1994). One of the key perspectives about adult learning in the literature is experiential learning. Although several definitions of experiential learning exist in the literature, it generally refers to learning that takes place outside the classroom (Rose, 1989). Experiential learning has been celebrated as one of the defining characteristics of andragogy (Knowles, 1980; Brundage and Mackeracher, 1980; James, 1983). Kolb (1984) claimed that learning is built on the interactions between cognitive process and direct experience; consequently adult learners bring a wide variety of life experiences to the learning context. In Kolb's model, the adult learners' prior knowledge serves him/her in a new learning experience.

However, Kolb noted that universal prescriptions concerning the method of facilitating adult learning fail to consider the relationship between learning style and culture. Apps (1978) argued for the value of incidental learning. Incidental learning is the purposeful acquisition of certain skills and knowledge essential to managing crises and changes successfully. It requires deliberate attempts to learn new ideas, attitudes and skills (Lovell, 1980). The role of critical reflection in experiential learning varies according to the learning objective. Schon (1987) argued that the more learners are involved in real life settings and are doing rather than observing, the more likely they are to be influenced by the experience.

Collard (1994) claimed that the wide list of theories of adult learning confuse the issues rather than clarify it. Building on the work of Mezirow (1991) who identified three domains of learning: instrumental, communicative, and emancipatory, Collard proposed a broader, more general, classification system: subject-oriented learning, consumer-oriented learning, and emancipatory learning. Each of the domains is valuable in meeting different learning objectives. Yet each is problematic when applied to the situation of learners' involved in cultural adaptation because all assume that the learner has an understanding of the culture. Subject-oriented learning is the acquisition of content, whether that is facts, concepts, problem-solving strategies, or technical or practical skills. Consumer-oriented adult learning (or individual-oriented) closely resembles self-directed learning. The learner identifies their needs, sets objectives based on those needs, selects materials and resources that are relevant to their learning, chooses the strategies to meet their objectives, and evaluates their own

progress. The idealized assumption in this view is that the learner knows what they want and knows how to learn it. Immigrants and refugees, especially those with little education, who are unfamiliar with the new culture do not fit with the assumptions which support this category. Emancipatory adult learning, which has long been an important goal of adult education aims to "free ourselves from forces that limit our options and our control over our lives, forces that have been taken for granted or seen beyond our control" (Collard, p. 16). However, interpretations of emancipatory learning which are supported by the values of humanistic psychology which emphasize individual growth, may have little relevance for people from non-western cultures who often place less emphasis on individualism and a greater emphasis on the well-being of the extended family.

Emerging Themes in the Adult Education Literature

Traditional research in adult education has received considerable criticism from other disciplines, as well as from adult education theorists, for its focus on the white middle-class male population, and for its exclusion of women, minorities, and low-income groups (Brookfield, 1988; Ross-Gordon, 1991). Rooted in western beliefs about human nature, adult education is currently being challenged to re-conceptualize its traditional views of individualism and personal autonomy to respond to the needs of women and minorities. In a review of adult education literature indexed in the Current Index to Journals in Education, Ross-Gordon (1991) found that less than one percent of more than 1500 articles referred to ethnic minority groups. Recently, the literature has begun to address feminist approaches to adult education (Gaskell & McLaren,

1987; MacKeracher, 1988). Rockhill (1987) described how Hispanic women's participation in adult education represents both a longing for self-development as well as a threat to their traditional social role, which often place significant pressures on the the family structure. Criticisms of feminist theory from women of color and visible minorities suggest that while programs that are offered from a traditional adult education perspective may fail to meet the needs of women, programs that are offered from a feminist perspective fail to be responsive to the needs of minority women (hooks, 1984).

Literature on how adult education can better meet the needs of culturally and racially diverse populations is just beginning to emerge. Common themes arising from this literature include: the need for adult educators to improve their knowledge and understanding of other cultural groups; the importance of community-based programs that feature ease of access, linkages to social networks, and interest in locally relevant issues; the importance of ethnic groups teaching other members of the same ethnic group; and the need for collaboration among stakeholders (Ross-Gordon et al, 1990).

An additional theme in adult education literature which has the potential to be helpful in exploring the role of adult education for new ethnic groups in Canada is community education. Although community education has historically been an important focus in adult education, the education of different ethnic communities entering a new culture has primarily been identified with social work. In a major review of articles published in the Journal of Community Development, Christenson

(1989) concluded that "the discipline devoted to community development seems to be caught in a treadmill of descriptive studies and needs assessment" (p. 41). Many interpretations of 'community adult education' exist within adult education ranging from liberal notions of community which regard communities as harmonious entities with homogenous needs, to concepts of community education that acknowledge that communities reflect inequalities of class, status and power, and that in choosing to meet the needs of one sector, the educator must ignore or even oppose the needs of another (Brookfield, 1984). Moreover, the term 'community' is so value-laden with idealism that critical questions concerning the meaning of community are often overlooked. Ng, Mueller, and Walker (1990) pointed out that even when community organizing may result in empowerment of individuals or groups, the practice of organizing can also further reproduce gender, class, race and language inequalities and maintain ethnocentric hierarchies under the guise of building "community". An approach to community development/education that problematizes the homogeneous and idealistic view of community is urgently needed in adult education.

It is apparent from the review of adult education literature that the meaning of adult education is both broad and ambiguous, at the same time as it has been limited to North American perspectives. Currently, perspectives on adult education are changing the research literature. North American researchers are recognizing that the process of adult learning is not 'universal' and that different perspectives in the discipline, such as the view that adult education is a emancipatory endeavour, or a means of acquiring skills, are simply the product of the social context of the time, and that each

perspective is valid (Jarvis, 1992). Within developing countries, adult education is interpreted differently than it is in North America. In his discussion of adult education and international development, Ewart (1989) stated that nonformal education programs now stress integrated development encompassing health, agriculture, and political action at the community level. Since much of the international work in adult education has an community-based, inter-disciplinary focus, (rather than the individual focus found in the U.S. literature) the knowledge generated from the work is often identified with other disciplines, such as health or agriculture. Ulich's (1965) early comparative research of the development of adult education in Denmark, England, the Federal Republic of Germany, and the United States suggested that "adult education reflects the social conditions in each country - even more than do the other levels of education" (p. 202). Bélanger & Blais' (1995) contemporary analysis of "World Perspectives in Adult Education" provides evidence from Africa, the Arab nations, Latin America and Eastern Europe that support Ulich's findings.

Summary

It is unfortunate that adult education, a discipline that has contributed to our understanding of individuals experiencing changes in their personal development, occupations, and social roles, has contributed so little to our understanding of the role of adult education for those individuals who are confronting cultural change at the same time as they experience change in each of the areas mentioned above. Current directions in the literature which explore the role of gender, ethnicity, social context, combined with interdisciplinary perspectives concerning cultural adaptation, and

community education, may hold promise for the adult education discipline, and, more importantly, for ethnic communities experiencing cultural adaptation.

This study explores the adaptation process of selected Somali refugees in Winnipeg. It considers some of the principles which have evolved in the literature in refugee studies and adult education to identify the areas which are relevant in developing an understanding of the role of adult education in the adaptation process of refugee groups.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research was to study the adaptation process from the perspective of Somali refugees in Winnipeg. In particular, I was interested in learning how Somalis describe their adaptation process, and how their experiences in adult education programs impact on their adaptation. The research questions were:

1. What do selected Somali refugees in Winnipeg identify as their adaptation needs?
2. What education experiences do selected Somali refugees identify as important to their adaptation?
3. What obstacles to education have selected Somali refugees encountered and how have they dealt with them?
4. How helpful do selected Somali refugees in Winnipeg feel that their education experience has been in meeting their adaptation needs?

Much of the research in the social sciences is conducted from one of two main paradigms: the positivist paradigm (quantitative) and pheonomonological or interpretive paradigm (qualitative). The positivist paradigm seeks to understand phenomena through measurement and the analysis of relationships among variables. Traditionally, inquiry within this paradigm has been considered to be value-free. Qualitative research is interested in understanding processes and meanings which are less amenable to statistically measurement. Bateson (1972) stated that qualitative researchers are guided by highly abstract principles inquiring into the nature of humanity and reality (p. 320). Where positivist methods provide one window for

understanding events in the social world, qualitative methods provide us with a different way of seeing the phenomena. Becker (1986) claimed that qualitative research differs from quantitative research in five significant ways which manifest themselves in different ways of addressing the same set of issues. Although a wide range of perspectives are characteristic within each of these, a brief overview of the five points of difference he noted are:

1) Uses of positivism: Traditional interpretations of positivist research contend that there is reality out there to be studied, captured, and understood (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p.5). Evaluation criteria, such as external and internal validity, are emphasized and data analysis is usually statistical. Qualitative researchers may also use statistical methods to assist them in their study, yet they do not report their findings in the same way as quantitative researchers.

2) Acceptance of postmodern sensibilities: The growing acceptance of postmodern sensibilities resulted in what has become known as the 'crisis of representation'. This view problematizes issues such as validity, reliability, objectivity, as well as issues of gender class, and race. In response, qualitative researchers describe their work as providing one way of telling a story that is not value-free.

3) Capturing the individual's point of view: Although both qualitative and quantitative researchers are interested in the individual's point of view, qualitative researchers believe they can learn more about a person's point of view through interviews and observation. Empirical methods used by quantitative researchers are less appropriate for gaining insight into how individuals understand themselves.

4) Examining the constraints of everyday life. Qualitative researchers are interested in how meaning is constructed and shaped in relation with the everyday world. Quantitative research examines probabilities which are less likely to account for specific context.

5) Securing rich descriptions: Quantitative research is typically not concerned with rich descriptions. Qualitative researchers, however, believe that such descriptions are extremely valuable.

Given that this study was interested in seeking Somali individuals' subjective understanding of their everyday experience with their social world, the qualitative approach was well-suited to the objective. The method has been used in classic studies which describe how people interpret their experiences. In order to gain insight into what it is to be a working-class wife and mother, Meg Luxton (1980) analyzed the lives of women in Flin Flon, Manitoba. William Whyte (1955) studied Italian Americans residing in the North End of Boston, and presented his data from the perspective of his relationships with the participants. Woods (1972) showed that the ethnoracial traditions and identity of several ethnic groups were not eroded after ten generations of settlement in America.

Strauss and Corbin (1990) claimed that qualitative research is ideally suited for research that seeks to explore the nature of peoples' experiences and suggested that some areas that lend themselves to qualitative inquiry are those that explore peoples' experiences with phenomena such as illness, or religious conversion. Researching the area of refugee studies, Taft (1986) recommended a qualitative approach as useful

with refugees whose values and beliefs may be very different than those of the researcher. Reichelt & Sveaass (1994) advocated that the researcher position be one of true curiosity and exploration, giving room to the refugees' own expertise, experience and direction.

With these considerations in mind, a nonexperimental, descriptive, qualitative research design was developed in which data was collected through in-depth personal interviews, and follow-up interviews, with four Somali refugees in Winnipeg.

Steps in Qualitative Research

Establishing Contact with the Somali Community

Through volunteer work at the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM) I became familiar with several Somali women. Through these women I became very interested in Somali history, politics, and culture and curious about their process of adaptation to Canadian culture. Research conducted on the mental health of refugees claim that the migrant who can maintain links with their own ethnic community and is also able to participate fully in the larger society will have the strongest sense of well-being (Report of the Canadian Task Force on Mental Health Issues Affecting Immigrants and Refugees, 1988). Since the Somali community in Winnipeg has a small population, I was particularly interested in how this factor, in light of the internal conflicts in Somalia, affects their adaptation process. Through contacts with Somali residents at IRCOM, and with staff at the International Centre, I learned that there were approximately 40 Somali families residing in Winnipeg. The small population was seen as advantageous in that I hoped that I

would be able to meet informally with almost all of the adult population, although I would be selecting only four for formal interviews. Because of the amount of time involved in meeting with the entire Somali community, I was unable to meet informally with as many Somalis as I had originally hoped. I did meet with 20 Somali refugees, 12 males and 8 females. Sometimes the informal meeting took place in the homes of Somali refugees, sometimes they occurred over coffee, and occasionally they occurred in informal groups. Each informal meeting usually took about two hours. After the informal meetings, I would take notes of our conversation. The informal meetings provided a deeper understanding of the events which precipitated Somalis' arrival to Canada, as well as the problems they face in adaptation. However, information from the informal meetings was not used as data for this study.

One of the difficulties in meeting with the Somali population was that was difficult to locate many of the refugees. When Somali refugees first arrive they were not anxious to identify with other Somalis and needed some time to put the stress of the civil war and the social and political divisiveness behind them. However, according to one study participant, after a period of about three years Somali refugees begin to change some of their views and recognize that they have a stronger voice in society if they identify themselves as an ethnic group. One of the participants whom I interviewed appeared to distance herself from the community, and three of the participants were in the process of recognizing the importance of group identity -- although the reasons for developing group identity varied.

Using purposeful selection, I chose the study participants using a combination of three strategies: opportunity, snowball, and judgement sampling. With opportunity sampling, the researcher selects respondents willing and able to cooperate. Snowball sampling begins with a small group of informants who put the researcher in touch with other potential sources of information. In judgement sampling, respondents are selected because they possess certain characteristics (Burgess, 1984). Because I was interested in reflecting the diversity of Somali refugee experiences, I attempted to select men and women, single and married, who represented different educational and economic levels. The characteristics of the participants were:

- two men; one married, one single, who attained the minimum level of secondary education in Somalia, and who had participated in different levels of adult education programs in Winnipeg (i.e. ESL, adult basic education, college, university, occupational programs);
- two women; one married, one single, who attained the minimum level of secondary education in Somalia, and who had participated in different levels of adult education programs in Winnipeg (i.e. ESL, adult basic education, college, university, occupational programs).

