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## Visitors Pass: The Story of a Group of Pakistani Immigrant Students at Sawyer High School

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

VISITORS PASS: PAKISTANI IMMIGRANT  
STUDENTS AT AN URBAN AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PROGRAM IN CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY STUDIES

BY

MELISSA GERSH FISCHER

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

MAY 2010

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## ABSTRACT

New immigrant populations are shaped in significant ways by globalization. The phenomenon of transnationalism has changed “home” and “culture” from a local to a global scale. In fact, globalization is central to the current sociocultural experiences of immigrant populations, especially in the formation of their identities, their daily practices, and the constraints of their environment. Both as active agents and through the agency of others, these immigrants challenge the phenomenon of deterritorialization through transnationalism. The Pakistani immigrant students in this study maintain a strong sense of “home” through their new sense of place and space located in a global society. This ethnographic study focuses on the question of how agency and institutional structures, in a global society, impact the lived experiences of Pakistani immigrant students at an urban public high school. A review of literature on identity formation, globalization, and institutional structures is essential to answering this question. The impact of agency is studied through interviews, classroom observations, and participation in the Ahinsa and Indo-Pakistani after school clubs. Since the official religion of Pakistan is Islam, a majority of the immigrant students are Muslim. Therefore, the impact of American culture on the Pakistani immigrant students’ religious identity is also explored in this qualitative study.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **Introduction**

I was sitting in the auditorium at Sawyer High School, a large urban public school in [Research Location], watching as the photographers with all their equipment, took senior photographs. On the right side of the stage, students were having their pictures taken in caps and gowns, dark green for the boys and white for the girls. Over on the left side of the stage, seniors had their photos taken without the caps and gowns, in outfits of their choosing, which is atypical at Sawyer. Each day the students are required to “conform” to the school dress code—jeans or khaki pants and a plain white or dark green shirt. But on this day, the seniors were allowed to be out of dress code.

As I was sitting 10 rows back from the front of the stage, I heard the door to the auditorium open behind me. I turned around and saw Salma and Ubah, two Muslim students who I have been observing and following through the entire school year, walk into the room with another female student. Salma, a senior, was wearing a black Hijab covering all but a small circle of her face along with dark fitted jeans, black sneakers, a dark green polo shirt with “Sawyer Honor Roll” written on the left side of her chest, and a black long sleeve shirt covering her arms. Ubah, a petite junior Pakistani student, was also wearing a black Hijab covering her forehead, two-thirds of her cheeks and neck, but not her bright blue eyes, which are colored by the contacts she wore each day of school.

Ubah also had on a dark green t-shirt that said “Sawyer Honor Roll” on the left side of her chest, jeans, and white sneakers. I did not recognize the third student with Salma and Ubah. Her hair was black, parted to one-side, and flowed well past her waist, almost to the back of her knees. On either side of her face, she had a couple pieces of hair that hung an inch or two past her chin. She wore lots of make-up and tight clothing, although her arms were also covered. Suddenly I realized that this student was another whom I have been following and observing at Sawyer all school year. I couldn’t believe I didn’t recognize her, but I only knew it was Shamim, a Senior Pakistani Muslim student, because of her voice. “Hi Ms. Fischer,” she said. Everyday, Shamim wears either a black, white, or grey Hijab to school, but on this day, she did not have on her Hijab when she entered the auditorium or in her senior photos. On this day, it was almost as if Shamim was a different person. In my field notes for that day, I wrote:

Shamim is wearing black eye liner, eye shadow, mascara, and blush. She is wearing the same or similar faded jeans and sneakers she wears on a daily basis, but she is not following the school dress code with the shirt she is wearing. Instead, Shamim is wearing a tight fitted grey shirt with a black flower pattern all over the shirt. Along the neck line and around her arms are ruffles. Underneath the grey shirt, Shamim is wearing a long sleeve black shirt that covers her arms.

With only a few students in the auditorium, Shamim puts her back pack down on one of the empty seats in the auditorium. She asks Salma, “Will you watch my stuff?” Then Shamim walks to the stage and stands in line for her photo. She has a huge smile and continuously looks in the audience which only consists of Ubah, Salma, two Latinas, and myself. With a huge smile, Shamim waves to Salma and Ubah. Ubah smiles and says, “oohh, I want to be a senior so badly.” I said to Salma, “Shamim’s hair is so beautiful; has she ever had it cut?” Salma said, “Not cut—cut, but you know she trims it.” I asked, “what about the front pieces that are shorter?” Salma says, “She had to go to a wedding in Pakistan and she wanted to get her hair cut and she cried and cried, so her dad let her get those pieces cut.”

Salma looks up at Shamim and says to Ubah and me, “I don’t want to wear this stupid green shirt, I don’t like green, I wish we could wear what ever we wanted to wear.” Salma said, “I feel trapped in [the] uniform. I feel like Sawyer, not myself.” [As Salma was saying this comment, she stretched her arms out from her shoulders to the tips of her finger tips forming a cross with her body.] Salma smiles and explains, “Tomorrow I am talking my photos, I cannot wait, I am going to wear my outfit all day.”

Salma and Ubah remain seated in chairs close to the stage, waiting for Shamim to finish posing for her senior photos. They continue to talk and gossip with each other as a way to pass the time. As one Latina was walking off the stage to the other two girls sitting in front of us, Ubah and Salma are staring at her. Ubah continues watching this girl walk while, in urdu, she says something to Salma. The Latina is wearing high heels, close to three inches tall, and she seems to be having trouble walking. With each step, she is limping from side-to-side. Salma looks at this girl, then back at Ubah and says, “See, that is the privilege of talking Urdu, [we] can talk about them, because they can’t walk in heels.” Ubah and Salma smile and laugh loudly.

Salma is now standing in the aisle, while Ubah and I are sitting in seats looking up at the stage and continue waiting for Shamim. All of a sudden, Salma says, “I don’t understand, shut your ass up. All that ghetto—the English language is so messed up in this world.” Ubah does not respond she sits there quietly. Salma looks up at the stage and sees Shamim walking toward her, so Salma begins walking closer to the stage.

Salma and Shamim walk toward Ubah and I. Shamim says, “I have to put my scarf on, I cannot leave it off, I have to wear it.” Shamim pulls her hair back and puts it in a large hair clip—leaving her hair hanging in a pony tail down her back. Salma says, “Don’t you have to put your hair up in your scarf?” With a big smile, Shamim says, “it is straight; I don’t want to mess it up.” Salma smiles and asks, “Then why wear the scarf?” Shamim immediately says, “Its okay.” Shamim does not say anything, she just smiles and puts her large back pack on her back. Salma, Shamim, and Ubah walk out of the auditorium. They said, “We have to get to class, see you later Ms. Fischer.” I said “bye, see you in Ahinsa club after school.” (Field notes, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2008)

### **Significance of the Study**

The Pakistani students at Sawyer High School are influenced by the local school and peer culture of this American educational institution. The school setting is the first formal introduction to American culture for many immigrant students. Thus, the social and institutional structures of this setting are critical to the lived experiences of the Pakistani immigrant students at Sawyer High School. Furthermore, the social interactions that immigrant students encounter heavily impact which of their identities they set in motion and activate at any given moment. These students are acquiring, declaring, and changing their identities while simultaneously trying to adapt to the context of each individual social interaction and experience at this American educational institution. This research focused specifically, on how these institutional structures and intimate interactions impact the lived experiences of the Pakistani immigrant students at Sawyer High School.

Globalization has significantly impacted their experiences at Sawyer. The Pakistani students are living in their own landscapes, which have a sense of being “here” in the United States while simultaneously being “there” in Pakistan. Almost exclusively, they befriend peers who share their same cultural, religious, and national origin identities. Meanwhile, changes in technology, media, transportation, and other systems are altering the landscape in which these Pakistani student’s lived experiences occurs. Globalization has changed the ways cultural flows occur, as well as the actual flow of humanity from one place to another.

Since 1990, nearly one million immigrants have entered the United States each year, resulting in the largest influx of immigrant students to American classrooms since the beginning of the twentieth century (Banks & Banks, 2003). Due to this change in the population of American schools, the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of students, teachers, school administrators, researchers, and policy makers have changed. This diversity has challenged teachers, administrators and policy makers to ensure academic programming for immigrant students with English as their Second Language and with unique learning styles. Social, academic, and institutional structures are changing quickly in American schools. For these reasons, understanding how immigrant students form their identity is critical.

This research presents how agency, institutional structures of the school setting, and cultural flows, shape the lived experiences of Pakistani immigrant students at Sawyer High School, a large, urban, public high school in the Midwest. Although immigrant students may have definite ideas about their own identities, Sen (2006) explains, “we may still have difficulty in being able to persuade others to see us in just that way” (p. 6). Although the Pakistani immigrants define, declare, and acquire self-selecting identities, the teachers at Sawyer also impose an identity on them, based on their academic program. The purpose of this ethnographic study is to describe the enactment of agency and institutional structures on the lived experiences of Pakistani immigrant students at Sawyer High School.



### **Purpose of the Study**

The stories of these Pakistani students have never been told. The purpose of this study is to describe and re-create the everyday lived experiences of this group of Pakistani immigrant students at Sawyer High School using ethnographic methods of participant observations and in-depth interviews. This study examines the role of the institutional structures, agency -- of both the school officials and the students -- and the impact of globalization on these students' lived experiences. The results of this ethnography provide descriptive portraits of these students' social interactions, academic experiences, and lived experiences within an American public high school.

### **Research Question**

The central question this study sought to answer is: How do agency, institutional structures, and globalization impact the lived experiences of Pakistani immigrant students at an urban public high school?

After spending one year collecting the data and another analyzing it, a number of significant findings have been established. Due to the extensive time I spent observing and interviewing these students, I have a wealth of data on which the findings are grounded. Each group of findings is organized into chapters and each chapter is centered around one of the three major themes: globalization, institutional structures, and student agency.