In addition, I selected participants who come from different regions of Somalia. As most of the Somali community in Winnipeg is originally from southern Somalia, three of the participants were from that region. One of the participants was from the northern region of Somalia. I did not select the participants on the basis of clan affiliation, however, in the course of conducting the study I learned that all the

participants came from different sub-clans (although two came from the same larger clan).

I had also intended to meet with the Somali Association in Winnipeg to describe my research, solicit input, and share my findings. I wrote to the Association requesting an opportunity to meet with them, and received verbal assurances that I would be able to do so. However, in spite of frequent requests, I have not met with them. Recently the President advised me that it would not be very useful for me to attend a meeting as many of the members do not speak English. My sense of the situation is that perhaps some members of the Association were uncomfortable with having a woman speak with them about aspects of Somali life that they fear will be misunderstood by Canadians.

I provided the four participants who agreed to be interviewed with a letter that described the study (see Appendix A). In accordance with Ethics Review regulations, they each signed a Letter of Consent. They were informed (verbally and in writing) that their participation was voluntary, and that they were free to withdraw at any time. Because the Somali community is small, I was unable to ensure confidentiality, however, I did ensure anonymity by providing participants with a pseudonym.

Qualitative research usually involves gathering detailed information about a small number of cases. It is the uniqueness of each case that is emphasized, rather than the representativeness. In this study, I was interested in learning about the adaptation process of Somali refugees from the perspectives of the research

participants. Their experiences, however, are not intended to be generalized to all refugees, or even all Somali refugees.

Data Collection

In qualitative inquiry, the collection of data is an on-going process which occurs in several ways. Most qualitative researchers spend some time participating in and learning about the participant's world. I have been involved with the Somali community in providing tutorials to students of English, usually followed by informal conversation with the students and their family members. I assisted the tenants at IRCOM House, where four Somali families reside, to develop a volunteer-supported ESL evening class. I also advised members of the community about educational, and other resources, that were available to them in the city. I acted as a liaison person when a member of the community needed to obtain the resources of Citizenship and Immigration concerning a family crisis that had occurred in Somalia. I worked with members of the Executive Committee to develop a grant proposal to Culture, Heritage and Citizenship for the Manitoba Somali Association. I also assisted Somali newcomers by helping them to fill out applications for employment, and driving them to job interviews. From these informal experiences, I became more familiar with members of the Somali community, and a certain level of trust developed.

A common method in qualitative studies to learn how people feel and think is through interviews. Interviews may be structured or semi-structured in which the questions are pre-determined, or informal. Informal interviews resemble informal conversations and provide the greatest amount of opportunity for the research

participant to express themselves in their own words. In this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted. The interviews began with a brief introduction during which the purpose and nature of the study were explained. The background of the researcher and her interest in refugees and adult education were described. A tentative interview guide was developed to ask about demographic matters such as the length of time that they have lived in Winnipeg, however, most of the interview was informal (see Appendix D). Questions and probes relating to the social, economic, political, and cultural aspects of adaptation were posed in a conversational style and asked in such a way that encouraged the participant's point of view. Probes included questions about what the participant's perceive to be the key factors in their adjustment process, their level of satisfaction with their own adjustment process, their perceptions of their adult education experiences and the importance of those experiences in their adaptation process. The first set of four interviews were approximately 2 1/2 hours in length and audiotaped. Follow-up interviews of approximately 2 hours in length were conducted with each of the four participants in order to expand on some of the issues that arose from the first interview. All the interviews were transcribed and the participants were invited to make any changes that they wished to the records. The process of discussing the revisions with the participants helped to validate the data. I left my name and telephone number wiith the participants so they could contact me if they wished.

As the interviews proceeded, new information often emerged. When this occurred, the emerging information was checked with other participants. In some

cases, participants who had been interviewed previously were contacted for their input into the new information.

Data Analysis

The text of the interview constitutes the raw data of the study which is coded by the researcher. The text was analyzed, and re-analyzed many times to identify patterns and themes. Taylor & Bogdan (1984) suggested that every theme, concept, interpretation, and proposition be identified in the initial analysis (p. 136). I classified the data by colors: first I matched the data with the four research questions, and then identified key themes. Next I explored the relationship among the themes. In many cases, the categories overlapped. For example, the emergent theme of clan identity overlapped with the research question concerning barriers to adaptation.

As noted above, qualitative studies do not purport to render "the truth" or a complete picture of reality. This does not mean, however, that there is no criteria for considering the validity of the study. Eisner (1991) suggested three sources of evidence to be used in qualitative study: structural corraboration, consensual validation, and referential adequacy. Structural corroboration is the means through which multiple types of data are related to each other to support or contradict the interpretation. In this study, the data triangulation consists of in-depth interviews, literature review, and my experience in personal contacts with Somali refugees. Triangulating the data sources results in a more holistic view of the research problem (Morse, 1994). Consensual validation is the agreement among competent others that the interpretation of the situation are appropriate. A qualitative study is considered to

be referentially adequate to the extent to which a reader is able to locate in its subject matter the qualities the researcher addresses and the interpretations that she makes. Validity in this sense rests in the researcher's ability to illuminate the subject matter and to provide more complex and sensitive understanding of the subject.

The Role of the Researcher

In qualitative inquiry, the researcher is the key research instrument (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982), as well as the interpreter of meaning. Consequently, the way in which the researcher views the world impacts upon their interpretation of the study. An on-going critical awareness of the intellectual and emotional process of conducting the research is necessary in sorting out how the researcher's personal experiences and beliefs may interfere with new understandings generated through the research. Kirby & McKenna (1989) described this reflective process as 'layering' and say,

> layering allows you to continually account for yourself in the process, including things like the decisions you make, and the reasons you make them, any thoughts you might have about doing research, and what other people tell you about the research when you talk to them (p. 52).

On-going critical reflection was very important in this study where, as a white, English-speaking Canadian woman of Scottish origin, I was interacting with men and women of a visible minority from a different culture and religion, and for whom English is not the first language. Consequently, the time I spent in informal interaction with the Somali people and in volunteering to help the community with different matters was important in developing a trusting relationship. I was only moderately successful in attaining this. This was due to several factors. First, many of the Somali

refugees have had negative experiences with oppressive governments, and are concerned that their responses may in some way have a negative effect. Some respondents may have had unrealistic expectations about how their participation might benefit them or their community. In particular, they may have believed that, because I was Canadian and a graduate student in a university, I had more influence to help them with their needs than I have. Another problem was that in some cases the participants responded in a way that they perceived to be the appropriate response. They did not want to appear ungrateful for being admitted into Canada. As I became more knowledgeable about issues within Somali culture, the participants responses were more open. An important obstacle in the research (although the obstacle diminished considerably in the course of the study) was the refugees' concern that Somalis would be seen by Canadians as 'primitive' because they come from a clan-based society, and that they may be seen as 'immoral' because of the internal violence within Somalia. For example, after an informal meeting with a small group of Somali men, I overheard one say to the others that "we shouldn't be telling foreigners our problems." Finally, the fact that I was a western woman played a role in the study. As shown in this study, gender relations in Somali culture and in Islam are different than Canadian values. Many Somali males feel that Canadian women have too much freedom. I sometimes felt that the men were afraid that the Somali women might be influenced by my values.

Critics of cross-cultural research charge that white researchers who study other cultures project their own experiences instead of understanding the other society on its own terms (Reinharz, 1992). I attempted to be sensitive to the issues of power

associated with my position as a white Canadian university student, and to the way that my perspective has been shaped through my inter-action with my own culture. The aims of this research study were to illuminate the adjustment process of Somali refugees from their perspective, and, in the process, allow my own perspective to be altered. Berry (1975) made four suggestions for researchers in cross-cultural settings. First, he suggested that the researcher study the ethnic group's cultural goals and adaptations with an understanding that different groups pursue different goals, posses different values, and have different norms. Next, he warned against making assumptions about behavioral universals. Rather than assuming that all behavior can be meaningfully compared, cross-cultural researchers must acknowledge that only rarely can comparisons be made, and then only for behaviors that have some features in common. Third, the researcher should attempt to use methods which reveal knowledge about the group's behaviour in a way that is meaningful for the ethnic group. Finally, Berry underscored the importance of understanding the socio-cultural context of the ethnic group, and warned that "the greatest problem in testing social and cultural groups in Canada is that our concepts are largely adopted from an assimilationist society where basic assumptions necessarily differ (1972, p. 153). In conducting this research, I developed a better understanding of the importance of family and religion in a different culture, as well as insight into the range of diversity that exists within even a small ethnic group.

Limitations of the Study

This research study was limited to the extent:

- that I could speak only with people who had proficiency in the English language;
- that it included only those who had attained a higher level of education in Somalia;
- that I could draw out perceptions, thoughts, ideas of the informants;
- the informants were willing to truthfully disclose their perceptions of their world and their lives; and
- I could accurately interpret the information the informants shared with me.

Summary

The intent of this study was to explore the role of adult education in the adaptation process of selected Somali refugees in Winnipeg. Since I wished to study this question from the subjective perspective of the Somali refugees, a qualitative approach was adopted. A total of eight interviews were conducted with four participants, producing 96 pages of transcripts, which constituted the data for this study. To become more knowledgeable about the community, I met informally with twenty members of the Somali community. I also spoke with a number of professors and graduate students at the University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg who have studied different groups of refugees. In addition, I spoke with many people who provide services to refugees and immigrants in Winnipeg. These people are listed in Appendix B.

The main research question, the role of adult education in the adaptation process of selected Somali refugees in Winnipeg, was supported by four sub-questions. However, a number of other themes emerged from the research data which have implications for the research questions. These themes, and the findings to the research questions, will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

This section provides a brief profile of the research participants, a preamble containing participants' responses about selected aspects of Somali life which impact on the research questions, and participants' responses to the four research questions. It is important to note at the beginning of this section that the findings represent the subjective responses of four individuals, and are not generalizable to all Somali refugees in Winnipeg. This understanding was held by the researcher as well as the research participants. The single participants who are attending university had a different outlook than the married participants; men and women had different perspectives; and the participant from the northern region of Somalia had different views than those from southern Somalia. Nevertheless, the responses of the four selected Somali research participants does provide a sense of the challenges Somalis experience in their adaptation process.

The primary objective of the study was to explore the role that adult education plays in the adaptation process of selected Somali refugees in Winnipeg. Adaptation was defined as a sense of well-being, and included psycho-social, economic, and political dimensions. The findings indicate that the selected Somali refugees, to different degrees, saw formal adult education as a tool for attaining well-being. Non-formal experiences that led to learning about Canadian culture appeared to play a greater educative role in the adaptation process than formal or informal education. The male participants saw education as a means to achieving greater economic

independence and the self-esteem associated with satisfactory employment. The female participants viewed education as a tool for individual empowerment. The findings also suggest that the spiritual dimension of well-being should also be considered when studying adaptation.

The four supporting research questions were:

1. What do selected Somali refugees in Winnipeg identify as their adaptation needs?
2. What education experiences do selected Somali refugees identify as important to their adaptation?
3. What obstacles to education have selected Somali refugees encountered and how have they dealt with them?
4. How helpful do selected Somali refugees in Winnipeg feel that their education experience has been in meeting their adaptation needs?

The research interviews also yielded considerable data which is useful in gaining insight into Somali culture, and on the adaptation process of Somali refugees. The underlying principles of qualitative research encourage flexiblibility in research design to respond to emerging themes which arise from the participants. In this light, the additional themes which evolved from the research because they were identified by the participants' as significant, are viewed as significant to the study. The additional themes that evolved from the interviews include: the participants' perceptions of Somali culture and politics; their educational experiences in Somalia; and marriage, family and gender relations in Somali culture.

Brief Profile of the Participants

As mentioned earlier, although all four participants were Somali refugees and all had completed their secondary education, their circumstances were different in many respects. As required by the Ethics Review Committee, the names of the participants have been changed.

Arabetto is married, 39 years old, with two children under the age of five, originally from the southern agricultural region of Somalia. He has been in Canada for three years. He is currently employed part-time in the service industry, and holds an executive position on the Somali Association of Manitoba. Abdi is single, 35 years of age, and currently attending a local university on a full-time basis. He supports himself through student loans and part-time employment. He is originally from the northern region of Somalia and has lived in Canada for 6 years. He is also an active member of the Somali Association of Manitoba. Ebla is 32, married, with two small female children. Aisha, age 25, is a single university student supporting herself with student loans and part-time employment. Both women were originally from Mogidishu and both arrived in Winnipeg in 1993. Although the researcher did not select participants on the basis of their Somali clan affiliations, in the process of conducting the research I learned that each of the four participants came from a different Somali sub-clan. None of the participants had members of their extended family here in Winnipeg, although one participant had an aunt in Ottawa. The participants had a variety of formal educational experiences in Winnipeg including ESL instruction, adult high school, women's health classes, and university courses.

Preamble to Responses

How the Participants' Perceived Selected Aspects of Somali Life

In the course of conducting the research study, it became apparent from the participants that social and political factors in Somalia play a critical role in the adaptation process of Somali refugees in Winnipeg. As this study was interested in learning about the subjective realities of the participants, it is necessary to have some insight into "where they have been" before addresssing the specific research questions which are focused on the present and future. Each of the participants contributed significant insights into the social, cultural and political aspects of Somalia that were identified in Chapter 1: in particular, the role of clan identity, both in Somalia and in their self-understandings; their perceptions of the civil war in Somalia; their educational experiences in Somalia; and marriage and family life in Somalia.