Chapter Three discusses the impact of globalization on the Pakistani students, including the ways they live within their own Ethnoscape of being "here" in the United States and "there" in Pakistan. This chapter also covers the ways media and technology

has influenced their overall experiences, and specifically their experiences at Sawyer High School. The focus of Chapter Four focuses on the institutional structures at Sawyer, including the structurally imposed identities students are given by agents (teachers and administrators) of this American educational institution. Chapter Four also analyzes the way school requirements and expectations prepare the Pakistani students for the American workforce. Chapters Five and Six center around the same theme: student agency. Chapter Five discusses the way the Pakistani students self identify, first in contrast to the other racial groups at Sawyer -- they define their racial identity as “Desi,” which includes all Indian and Pakistanis -- and then the way they choose to self-identify based on their multiple root and route identities. Chapter Six analyzes the interaction of the institutional structures and student agency as the Pakistani students choose which after school clubs to join and which peers to befriend. Each of these chapters is significant in this ethnography, as they describe the lived experiences of the Pakistani students at Sawyer High School and provide evidence of the impact of globalization, institutional structures, and agency.

### **Conceptual Framework**

#### ***Statement of the Problem***

Identity is a complicated concept that can be understood in many different ways. The process of forming one’s identity is equally complex and shaped by a variety of factors, both local and global in scope. The identity one arrives at is multidimensional, malleable over time, and dependent on with whom one is interacting, and whether the individual is looking for an identity she shows to the world, or the one she shows to her

own self. This all becomes even more complex because technology, media, politics and other forces that have conspired to create a degree of globalization unique to current times. And yet it is essential that educators do understand identity formation because the identity a student takes on may be the deciding factor in her educational attainment.

The concept of “identity” is used in multiple fields, and therefore defined and understood in many ways. However, in general terms identity is commonly discussed as a process of making identifications, a process that is continuous and incomplete (Yon, 2000). Charles Taylor (1989) explains that modern identity “involves tracing various strands of our modern notion of what it is to be a human agent, a person, or a self” (p. 3). This continuous process of identity formation is two-dimensional: “In the process of claiming who one is, one is also announcing who one is not” (Yon, 2000, p. 102).

Identity is always understood in reference to time (Friese, 2002). As Taylor (1989) suggests, “I define who I am by defining where I speak from, in the family tree, in social space, in the geography of social stratuses and functions” (p. 35). Whether an individual is at home, work, school, or in a social setting, he or she interprets his or her present being within the framework, time, current space, and structure he or she is in at any given moment.

One’s sense of “identity” is also determined by with whom one interacts, dialogues and has relationships. James Clifford (1997) explains that to form an identity is to decide which “root” or “route” to have present at that moment in that interaction. Cultural roots include race, gender, and family history. One cannot change these characteristics. On the other hand, one can change one’s routes of identification,

socialization, and cultural connections. In other words, there is no *one* identity – the formation of identity recurs within each individual social context.

The impact of human agency is important because identity formation occurs within the context of a global society. “Agency emerges within the semantic and institutional networks that define and make possible particular ways of relating to people, things, and oneself” (Asad, 2003, p. 78). Agency is the combination of both intentional and unintentional actions by human actors (Parker, Mars, Ransome, & Stanworth, 2003). John Meyer and Ronald Jepperson (2000) explain the modern self, or actor, as a mobilizing agent for herself and often for other agents as well. Modern social structures are shaped by human agents who endorse their identities through agency for collective purposes.

The second central concept of this study is cultural globalization, or cultural flows. Cultural flows are the interconnectedness and the world-making movement of people, ideas, cultures, and goods. The Pakistani immigrant students are part of the wave of “new” immigrants, who are members of first, one-and-a-half, and second generations, including both children born in the United States to foreign born parents, and foreign born children brought to the US at a young age (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Zhou, 1997). One-and-a-half generation immigrants are children brought to the United States at age 9 or 10 (Lee, 2005).

In *The Interpretation of Culture*, Clifford Geertz (1973) proposes that culture is not a power – something to which social events, behaviors, institutions, or processes can be causally attributed. Rather, Geertz proposes that it is a context, something within

which they can be intelligibly, or thickly, described (p. 14). For the purpose of this study, the concept of “culture” will not be used to make judgments of other cultures, but rather as a descriptor of the context in which to understand individuals’ ideas, behaviors, and beliefs. It will help to contextualize the identities of these Pakistani immigrant children. “The analysis of culture comes down to a searching out of significant symbols, clusters of significant symbols, and clusters of clusters of significant symbols—the material vehicles of perception, emotion, and understanding—and the statement of the underlying regularities of human experience implicit in their formation” (p. 408). Through this ethnographic study, the everyday lived experiences of Pakistani immigrant students will be observed, documented, analyzed, and understood through thick description of their “native” way of life otherwise known as their “sociological pathways,” but not for the purposes of determining whether they are wrong or right (Latour, 1987, p. 205). “What is needed is some systematic, rather than merely literary or impressionistic, way to discover what is given, what the conceptual structure embodied in the symbolic forms through which persons are perceived actually is. What we want and do not yet have is a developed method of describing and analyzing the meaningful structure of experience as it is apprehended by representative members of a particular society at a particular point in time -- in a word, a scientific phenomenology of culture” (Geertz, 1973, p. 364). Through ethnographic methodology, this study describes and analyzes the enactment of agency, institutional structures, and globalization on the lived experiences of Pakistani immigrant students.

Modern globalization, unique to the current era, has changed the concept of culture through increased interconnectedness in world-wide cultural production and consumption. Globalization, in the sense of cultural flows is “what happens when the movement of people, goods, or ideas among countries and regions accelerates” (Coatsworth, 2004, p. 38). There is a direct correlation between the effects of globalization and the need to understand how immigrant students form their identities because globalization has resulted in extraordinary numbers of immigrant children entering the United States (Suarez-Orozco, 2001).

Accelerated globalization requires a new understanding of identity formation. Aihwa Ong and Stephen Collier (2005) identify the tension created between global forces and local communities, “[T]he term ‘global assemblage’ suggests inherent tensions: global implies broadly encompassing, seamless, and mobile; assemblage implies heterogeneous, contingent, unstable, partial, and situated” (p. 12). Immigrant students form their identities within the contexts of the global, encompassing, and mobile lifestyle described by Ong and Collier. Since immigrant students have moved between countries and therefore cultures, they are characterized as a heterogeneous, unstable, and partial population as a result of being a mobile community.

The lived experiences of immigrant students occur within the society identified by theorists as a global, cultural flow of assemblages. Arjun Appadurai (1996) proposes “a new role for the imagination in social life.” This “imaginary” life Appadurai alludes to is one of the “transnational construction[s] of imaginary landscapes.” Appadurai proposes a five dimension framework for understanding global cultural flow: ethnoscape,

technoscape, financescape, mediascape, and ideascap. Each of these dimensions shares the same suffix –scape, which “allows us to point to the fluid, irregular shapes of these landscapes, shapes that characterize international capital as deeply as they do international clothing styles” (p. 33). The collective, irregular, and multi-dimensional landscapes of culture speak to the fluidity of their multiple individual, self, collective, and social identities of immigrant students. Appadurai states, “an important fact of the world we live in today is that many persons on the globe live in such imagined worlds (and not just imagined communities) and thus are able to contest and sometimes even subvert the imagined worlds of the official mind and of the entrepreneurial mentality that surround them” (p. 33).

These Pakistani immigrant students’ experiences are representative of Appadurai’s (1996) “imagined worlds.” They may physically live in one country, but through the ethnoscape, technoscape, financescape, mediascape, and ideascap, actually exist as much in another. Appadurai uses the word, “rhizomic” as a metaphor for the way people currently live. Immigrant students live a life best explained or represented by a rhizome, which is the horizontal stem of a plant with multiply connected nodes in which roots grow. The same is true for the cultural flow present in immigrant students’ lives-- they begin school when they are young in one country and then continue their education in a new country with different cultural landscapes. The educational experiences of immigrant students may represent one node of their identity, while other parts of their life are represented in the other scapes identified by Appadurai.

Many other theorists agree with Appadurai's (1996) description of "irregular landscapes" of culture and current cultural flow, including Anna Tsing (2000). Tsing argues, "These world-making 'flows,' too, are not just interconnections but also the recarving of channels and the remapping of the possibilities of geography" (p. 327). She continues, "First, we must stop making a distinction between 'global' *forces* and 'local' *places*" (p. 352). In other words, Pakistani immigrant students are no longer living in two worlds, and should not be identified as bicultural. Due to the phenomenon of transnationalism, immigrant students' identities are now complex hybrids of their root and route identities (Suarez-Orozco, 2004). Since the lived experiences of immigrant children takes place in both their root and route locations, they tend to form identities that can be usefully understood, I propose, as "hybrid identities" or "braided identities". A "hybrid identity" is neither completely Pakistani nor American—these students are in between and within both cultures and communities simultaneously. The students with a hybrid identity merge and meld their multiple identities into one. Conversely, a "braided identity" allows for each strand of the student's identity to keep its individual integrity. These different strands come into contact through a weaving together. A braided identity is representative of multiple identities converging with one another and united as parts, but not completely merging into one another. Suarez-Orozco (2004) explains that the braided identity is a sense of self that incorporates elements of the parent culture, the new culture they are navigating, and an emerging globalized youth culture.

Due to the complexity of their root and route identities, the Pakistani students choose to self-identify in multiple ways. Rumbaut presents four types of ethnic self-



identities. Each of these four types of self-identities corresponds with the way the Pakistani students view the enactment of their root and route identities. In other words, each of these four types of self-identities correlates to either a “hybrid identity” or a “braided identity. Rumbaut’s (1994) four types of ethnic self-identities are: (1) immigrant or national-origin identity, (2) hyphenated identity, (3) American national identity without the hyphen, and (4) dissimilative racial or panethnic identity. Each of the Pakistani students represents his or her identity differently. The Pakistani students who choose a self-identity that includes a hyphen between their root and route identities represent a merging, melding and “hybrid identity.” The students who declare a self-identity without hyphens, allowing each strand of their identities to converge, yet simultaneously remain independent, choose a “braided identity.” The one constant among all the Pakistani students, is the complexity of the combination of their numerous identities.

Globalization plays a significant role in the conflicting influences of the American culture represented within the school setting. Due to technological advances, immigrant students have the choice of living in their local-American culture, or joining a global, on-line community. The internet provides students more opportunities to interact with cultures around the world and an entire community, including chat rooms, music, videos, movies, stores, and products from any, or all, parts of the world. This can include active participation in the culture of the students’ countries of origin, or in a youth culture that cannot be assigned to a single physical location.

Technology, and the global youth culture it has helped enable, might be inverting the traditional paradigm, in which children are more Americanized than their immigrant parents. Now, tech-savvy immigrant students have the option of maintaining contact and communication with their country of origin's current culture, including friends, music, movies, and other trends through the use of the internet. Thus, while their parents maintain an attachment to the remembered culture of an earlier time in their country of origin, their children remain very much a vital part of that country's actual culture.

James Clifford (1997) examines the concept of "travel" in relation to the movement of peoples, including diasporic populations, immigrants, and "travelers." He argues that the term "travel" is biased based on culture, gender, socio economic class, and "historically tainted," Clifford states:

My point, again, is not simply to invert the strategies of cultural localization, the making of 'natives,' which I criticized at the outset. I'm not saying there are no locales or homes, that everyone is—or should be—traveling, or cosmopolitan, or deterritorialized. This is not nomadology. Rather, what is at stake is a comparative cultural studies approach to specific histories, tactics, everyday practices of dwelling and traveling: traveling-in-dwelling, and dwelling-in-travel (p. 36).

John Tomlinson (2007) integrates the concepts of globalization and Clifford's argument, "[R]ather, globalization changes the texture of lived experiences both in mobility and in dwelling. Though it promotes much more physical mobility than ever before, the key to globalization's cultural dimension is not primarily grasped in the trope of travel, but in the transformation of localities themselves" (p. 152). Once again, Clifford and Tomlinson argue that culture is no longer about where you are. Instead, "Globalized culture is less determined by location because location is increasingly penetrated by

‘distance’—by the integration of structures of global connectivity” (Tomlinson, p. 152). Tomlinson refers to this as deterritorialization, “the reach of this connectivity into the localities in which everyday life is conducted and experienced.”

There is a common thread connecting many of these scholars: some speak of deterritorialization and others of scapes, but all propose that the cultural flows between local and global affect one’s identities. The adoption of transcultural identities is prevalent in this era of globalization, when individuals operate within constantly changing and multiple cultural flows (Suarez-Orozco, 2004). Immigrant students construct their identities within the differentiated schools and programs provided to them (Lipman, 2002).

However, while cultural flow exerts a “global” influence on identity formation, schools exert an equally profound “local” influence. Schools play a role in defining a person’s culture and the formation of their identity. Schools are examples of global spaces. The discursive space of schooling provides us with an example of how identity is constructed within the larger context of society. Daniel Yon’s (2000) ethnographic study explores identity formation and the cultural experience of students at an urban high school in Toronto. Yon explains that one must conceptualize schooling as a discursive space that enables us to recognize “how individuals come from contradictory locations and occupy contradictory positions” (p. 127).

A school as a discursive space where identity, culture, and race are conceptualized cannot be separated from the larger social context where the school is located. The dominant discourse at Yon’s (2000) Maple Heights suggests youth can be White, Black,

or Spanish. Marta, a Serbian student at Maple Heights sees herself as Spanish. Marta selected a Spanish identity based on her relationships with her peers. This selected Spanish identity is an example of how relationships represent the identity desired or imaged at any given moment in time.

And, as in society at large, identity in the school context is not fixed. Yon (2000) found the students at Maple Heights to be “fluid in their multiple affiliations” (p. 133). This fluidity, or elusiveness, is a result of our current cultural flow and globalization. Due to the global movement of cultures, people, ideas, and goods, these students are not defined, restricted, or contained to their present space. Their discursive space and relationships are continuously changing in this period of globalization, which allows them to identify, circulate, and communicate on a global scale.

Not only do schools provide a mirror of society when it comes to identity formation, but there is a direct correlation between students’ identities and their academic achievement. This was the finding in Signithia Fordham’s (1996) study. To highlight the pressure students feel at high school, Fordham studied student life and the academic experiences of African-American students at Capital High, an urban high school. She found that academic achievement is the primary course to success, but that it is also the primary course to “becoming the Other,” and liquidating one’s “Black Self” (Fordham, p. 283). The African-American students at Capital High choose “avoidance,” including limited contact with the school curriculum because of its connection to the “Other.” Tension builds because these students feel a threat to their identity (p. 285). “[T]he perception of becoming (an)Other inevitably involves liquidating the Black self at some

level” (p. 237). The only alternative for the African-American students is to live beyond society’s limited expectations for Black people through academic success, which results in taking on the identity of (an)Other (p. 235). It is evident how choices about identity, as Black or Other, can dictate the academic performance of students.

Identity formation is very much a choice. To form an identity is to decide which root or route to have present at that moment in that interaction. Yet, the root or route in which students self identify is dependent on the “scape” in which they currently exist. In other words, there is not one identity; the formation of identity for students recurs within each individual social context. And, identity formation for immigrant students fluctuates between root and route. The root is defined as the identity of fixed origin. Route includes the transformations, challenges, and paths one takes in life. The route also represents the global movement described by Ong and Collier (2005) as “global assemblages.” These “assemblages” are fluid within the social and institutional structures of the school setting. When students are speaking with a group of peers of the same fixed origin or root, their root identity is active.

K. Anthony Appiah (1994) and George Herbert Mead (1934) each describe a person’s identity as two-dimensional. Appiah explains that a person’s identity has two major dimensions: there is a collective dimension, which includes the intersection of collective identities, and there is a personal dimension, consisting of other socially or morally important features that are not themselves the basis of forms of collective identity (Appiah in Taylor, 1994). Mead agrees. In Mead’s first stage, the individual self is comprised of both the specific social acts in which one participates and the

organization of attitudes of others toward oneself. Ruben Rumbaut (1994) puts it, “youth see and compare themselves in relation to those around them, based on their social similarity or dissimilarity with the reference groups that most directly affect their relationship” (p. 754). Mead’s (1934) second stage is when the social attitude of the social group to which one belongs, in addition to the attitudes of individuals, constitutes the full development of the individual self. Both Appiah and Mead agree that a person’s identity is two-dimensional; each person has an individual and collective identity.

The one constant factor is that an individual’s identities are created and shaped within the context of the dominant culture. As Amy Gutmann (2003) put it:

The democratic state protects the dominant culture, whether intentionally or not, through the language it uses, the education it accredits, the history it honors, and the holidays and other customs it keeps. The state and the dominant public culture that it supports, both indirectly and directly, cannot be culturally neutral in this sense. Government conducts its business, public schools teach, and the mass media broadcast in the dominant language and in conformity with a culturally distinctive calendar (p. 43).

Thus, individual and collective identity formation for students in American schools can only be understood in the context of “America.” The identity of African-Americans cannot be seen as constructed exclusively within African-American communities, because these communities are also part of American society in general (Appiah, 1994). For the African-American students at Capital High, for example, academic achievement is known as *warfare*, because these students are in consistent struggle against competing forces: the dominant culture’s low academic expectations for the Black students and internal policing by their classmates intended to maintain group solidarity (Fordham, 1996).

Given the importance of identity in academic achievement, it is important that educators incorporate an understanding of the process of individual and collective identity formation, and how it can be guided, as they consider how to improve education for each child and all children. As Fordham (1996), Lee (2005), and Yon (2000) have all found, the expectations and categorization of “good” or “bad” students affects how students determine their personal identities, collective identities, and their academic performance. Taylor (1994) argues:

[O]ur identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the *misrecognition* of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being (p. 25).

The misrecognition of immigrant students may result in social distance and marginalization. Michael Olneck (2001) states that immigrant students are well aware of the negative opinions others have of them. Teachers’ opinions guide their practices, which may result in incorrect perceptions or interpretations of immigrant students’ abilities in the classroom. In response to these opinions or perceptions, immigrant students sometimes become critical of their teachers. Taylor (1994) explains that misrecognition is not just a matter of disrespect, it may cause or inflict “a grievous wound, saddling its victims with a crippling self-hatred.” Talal Asad (2003) agrees with Taylor, but also takes this idea one step further, arguing that now, more than ever, our identities depend on how others recognize us (p. 161).

The impact of misrecognition on immigrant students highlights the importance of interactions between educators and students. Without them, the school setting is just a physical structure – teachers and school administrators produce, build, and represent the school setting. Stacey Lee (2005) conducted research on first- and second-generation Hmong high school students and how they create their identities as “new Americans.” The teachers and administrators at University Heights High School (UHS) identified the Hmong students as culturally different or culturally deficient, compared to the White norm. This resulted in many Hmong students becoming marginalized both academically and socially at UHS. Lee explains her experience, “My fieldwork confirmed Mr. Schenk’s observations, that many Hmong American youth are alienated by their interactions with UHS educators” (p. 77). Taylor (1994) suggests that we not only let different cultures survive, but that we also acknowledge their worth and recognize the equal value in each culture.

Immigrant students have been categorized by teachers based on their conformity with society’s definition of the “good student.” Teachers have mixed views of students’ educational values, capabilities and futures (Olneck, 2001). There are many examples where students felt the formation of their self-identity mattered in regards to how they were treated or perceived by their teachers. Maria Matute-Bianchi (1986) explains that maintaining an identity as a Mexicano or Mexican-American student allows one to develop an identity as a successful, or “good,” student. She further explains that to be a “Chicano student” means cutting class, not participating, and doing only the minimal work necessary, which translates into being a “bad” student (p. 253). Similarly, in Lee’s



(2005) research, many of the Hmong American students who dressed and spoke in hip-hop or urban styles led teachers to believe that they had Americanized in “bad” ways.

Beyond interactions between students and teachers, the institutional structures of American schools significantly influence the lived experiences of immigrant students. Many of these structures are the responses of school administrators, teachers, and policy makers to the influx of immigrant students in schools. Some school systems believe the purpose of schooling for immigrant students is to Americanize their identities. Either intentionally or not, many of the programs for immigrant students are segregated from the mainstream students. This segregation influences the educational experiences of these students.