Somali Culture and Politics

As discussed, clan-based identity traditionally has been the foundation of Somali culture, providing a network of support and protection. However, a number of forces, including urbanization, colonization, industrialization, increased western-based education, have contributed to the erosion and distortion of the culture, particularly in some regions of Somalia. Views that consider the fighting among clans in Somalia as the results of 'tribalism', fail to see that the situation involves a combination of long-standing political, geographical, cultural, regional, and individual conflicts.

The participants expressed strong, though very different, feelings about the importance of clan identity in Somalia.

People are very sensitive to their identity. Here your surname might be Williams and it may have existed for generations, but it is not personally that significant because it doesn't convey social, political, cultural associations. There is no need for that. There is no need to be a group to protect your interests. Each clan is [like] a state with its own government. (Abdi)

That example helps me to understand the importance of clan identity.

Yes, it's everything. Wherever you go people do not ask you where you came from, they ask you what clan you belong to. (Abdi)

I'm completely against it. I don't buy it. I believe in myself and in my family and in my friends. My aunts, cousins, uncles. I don't believe that the clan thing has played a big role in my life and it never will. (Aisha)

In Somalia, it depends on the regions where people live. Where I came from it is not very important. We respect people for their faith, for their education. Most people in southern Somalia, where I am from, are farmers. They are busy doing their work. Once in a while someone in the south may ask you which tribe you are from. In other regions, though, the first question people will ask you is what tribe you belong to. (Arabetto)

Is it the nomadic areas that are more connected to tribe?

Yes. They have their own reasons for continuing the tradition. They have problems of people coming from other tribes and robbing their camels. They need clans for protection. (Arabetto)

[My grandparents] believed in clans for good. They lived in the jungle and they had animals and agriculture and tribes were little groups that lived together to help each other. It wasn't like now. It was not to have power over another group. In the city they did not think much about clans. (Ebla)

They also had different understandings about the factors that have contributed to the tragedy in Somalia.

I think we have been hurt by foreigners deciding our land. The Somali government call these artificial boundaries. The boundaries are not

> accepted by us. It is denying our brothers and sisters. The conflict occurred because Barre did not want to liberate Somalians within the other boundaries. He thought it was too risky. The other regions had better arms. He'd say, 'what if they come to Mogidishu'? He was too afraid. Barre became very hard. Then the situation translated into tribal lines. But there is no conflict between the north and south. There are tribal conflicts, and there are tribes in the north and in the south .... What's happening in Somalia is that there has become a doctrine of hate. Hate translated into death and destruction. It is a war of identity rather than a war of ideology. (Abdi)
>
> **Can you say more about what you mean?**
>
> Yes. Ideology is based on an idea, like nationalism, a way to unite people. The tribal notion of identity is less important than the overall ideology. When the country is based on identity, you help only those who are part of your clan, and you create enemies, so there is no communication or compromise. (Abdi)

Arabetto had a different view:

> People do not believe tribe. They do what they do to protect their own power. The fighting in Somalia is not about tribes -- it is a struggle for power.

Aisha referred to the work of Paulo Friere to explain her understanding of the current situation in Somalia.

> The people who were oppressed before are now the tyrants. What Friere had said was that when the oppressed come to power they have to work with other groups, not oppress them. If you don't do that, you are also the oppressor. (Aisha)

Ebla described a desperate situation.

> I don't understand why they are fighting and why they kill each other. Everybody wants to be president. For example, when I want to be president I have to have people on my side. But other tribes want to president too - like me. So they fight. I don't have enough money, so I'll take the money or food or whatever I need. It's for power and for name. (Ebla)

However, all agreed that although Barre's government's initial efforts towards nationalism had been positive, but that the disasterous war with Ethiopia in 1977 turned back the tide of nationalism.

> The Ethiopian war really changed things. People had lost lives. The people changed their ideology from one of nationalism, to one of clan. People blamed Siyyad Barre and his clan, and wanted to kill all the members of his clan. The Hawiye clan came into Mogidishu and said that they were liberating the people from the Barre's clan. Liberating from what? To what? Because they overthrew Barre's government, they felt they had the right to take over. Because they had been oppressed by Barre's government, they felt they had the right to confiscate the properties of other clans in retribution. The rest of the world doesn't see that. (Abdi)

> In the beginning, Siyyad Barre was good. One person on their own can't do anything. They need help. So his family helped him, and then he helped them. People got angry and frustrated. They all want to be president because they want the power that Barre had. Until 1977, things were ok, there was no big clan fighting. But after the Ethiopia war everything changed. After the war people wanted to kill him - when he knew that he had others killed. With his own tribe he had tribe protection ... People in Somalia were not yet ready to fight a war. At that time we were not yet strong enough. (Ebla)

Although some participants were eager to talk about the fighting in Somalia and the role of clan identity, others explained that they felt ashamed of what has happened to their country.

> When my culture is fighting among tribes I feel bad. I feel that those people are bad people. They have destroyed themselves. If they teach their children this hatred, it will continue. (Ebla)

> We have contributed to the destruction of our own people. For example, we have caused famine, by taking people's food away from them, we have humiliated people. How are the children going to view other clans? It's a very sensitive issue. (Abdi)

Although it is true that Somalis have contributed to the destruction of their people, it is unfortunate that ordinary Somalis, who may have been influenced by clan leaders but who were not directly responsible for the situation, are burdened with a sense of shame. The humiliation that some Somali refugees experience in identifying with their country of origin is intensified by their fear of being judged by Canadians who lack an understanding of the complex factors that have contributed to the Somali tragedy.

Educational Experiences in Somalia

As indicated in Table 2, the majority of Somali refugees in Winnipeg, and especially the women, received limited education in Somalia. The participants in this study had all completed secondary school in Somalia. Two had attended university in Romania (both Romania and Somalia had 'scientific socialist' governments and many Somalis attended Romanian universities.) Two were presently attending a local university. The participants' descriptions of their education in Somalia are useful in understanding how they perceive the role of adult education in Canada.

All the participants indicated that their school system in Somalia was far more disciplined than the school system in Canada.

> **When you think about your schooling in Somalia, and your schooling here, how are they different?**
>
> There are big differences. In Somalia, the teacher has all the responsibility. He comes in, he lectures, and when he is finished he asks if you have a question. If you ask a question, he starts the lecture over again from the beginning. The teachers there are very dictatorial. The student doesn't participate in the education process. The student is taught this is the way it is. It's this way or the highway. Here, what I've found is that education is a two way process. There are options for students to choose a variety of courses. (Abdi)

> We had public schools. They were good - and not so good. We did everything in Somali language from grade 1-8. Then from grade 8-12 I went to an Arabic school and did everything in Arabic that was taught by Egyptians. The system was demanding. You have to take eight subjects. There would probably be about 40 students in each class. It was very structured and disciplined. If you are late, you have to apologize to the teacher. Your homework must be done on time. If it isn't, they punish by hitting your hands with a stick if you are late. You wear uniforms. In primary school you wear a yellow shirt and khaki trousers. In secondary level you wear white cotton shirt, short or long sleeve, and long khaki pants. The reason why you wear uniforms is so there isn't a class difference. (Aisha)
>
> **If I understand correctly, the Somali education system is more strict and less individualistic than the system in Canada.**
>
> Yes. In each system there are advantages and disadvantages. There are times when individualistic emphasis is best, and there are other times that it is better to think collectively (Aisha)
>
> Most students study hard because they don't want to get punished. Other students get frustrated because they have other problems and the pressure from school just adds to it. Nobody helps them solve their problems. We don't have counsellors like they have here. If students here have a learning problem, they get help. In Somalia, no one does those kinds of jobs. The rules are very very strict, too. It was even more strict in the earlier generation. Now, they probably don't beat the children. (Arabetto)

Arabetto described the role of education in Somalia prior to Independence:

> Before Independence in 1960, most of the people did not encourage their children to go to school because the schools taught Italian, or English or a foreign language. They thought by sending the children to school they would change their culture. Somali people are very concerned about maintaining their Somali culture. No one told Somalis how education could benefit their children. What they learned was that if children went to school they learned about foreign culture and they would not learn their own culture and religion. That was true. But it depends on the person. If I get an education and decide to stay true to my culture or adopt foreign ways that's my choice. It doesn't depend on those people who educated me. (Arabetto)

> Before 1972 school attendance was not obligated. It didn't matter if children went to school or not. After 1972 there was a rule that every child has to go to school. (Arabetto)
>
> **Boys and girls?**
>
> Yes, before it was mostly boys because the bands send the children to school. Maybe they have a lot of children and mother needs help so they don't send the girls to school. It depends where they grow up. They probably would go to school if they lived in the city. But most of the girls didn't go to school in the earlier generation. (Arabetto)

Ebla was educated in an government-run orphanage and had a difficult, and protected, environment.

> When we were inside the orphanage we had a strict life. We would be woken up at 6 a.m. Then we would exercise outside. At 8:00 we would have breakfast. At 8:30 we would start school. At 12 we would come back, have lunch, and sleep for one hour. They would wake us and we would go back to school. At 4:00 we had a snack and came back to school. School finished at 7:00. At 7:00 we had supper in a big hall where we had to read until 10:00 and then go to bed. If you disobeyed, you were put in a small room, like a hole, and you had to stay there by yourself for one or two days with no food.
>
> **Did that ever happen to you?**
>
> Never, but other things like I had to lie down on the ground and they closed my legs and my arms and I had to stay like that for a long time in the sunshine.

Since Barre's government discouraged tribal associations (in policy, although not in practice), Ebla, raised in the orphanage, did not identify herself with her clan.

> When I came out of school I was different and I was afraid. For example, my mothers and brothers and sisters had different ideas. We were a different culture.

Apps (1986) stated that, "In our zeal for adult education, we magnify our uniqueness, and thus we see no connection between what we do as educators of adults

and what first grade teachers do" (p. 5). Increasingly, adult education is recognizing that the there is a strong connection between early educational experiences and adult education (Cross, 1981). The participants' responses in Research question 2 will provide some understanding of how they experience the different educational system in Canada.

Marriage, Family, and Gender Relations in Somalia

As noted in Chapter 1, marriage, family life, and gender relations in Somalia is different than what is allowed by law and practised in Canada. Within Somalia, arranged marriages, polygamy, female circumcision, have traditionally been practised. This section includes the perspectives of the research participants on these issues because they provide insight into important differences between Somali and Canadian culture, and on how civil war has impacted Somalis. It is, however, only a partial picture of social life in Somalia.

The United Nations Report on The World's Women: Trends and Statistics (1995) reports that 80 percent of young women in Somalia today undergo female circumcision. Domestic violence is not a criminal offense in Somalia. Since the overthrow of Barre's government in 1991, no recognized form of government has established law and order. In this turbulent climate, rape is used as a political weapon (Mocellin, 1994, p. 17). The participants in this study provided their perspectives about traditional, and changing, makeup of marriage, family life, and gender relations in Somalia.

Abdi spoke of some of the negative consequences of family structure, and about domestic abuse.

> **I've heard that extended families are important for the support that they provide.**
>
> Maybe in some way they might be, but I would say it's not a good idea for a man to have several wives. If things are truly equal in number and resources, it might be ok. But when group is larger than the other, they take over. In my father's case, my grandfather had two wives, and the two wives were also sisters. One sister had many children, and the other just had one son. There was conflict. My father did not have other brothers with the same mother and same father. So this also contributes to discrimination. (Abdi)
>
> **I've been told that domestic abuse does not occur very often in Somali culture because of the protection the women receive from the extended families.**
>
> Oh, it's common. It is well known. A man will say it's ok to beat his wife. They beat their wives because their wife is a possession. Sometimes the family will try to do something about it. For example, if my sister tells me she is being beaten, I will care, and I will try to do something about it. Sometimes it leads to killing and more war. (Abdi)
>
> **And they come here and it is illegal.**
>
> Yes, now the women come to Canada and they leave their husbands because they are protected by the law. There is a high divorce rate in Somali community in Canada. The men blame the western culture, not the abuse. (Abdi)

Aisha's response was more cautious.

> I'm not saying that Somali people have a problem with domestic abuse, but it's everywhere. But in Somalia there is no law against abuse. (Aisha)

In Somalia, Ebla had worked with a government-sponsored Women's Association that provided counselling services to women and couples.

Did the government pay you to teach people about domestic abuse?

Yes. The Party paid me. They taught me and told me what I should do and then I told other women. (Ebla)

Did they teach you to teach others about female genital mutilation?

No. But it happens in our culture. It still happens. If you say no, they say you are without religion. But religion has nothing to do with it. It is not good. It is bad. It's wrong idea. A lot of problems happen to ladies. For example, I had it done to me at the orphanage. They cut. Any girl there they did that to. (Ebla)

Most girls?

All girls. (Ebla)

And now?

Still they have. When they come out they refuse to do it. Inside Somalia they still do it. (Ebla)

How do you cope with that now?

I can't change it. But my girls will not have that done to them. I can tell people that this is wrong. I tell my neighbours from Somalia here and sometimes they say that they must do this for religion. But it is not for religion. It is bad for health. For example, you cannot menstruate properly. (Ebla)

Abdi, Arabetto, and Ebla spoke about arranged marriages:

It's interesting to me that some women who have grown up in a culture which accepted arranged marriages, reject the idea of arranged marriage very shortly after they arrive in Canada.

Well, your view of the world changes. I grew up in Somali culture yet I do not believe in arranged marriages now. My view of the world has changed. (Abdi)

Using the example of arranged marriages, was the change in your world view a gradual one?

No. Even when I was back home I did not approve of arranged marriages. You want to know the person you are going to marry. Arranging marriages serves a function where your parents select someone who is acceptable to their clan. (Abdi)

So it is political?