Often immigrant students’ native languages are not spoken by individuals at their American school, or there is an expectation for immigrant students to learn English. As a result, immigrant students are segregated from other students because they are in English as a Second Language (ESL) or Limited English Proficient (LEP) classes (Olsen, 2000). In many schools these programs are physically isolated from the rest of the school. Students in these programs are aware of the separation. This affects their identities by resulting in a forced change for immigrant students from their root to a new route identity (Olneck 2001). Rumbaut (1994) explains:

Being labeled and assigned to classes as a (LEP) student in school is significantly associated with diminished self-esteem. A LEP status is a common designation for non-English-speaking immigrants in public schools, as well as a stigmatized status which typically places them outside the mainstream English-language curriculum and exposes them to teasing and ridicule by other students (p. 784).

This segregation of the school setting creates social and academic isolation for immigrant students which affect the formation of their identity along with their self image, self-esteem, and self-confidence. Immigrant students are expected to develop their sense of self in the context of a school setting that separates them from all the other students.

The literature reviewed above clearly indicates that American schools influence the lived experiences of immigrant students through the pedagogy, curriculum, classroom arrangement, policies and procedures, and overall school structure. Olneck (2001) explains that schools are:

Instructing youngsters in middle-class hygiene and manners, diet and food preparation, home management, dress, aesthetic and literacy standards, recreation, the rights and duties of citizenship, accentless English, and the myths and legends of U.S. history, and in providing them with role models, educators sought not merely to induce behavioral conformity, but more fundamentally, to inculcate American values, logics, sensibilities, and identities (p. 311).

The goal, apparently, is to integrate immigrant students and Americanize them into the mainstream culture. Research is necessary to determine how these efforts impact students' identities, their educational experiences, and what effects, positive and negative, this has on immigrant students.

### ***Review of Relevant Research on Immigrant Students in the United States***

Although high school is an everyday, familiar place for most American teenagers, for immigrant students, school is more than an academic institution – it is where the Americanization process takes place. For most Americans, schools present the most common shared experience. They are essential to the Americanization process for immigrant children (Miller & Tanners, 1995). For most immigrants, American schools

are where they first come into contact with the dominant culture. The American public schools are representative of the larger societal context and dominant cultural structures with which they will have to contend in their new home.

The existing historical, social, and economic situation of the time is critical to understanding the experience of each wave of immigrants to enter the United States (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). Therefore, the experience of the “old” immigrants, those arriving in the US beginning at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century through the turn of the century, differs from that of the “new” immigrants, who arrived in the US at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century through present day, as the historical, social, and economic time periods are different. Each “wave” of immigrants creates problems and challenges for the American educational system. Carola and Marcelo Suarez-Orozco (2001) conclude that each large wave of immigrants presents unique challenges, and there are no shortcuts to addressing these challenges. The language acquisition and bilingualism debate, for example, has been faced by both “new” and “old” immigrants. In fact, one similarity is that linguistically, neither group of immigrants fit into the mainstream culture. Immigrant children are often embarrassed because they are teased about their accents or incorrect use of English (Zimmerman, 2002).

But the country and the immigrants come to these challenges from very different places today than they did a century ago. The “old” immigrants came largely from Europe, whereas the “new” immigrants enter into the United States from all over the world, including Asia, Africa, and Latin and Central America. The Suarez-Orozcos (2001) found that majority of the “new” immigrants cannot “disappear” into mainstream

America because they are people of color. In addition, the “new” immigrants are part of the significant back-and-forth movement of people, goods, information, and symbols that is common to the Global Era. Thus, not only the players, but the playing field on which these issues play out has changed:

The experience of the last three decades has taught us that immigration is structured by extremely powerful and global social, economic, and cultural factors that democratic nations cannot easily regulate with unilateral policy initiatives (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001, p. 155).

The unique challenge faced by schools today, is to determine the most effective educational policies and curriculum reforms to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse immigrant population in an increasingly global world.

The challenges facing the current wave of immigrants are different, and probably greater, than those facing turn of the Century immigrants from Europe. Min Zhou (1997) discovered that there are trends unfavorable to adaptation by the “new” immigrants to American schooling. First, Zhou explains that after narrowing for most of the twentieth century, the gap between rich and poor has widened in recent years due to globalization and economic restructuring. Next, she argues, “The context of the reception that has greeted contemporary immigrants and their children has changed dramatically over the past three decades to create additional obstacles to ‘melt’ the diverse body of immigrants and their offspring into a single mainstream.” Finally and most relevant to the schooling of the “new” immigrants:

[T]here has been a growing ‘oppositional culture’ among young Americans, especially among those who have felt oppressed and excluded from the American mainstream and who have been frustrated by the widening gap between a culture that highly values freedom and

materialism and the reality of a dwindling economic future. Many of these American children have responded to their social isolation and their constrained opportunities with resentment toward middle-class America, rebellion against all forms of authority, and rejection of the goals of achievement and upward mobility. Because students in schools shape one another's attitudes and expectations, such an oppositional culture negatively affects educational outcomes (Zhou, 1997).

These negative effects are evident in studies by Stacey Lee (2005), Alejandro Portes and Ruben Rumbaut (2001), and Alejandro Portes and Dag MacLeod (1996). In each of these studies, a local population formed an "oppositional culture" due to the exclusion and oppression *they* receive from the dominant, majority American culture.

Portes and MacLeod (1996) completed a study of 5,266 children of immigrants in Florida and California in eighth and ninth grades. The purpose of their study was to examine how the educational attainment of second generation immigrants is shaped by the diverse characteristics of their parents and their immigrant communities. In order to compare and contrast the first and second generation immigrants, Portes and MacLeod's research was based on two hypotheses: (1) test scores of second generation students will be higher in schools with higher average socio-economic status "that are not near inner-city areas; and (2) parents' socio-economic status will interact positively with average school socio-economic status (p. 257).

They studied "new" immigrants from Cuba, Vietnam, Haiti, and Mexico and found that parental socio-economic status had a strong correlation with the academic performance of students (Portes & MacLeod, 1996). Portes and MacLeod also found that "second-generation students from disadvantaged groups did, indeed, have lower-than average mathematics and reading scores and the gap persisted after parental SES, length

of United States residence, and hours spent on homework were controlled” (p. 264).

Therefore, the Cuban and Vietnamese students achieved higher scores on the standardized tests than the Haitian and Mexican immigrant students. Portes and MacLeod concluded that the median scores for the Cuban- and Vietnamese-American children in mathematics significantly exceeded the average for the sample and surpassed those of their respective school systems. The opposite was true for Haitian- and Mexican-origin students, whose scores were quite low relative to both the total sample and the median scores for their respective school systems (Portes & MacLeod, 1996). Through their study of the relationship between neighborhood schools, test scores, and the positive relation between parental socio-economic status and the average school socio-economic status, they found both hypotheses to be true.

In *Up Against Whiteness: Race, School, and Immigrant Youth*, Stacey Lee (2005) argues that Hmong American students are seen in one of two ways: either as blackened, and Americanizing in bad and dangerous ways; or as foreign, not American, and culturally different. Lee explains that the middle- and upper-class immigrants are typically seen as Americanizing in “good” ways, while the poor- and working-class students are seen as Americanizing in “bad” ways. “Good” is synonymous with following the rules set by the institutional culture and structures present in American public high schools—that of the mainstream, white-middle-class.

Lee (2005) found that, students’ experiences with educational institutions that do not serve their needs cause their negative attitudes toward school. These negative school experiences have a significant impact on the students’ culture. Carl Bankston’s (2004)

work supports Lee's findings. He argues that process factors are "the center of attention of school reformers who are concerned with problems such as unequal distribution of resources among schools." Process factors are significant factors in the educational attainment of immigrant students. Bankston explains that teachers perceive and treat children from some backgrounds differently than others, which is the single relevant process factor. Thus, the categorization of "good" and "bad" students by the teachers at UHS influenced the educational attainment, expectations, and aspirations of the Hmong students.

In 1990, the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (CILS) by Alejandro Portes and Ruben Rumbaut (2001) found that educational expectations and personality adjustment, as indexed by self-esteem scores, influence school achievement strongly and positively. This also comports with Lee's observations of the Hmong students at UHS. The CILS was composed of 5,262 second generation Asian and Latin American immigrant students from 49 different schools in Miami and Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and San Diego, California. Portes and Rumbaut explain their findings:

Significant differences in aspirations and expectations emerged among nationalities. The most ambitious groups were Cubans in bilingual private schools in Miami and Chinese and other Asians (mostly Japanese, Koreans, and Indians). Along with the Vietnamese, these were the groups that showed the most significant increases in educational expectations over time....At the bottom of the distribution were Dominicans, Mexicans, Laotians, and Cambodians (p. 216).

Portes and Rumbaut (2001) concluded that two predictable social forces were central to these differences: (1) the human and social capital of each immigrant group; and (2) the opportunities and barriers in the host society (p. 267).

The educational aspirations of the “new” immigrants are dependent on their cultural, social, and human capital. Human capital includes education, job experience, and language knowledge (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). The difference in human capital between immigrant groups often explains why some immigrants have higher levels of educational attainment than others.

The value, or wealth, of existing personal relationships is one form of social capital. Grace Kao (2004) explains that the following are forms of social capital for immigrant students:

Parents’ education, the family structure, resources in the household, children’s educational aspirations, parents’ educational aspirations for their children, parents’ contact with schools, parents’ interaction with their children, and any other resource that is tied to educational outcomes (p. 174).

But while social capital is equally important to each group, the social capital they possess is quite different. “New” immigrants “tend to be much more ethnically, socioculturally, and linguistically diverse than before” (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001, p. 56).

In the United States, individuals are often expected to “check the box” to identify themselves. In other words, individuals must identify which race or ethnicity they “belong” to by selecting from among a pre-determined list of options. The 2005 U.S. Census Bureau indicates that out of 583,070,000 students attending American schools, 159,340,000 were attending public high school, of which 25,920,000 are Black, 5,960,000 Asian, and 28,240,000 selected Hispanic. The categories available for students to self-select their race or ethnic origin are limited to “White,” “Black,” “Asian,” “Hispanic.” There are many other “categories” that students might have selected or



chosen if given the opportunity. These categories are not just of skin color, but also reference “root” identities. The Census defines “ancestry” as a “person’s ethnic origin or decent, ‘roots,’ or heritage; or the place of birth of the person, the person’s parents, or ancestors before their arrival in the United States” (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005).