It's about identity, and purity. That is if you are marrying good people you are keeping good blood. It is expected that the female will produce good children - mostly boys. In my view, that view is of an ancient culture. In the past, each clan had its own territory so if I married someone outside of my clan my family may be prejudice against that person. They might say, 'what is the character of Abdi's wife?' I think it is an ignorance. (Abdi)

In Somalia people marry outside of their clan - if you are told that they have to marry within their clan that is garbage! (Arabetto)

Ebla said,

I hate my culture for arranged marriages. (Ebla)

Does that happen now in Somalia?

Just a little. With fighting it has come back because many girls have become pregnant because boys and men are raping girls and women. Parents are afraid their daughter will have a baby without father, so they are arranging marriages when the girl is young ... In Somalia now there is no law so there is a lot of rape. Nobody punishes them. Many women become pregnant because of rape. I heard that some women were raped inside the mosque. That's too terrible. They are not respecting anything. I also heard that they raped a woman who was 8 months pregnant. (Ebla)

Before the war, these crimes did not happen like they are now?

No. Sometimes, but when it happened they were punished by law. (Ebla)

By law or by clan?

> Both. (Ebla)
>
> **What would happen if a woman from one clan had been raped by a man from a different clan?**
>
> The elders would talk and one clan would say that they are sorry and that it would not happen again. Then they would give them money or livestock. Sometimes if the girl becomes pregnant they obligate the boy to marry her. (Ebla)

Ebla also spoke about the importance of family.

> Family is the most important thing in Somali culture and I like it. You stay together, Here, you separate. (Ebla)
>
> **If your daughter wants to live on her own when she turns 18, how do you think you will feel about that?**
>
> I would feel bad. (Ebla)
>
> **You would like her to stay with you until she is married?**
>
> Yes. I would be happy. (Ebla)
>
> **If your daughter wanted to go to university in a different city?**
>
> Oh, that's good. I would know that she is learning and she is part of my family still. If she told me today, 'Mommy, I am 18 years old, and I want to move and I want to have a house of my own,' I would be sad. I would worry about her because she is alone. Eighteen years old is too young to make your own decisions. (Ebla)
>
> **Yet, in Somali culture girls often marry at 14 or 15 years old.**
>
> But at that time we know the husband is responsible. The family also helps. If there are problems, the family helps. (Ebla)

The discussion above is intended to provide some understanding on selected areas of 'where the participants have come from'. It is evident from the participants' remarks that Somali culture is very different from Canadian culture. The participants'

comments concerning Somali politics and culture support Kunz's typology of factors that precipitate refugee migration at the same time as they suggest that there a multiple external and subjective forces that motivate migration. The responses to the research questions below will provide insight into 'where they are now, and where they are going.' The responses also raise questions surrounding the level and kinds of support provided to refugees through the perspective of the participants.

Responses to the Research Questions

1. What the participants identified as their adaptation needs

This research question was very broad, and, consequently, the responses to this question were quite general. However, all the participants stressed the importance of understanding Canadian culture.

> To understand the Canadian culture, although it is a multicultural country. I have to observe it and know it to gain some insight into adaptation. (Abdi)

> First you have to understand the culture and select what you want. Understand how the system works and follow the rules and regulations. (Aisha)

The two participants with family responsibilities were more specific about their adaptation needs.

> What I need to integrate into society is to get a job, or go to university. (Arabetto)

> The most important thing to learn is English. Then I can learn the culture. (Ebla)

When asked what they saw as the adaptation needs of the Somali community, both Arabetto and Aisha indicated the importance of learning English. Aisha also spoke of the lack of familiar supports.

> First of all they need to learn English properly. When they come here they have a tough time to get good English. We have our own language and our own culture. In order to learn a new culture, you first have to learn the language. When they take ESL, they don't know what the words mean because they don't know the culture. Learning the culture and the language are inter-dependent. (Arabetto)

> I cannot speak for others. We are all different. We have different experiences and are from different regions. It is difficult to say. It is tough, especially for families with children. There is the language barrier. Many do not have a good education. I give them a lot of credit. It's not easy. They are happy that their children will have a Canadian education and experience, will be able to compete. Even for a single person it is very hard. Being surrounded with unfamiliar surroundings. If you are in trouble or in an emergency you do not have your family. If you do not have a job, or you have a meaningless job and you get tired and bored and you loose incentive. (Aisha)

Recently, Mount Carmel Clinic (1996) in Winnipeg conducted a study which explored the impact that adaptation has on mental health for 11 immigrant and refugee groups (the Somali community was not part of this study) in Winnipeg. It found that English language continues to be major problem for many newcomers. The participants in this study reported that learning English was their greatest need, and was the area that presented the greatest difficulty in terms of adaptation (p. 12). The English Language training that newcomers receive provides them with basic survival skills, which does not allow them to compete effectively in the labour market -- survival skills result in low paying jobs, where the income earned is barely enough to

meet their basic needs. In addition, many newcomers reported that the lack of English proficiency increased their sense of alienation from mainstream society.

The female participants, Ebla and Aisha, identified additional adaptation needs. They felt that education would give them greater opportunities, and a stronger sense of independence as a woman in a patriarchal world.

> When Canadian people would phone, I couldn't talk with them. I'd call my husband. My friend said, 'why do you call your husband when I phone.' I said, 'I have to because I can't talk to you because I don't know English.' I had to ask my husband everything. (Ebla)

> I think that education is the only power that can empower me, especially as a woman. (Aisha)

The male participants, Abdi and Arabetto, spoke about the importance of economic adaptation.

> **In the first interview you mentioned that you took high school courses in Winnipeg to refresh your learning for university. Had you planned to attend university when you came to Canada?**

> Not really. When I first came here I wanted to get a full-time job. But I've found it difficult here to get a full-time job. I've only found part-time, seasonal work. After quite some time I decided that I would not have the opportunity to get a permanent full-time job that I thought this could be the job for me. When I applied people would say 'what jobs have you had in the past', 'what schools have you attended', 'what are you skills and work experience?' I decided, why not? When university came to mind I thought I should refresh my knowledge first. I learned my subjects in Somali language, so although the ideas may be the same thing, the language that I learned the knowledge in was different ... [When I first arrived] the immigration officer who interviewed me asked me what I wanted to do in Canada. I said any kind of job. I was hopeful for the future. I wasn't thinking to run a company, but I was thinking there would be more opportunity for a full time permanent job. (Abdi)

> This I don't understand. I knew when I came here that I wouldn't get a professional job with my degree. But I had thought that I would get training in my area. Rather than paying me to sit for a year while they sponsor me, why do they not train me to work in my area? They sent me to Manitoba because they said it was the best place to train for agriculture. I had never heard of Manitoba. (Arabetto)

They also spoke of the relationship between satisfactory employment and self-esteem.

> It is hard to get a job. If you have qualifications, it is very hard to get a job. If you don't have professional qualifications, it is easier to get a job. But you are still happy to get a job that is under your qualification. But it affects your self-esteem. You worked hard to get this degree and you expect to be treated at a certain level. But you will do any job because you don't have any choice. (Arabetto)

Abdi had had considerable work experience in Somalia.

> I worked for an international aid organization, and for foreign firms. I had skills, but the companies who interviewed me here wanted to know what experience I had in Canada. In one month I filled out 300 applications. From those, I was contacted by two companies. They advised me to get Canadian experience, and Canadian education, to improve my chances of employment ... and I have western experience. I worked for a German company, and was administrative assistant for a company that was headquartered in Quebec, while I was in Somalia.

Arabetto, who has a degree in agriculture, described his experience in applying for jobs in his field.

> I applied for soil science and production. This is what I am qualified to do. But I would like to do anything in agriculture - I'd like to work on a farm. I applied at a place in Oakbank. Really, it was nothing to do with my qualifications. I was to load fertilizer with a forklift. He said he would hire me and I would start April first of last year. Two days before I was to start he called me up and said he couldn't hire me because he had someone else. I don't know exactly why he changed his mind but I think his assistant had something to do with it. The owner was the one who had hired me, but the assistant gave me a tour. He told me everything that I would have to do. He asked me one question which at that time didn't have any experience with. We use a different system of measurement and at that time I did not know the metric

> system. I said, 'I can't answer your question right now until I know how many bushels make a ton, and then I'll figure it out'. Four days later the boss called and said I did not have the job. I think the assistant was scared for his position.
>
> **You must have been very disappointed.**
>
> Yes. Even when you apply for jobs and they ask about your references and experience, I am not able to give references. My knowledge and my character is my reference. I do not have Canadian experience - and they mean Canadian experience. If no one gives you the opportunity to gain the experience, how do show them you have experience?

Echoing Neuwirth's (1988) study on the economic adaptation of refugees, Somali males in this study who had education and experience in their own culture have found it difficult to transfer their occupational skills to Canada. Unemployment and underemployment is part of a cycle that impacts on social adaptation.

> After they [Somali refugees] have lived here for four or five years, they get very frustrated. When they get frustrated, sometimes they turn to other things like alcohol. Their body is not adapted to alcohol. Then their families have more problems than before. (Arabetto)

In addition to the inter-dependence of economic, social, and political adaptation, the spiritual dimension is also critical in the adaptation process of Somali refugees, and, although it was not an identified aspect of this study, many of the participants' responses contain references to Islamic values. As suggested above, the use of alcohol is prohibited by the Muslim religion. Both the Muslim faith, and Somali culture, place a high moral value on good character. Arabetto's statement that his "knowledge and character were his references" suggests more than the fact that he lacks Canadian employment experience. Many other references to moral character arose in the interviews:

They might say, 'what is the character of Abdi's wife?' (Abdi)

They know I am a straight person and that I'm talking about reality (Ebla)

Understanding the inter-relatedness of Somali culture and Islamic beliefs are an important factor in understanding the adaptation process of Somali refugees. In traditional Somali society (before armed conflict) clans and subsidiary clans co-existed through shifting political alliances. This system, however, was a fragile one for when one group gained greater access to power or resources the balance would break down and conflict emerged. Yet, although the system was delicate, the efforts to achieve balance among the groups is an important aspect of Somali culture and politics.

Achieving balance is also a major theme in Islam. Nanji (1993) explained Islam through appealing to "the metaphor of the ideal Muslim environment as a series of linked spaces, represented by concentric circles, within which Muslim life unfolds" (p. 232). The innermost circle represents the mosque where the earthly world and the divine world intersect. The next circle represents the world of knowledge. The next circle represents the zone of economic and social relationships, and the final circle represents the private world of the family (Nanji, 1993, p. 233). In the Islamic world these zones are inter-connected allowing for an emphasis on privacy and family at the same time as balancing the private with public participation within the greater community. Seen in this light, the adaptation process which requires the refugee to find the right balance of cultures, also has spiritual implications.

Relatedly, community development is also a critical area for the adaptation of Somali refugees in Winnipeg. As noted in Chapter 1, several studies have concluded that maintaining links with other members of the refugee group is critical for successful adaptation (Alexander, 1969; David, 1969; Higgitt, 1992; Hutton, 1993). Developing a new community in a different culture is difficult work. Developing a new community that is suffering the effects of war, torture, grief, and political and social divisiveness is extremely challenging. Yet, although conflicts exist, the notion of 'community' is at the heart of the Somali identity, and individuals are beginning the work of building a new Somali community.

Arabetto describes the needs of the community:

> In the community we have a situation where we don't have our own culture and we are not integrating with Canadian culture. We don't have any place to get together as a community - to have our culture and solve our problems. Also, we don't have recreation, our own sports, and dancing. We need to teach the children Somali language so they can keep the Somali culture. We are in-between. (Arabetto)

Somali refugees, bruised by internal conflict within their own culture, adapting to a new culture, are faced with the question of what sort of community shall we become? It is noteworthy that the small Somali community in Winnipeg has formed an association based on the common need of adaptation, although differences exist among individuals concerning the degree of adaptation desirable. In Toronto, where the Somali population is much greater, Somali associations have developed along clan lines. Currently, 22 Somali associations operate in Toronto (Opoku-Dapaah, 1995). The participants' responses from the following research questions provide some insight

into some of the strengths of the community, as well as some of the difficult issues they confront.

2. What education experiences the participants identified as important to their adaptation

The participants said that learning to speak, read, and write English were important educational experiences in their adaptation process. Each of them also stressed the importance of non-formal learning.

Abdi's description of his experience with formal education in Canada provides a sense of the individual commitment involved in learning English and in pursuing an academic education.

> When I came to Canada I started immediately to improve my English language. I took ESL evening classes at Gordon Bell. I had an oral test and a written test to decide where I should start. In the day time I worked, so my English improved slowly. Then I went to the Winnipeg Adult Education classes in the evening to improve my writing skills for a year and a half. I also upgraded my high school because I had finished my high school in 1985, and that was some time ago. I wanted to make sure I was comfortable before I enrolled in University. I wanted my high school knowledge to be fresh before I started University. (Abdi)

With greater enthusiasm he spoke of how learning to access the Internet has enabled him to have contact with the broader Somali community.

> I learned [the technology] quickly - just like that! I did not attend any formal classes. They [the University] gave me a password, and nothing else. I tried it one day and I didn't get anywhere because I didn't know what to do. I shut it off and went home. I came back the next week, and I sat next to someone. He told me about e-mail, and then I got e-mail ...

> I connect with Somali groups and we write and discuss different issues, sometimes controversial. I get some harsh criticisms sometimes, and I've learned not to let others push me around. (Abdi)

Aisha, a university student, felt that formal education did not help her to adapt.

> Education and workshops do not specifically help me to adapt. They broaden my perspectives on different issues, for example, abortion. It helps me to debate more openly. When I hear other people expressing their views, I might alter my views, or I might hold to my own views. You select what you think is suitable for you. (Aisha)
>
> **Then how do you learn about Canadian culture?**
>
> By individual research. By talking with others. By watching others. By experience. By asking questions. (Aisha)

Yet, both female participants, Aisha and Ebla, identified that education was important to them as a gender issue.

> Education allows you to make your own choices in life. If you are uneducated, you have no choice. It is difficult to be a woman in a patriarchal world. Education gives you a chance to make choices and shape your own life. (Aisha)
>
> I thought if I learn English I could do everything for my family by myself. My husband had to go with me for everything I needed. I thought when I learned English I could do everything by myself. (Ebla)

When the participants began attending classes in Winnipeg, they were initially surprised by the lack of discipline in their classes.

> I can give you an example of how the discipline in Somali schools is different than here. In Somali schools and university, you must not be late for class. On my first day of university, I was unable to find the classroom and was very upset about missing the class, and afraid of what the instructor's response would be. I gradually realized that it didn't matter if you were late, or even if you didn't attend classes at all. (Abdi)

Adult education theorists emphasize the importance of the learners' active participation in the learning process. Generally speaking, all the participants indicated that students had greater choice in their educational process in Canada than in Somalia.

> Here, what I've found is that education is a two way process. There are options for students to choose a variety of courses. (Abdi)
>
> Here students have more choices than schools in Somalia. (Arabetto)

However, the two-way process is not always viable:

> **Did you experience a two-way process of education in your ESL classes?**
>
> No, in my experience, there was no two-way process there. The teacher was similar to what I had in high school in Somalia. She comes. She does anything she wants. She brings a cassette and we repeat, "Mr. Fletcher....". I think it is best when students learn to speak and communicate with other students. In terms of writing and reading, ESL is not too successful. (Abdi)
>
> **In my own experience in teaching ESL I have had difficulty in encouraging student participation when people have limited English.**
>
> Yes, it helps if they give you an evaluation. I think they should separate students in different classes where they practice speaking, and different classes where they learn writing. ESL classes here are very good for speaking. (Abdi)

It was interesting that all of the research participants identified volunteer experiences as important learning experiences in their adaptation process. Abdi has volunteered to work with Habitat for Humanity and the International Centre. Aisha volunteers with the Red Cross, and assists Somali newcomers. Ebla does volunteer work for Planned Parenthood.

> I believe if you give something, you will get something in return. I do volunteer jobs here. I think it is my responsibility to give something to my community. I learn about the new culture that way too. Assimilation means learning the system and contributing to that system. If I don't understand something about the culture, I will find out. (Aisha)

Arabetto, an executive on the Somali Association of Manitoba, volunteers his time to help the Somali community.

> I am helping my community to tell them what is happening in this country and the way they can live here in peace. This is why they wanted to come here. They abandoned their country because they had a problem. Those problems are different than here. People who come here from Somalia all have stress from the civil war. Then they come here and they see that things are different. I tell them how they can deal with this, associate with society, how they can help their wives and their children. (Arabetto)
>
> **So have your best educational experiences been in helping the community?**
>
> Yes.
>
> **Not by going to school?**
>
> No, I did not go to school for my profession here. I did that before I came here. What I do here is to help my family and my compatriots from Somalia. They are extra-curricular because I'm not doing those things to get job. When I came here I would have liked to have someone to help me and I didn't have that, and I thought it would be good to get this education to help those people who came after me. (Arabetto)

Rogers' (1992) contribution to understandings of adult learning have some promise for understanding the learning process involved in cultural adaptation. Emphasizing the role of intention in learning, Rogers' proposeed a continuum which consists of unplanned learning, informal learning, non-formal learning, and formal

learning. Unplanned learning is haphazard and casual. In this case there is no intention either by the learner or by the information source, to purposefully learn. Informal learning is that learning which is purposed on the part of the provider, (i.e., advertisements) but there is no intention to learn on the part of the learner. Further along the continuum, learning is more purposeful and is designed to meet needs as they arise when facing new challenges of coping with new situations. Rogers (1992) termed this kind of intended learning as non-formal learning. Formal learning programs are situated at the far end of the continuum and is characterized by a clear intention to engage in learning on the part of both the provider and the learner (i.e. attending classes). Although the categories overlap and intentions are often multiple, Rogers' model is less culturally bound than other models found in adult education literature (see Cranton, 1994; Knowles, 1980).

Rogers' (1993) more recent research on adult learning maps also has potential for gaining insight into how adults' experiencing cultural adaptation learn about the new culture. He argues that how an individual learns, and how they respond to new knowledge, varies according to the personality and the prior history of the learner. Reflecting a constructivist paradigm of knowledge, Rogers' stated that "all persons construct patterns or maps of reality; and they locate all knowledge somewhere on these maps in relation to themselves at the centre of those maps and in relation to other knowledge and events" (p. 16). Some experiences will be 'close to' the learner; others will be more remote to the ways of thought and value systems of the learners. He identified five factors that are involved in locating any new material on the map:

(a) how the new subject matter or experience relates to existing experience;

(b) whether it is perceived to relate to the current concerns of the learner;

(c) how 'difficult' it is thought to be to learn;

(d) whether it is seen to possess internal consistency - issues which have at first sight problems of logic will often be pushed further away; and,

(e) whether it 'rings true', fits in with the general world picture and with other subjects already on the map (p. 16).

The responses from the participants suggest that they consider non-formal learning to be more useful in their adaptation process than formal education experiences. Learning about the new culture from direct experience, rather than formal education, at this time, is more relevant to the needs of the participants. The challenge for adult educators who are working with immigrants and refugees is to build on the knowledge gained through non-formal learning, and provide a further range of experience not too remote from the learner's existing experience. Based on the comments of the participants above, it appears that non-formal learning is not only helping the Somali refugees in their adaptation process, but is doing so in a more social manner than what generally occurs in formal education. Abdi enjoys using the Internet for the social contact that he has with other Somalis. Abaretto is learning about the culture at the same time as he helps Somali newcomers to learn the culture. Volunteer activities not only provide a chance to increase their understanding of the culture, but an opportunity to do so in a way that helps to foster a sense of social well-being.

3. What the participants identified as obstacles in their education

The participants mentioned three kinds of barriers that they had encountered in their education experiences: financial; cultural; and social.

Abdi and Aisha are supporting themselves to attend university on student loans, and through part-time employment. However, it is difficult to find steady employment. Abdi worked only one or two days per week this past summer so the upcoming academic year will be a stressful one. Aisha also has difficulty in finding steady part-time employment. Over the summer months she had three different part-time jobs at different times. The students were appreciative of student loans.

> Money [is a barrier] ... But there are other ways that people without finances can reach their goals, such as student loans. One must define what he or she wants. (Abdi)

Cultural obstacles were more significant to the participants than the financial barriers. Understandably, studying in English required effort.

> I spend a lot of time studying because of my English. I have to read each chapter 3 to 5 times and repeat it. In Intersession and Summer Session I have to stay ahead of the teacher in my reading. If I get behind, then I have to drop the course. (Abdi)

> I feel like I'm between two cultures and that is sometimes tough. I have to translate between Somali and English, and English and Somali. (Aisha)

Abdi and Arabetto spoke about bias in testing.

> Although I may understand the material well, when the test is in multiple choice form I do not do as well as when the test is an essay. I had a bad experience in my first year with a Psychology course where all the tests were multiple choice ... The thing is that sometimes in multiple choice they introduce new vocabulary, and tricky grammar, so it takes me a long time to think about each answer. (Abdi)

> They say if you want to go to university, take a loan and support yourself. But the university won't take you because of your English. I've tried. They told me to take a TOEFL test. I said, 'why you asking me to take a TOEFL test'? I can do the course, I know, but I would fail a TOEFL test. The TOEFL test is not for African people. It's full of tricks with grammar. When it talks about snow and cold, I don't understand. I went to Admissions at the University and they would not consider me without a TOEFL test ... I said TOEFL test is not for Africans. It is for North Americans. I have read the test and what they test is North American culture. It's a culture test. Every culture is different. If someone looks at me in a certain way in Somalia, I know what they mean. Here gestures and expressions mean something different. Everything, especially language, how you build your story, how you write your story, is based on culture. (Arabetto)

Aisha experiences frustration with the Eurocentric perspective in her courses.

> A lot of our education is based on a European view. The world is not only European: Asian perspectives, African perspectives, and many others are not considered. Here you completely cut off from the world's diversity. Often I'm annoyed at my fellow students who have a very limited view. They can irritate me because they have so much opportunity and have a narrow view of the world. (Aisha)

The participants also said that feelings of loneliness and stress were problems.

> My first year was kind of lonely. I spent most of my time reading, and learning. There was the stress of deadlines for assignments. And you have to face the winter blues. It's cold. No matter how warm you dress it's always cold. It was really tough - but I made it. (Aisha)

> The Somali women ... are all feeling lonely and busy with children. (Ebla)

Ebla, a mother of two small children, attends classes to improve her English and upgrade her education. The obstacles she faces are typical of the difficulties faced by many refugee and immigrant women pursuing education.

> I come home and I cannot learn because I am too busy with house and with children. I don't have time to learn. It is difficult with small children. Sometimes I do not get sleep and if I do not sleep well and I

> can't learn. And we have problems with our families and stress. Sometimes I'm homesick. I feel alone and all the time I'm thinking about my mother or my brother. If something happened with my family, I am so far away. My sister died in Somalia last month and it was horrible for me. I couldn't help her or her children and they need me, I know. I also need them, but I can't do anything. (Ebla)

Adult education researcher Patricia Cross identified three types of obstacles to adult education: situational, institutional, and dispositional (Cross, 1981, p. 98). The participants in this study provided examples of situational barriers, including the lack of income, lack of child care, and lack of time due to employment or other responsibilities. They also described institutional barriers such as inconvenient locations and schedules. In spite of the loneliness they felt, the participants' disposition to education was quite high, although those participants' with families experienced greater obstacles to participating in education, and experienced greater stress, which impacted on their self-esteem. Based on the participants' emphasis on the cultural barriers that they experienced in pursuing adult education, it is recommended that adult education broaden its understanding of barriers to participation in adult education to include cultural barriers.

In spite of the difficulties, the participants are actively engaged in adult education programs. Ebla took a course at Planned Parenthood on health and sexuality, and volunteered to offer a workshop on this topic to Somali women with the support of Planned Parenthood.

> I was told that they needed volunteers for Somali women. I was happy because I was the first Somali woman there and I could help my community. After that I would take Somali women to the doctor when they had to go ... I tried to do some training for my community.

> Planned Parenthood helped me. But no one from my community came. In my community we don't talk about sexuality, they think it is wrong for religious reasons. They have a strong culture and religion. I can't tell my community about sexuality.
>
> **How did you feel when the women did not come?**
>
> I was disappointed and angry. I said I'd never help again. When I told them about the class, they had said they would come, but then they did not come. Two came. Two teachers from Planned Parenthood were there and they spent a lot of money to start that program but my community did not understand that it was important. I can't change them. For example, I tell them that genital mutilation is not done for religious reasons - it is Somali culture. When you do something for culture that is not okay, and you don't have to do it any more - throw it away, and take something good. Some of them have changed their ideas a little bit.

Ebla's account of her experience reveals a sense of her concern for community, at the same time as it raises some of the issues that confront the community. The Somali refugees who arrived in Winnipeg from refugee camps in the last two years often have less education, and a fear that western culture will interfere with their Muslim beliefs. In the initial stages of adaptation, refugees often hold to their traditional beliefs more strongly than they might have in their culture of origin. Somali women have cultural and religious values that are different than mainstream Canadian values in areas of dress, patriarchal dominance, separation of genders, family life, and personal rights. Understandably, they are often reluctant to consider different mainstream Canadian values. Yet, when some of their values are questioned from the perspective of 'human rights", cultural or religious practices such as female circumcision can be interpreted as an act of violence against women.

The complex question of how much diversity can a multicultural society such as Canada support was a veiled issue throughout the research. Three of the participants indicated that they appreciated that Canada was a multicultural country. I frequently heard the phrase, "when you come to a new country, you have to take what is good and throw away parts of your culture you do not need." Yet, Islam, at least as traditionally known, cannot be fully practiced in Canada. Barclay (1978) stated that the official view of Canadian multiculturalism as a multi-ethnic community with a common identity, and Islam are incompatible:

> I would argue that such a multicultural society is a myth and the Muslim examples demonstrates this argument. In Canada Muslims are in no sense free to practice their traditional Muslim law. Polygamy and divorce Muslim style are prohibited. The forces of the establishment speak loudly and clearly against the doctrine of male priority, of seniority by virtue of age, of the patriarchal family, of arranged marriages, and the belief that marriages are contracts between groups and not individuals (p. 110).

Often Somalis who have adopted some western traditions, and abandoned some Somali or Muslim traditions, such as wearing the hijab, are held in suspect by other Somalis.

> Sometimes they [other Somali women] think I have lost my culture and my religion. (Ebla)
>
> Before they [Somalis] come here, people tell them to be careful not to loose their culture. They say 'those people will try to change you forever'. When they come here they are already thinking negative. (Arabetto)
>
> **To protect themselves?**
>
> Exactly. You have to be very careful in helping them otherwise they will think that you have changed and you have become 'one of them'. It

> is sometimes very difficult. Canadian constitution says that this is a multicultural country. That means you have the right to my own culture, my own religion. But if I don't read or write English, how do I know these things? It takes time. I knew these things because I could read English. But others do not know. Especially the refugees. (Arabetto)

The matter of whether an individual had entered Canada as a refugee or as an immigrant was of considerable significance to the participants in this study. Arabetto felt that it was necessary to distinguish between 'immigrants' and 'refugees'. Aisha, felt that the legal category of 'immigrant' assigned to most of the Somali refugees in Winnipeg denied the reality of the Somalis' circumstances.