“Population by selected Ancestry Group and Region” from the 2005 US Census indicates that out of the 288,378,137 total residents of the United States, the “Arabs” are 1,400,345, which includes eight subcategories of this one “group,” including several subcategories that do not actually speak Arabic in their home countries. Among these are those of Pakistani descent. In 2005, the population with Pakistani “Ancestry” was 66,333 people. Twenty-six percent of this population lived in the Midwest – approximately 17,279 individuals.

The concept of fitting into the checked box is especially difficult for immigrant students, who have moved from their “root” culture into a new country and culture. For example, Pakistani immigrant students have the choice of “Black, white, Asian, or Hispanic” but many prefer to “fit” into a box according to their religion, specific ancestry (in other words, Pakistani, not “Arab”), or a hyphenated identity of Pakistani-American. The lack of “boxes” available for self-identification, limit the options available for immigrants to self identity as they choose (Bonnett & Carrington, 2000). Alastair Bonnett and Bruce Carrington conducted a study of English and Welsh student teachers’ attitudes towards ethnic classification. They found that half of the students, approximately 46%, were dissatisfied with the category of “other.” They preferred the descriptors, “mixed parentage, multiracial, mixed ethnic origin, ‘Half British, Half

Sudanese,' 'Black English,' 'Latin American,' 'Middle Eastern,' 'European white' (p. 494). Even when given the categorical options of "Black Other," one-third of the students preferred heritage or mixed cultural identities. The same was true for the category of "Asian Other" – 36% of students requested the categorical choice of national or ethnic identity (Bonnett & Carrington, 2000).

Rumbaut (1994) found four main types of ethnic self-identities: (1) immigrant or national-origin identity, (2) hyphenated identity, (3) American national identity without the hyphen, and (4) a dissimilative racial or panethnic identity. Over one-quarter of the youth he studied, 27%, identified by national origin; 40% chose a hyphenated-American identity; approximately 11% identified themselves as unhyphenated Americans; and 21% of the children selected racial or panethnic identity labels for themselves (p. 788). Most of the children in Rumbaut's study identify themselves as individuals with membership in collective identity groups, either from their national origin or within the current structure of American society. Rumbaut's work shows the importance of both the "root" and "route" identities for children of immigrants. It highlights the interaction of two essential forces on the process of identity formation for immigrant students: globalization and the school setting.

### ***Previous Research on Pakistani Immigrants in the United States***

There has been extensive research on how agency and institutional structures impact identity formation for other categories of students, including White, Black, Asian, and Hispanic. However, when it comes to the "other," there are many students that select this category because they do not want to fit into one of the other racial categories or

boxes. The U.S. Census does not provide a box to check titled “Muslim or Pakistani” for students, but there are an increasingly growing number of Pakistani immigrant students attending American public high school. Thus, there is a need to study this population. There has also been limited research on the educational experiences of the Pakistani immigrant population present in American high schools. Pakistani students do not fit into the category of “Black,” “White,” “Hispanic,” or even “Asian.” There is a need to understand how agency and the institutional structures impact their identity formation. In fact, immigrants from India and Pakistan introduced the most diverse and active new ingredients into American religious pluralism of any immigrant group (Williams, 1998, p. 182).

Although this study will focus specifically on the Pakistani immigrant experience, background knowledge and information regarding the larger Muslim community is essential to better understand the specific experiences of Pakistani immigrants. Identity formation is not developed within isolation. In fact, one’s identity is defined “always in dialogue with, sometimes in struggle against, the things our significant others want to see in us” (Taylor, 1994, p. 33). For immigrant students, this mostly occurs within the walls of American public schools, which represent the larger democratic society and public spheres, where each individual’s identity is recognized (Taylor, 1994).

Muslim immigrants have been expected to assimilate to the “American ways”. “The American experience forges as well as forces a new Muslim identity that is born out of both the quest to belong and the experience of being permanently depicted as ‘the other’” (Haddad, 1998, p. 33). Muslims are not only expected to assimilate (Haddad,

1998), but they have also been victims of resistance due to the generalization and lack of knowledge on the part of many Americans.

Throughout the history of America different groups have played the role of outsider, non-participant, even enemy, in response to which Americans can reaffirm their identity as a nation standing for the right and good. Currently, Muslims appear to be the victims of the apparent need to create such an enemy, one that can be defined as the antithesis of the national character and a threat to the righteous order (Haddad, 1998, p. 23).

Another way Muslims are expected to Americanize is through “fitting into a category.” Amartya Sen (2006) explains, “Our freedom to assert our personal identities can sometimes be extraordinarily limited in the eyes of others, no matter how we see ourselves” (p. 6). Sen demonstrates that nationality and religion are two separate, yet equally important identities, “For example, a Bangladeshi Muslim is not only a Muslim but also a Bengali and a Bangladeshi, typically quite proud of the Bengali language, literature, and music, not to mention the other identities he or she may have connected with class, gender, occupation, politics, aesthetic taste, and so on” (p. 14). The need to classify, categorize, and “fit into a box,” are all part of the Americanization process. “The need to define themselves [Muslims] by religious identity and increasingly by ethnicity is in a sense a product of the Americanization process. The current culture is in flux with strong sentiments supporting the definition of America as a Judeo-Christian nation, and others advocating a pluralistic society” (Haddad, 1998, p. 47).

Just as there are churches, synagogues, and other houses of worship in the United States representing different branches of Christianity and Judaism, the same is true for American mosques. In fact, the significant differences among mosques within the United States reflect the significant differences among the nationalities of the “Muslim” world.

For example, “In some metropolitan areas, such as [Research Location] . . . mosques serve distinct national or ethnic groups and are known as Asian, African, European, or Arab. The regional identity of the mosque is revealed by the native place of the governing boards, the training of the imams, the language of instruction and social intercourse, the modes of dress, and the cuisine at mosque functions” (Williams, 1998, p. 185). Haddad (1998) states that “The diversity of the Muslim community in North America and the cultural differences it represents have raised the question of whose cultural definitions is truly Islamic” (p. 46).

There have been four major waves of Muslim immigration to [Research Location] land. The first and smallest wave of Muslim immigrants date back to 1885-1893, the second wave occurred between 1917 and 1945 when the Ottoman Empire was in decline, the third wave began after World War Two from 1945 through 1965 – this was a time during which many significant events occurred for Muslim immigrants, including Bangladesh separating from Pakistan, Civil War in Lebanon, the development of the first Muslim Student Association (MSA) of the U.S. and Canada (which occurred in 1963 in [Research Location]) (Husain & Vogelaar, 1994) – and the last and continuing wave of Muslim immigrants began in 1965. The final large influx of Muslim immigrant families began in response to the Immigrant Act of 1965 (Husain & Vogelaar, 1994). The Muslim community in [Research Location] consists of families from many different countries, including India, Pakistan, Yugoslavia, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Algeria, Morocco, Iran, Malaysia, Indonesia, China, Turkey, the former Soviet Union, the Balkans, Albania, Cambodia, and all countries of the Arabian

Peninsula (Husain & Vogelaar, 1994). Fifty-nine percent of the Muslim population in [Research Location] lives in the northern part of the city, which is where this study was conducted.

There has not been extensive research on Pakistani immigrant students in American public high schools. We do not know specifically how American educational institutions generally impact the lived experiences of Pakistani immigrants. Pakistan was created as an independent state in 1947 (Williams, 1998, p. 185). It is the only Middle Eastern country that combines English as its national language with Islam as its national religion. Pakistani immigrants depend on their religion to “shape and strengthen” their identities (Williams, 1998). Pakistani immigration has increased 415.3 percent between 1980 and 1990 (Williams, 1998). The need for this study is significant.

General research on Pakistani immigrants has found a significance difference between the generations of parent and children in maintaining traditional cultural identities. The parents of Pakistani immigrant children are more likely to maintain their traditional culture (Wakil, Siddique, & Wakil, 1981). However, through the use of religious schooling on the weekends, Pakistani TV, radio, and movies, and religious youth organizations, parents hope for their children to maintain some of their traditional cultural. Parents expressed sadness that second generation immigrant children are losing the love for and facility in their families’ languages and symbols (Wakil, Siddique, & Wakil, 1981; Williams, 1998).

S. Parvez Wakil, C. M. Siddique, and F. A. Wakil (1981) found that Indian and Pakistani parents thought their children were becoming more and more Westernized in

their looks and attitudes. “They had more white friends than their parents had. Most of them freely expressed their love for Western music, dances, and movies. Unlike their parents, the children always spoke English. Interestingly, children who understood their mother tongue, whenever addressed by their parents, tended to answer in English” (p. 937). Thus, tension builds between Pakistani parents and their children because of the influences of Western culture on the children. Ron Kelley (1994) highlights the words of one American convert to Islam,

The kids [of immigrant Indo-Pakistanis] come into the house wearing Levi 501’s. . . . They take off their makeup and jackets. They put on their Indian clothing—they’re kind of like pajamas. And then they eat Pakistani curry and their parents think everything is OK. They don’t know when their kids walk out of the house, they’re totally American. (pp. 140-141)

Pakistani immigrant social networks are mainly composed of family members, as opposed to friendships, and therefore “they are suspicious of American family life and fearful of bad influences from their children’s peers” (Williams, 1998, pp. 189-190). Furthermore, tension often arises between parents and children because of the multicultural and multireligious friendships and dating. Religious groups offer “safe” environments for parents and children to discuss these issues (Smith, 1999; Wakil, Siddique, & Wakil, 1981; Williams, 1998). In this era of globalization and transnationalism, many Pakistani families continue to be influenced by social communities in at least two countries, maintaining direct contact with family and friends in several countries through the use of advanced technology (Williams, 1998).