Arabetto:

> Most Somalis here have only arrived in the last two years.
>
> **And they are refugees?**
>
> Yes, but most of us are categorized as 'landed immigrants' because we began the application process from another country.
>
> **By refugee, I mean people who have to leave their home because their lives are in danger.**
>
> There are five categories I believe: political asylum, race, religion, ...
>
> **I do not mean the term negatively in any way. Do you think that I think the word 'refugee' is a put down?**
>
> No. I understand the word from Latin. Fugee means to run away. You run and don't come back.
>
> **So, for you, there is a greater emphasis on running away?**
>
> Yes. On fleeing. You are fleeing your circumstances. (Arabetto)

Aisha:

> I was a refugee. I don't like the name 'immigrant' because it lumps all immigrants and refugees together. There are different kinds of immigrants. Someone from Hong Kong with lots of money to contribute to Canada and who creates employment and trade opportunities is one kind. I was also categorized as an 'immigrant' but I was a refugee. (Aisha)

Aisha's and Arabetto's concern about categories is significant for how they perceive their identity. In "Organizing with Immigrant Women: A Critique of Community Development in Adult Education," Jo-Anne Lee (1993) argued that categories of "immigrant" [and refugee] are socially constructed, and that they impact on individual identity. Although Lee's subject is women, her discussion on labelling is significant for immigrant and refugee men and women.

> Within Canadian culture, the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and ideologies of women of different countries of origin are obscured by the representation that all immigrants face similar problems of adjustment (p. 25)

and

> until she emigrates to Canada, a woman does not see herself, nor do others see her, as an immigrant. It is only upon her arrival in the adopted country that she finds herself represented in this way. Because the category of "immigrant women" is materially reinforced through laws and state administrative policy, she begins to represent herself as "immigrant" in order to survive (p. 25).

A more immediate issue, and perhaps the most significant issue confronting the Somali community, may be the issue of trust -- primarily trust amongst Somalis, but also trust of the new culture.

Because of the delicate balance of political alliances, and because of the clan-based rivalries of the civil war, Somali refugees have difficulty trusting each other. Aisha's response was cautious.

> I wouldn't say the community is divided. There is a tension and when there is tension people tend to stay away from each other. It's a sad thing because people of the young generation had nothing to do with the problems in Somalia. (Aisha)

Ebla's response was more explicit.

> **Do you think that some Somali people have trouble trusting, because of the war?**
>
> Yes. They are not honest. In Somali, they killed and just cared about their own interests. Why do they kill each other? It is just about money and power. It's not honest. That is my opinion. I can only tell you for myself. I can't speak for other Somalis ... We need help to trust. We destroyed our own country, and now we are living in another country. We have to resolve those feelings. We don't want our children to have the same problems we have. Families here have a lot of stress. They are staying together but they have a lot of problems and are not happy, but they feel they have to look like a happy family. Most of the women need counselling, recreation, and to come together and talk. Women do not go to the Somali Association. Men go together and talk together. I tried to set up a Women's Association but they are too tired to go, and too afraid to talk about what they are feeling.
>
> **Would you like to have a Somali Women's Association?**
>
> Yes, but first I would like to have individual counselling for the Somali women. They are all feeling lonely and busy with children. They need time to talk with others. We need to change some ideas. We can have get-togethers sometimes and have some fun. If the women could get together, we could strengthen the community. But they have many things to resolve first. I would like it if Canadian women could help us. Would you look into this? (Ebla)

Jane Mocellin, formerly of the University of Manitoba, has studied the psycho-social consequences of the Somali crisis on women in Somalia. In a personal interview with her (August 22, 1996) she recommended that Somali refugee women in Winnipeg establish a support group to help each other to deal with the personal losses they had

experienced, as well as the challenges they encounter in moving from a clan-based society to an individualistic one. Women's groups such as the one suggested by Ebla and Jane Mocellin have historically been important feature of adult education, for example the Women's Institute and the YWCA. However, in community organizations, and perhaps especially in immigrant (and refugee) women's organizations, the needs of the participants are often assumed to be homogeneous. Although they are a small group, Somali women in Winnipeg are not homogeneous. They possess different levels of education, different levels of language-proficiency, originate from different social classes, hold different interpretations of their faith, and, most importantly, have different perceptions about Somali culture and Canadian culture. At the same time, however, many are experiencing similar difficulties in adaptation, including loneliness, parenting problems, and financial stress.

On the issue of trust in the community, the two male participants expressed very different views:

> **How does the issue of trust and mistrust impact on you when you are adapting to a new culture?**
>
> It is very difficult. There are some Somali people here who will tell me quite frankly that they do not trust me. They look at me with suspicion. I cannot go up to them and say 'trust me, trust me'. Anything that I could do for them I would be willing to do, but the question is again, which clan does he belong to? Although they have different sub-clans, some come from the same region, and I come from a different region, so we do not have the same interests. When a ___ says 'help me' - I have to ask 'why'? (Abdi)
>
> **So, although you are living in a different country, the Somali community still identifies you with your clan? Is there a common ground?**

> Here we have a Somali community, but if I want to contribute something, the people will say that I'm from ___ (clan) and most are from ___ (different clan). They do not have a uniting vision. To be honest with you, the people are good, but they don't trust outsiders. (Abdi)
>
> **Does that mistrust extend to the Canadian community?**
>
> I don't know. I have never had any problems with the Canadian community - working or coming to school - but the people I have close contact with is none. I don't have many friends in the Canadian community. I don't have any animosity to Canadians, but I don't know many. I view other Somalis with suspicion. (Abdi)
>
> **When you arrived six years ago, there were very few Somalis in Winnipeg?**
>
> Yes. Actually I didn't meet any until after about two years. (Abdi)
>
> **Coming from such a volatile world, how has it shaped your view?**
>
> I do not trust government. I do not think government is necessary. Government is what caused pain and suffering. (Abdi)

Arabetto felt that members of Canadian society mistrusted him.

> **Do you feel that people in this culture don't trust you?**
>
> Of course. No one trusts you. Nobody says they don't trust you, but always something is going on that says that they don't trust you ... For example, I applied for a job and I was interviewed and they admired my qualifications. Later on, they said that I was over-qualified for the job. They told me I was over-qualified but I think that was an excuse to not hire me. Employers think that if you are an immigrant you will work for them a short time to gain experience, and then leave to go somewhere else. They do not believe you are reliable. They are not discriminating against my skin, but they think that any immigrant, white, black, whatever, is not reliable. They don't trust you. (Arabetto)

However, Arabetto had a more optimistic view of the future of the Somali community in Winnipeg.

When Somalis come to Canada they see that they don't need protection so they do not need the idea of tribes.

But doesn't it take quite a while to change ideas that you have held since childhood?

For those who have limited education, it may take more time to understand that you can receive protection within the Canadian culture. They don't need the same protection they needed in Somalia. No one is respecting tribes here. Even in Somalia, before the civil war, no one was relying on tribe for protection because colonials were protecting the people. Still, tribalism existed, but it existed for good things. (Arabetto)

If a Somali [in Winnipeg] needs help, will they go first to members of their tribe?

They would go to anyone who can help them - not just their clan, or not just Somalis. You won't go to a member of your tribe if they cannot help you. When I first came here I did not know anyone from Somali - or any human being in Winnipeg. I did not need any Somali to help me but what I did need was to see someone from Somalia to discuss with them how to cope with stress. If you have someone speaking your language you feel more comfortable and secure than speaking to a counsellor that speaks English. The first two months I was here I did not see any Somalis. I saw a guy working on the street - actually he saw me - and he knew me from Rome. He called me and I said to myself, 'who knows me by name here'? He had been here almost a year and I didn't know he was here. He told me that there was a Somali Association that was only about two weeks old. Later we had coffee and talked about establishing the Association.

What role do you think clan identity will play in the future?

Very little. As soon as we feel comfortable in the new culture, we will forget about the disasters in Somalia. (Arabetto)

Although Abdi and Arabetto have contradictory views about the impact of clan identity on community development, it is evident that they both care deeply about the Somali community. The degree of difference in their views may also suggest that

other Somalis have strong feelings about the role of, or future for, clan identity on the new community. Given that the refugees from Somalia in the last six years have experienced civil war, these feelings are understandable. Even without the trauma of civil war, the transition from a clan-based society to a society that emphasizes individuality, is a challenging one.

4. How helpful Somalis' felt their education had been in their adaptation process

The research did not produce much data in response to this question, probably because three of the four the participants are still very much in the process of adaptation, and are not yet able to identify the important 'benchmarks' in their process. However, a statement from Ebla gives some sense of the rate of progress she has experienced in meeting her goal of increased independence.

> I thought if I learn English I could do everything for my family by myself. I knew some English words. My husband had to go with me for everything I needed. I thought when I learned English I could do everything by myself.
>
> **Has that happened?**
>
> Yes, [pause] slowly. About two years.

Abdi, the participant who had lived in Winnipeg the longest, had this to say about his adaptation process.

> You have to be flexible when you come to another culture. No one actually guides you. When you come to this culture everything is fast and quick - so you learn to be fast and quick ... You have to find a steady job as soon as you can after you arrive ... You have to be open-minded. You have to know who you are, why you are here, what you

> left behind - and that motivates you. You have peace, and now you must learn the community that offers that peace.

When the study concluded, the two male participants who believed that education would enable them to find satisfying work had not achieved that goal (although Abdi is not presently seeking full-time employment). Arabetto identified his work in community development as the best means of learning the new culture (like the old expression, teaching is the best way to learn). Aisha felt that formal education did not help her to adapt, and that individual research, and speaking with others informally was the best source of information for adaptation. As noted above, Ebla felt that learning English had helped her to adapt to the culture and achieve a greater level of personal independence, however, she also acknowledged that she would need to continue to take English classes for some time yet to become fully proficient in the language.

In addition to learning the English language, perhaps the most important aspect of adult education in the adaptation process of Somali refugees in Winnipeg has been the incidental learning that has occurred through community development. The establishment of the Manitoba Somali Association (1993) is a notable accomplishment. Arabetto described the Association's objectives.

> **What were in the objectives of the Association when it began in 1993?**
>
> To help the newcomers. You have to understand that when a new community starts somewhere it takes some time ... They had a lot of problems because they couldn't get money from the government to establish. And since the community is so small, collecting money from the people did not provide enough money.

Did the clan differences interfere in the development of the Association?

No. The first President was from the north, and most of the Somali people in Winnipeg are from the south. He was President for a year. Then someone else was elected and he was President for a year. ... As I told you, I'm from ___ (clan). I'm the only __(clan) member in the Somali community in Winnipeg, and the Somali people elected me as ___ (position in Association). Why did they want me to have this position? Because they knew I could help them. I think this is a good example that tribalism is not something we believe deeply. If no one knows you, no one trusts you. But as long as people know that you are honest and you can help them, they prefer you to members of their tribe. People who need help will come to me before they come to members of their sub-clan. They know I will try to help them. I won't say that people don't believe in tribalism, but it is a superficial belief.

It was only in the last couple of years that we have had enough people to start to develop the community. In the last two years more families have arrived. Before it was mostly singles, and many singles moved to Toronto. Now it is more families who are settling in Winnipeg. They need a lot of help from members of the community. Their kids need to meet other kids, practice their culture, and learn the Somali language. We thought if we could develop the community we could get help for those people. The former ___ (position in Association) tried to get things started but he couldn't do much for the community. Now I'm the ____ (position in Association). So far I've got the people together to share our ideas. We are meeting twice per month at the International Centre to analyze our needs. We are trying to find out what help we can get from the government to establish our community. I've put together a lot of information. We're collecting $300-$400 dollars per month from the Somali people to rent a place. Each family contributes $15 per month, and singles are $10. Families will benefit more from the Association than the single. Everybody agreed ...

What ideas have people expressed?

Mostly, they do not want to lose their culture. The kids are losing their language. My kids understand it, but they do not speak it. When I speak Somali to them, they answer in English. Even though I encourage them - here is the problem. In they morning they get up, they talk to the TV, they listen, they play with their mom. Even their mother mostly speaks English, because they do. Nobody corrects

> them. They need an environment where they are obligated to speak Somali language. If they had a class two or three times a week where they could only speak Somali they would keep their language.
>
> **Is it good to talk about the tragedy in Somalia?**
>
> It is very important for the community to talk about it. When people come here, the first thing they ask is how do you get help, either from the government or the community. People have to have contact with their community. Often people don't want to contact the community when they first arrive because they are sick of the fighting. The community must help them when they want help. The Association has a role to inform the community to let them know the differences between Somali and Canadian culture. Sometimes people will say 'I don't want to lose my culture' and they are extremists. They are hesitant to change. They may need the Association to help them become aware. Some people are extreme in their culture. (Arabetto)

The Constitution and By-Laws of the Manitoba Somali Association lists four community objectives:

1. To bring together all Somalis residing in Manitoba, regardless of their creed, political beliefs, sex or age, into a framework of mutual cooperation in solving common problems through concerted effort, and by participating collectively in social occasions, as well as sharing each other's dreams in good and bad times;
2. To work together in developing Somali culture, language and traditional values and pass them over to Somali children, and also acquaint them to other communities;
3. To inform Somali newcomers of the social services available in Canada, in general and particularly in Winnipeg. In addition the Association will provide every possible assistance in matters directly or indirectly related to their

settlement and integration into Canadian society, i.e. language, employment, housing, etc.

4. To encourage all Somalis to participate in general physical fitness and sports activities, and engage teams from other communities in various sports in order to exchange friendship and recognition (Manitoba Somali Association, p. 2).

Although the Constitution includes Somali women, most are unable to participate in the decision-making aspects of the Association because of child care responsibilities, and traditional gender roles which limit women's public participation. Ebla spoke of the future of the Somali community in Winnipeg, and suggested ways that members of Canadian society could help the community.

> **What do you think the future will be like for the Somali community?**
>
> I don't think the children will keep our culture.
>
> **How do you feel about that?**
>
> So-so. The children are growing up in Canadian culture and I want them to be happy. They will change.
>
> **Is it good for the community to have their own Association?**
>
> Yes, that's helpful. They will hear the language. A little is ok. Most of the community now is not talking about the clan but they are talking about how we can keep our language. I don't want my children to learn about clan. That is something that I don't like.

The objectives of the Manitoba Somali Association indicate that the Somali community is attempting to solve internal problems in the community, at the same time as it is providing support to the community. Community adult education efforts that

avoid liberal definitions of community as a harmonious unit, and recognize the diverse and divisive forces in the community, may have the potential to assist Somali refugees in dealing with some of their internal conflicts. Kaplan and Schwartz (1981) define community problem solving through community education as "involving people in identifying problems and needs, searching for alternative solutions, and implementing those solutions" (p. 22). The Somali community in Winnipeg is involved in such a process. Unlike Toronto where Somali associations have developed along clan lines, the small Somali population in Winnipeg has formed to meet the common needs of adapating to a new culture. Recognizing that members of the Somali community in Winnipeg interpret their Islamic faith in diverse ways, the community has rejected the idea of establishing their community on shared religion. In working out these and other issues, community problem-solving is itself an educative process.

Summary

1. What the Participants Identified as Their Adaptation Needs

Somali culture is very different than Canadian culture, and the participants in this study identified several adaptation needs. Learning English, and improving their proficiency in English, is the most important adaptation need. In addition, learning about the economic, social (especially issuess in family life), and legal dimensions of Canadian culture was mentioned as an adaptation need. Somali men indicated that finding full-time satisfactory employment was necessary for their successful adaptation. The female participants felt that education could empower them and enable them to have more choice in their lives. In addition, both men and women

expressed the need for community development so that they could support each other in the adaptation process.

2. **What Education Experiences the Participants Identified as Important to Their Adaptation**

All of the participants said that English classes were important education experiences in their adaptation process. However, English training for newcomers provides the student with survival skills only, and does not develop their language proficiency to the level where they can be competetive in the Canadian market. Non-formal learning experiences, such as individual research, self-directed learning projects (such as learning about new computer technology), volunteer work, and talking with others, provided the participants with knowledge that met their immediate adaptation needs better than formal programs.

3. **What the Participants Identified as Obstacles in their Education**

The participants identified three kinds of barriers that they had encountered in their education experiences: financial; cultural; and social. Difficulties with English language, bias in testing, ethnocentric perspectives were identified by the participants attending university. Loneliness, family responsibilities, and child care were also mentioned as obstacles. The role of women in Somali culture, and in Somali interpretations of Islamic religion, are also a barrier to Somali women's participation in education. In addition, tension along clan-lines exists within the community, and is a limiting factor in the psyco-social dimension of adaptation.

4. How Helpful Somalis' Felt Their Education had been in Their Adaptation Process

The participants felt that their English language instruction had helped them to adapt to Canadian culture, although they felt that their English language proficiency would have to improve a great deal before they could be competitive in the labour market. Formal education was seen to be less beneficial than non-formal learning. The effort to establish the Manitoba Somali Association has, itself, been an educative experience for Somali refugees, at the same time as it has assisted members of the Somali community in the adaptation process.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of adult education in the adaptation process of selected Somali refugees in Winnipeg, from the Somali participants' point of view. The four research questions were:

1. What do selected Somali refugees in Winnipeg identify as their adaptation needs?
2. What education experiences do selected Somali refugees identify as important to their adaptation?
3. What obstacles to education have selected Somali refugees encountered and how have they dealt with them?
4. How helpful do selected Somali refugees in Winnipeg feel that their education experience has been in meeting their adaptation needs?

Adaptation Needs

Somali culture is very different than Canadian culture, and adaptation for Somali refugees is a difficult process. Clan identity and divisions, gender roles and marriage, parenting, previous education, and religion all pose challenges for Somalis' adaptation. Their most immediate needs are language and employment. Most of the Somali males speak English quite well, however, they need help to improve their reading and writing skills. The women's knowledge of English is far more limited than the men's, and their access to English language classes and participation in Canadian or English-speaking community is much more limited.

Approximately 20 percent of Somalis in Winnipeg have completed university or specialized in a trade in Somalia. However, many Somali men are employed, and those with professional degrees are underemployed. Unemployment and underemployment have negative consequences on self-regard, and on family life. Some members of the community remain hopeful about their professional future in Canada, while others are not optimistic.

The literature shows that high ethnic identity and freedom to express cultural practice is associated to better adjustment. Contrarily, feeling restricted or ashamed of their own ethnicity may be a determinant to adaptation. The Somali people are quite complex in this regard. They are very proud people, which, has enabled them to survive and resist colonization, and the harsh conditions of nomadic life. Yet, in some cases, pride prevents change and can be a barrier to adaptation. Their sense of pride is also ambiguous since some community members also express shame about the role of Somalis' in the Somali tragedy. Because they want to put the horror of the Somali war behind them, many Somali newcomers do not wish to associate with other Somalis in Winnipeg. Others, however, are attempting to overcome clan divisiveness and build a functioning community organization.

The process of adaptation implies many changes as well as constant learning about the new cultural environment. The Somali community lacks knowledge and understanding of the Canadian legal system. In my experience with the Somali community it became apparent that many Somalis, especially the men, were afraid of the legal system, which, from their perspective, did not understand Somali values and

practices, particularly in the area of family life. There is also a reluctance to seek help for problems from mainstream agencies.

Education for Adaptation

Several educational programs directed to the adaptation of refugees currently exist. However, the needs of refugees are usually viewed as being homogeneous, and little time is devoted to learning about the particular world views of different ethno-cultural groups. In working with Somali students, it is important to understand that the issues of clan-identity, and trust, are very close to the centre of their 'conceptual map'.

The Somali community in Winnipeg has a variety of educational needs, depending on educational background, and the length of time they have been in Canada. The participants in this study indicated that they benefitted more from non-formal learning experiences than formal ones. At the same time, however, they identified several areas in which they needed education. Educational programs that place a greater emphasis on the students' non-formal learning of the culture is recommended for program planning.

a) **English classes**, particularly for women, which provide child care while the mother is in class. The classes would allow the students to have the opportunity to work on their assignments in class. Somali men could benefit from English classes devoted to the development of writing skills. In addition to ESL classes, greater emphasis should be given to the students' non-formal learning. Activities such as banking, shopping, completing forms, obtaining legal assistance, should be included in ESL classes. In

addition, workplace language programs that help the employee to communicate in the workplace, and to feel greater ownership of their work, should be given greater support. The need for English language programs cannot be overemphasized as it is a basic factor in the adaptation process.

b) **Employment**. Currently employment classes teach refugees how to develop a resume and apply for work. I suggest that an expanded view of employment programs that provide students with an understanding of Canadian economic structure is needed for Somali refugees. Because the socialist government of Somalia provided men with employment upon completion of their education, many Somali newcomers do not understand a democratic market. While employment workshops teach Somalis that they must market themselves, some students lack understanding of the economic importance of this skill. Although it is critical that refugees obtain the skills necessary for employment in a different culture, it is also important that they learn why the new skills are important in an inter-active way; this encourages the student to explore what they feel and think about the subject matter. Employment programs should provide refugees with the opportunity to gain 'hands-on' work experience. Mentoring programs that provide one-on-one workplace instruction would also be beneficial.

c) **Family Life**. Educational programs which address the different cultural values in family life is needed in the Somali community. Parenting in Somalia is carried out by the extended family members, as well as the biological parents. Somali families in Winnipeg miss those support structures and feel quite alone in parenting in a culture that has different values. What some Somalis' perceive to be discipline, is, in Canadian

culture, seen as abuse. Family issues are a significant source of stress to the families, especially when there are other variables impinging upon the family dynamics such as traumatic past experiences, separation from loved ones, and the unfamiliarity with the host country's language. Programs that explore family life should also incorporate knowledge about the Canadian legal system, preferably in the Somali language.

d) **Women's Support Group**. Recognizing that Somali women have diverse interpretations of their religion and culture, a support group for women to discuss problems in the community, difficulties in adaptation, fears concerning parenting, etc. would help to alleviate some of the stress and feelings of isolation that women in the community experience. An approach that recognizes that the women's support group is a community group, and that women's problems are community problems, is recommended.

e) **Preventative Programs**. Somali refugees who have lived in Winnipeg for two or three years are well aware of the problems that members of the community face in cultural adaptation. Stress resulting from unemployment and underemployment, the consequences of unfamiliarity with the legal system, domestic abuse, different cultural values concerning marriage and gender relations, have surfaced on several occasions. Service providers such as Mount Carmel Clinic, the Multicultural Partner Abuse Program through the Department of Culture and Heritage, are willing to assist the Somali community to develop preventative programs. It is recommended that service providers work with the Somali community to develop such programs. It is also recommended that mainstream organizations have an awareness and sensitivity about

issues which have shaped Somali perspectives: such as the importance of family; clan-identity; and the role of mistrust. In addition, it is recommended that the Somali community undertake initiatives to develop and administer preventative programs as a method of assisting the community with their adaptation needs; at the same time they also learn about how the systems in Canada operate. Identifying needs and objectives, organizing planning meetings, identifying resource people, arranging for service delivery, conducting follow-up evaluations, are provide valuable non-formal learning opportunities.

Obstacles to Education

The members of the Somali community in Winnipeg appear to have a positive disposition toward education. This observation is supported by the recent study conducted by Mount Carmel Clinic (1996) in Winnipeg that found that in spite of the level of education in their country of origin, African respondents in their study went back to school in much higher percentages than any other ethnic group interviewed (p.5). However, this finding is not broken down by gender, and, based on my experience with the Somali community, it is likely that more men and returning to school than are women.

In addition to limited financial resources, family responsibilities, and child care, Somali participation in adult education is limited by a fear of that they will loose their culture and religion. Yet, culture is a dynamic force, and both Canadian culture and Somali culture experiences change. How much change one can respond to at a particular time is influenced by many variables, including previous education, personal

belief systems, and levels of support. For adult educators involved in adaptation programs for refugees it is important to recognize that the student needs to feel that they can maintain their identity and personal values with a relative degree of safety at the same time as alternative views are suggested.

Educational Experiences

The participants indicated that English classes taken in Winnipeg had been helpful in their adaptation process. However, non-formal learning experiences such as the efforts involved in formally establishing the Manitoba Somali Association, individual research, and talking with others were more helpful for adaptation than formal education programs. The participants' expectations of their educational experiences play an important role. The men in this study anticipated that their educational experiences would lead to full-time satisfying employment. The women expected that education would empower them to change their limiting social roles. After living in Canada for a couple of years, they realize that their expectations will not be fulfilled through education alone and that much personal adaptation, as well as deep changes in Canadian society, are required if they are to achieve their aspirations.

Directions for Adult Education Research

The findings from this thesis suggest that adult education should broaden its traditional emphasis on the individual, as viewed from a western perspective, so that it can be more responsive to the needs of ethno-cultural groups. More studies that focus on specific ethno-cultural groups need to be conducted, with attention to intragroup differences and their relation to class and gender. In addition, a diverse range of

methods is called for. Quantitative studies that reach a greater number of people can serve as a basis for qualitative inquiry.

This study generates several questions which are helpful to adult education researchers exploring ethno-cultural groups. The relationship between schooling and early learning experiences in a different culture is a useful research direction, as are questions of how different ethno-cultural groups define adult education, and how do these definitions affect what they choose to learn. Further research about learning processes, educational supports, and networks in ethno-cultural communities may yield valuable information for program development.

In addition to broader questions related to adult education, future studies of the adaptation of Somali refugees in Winnipeg might focus on the three specific areas where little research currently exists. These are the role of community development in education for adaptation; how adaptation affects clan identity; and how adaptation and education impacts on the traditional views of gender roles.

Conclusion

The findings from this study provide adult educators, service providers, and government with a better understanding of the cultural, political, social, and religious factors that influence Somali refugees' adaptation process in Winnipeg. In terms of adult educators, the findings of this study suggest that it is important for the facilitator to be knowledgeable about cross-cultural issues in general, and, with respect to Somali students, sensitive to issues of clan, culture, and religion. For service providers, the study suggests specific areas where service agencies can support Somalis; by providing

9) That the Federal government fulfill its commitment to refugees by providing the on-going resources necessary for successful adaptation (Citizenship and Immigration).

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APPENDIX A

Nancy Buchanan
10-223 Nassau St. N.
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3L 2H7
Phone: 453-3895

Date

Dear ________,

I am writing to request your assistance in a research project that I am conducting as part of my thesis requirements for a Master's Degree in Education. My research topic is The Adaptation Process of Somali Refugees in Winnipeg: The Role of Adult Education. I hope that by interviewing Somali people in Winnipeg, I can help to improve educational programs for refugees in Winnipeg.