Previous dissertations have studied Pakistani immigrants, but there has not been extensive research on how agency and institutional structures, in a global society, impact

the lived experiences for Pakistani high school students in urban public high schools. Recent dissertations have studied: “Resettlement, Ethnic Identity, and Health Care Experiences of first-generation Pakistani Immigrants” (Hashwani, 2006); “Islam and the making of Transnational Citizenship: Pakistani Immigrant Experience in Houston, Texas” (Afzal, 2005); “The Perceptions, Problems, and Concerns of Female Pakistani Students Attending Secondary Level Public School in the United States” (Spencer, 2000); and (4) “A Contemporary Urban Ethnography of Pakistani Middle School Students in Oslo, Norway” (Hansen, 2000). Though these other studies contribute to the field of research, there is a need for ethnographic research on the lived experiences of the Pakistani immigrant students at an American public high school.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Overview**

I conducted classroom observations as well as in-depth interviews with a group of Pakistani immigrant students at an urban public high school in the Midwest (that I refer to under a pseudonym as “Sawyer High School”), beginning on the first day of the 2008-09 school year – September 1, 2008 – and continuing through Friday, June 5, 2009. During each visit, I observed these students in a variety of classrooms, including Science, History, Math, English, Art, Music, and Physical Education (P.E.). I observed these courses in each of the different academic programs, including Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Advancement Via Individual (AVID), English as a Second Language (ESL), and the “Regular” academic programs. I also observed the Pakistani students in the lunch room. I conducted many open-ended interviews with students, teachers, and school administrators, and was also a participant observer in certain after-school clubs, including the Indian-Pakistani club, Ahinsa, and National Honors Society (NHS). This study was designed and informed by the observations and interview data collected throughout the school year.

Prior to the start of this study, I received approval for it from the Loyola University Chicago Institutional Review Board (IRB). The Loyola IRB approved each component of this study, including, but not limited to, participant observations, student

and teacher participation and conducting interviews. The IRB also allowed an extension of this study for me to continue to conduct data analysis for another year.

### **Site Selection**

Due to the large immigrant population, Sawyer was an easy and obvious choice for this study. Although I had previous connections to Sawyer High School, I was considered an outsider by the faculty, staff, and students. Ms. Gray, the curriculum coordinator who refers to herself as a “pseudo-administrator,” and I have known each other for two years through professional interactions. She, along with the principal, Mr. Newhart (both pseudonyms) approved my access into Sawyer High School.

Sawyer is an urban high school in one of the largest urban school districts in the Midwest. The actual name of the school and district has not been identified in order to maintain this particular school’s confidentiality. The mission statement from this particular school is “to develop lifelong learners who embrace diversity, have a social conscience, and possess the academic, critical thinking, social and technological skills to be responsible and productive members of society.” Enrollment at Sawyer High School for the 2008-2009 school year was 1,152 students. The racial percentages at this school were as follows: 7% white, 40% black, .06% Native American, 13% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 40% Hispanic. The mobility rate was 40.4% and the graduation rate was 66.8%. The school is in the neighborhood of Water’s Edge. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the school’s zip code had a population of 47,726. The median household income was \$34,293. Foreign-born residents were 38.2% of the area’s population, compared with 11.1% nationwide, and 46% of the residents spoke a language other than English at

home. The area is currently going through a re-gentrification that includes the building of expensive condominiums, town houses, and large single-family homes. Enrollment in the school is open to all students living within the attendance area. Students living outside the area can apply to attend.

This particular school has English Language specialists to work with the students and teachers to support the students for whom English is their second language. This school has students who are bilingual, English Language Learners (ELL), and Limited English proficient (LEP). The total number of ELL students was approximately 22%. It has a Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) program and sheltered English classes for ELL students. Sheltered English classes “are a technique in which limited-English proficient students receive instruction in modified English, but the instruction is of the same caliber and at the same level as that provided to their English-speaking peers in the general program of instruction” (Sawyer website, 7/11/09). The aim of the ESL Program is to develop English listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Instruction is given in the areas of syntax receptive and expressive language. The goal of the ESL Program was to aid the students to understand and speak the English language, thus enabling them to function in school activities and in the students’ daily lives. “Once students understand English at a transitional level, they enroll in classes in the general program of instruction” (Sawyer website). Sawyer High School formerly also had bilingual programs in Spanish, Urdu, and Vietnamese due to the large immigrant populations and now has a bilingual program in Spanish.

There are were approximately 734 students at this high school who speak a language other than English as their home language, which was about 63.72% of the student population. Among these students at Sawyer, forty-nine different languages were spoken. Within the 36.38% of the student population that was born outside the United States, representing 60 different countries, approximately 25 of the students were born in Pakistan, which is the second largest immigrant population after the Mexican student population.

### **Ethnographic Methods**

The purpose of ethnographic research methods is to provide detailed descriptions of the “breadth” of everyday social life (Becker, 1996). For this study, I have written extensive field notes to preserve the meaning of the lived experiences of a group of Pakistani immigrant students at an urban, public high school. The ethnographic method includes descriptions that are detailed and “thick” (Geertz, 1973), and that connect the “close-up details” as well as the “wide-angle lens” (Becker, 1996). The use of field notes was essential to reconstruct the lived experiences of the Pakistani students. Field notes were absolutely essential for preserving the experiences of the participants in this study (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995).

The ethnographic method was chosen for this study so that through extensive field notes, interviews, observations, dialogue, and particular situations, the everyday lives of the Pakistani immigrant students could be recreated. The compiled files of both the transcribed interviews and field notes are 875 pages. In fact, once the field notes were analyzed, sorted, coded, and organized by themes, they became the “building blocks of

the emerging ethnographic story” (Emerson et al, 1995, p. 175). My goal was to tell the ethnographic story of the everyday lives of the Pakistani immigrant students at Sawyer High School.

### **Interview Methods**

An interview protocol was designed prior to the first interview for purposes of organization, focus, and consistency among interviews. Irving Seidman (1998) suggests a three-tiered model for phenomenological, in-depth interviewing. His model was the basis for interviews in this study. The research question focuses on the way the Pakistani students self identify, as well as how the influences of the teachers and the institutional structure of schooling at Sawyer impact the Pakistani students’ lived experiences. To do this, I needed to know some background information about the students’ life experiences in Pakistan. This was the first section of the protocol: questions pertaining to the student’s life history: where he or she grew up, went to school, and social experiences in Pakistan. Then, in the second part of the interview, information was gathered about the student’s contemporary experiences: their perceptions of what it is like to be a student at Sawyer High School, what music he or she enjoys, who his or her friends are, and how he or she describes himself or herself to other friends, teachers, and family members. When the students responded to questions pertaining to their social and academic experiences, they were asked to provide specific examples. The interviewees were also asked to provide evidence to back up their assertions. Lastly, the third section was one of reflection: what was the biggest challenge he or she had overcome and what has he or she

learned from their classmates at Sawyer, and what are some of his or her future goals as a student and for her career.

Each individual participated in a one-on-one interview with me at a scheduled interview time. The participants each had agreed to and signed the consent forms, prior to the scheduled time and date of the interview. The interviewees that were under the age of eighteen signed an assent form followed by parental consent forms that were required prior to each interview. Each interview began with an introduction from me, followed by an explanation of the purpose of the interview. All interviews were semi-structured and audio taped for transcription purposes.

### **Data Analysis Methods**

Immediately after each interview, transcriptions and notes were typed and organized. Included in the notes were side-notes, initial thoughts, important additions, and my thoughts on the significance of the field notes or comments by the participants, all as made by me during the interviews and observations. Once multiple interviews were transcribed, I began to code the data for patterns and themes from the students' experiences as Pakistani immigrant students at this particular urban public high school.

Triangulation is a strategy for ensuring credibility and rigor in a study. This occurs when there are multiple sources of data, at different times, from different places that are used for data collection points (Rallis & Rossman, 2003). I recognized this and understood there was a need for significant amounts of data collection to validate my themes, findings, and conclusions that were made throughout the analysis of the data.

Sharon F. Rallis and Grechen B. Rossman (2003) describe data analysis as the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data. The purpose of using codes is to ensure a systematic and rigorous method of organizing the data into useful categories and themes. There were three stages of coding the data: first, reading through the field notes as a data set and asking questions of the notes; second, open or initial coding; and last, selective coding (Emerson et al., 1995).

Each stage of coding the data was significant to the systematic approach to analyzing this qualitative data. The first stage of coding was important for me to perceive relations over time and gain insight, and encouraged recognition of patterns and themes within the field notes (Emerson et al., 1995). I asked questions of the information written in the field notes—which later turned into a short phrase or potential theme that captured or signaled what was going on in a particular piece of datum that later linked to more analytical issues in the study. Each of these questions I asked of the field notes turned into a memo of a potential theme or pattern. This stage of coding was important because I prioritized the process of how the students' experiences played out rather than just the cause of an event.

Open or initial coding was the second stage of data analysis in this study. This is a more focused, time intensive analytical process than the previous stage. Open coding involved line-by-line coding of both the field notes and interviews for the purpose of opening up “avenues of inquiry” (Emerson et al., 1995). In this stage, I did not use pre-established categories: rather, I “read with an open eye toward identifying events described in the notes that could themselves become the basis of categorization” (p. 152).

The purpose of categorizing the data was for there to be a way to name and identify the significance of a particular observation.

The last stage of coding was selective coding. This was the most systematic and methodical stage of analysis. Selective coding involved more focused codes. This process was used for all of the interviews, as well as for observations. The coding was completed by hand, with marks and codes labeled in the margins of a typed copy of the data. I re-coded all the field notes and interviews with the more focused codes, with a spotlight on the key themes and patterns. In sum, this stage required that I identify, develop, modify, and concentrate on the broader analytical themes, arguments and patterns of the lived experiences of the Pakistani students at Sawyer High School (Emerson et al., 1995).

Rallis and Rossman (2003) offer a series of recommendations for analyzing data. Many of these suggestions were used to analyze the interview and observation data, including consistently referring to the conceptual framework, staying focused on the research question, writing down descriptive notes, modifying and organizing the findings according to what research and scholars have found, and talking through the findings with other people.

The next step after coding was the continuation of the interpretation of data. This required the writing of the findings (Chapters Three through Five), followed by the conclusion (Chapter Six). These findings are tentative and exploratory, due to the limited size of this small study.



I organized the codes by larger themes, first—Institutional structures and teacher’s agency, secondly—student’s agency, and lastly—globalization. These three overarching themes became the focus for each of the three chapters setting forth findings. The next step in the data analysis process was to begin with the memos I had written to begin outlining each of these chapters. I outlined and wrote one chapter at a time, staying focused on the theme through the field notes, interviews and theoretical framework. Once each chapter was outlined using my memos and findings, I wove the theory and analytical framework into the chapter. Lastly, I turned each outline into a first draft of a chapter. This same process was repeated for each of Chapters Three through Six.

Each of the four chapters setting forth the findings has a different theme, yet together the chapters analyze, summarize, and explain the lived experiences of the Pakistani students at Sawyer High School. Chapter Three argues the ways these Pakistani students live in an “imaginary world,” living within a community made up of both their worlds “here” in the United States” and “there” in Pakistan. In other words, due to globalization, one can say that these students live in less of a physical location but instead in a more irregular global landscape. Chapter Four discusses the way the institutional structures at Sawyer prepare them for the American workforce, along with the way the teachers, as active agents, assign them with a structurally imposed identity based on their academic performance. Chapter Five analyzes the way the students are active agents within the constraints of their experiences at this urban public high school. Lastly, Chapter Six discusses the role of after school clubs in the social and educational experiences of the Pakistani immigrant students. Chapter Seven summarizes my findings

and also includes implications of my research and further studies that should be completed.

### **Informal Consent**

At the beginning of the interviews, I met with the participants to describe the overall goals and purpose of the study. I then explained the purpose of the consent letter and its importance in this study. Participants voluntarily took part in this study. They read the letter of consent and then signed it if they agreed to the terms stated in the letter. Therefore, I received voluntary consent from each participant to conduct this study.

The consent letter stated that “the researcher will keep my name and the names of others in this project confidential.” The real names of the students, teachers and the school remain confidential and private to protect their identity. The participants were notified in the letter of consent that the information collected will only be used for this specific study and will not be used for any other purposes.

### **Access and Entry**

Access was granted to me for the entire 2008-2009 school year. This “access” was evidenced by a letter written by Ms. Gray and signed off by Mr. Newhart, the principal, allowing me to conduct this ethnographic study at Sawyer High School. This letter did not guarantee the willingness or interest of the Pakistani students to participate in this study. The letter stating that the researcher had “access” included that, and only that—entrance and permission to be within the school building of Sawyer to conduct this study. The next level of entry for me was for the Pakistani students to volunteer to participate in this research.

The first time I went to Sawyer to begin my research, Ms. Gray took me to the computer lab to meet a couple of the Pakistani students. Ms. Gray said “Many of the Pakistani students are in the computer lab during lunch right now because it is Ramadan and they have to fast all day; c’mon, let’s go to the computer lab so I can introduce you to some of them.” Ms. Gray and I went to the computer lab where she introduced me to Mateen. Mateen then introduced me to Shamim and Salma. The meeting of the Pakistani students at Sawyer occurred with a snowball effect. Every time I met one Pakistani student, she or he then introduced me to another Pakistani student. It took me two to three weeks to meet all of the Pakistani students. I met a number of them through their friends or classmates. Then Ms. Gray gave me a list of homerooms or divisions to go to where the Pakistani students were assigned. I visited each homeroom class to reintroduce myself to each of the Pakistani students and ask them to participate in my study. I also gave each of them a copy of the assent or consent form and asked them to return it to Ms. Gray’s office (where I would then pick it up) if they were interested in participating in this study.

Unexpectedly, it took multiple copies of the assent and consent forms along with an extensive amount of time to collect the required forms from each of the students interested in participating in this study. The assent and consent forms were a more difficult task to complete than expected. The large amount of time it took to receive these forms delayed the collection of data from some of the participants. After multiple attempts to collect these forms, only the students that turned in their assent or consent forms participated in this study, which included 29 students.

Of these 29 students, 11 of them were sophomores, 8 were juniors, and 10 were in their senior year at Sawyer. None of the freshman Pakistani students were willing to participate in this study. Some of these students arrived in the United States when they were very young while others arrived in the United States within the year preceding the study. The 29 participants in this study included: 24 Pakistani students, 3 Indian students, 1 Afghani student, and 1 African American student. Each of these students voluntarily participated in this study.

More details about the participants and their educational experiences are set forth in Appendix A. The names of the participants have been kept confidential and pseudonyms have been used throughout this study to maintain their privacy.

### **Limitations**

There were many limitations on my research, including my self-identity, the fact that I am an outsider and my lack of access to insider information as an employed school official, and my ability to spend the same amount of time with each student in this study to capture significant data on individual experiences at Sawyer High School.

The purpose of this ethnographic study was to begin to understand how agency, institutional structures, and globalization impact the lived experiences for Pakistani immigrant students at Sawyer High School. These findings should not be overstated; this was a study of Pakistani immigrant students at one particular urban public high school in the Midwest. Therefore, the findings in this study are not designed to apply generally to all Pakistani students, nor to all immigrant student experiences in the American public school systems. In fact, I may have ended with more questions than answers. Only a

surface answer to the research question regarding how agency and institutional structures, in a global society, impact the identity formation for Pakistani immigrant students may have been reached.

My personal characteristics are another major limitation to this study. I am not Pakistani. I am a Caucasian-American woman who speaks only English. This is a limitation in many different ways: first, my high school experiences were very different than that of the Pakistani immigrant students; second, I lack the ability to communicate with any of the Pakistani students in their home language; and third, I have ethnic and cultural characteristics similar to the majority of the faculty members. Because I am part of the mainstream white middle-class culture, I have no first-hand understanding of the lived experiences of the immigrant students I have studied. Therefore, more in-depth interviews and participant observations are required to provide a more complete study that could be generally applicable to a wider population.

This research does not address the specific impact of the immigrant students' identity on their academic performance or success. Further research on the relationship of the formation of identity of immigrant students to academic performance is intended for a later date. While the population of schools in the United States becomes increasingly diverse, most of the teachers remain white (87.2%), female (72%), and middle class (Banks & Banks, 2003). Details about the diversity of teachers and school administrators would be an interesting and pertinent addition to the discussion on identity formation of immigrant students. These are thoughts for future research.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE SCAPES OF LIVING: HOME, TECHNOLOGY, AND THE MEDIA**

The Pakistani students at Sawyer are all living in an “imaginary world” that allows them to be simultaneously “here” and “there.” They may be physically “here” in the United States, but virtually they are often “there” in Pakistan. Their current physical location is less relevant because they are actually living in a “transnational construction of imaginary landscapes” (Appadurai, 1996). These imaginary landscapes include physical, mental, emotional, and interpersonal features of both their communities in Pakistan and the United States. There is an open flow and remapping of their cultures over irregular, fluid landscapes. There is often a lack of physical borders, restrictions, or dividers between their imaginary landscapes. The Pakistani students’ irregular landscapes consist of overlapping, intermingled, and unique planes, including physical features representative of their communities in both the United States and Pakistan.

This “imaginary world” is caused by globalization, the acceleration of worldwide networks of cultural flows of people, discourses, ideas, religions, and cultures. The term globalization is interchangeable with other descriptions of cultural flows including transnationality and deterritorialization. Due to the increased cultural flows or globalization, more Pakistani immigrants are entering into the United States school system, and understanding these students’ identity is imperative.

The relationship between each student's scapes and his or her identity is cyclical. The scapes in which the Pakistani students live help shape their identities. At the same time, the scapes are influenced and shaped by the students' multiple identities. As a result, and depending on how they design their ethno, media, and techno scapes, the students will have characteristics of either a hybrid or a braided identity.

Some of these Pakistani students declare a hybrid while others declare a braided identity. Many scholars that study immigrant students, including Suarez-Orozco (2004), discuss the difference between these two types of identities. As noted in Chapter One, a hybrid identity is neither completely Pakistani nor American—these students are in between and within both cultures and communities simultaneously. The students with a hybrid identity merge and meld their multiple identities into one. Conversely, a braided identity allows for each strand of the student's identity to keep its individual integrity. They come into contact through a weaving together. A braided identity is representative of multiple identities converging with one another and united as parts, but not completely merging into one another.

Both of these identity-types, hybrid and braided, are a source of contention between the Pakistani students and their parents. Most of the parents prefer their children to maintain their cultural, religious, and national-origin identities. In other words, the Pakistani parents do not want their children to adopt a hybrid or a braided identity.

As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, the Pakistani students often share collective identities as members of one of two after school clubs: Ahinsa and Indo-Pak. The focus of the Indo-Pak Club is to promote awareness of the Indo-Pak culture to the

students and teachers at Sawyer. The Ahinsa Club promotes the message of peace, unity, and nonviolence; this club encourages students to bring this message to all aspects of their lives. Even though the students in each club share the same root identity, their route identities are different. This difference in their route identities is representative of the difference between a hybrid and braided identity. Most of the students in the Indo-Pak club have identities that are braided—a weaving together of their multiple identities, while keeping the integrity of each individual component. The majority of the students in the Ahinsa club have hybrid identities, which represents being part Pakistani and part American—in between and within both cultures and communities.

The Pakistani students operate within the constantly changing and multiple cultural flows of their community “here” and “there” in global spaces where they construct and declare their identities within multiple group affiliations. Because schools are discursive, global spaces where identity is declared, the Pakistani students identify, live, and communicate on a global scale.

This chapter discusses the relationship between globalization and the identity formation of the Pakistani immigrant students at Sawyer high school. It tracks Arjun Appadurai’s “scapes:” first—ethnoscape, second—technoscape, and third-mediascape. Although each of these sections covers a different scape, they also share the suffix, scape, which “allows us to point to the fluid, irregular shapes of these landscapes, shapes that characterize international capital as deeply as they do international clothing styles” (Appadurai, 1996, p. 33). These different scapes together form a collective, irregular and



multi-dimensional landscape of the complexity of the Pakistani students' culture, lived experiences, and the fluidity of their identity.