In order to learn about the role of adult education in the adaptation process of Somali refugees in Winnipeg, I would like to interview you on two separate occasions. The interviews are intended to be informal and will touch on all aspects of adaptation (for example, language, employment), but some of the questions that I will ask you will include the circumstances that led to your departure from Somalia, your educational background, your participation in educational programs in Canada, and your future educational goals. Each interview will last about one and a half hours. They will be audio-taped for later transcription so that I can analyze the data more completely. The audio-tapes will be erased once the research is completed. All information gathered in the course of the interviews will be kept completely confidential. The information you disclose to me will be combined with other information and presented in a thesis. A pseudonym will be used so your identity will not be revealed in the research. Please note that as the Somali community is very small, I am unable to guarantee that you will remain anonymous in the research paper. You are free to refuse to answer any of the questions you are asked in this research. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Both interviews will be transcribed by me. I will mail you a copy of the transcription from each of the two interviews for your review. You are free to revise any of your responses contained in the transcription. Approximately ten days after I mail the transcript to you (and before we meet for the second interview), I will contact you by telephone to see if you would like to revise any of your answers.

While there may be no direct benefit to you as a study participant, it is my hope that this research will contribute to an understanding to the role of adult education in the adaptation process of refugees in general, and of the Somali refugees in Winnipeg in particular. If you wish, I will be pleased to provide you with a summary report of my findings and recommendations stemming from the study.

As you may wish to know more about my background and interests, I have enclosed a brief statement describing my background.

Again, thank you for your help. Please do not hesitate to contact me, at 453-3895, or my Faculty Advisor, Dr. Deo Poonwassie, at 474-8244, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Nancy Buchanan

APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM

I, _______________, agree to participate in the study of the role of adult education in the adaptation process of Somali refugees in Winnipeg.

I have read the covering letter describing the research study. I understand that if I agree to participate in the study my two interviews will be audiotaped. I understand that I will have an opportunity to review my interview transcripts, and make alterations to that record if necessary. Any information provided by me in the interviews will be kept in strict confidence. A pseudonym will be used to conceal my identity; however I understand that anonymity cannot be guaranteed. I accept that the information gathered in the course of this research will be used in a Master's of Education thesis at the University of Manitoba.

I am free to refuse to answer any questions I consider too personal or to which I object. I understand that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary. I also understand that I may withdraw my participation at any time.

Please check the following, as appropriate:

[ ] I wish to receive a summary of the final report of this study.

[ ] I do not wish to receive a summary of the final report of this study.

__________ __________

Date Signature in ink

__________ __________

Date Researcher

APPENDIX C

List of Individuals I Met With in the Course of this Study

- John Rogge, formerly of the Disaster Research Unit at the University of Manitoba who studied the impact of the Somali war within Somalia
- Jane Mocellin, formerly of the Department of Psychology, University of Manitoba, who studied the psycho-social consequences of the Somali war on Somali women
- Ann Lawler, Citizenship and Immigration, Winnipeg
- Brian Johnston, Citizenship and Immigration, Ottawa (via telephone)
- Margot Morrish, Settlement Services, Culture and Heritage, Winnipeg
- Marilyn Kenny, Director of Settlement Services, Culture and Heritage, Winnipeg
- Margaret von Lau, Director, Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba
- Nancy Higgit, Professor, Family Studies, University of Manitoba
- Ralph Melnicer, ESL Services, Winnipeg School Division No. 1
- Debra Braun, and Alizar of the International/Interfaith Centre
- Ivan Seunarine, Director, Mount Carmel Clinic Cross-Cultural Counselling Program

APPENDIX D

Interview A

This represents a summary and paraphrase of the interview. Most of the interview has been transcribed verbatim, however, in some cases the wording has been modified slightly so that the summary flows more smoothly. The interview questions are in bold type.

***

As you know, I'm interviewing you as part of my research project for my Master's degree in Adult Education. I'm exploring the role that adult education plays in the adaptation process of Somali refugees. I'm interested in learning what role education has had on your social, psychological, and economic adaptation to Canadian culture. This is our first of two interviews. In the first I'll mostly be asking about your background and how you came here, and the second interview will deal more specifically with your educational experiences.

Could we begin by you telling me a bit about yourself? Growing up in Somalia, leaving Somalia, and coming to Canada?

I grew up in an orphanage in Mogidishu. My father and mother separated when I was a baby. After that my father tried to take care of me but he died. He was in the army. When he died my mom put me in the college (orphanage).

How many brothers and sisters do you have?

Six. Three brothers and three sisters. My mother had a son before she met my father, and my mother and father had five children, but one died when she was a baby. My sister and I are twins. Two of my siblings have died, and two brothers are alive.

Have you lost members of your family in the fighting in Somalia?

Yes, but not from the fighting. My big brother died in 1991 but not from fighting. He was a doctor and somebody killed him for money. Some of our own tribe killed him just for money - not for clan. This situation in Somalia now, one party will kill another party for money or for clan.

It sounds very desparate. How do you make sense of what is going on?

I don't understand why they are fighting and why they kill each other. Everybody wants to be president. For example, when I want to be president I have to have people on my side. But other tribes want to president too - like me. So they fight. I don't have enough money, so I'll take the money or food or whatever I need?

Interview B

This represents a summary and paraphrase of the interview. Most of the interview has been transcribed verbatim, however, in some cases the wording has been modified slightly so that the summary flows more smoothly. The interview questions are in bold type.

The interview began with a description of the purpose of the study and a review of the primary research questions.

***

Could we begin by you telling me a bit about yourself - how you came to be in Winnipeg, your educational background?

I came to Winnipeg in 1990 via Rome, Italy. This is my sixth year here. I'm originally from _____, which is a Somali region, unfortunately, now it is part of Ethiopia, but it is not geographically part of the Somali Republic. I left ___ and went to Somalia when I was 13 where I continued my schooling there. I had some personal problems with adaptation in Somalia and fled to Italy. When I came to Canada I started immediately to improve my English language. I took ESL evening classes at Gordon Bell. I had an oral test and a written test to decide where I should start. In the day time I worked, so my English improved slowly. Then I went to the Winnipeg Adult Education classes in the evening to improve my writing skills for a year and a half. I also upgraded my high school because I had finished my high school in 1985, and that was some time ago. I wanted to make sure I was comfortable before I enrolled in University. I wanted my high school knowledge to be fresh before I started University.

Did you have to write a TOEFL test?

No. My high school grades were high so I did not have to write a TOEFL test. As a landed immigrant, I was not considered a foreign student.

Reading takes much longer to learn than speaking, is that right?

Yes. English is a very difficult language to learn. I think it's the worst language! The rules always change. It is very difficult. I still find the language difficult. In addition to English courses, I took Physics and Math and English courses at the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre.

Let's go back and expand on some of the things you have said. You said you are originally from ____.

____ was previously part of British Somaliland, a colony of Britain. In 1955 the British were not happy with the leaders of _____ who wanted independence so they

punished us because they felt we were anti-British interests. Our clan was in the interior, so we had less contact with the British and with other clans, so they were hostile toward us. Our leaders were not trusted. The British felt one way to get us was to move our boundary into Ethiopia. We did not have a treaty with the British. The other tribes had more business and trade with the British, and the British built them some elementary schools and taught in the British educational system. We were the forces of nationalism. For years we had been advocating the unity of all Somali lands (lands where Somalis lived). The largest region geographically occupied by Somalis. Now that territory is gone. In 1977 there was a war. The people in my area were freedom fighters - others might call them guerillas. I was not a fighter because I was a child, but I was affected.

How?

I was 12 years old. My cousin, who was a business man, had connections with brothers in the Somali republic. This person is responsible for sending me to school and helping me out. The government of Ethiopia became hostile towards him. Then, they assassinated him in 1978. We then fled. All the Somalis in Ethiopia fled to Somalia. Then the Ethiopians obtained the help of the Russian army and Eastern European military forces. Then it became a war of Somalis against eastern forces. It was very complicated.

Did that also become complicated for religious reasons? My understanding is that some Muslim countries would want to reject western influences.

No, we are Somali first and foremost. It was a Somali cause - not religious. Our religion is not institutional. What you say may be true for the Arabs. In Ethiopia, most people are Muslim, and they belong to different nationalities, although the government is not Muslim. When I was there this was not an Islamic issue.

The western world was silent about the Somali problems. Jimmy Carter's administration was sympathetic to the Ethiopians rather than the Somali cause. For a time we succeeded in liberating Somali lands from Ethiopia, but when the Ethiopians gave privileges to Russia, and the Russians came to the Ethiopian side, we couldn't handle the Russians. The Somali army could not confront, so they left. The Somali nationalists were then hunted by the Ethiopian government. I was one of those refugees. I fled to a place that was south of Mogidishu.

With the divisions between the Somali people, were you safe in southern Somali?

Yes, I was in a refugee camp there. In that time, 1977, Somalia was at its peak of nationalism. The conflict started when already military men said 'how can we just

leave the land?' They said that Barre was not interested in nationalism. We should fight for our shores and our land.

Interview C

This represents a summary and paraphrase of the interview. Most of the interview has been transcribed verbatim, however, in some cases the wording has been modified slightly so that the summary flows more smoothly. The interview questions are in bold type.

***

In this interview, _________, I'd like to expand on some of the things we discussed in the first interview, and to ask you some other questions that have occurred to me since our first interview. Did you have any questions after the first interview?

No, go ahead.

In the first interview I asked you about the differences between school systems in Somalia and in Canada. You told me that students here have more choices in their studies. Are there other differences that you could mention?

Well, there is more discipline in schools in Somalia. Until grade 8 you study what the government tells you to. In Somalia, if a teacher asks you a questions you must answer. Here, if you don't know the answer it's no big deal. In Somalia if you cannot answer you are punished.

For example, if you didn't know the answer to a mathematical question....

They'll check your work, and call your parents. If it continues they might suspend you from school for fifteen days. In elementary school the children are beaten with a stick if they don't know the answers.

What kind of impact does that have on the students?

Most students study hard because they don't want to get punished. Other students get frustrated because they have other problems and the pressure from school just adds to it. Nobody helps them solve their problems. We don't have counsellors like they have here. If students here have a learning problem, they get help. In Somalia, no one does those kinds of jobs. The rules are very very strict, too. It was even more strict in the earlier generation. Now, they probably don't beat the children.

In earlier generations, people didn't attend schools as much as they do now.

Yes, before 1972 school attendance was not obligated. It didn't matter if children went to school or not. After 1972 there was a rule that every child has to go to school.

Boys and girls?

Yes, before it was mostly boys because the bands send the children to school. Maybe they have a lot of children and mother needs help so they don't send the girls to school. It depends where they grow up. They probably would go to school if they lived in the city. But most of the girls didn't go to school in the earlier generation.

What kind of value does Somali culture place on education?

I don't know what you are looking for.

Do families in Somali strongly encourage their children to go to school in the hope that better education will improve their children's future?

Before Independence in 1960, most of the people did not encourage their children to go to school because the schools taught Italian, or English or a foreign language. They thought by sending the children to school they would change their culture. Somali people are very concerned about maintaining their Somali culture. No one told Somalis how education could benefit their children. What they learned was that if children went to school they learned about foreign culture and they would not learn their own culture and religion. That was true. But it depends on the person. If I get an education and decide to stay true to my culture or adopt foreign ways that's my choice. It doesn't depend on those people who education me.

But it would have an influence.

Yes, it influences you.

So rather than have their culture threatened parents held their children back from education until Independence in 1960.

Yes, it took time. Elementary and intermediate education did not become compulsory until 1972.

What about adult education?

Majority of students who graduated from grade 8 in the 1970s would go to get a job. After 1980, when the economic situation went down, they began to realize they needed more than grade 8 to get a good job. Then they wanted to go to University.

There is one university called the National University of Somalia. It is in the south. There is no university of the Northern area. It has different departments like the university of education, university of agriculture.

Faculty of Education
ETHICS APPROVAL FORM

To be completed by the applicant:

Title of Study:

The Adaptation Process of Somali Refugees in Winnipeg: The Role of Adult Education

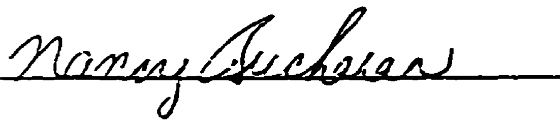
Name of Principal Investigator(s) (**please print**):

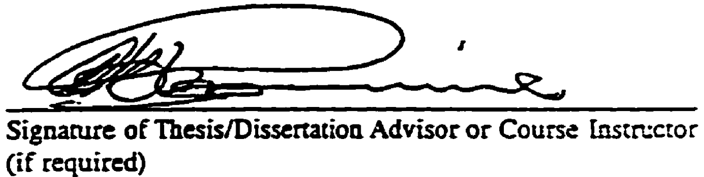
Nancy Buchanan

Name of Thesis/Dissertation Advisor or Course Instructor (if Principal Investigator is a student) (**please print**):

Dr. Deo Poonwassie, Dept. of Ed. Admin. & Foundations

I/We, the undersigned, agree to abide by the University of Manitoba's ethical standards and guidelines for research involving human subjects, and agree to carry out the study named above as described in the Ethics Review Application.





Signature of Thesis/Dissertation Advisor or Course Instructor (if required)

Signature(s) of Principal Investigator(s)

To be completed by the Research and Ethics Committee:

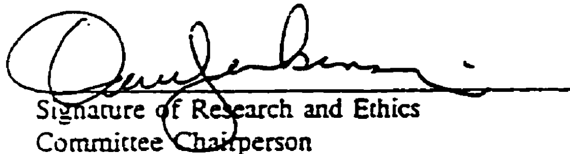
This is to certify that the Faculty of Education Research and Ethics Committee has reviewed the proposed study named above and has concluded that it conforms with the University of Manitoba's ethical standards and guidelines for research involving human subjects.

Dave Jenkinson

Name of Research and Ethics Committee Chairperson

April 2, 1996

Date



Signature of Research and Ethics Committee Chairperson