The first section of this chapter identifies the ways Pakistani students live both “here” and “there.” In other words, the way they create their own “imaginary landscape” of home, also known as an ethnoscape, inclusive of both communities. This section covers the way the Pakistani students define their sense of home in regards to being “here” in the United States on Durham Avenue (I have altered the name of this and other locations to further protect the identities of the student-participants), while mentally and simultaneously also living within their community in Pakistan. Other components of their ethnoscape are also defined and discussed in this chapter, including schooling and work, social and free time, and family pressure and the influences of their parents on the lived experiences of these Pakistani students.

The second half of this chapter covers the two other significant scapes in the lived experiences of the Pakistani students at Sawyer high school—the technoscape and mediascape. The technoscape section discusses the way the internet, emailing, and cell phones, both calling and texting, allow the students to physically be located in one environment while communicating with their friends and family members around the world. The technoscape identifies the ways the students are technologically constantly moving between borders and the ways they are interconnected to others in their imaginary and irregular landscapes. The mediascape is also significant to the lived experiences of the Pakistani students and the ways they form, acquire, and declare their identities. Although the Pakistani students are currently living in the US they choose to

watch and listen to Indian movies and music. The techno and media scapes are significant ways globalization has influenced the lived experiences for these Pakistani students.

### **Ethnoscape—Living “Here” and “There”**

An ethnoscape is the landscape of the Pakistani students as immigrants—a mobile community that shifts from one world to another. Most of these immigrant students shift the world they live in, into a world without boundaries of being both here and there. The Pakistani students’ shifting world or ethnoscape, includes a sense of home in both the US, more specifically on Durham Avenue, and in Pakistan. This imaginary world of being both “here” and “there” is also seen through the ways the Pakistani students spend their free time, for example by playing cricket. As a result of the cultural flows and the fact that the Pakistani students are currently physically in the US, they are also influenced by the local cultural flows of the American culture. This is a point of contention with their parents, who expect their children to fulfill their high expectations of academic and professional success, while simultaneously maintaining their traditional, cultural, religious, and national origin identities. Globalization and the current cultural flows have played a significant role in the Pakistani students’ declaration of their hybrid and braided identities.

### ***Sense of Home***

***Nosy and Noisy: Durham Avenue.*** Although Durham Avenue is currently home to large Indian and Pakistani populations, this has not always been the case. Durham Avenue has a significant history to many immigrant populations in the City of [Research

Location]. Durham Avenue was built in the 1850's and was originally named Church Road. It was then renamed to Durham after Durhamshire by the English settlers (Rangaswamy, 2000). Durham became the main commercial street and shopping center for the Jewish immigrants after World War I, followed by the Greeks, Russians, and Assyrians in the 1970's. In 1973, the first Indian store opened on Durham. This immigrant community significantly changed in the 1980's when the second wave of Indian immigrants arrived, with a large Pakistani and Bangladeshi population to follow, and also opened shops and stores on Durham. By the 1990's, Durham Avenue was divided into clusters or ethnic enclave communities—with the central district of Durham, between Willow and Colorado being the Indian and Pakistani ethnic neighborhood (Rangaswamy, 2000).

Durham Avenue plays a significant role in the lives of the Pakistani immigrant students. They discuss this street as a kind of “home,” which on some levels appears to be synonymous with being in Pakistan and so even though they are not physically in their homeland they have recreated a sense of home or an enclave, ethnic community in the Durham Avenue neighborhood. This is an example of the “imaginary landscape” in which the Pakistani students currently live. Yasmin, Aamira, and Mateen each describe Durham Avenue as a “Desi Place,” where all the Indian and Pakistani people live and occupy the space. Yasmin, a 16-year-old junior, says:

It's like, totally Desi place. People, like wherever you see, it's like Indian and Pakistan people. It's their own space where mostly people don't want, wanna move from. They feel like home whenever they are in Durham.  
(Interview, April 2009)

Aamira, a 17-year-old junior, agrees with Yasmin:

Durham, it's just like being in your own country (laughs) because there's a lot of Indian people, Pakistanis, and um, it's just, it's like living with your country people, you know? It's like your culture's clothes are there, like you buy the food that you eat at home. You just go and get it and, people speak the same language as you do. (Interview, March 2009)

Mateen, an 18-year-old senior, explains, in more detail:

You should expect pretty much, a lot of Indians and Pakistanis. You're going to see shops that consist of Pakistani and Indian groceries. Uh, you are going to see meat markets, Pakistani and Indian restaurants, uh, you are going to see electronic stores on Durham. And pretty much from River and Durham to all the way to Colorado and Durham, it's all the population of Indians and Pakistanis. So that's what you are going to see on Durham. (Interview, January 2009)

Clearly, some of the Pakistani students find the environment of Durham Avenue comforting and home-like. But others do not like Durham Avenue because they feel the close-knit ethnic community is actually both nosy and noisy.

Ali, Nada, Maaz, and Abdul-Azeez all find the enclave, Pakistani or "Desi" community on Durham Avenue comforting. This is due to the fact that they proudly choose to maintain their cultural, religious, and national origin identities. Durham Avenue provides each of these individuals with an "imaginary landscape" of being both "here" in the United States for their education while also living "there," in Pakistan, a community with a high concentration of Pakistanis and Muslims. Ali, a 16-year-old senior, says:

I love it [Durham Avenue]. (laugh) [It] makes me feel home but it's not the same, everything. Girls are right there, at home you don't see girls right there wearing jeans walking around holding hands with guys. (Interview, April 2009)

Nada, an 18-year-old junior, explains the ways Durham Avenue is the same as being in Pakistan:

Oh, it was same like Pakistan. There's so many Desi people, like if I just. Ok. Uh, uh like, when I just came here if I went to the suburbs I never gonna live over here, believe me. (laughs). Yeah no, if I were uh live in suburbs like there's only white people's in the, there's some Desis, but on Durham I like we feel it's our country. There's so, there's, I mean, you can say that, Durham is the half Pakistan. (laughs). There's so many Desi people. There's so many Desi. I mean different kinds of stuff. Yep I like (laughs) [to spend time on Durham]. And there's so many boutiques where we can buy Pakistani clothes, like I'm also working on a Desi, uh, boutique. So it's cool. (Interview, February 2009)

Maaz, a 16-year-old junior, and Abdul-Azeez, a 16-year-old sophomore, enjoy the community of Durham Avenue because of the shared national origin identity. They like the fact that everyone speaks Urdu and they can easily communicate with others in this neighborhood. Maaz explains:

The people, they speak same language, that won't be difficult for me to speak to them, so I can buy everything if I want. So if I, if it's like, other peoples who can speak just English, so I can tell them what I want. (Interview, May 2009)

Abdul-Azeez agrees with Maaz. He says:

Uh, it's a lot of people and they're speaking my languages, and helping you if you need help, or telling you what's where to go if you know if you're going like the store. I don't know this store. Would you tell me or in, in my language I can say, like tell me where this store, he gonna tell me, in his language, so it be easy to communicate. (Interview, March 2009)

Although Ali, Maaz, Nada, and Abdul-Azeez like the feeling of "home" on Durham Avenue, Salma a 17-year-old senior, and Shamim, an 18-year-old senior, both of whom live half a block from Durham, do not like this enclave community because the people are both "nosy" and "noisy." Salma and Shamim act this way in part because they have a hybrid identity – part Pakistani and part American. They are neither completely Pakistani at home nor completely American at School. Instead Salma and Shamim

choose to merge their Pakistani and American identities: they live close to Durham Avenue, are part of this community, and choose to wear their Hijab most of the time, but they are also interested in dressing like other female American teenagers, wearing tight fitting jeans and shirts and showing and styling their hair. Both Salma and Shamim prioritize their religious identity of being Muslim, but they also want to be American in the ways they dress and how they choose to spend their time. They do not like the fact that the men and women on Durham interfere with their personal business--the ways the adults are both “nosy” and “noisy.” Salma explains her many concerns and problems with Durham Avenue:

First of all it is dirty (laugh). But yeah, I don't really go on Durham now, cause the first, like, when we were new here for the first year, I had to walk cause we didn't have a car. So like, yeah, we walked through Durham stores and to the grocery and stuff, so that was not so bad. But I don't really like the people that are really nosy about your life and that is pretty much Indians and Pakistanis who do that. And stare at you. (Interview, January 2009)

Salma also experiences this feeling of others being nosy on, and it reminds her of the way it was in India:

Its, its, exactly the same, that is what I feel about it. I don't feel like I am in America (laugh). So it's like, same people looking at you, the same look, and everything. Staring at you for, like, two minutes, from top to bottom. It's so annoying and I be like, oh, okay, what are you staring at?

Men and women. I don't really, really feel comfortable on Durham cause when I walked out of the house in India, it would only be for school and I come back from school. And if you go out you won't go out with your friends, you go out with your parents so that wasn't a problem. So, so.

It's just like when you were, when you dress up differently. Cause on Durham people don't usually like the older, elder people they are all, usually when you dress up in like, what do you call it, sha-wark-nees. Cause they're at, they're in that, and when you wear tight jeans and boots

and like a jacket, its, its like, why are you so different? Like the way they dress up, yeah, but I don't really feel comfortable in that clothes.

When asked what she feels comfortable wearing, Salma responds:

Jeans. Cause I used to wear jeans in India, yeah. So that was not a problem, cause I used to go to school and come back and when I used to go see my relatives. I used to wear jeans and a long top, like really long, like to my knees, so that would not be so different. But here, they feel, they look at you like, what are you wearing? (Interview, January 2009)

Shamim agrees with Salma. She explains:

In Durham there is a lot of people, they are really noisy and they nosy too. For example, like, my mother, their friends, they live on Durham and if I am going like, going out with my friends, they'll see oh my God I saw your daughter with their friends, what was she doing everything. So I don't like this, I'm like, I don't like noisy people and who, who like come to your, I mean, what you call, um, like, in your business, its none of your business, like who comes to your business and talk to your mom and dad and um, ah, so I don't like this. I want to move. (Interview, January 2009)

Though some Pakistani students enjoy and others dislike Durham Avenue, they all live close by and go there on a weekly basis for groceries and to shop for clothing, meat, food, and other necessary items. In fact, Zahra, an 18-year-old junior, explains that she must go to Durham, because it is part of her culture, similar to the way Americans go to large American grocery-store chains. Zahra says:

I have to go there to buy grocery, I have to go there to buy clothes, like I have to go there no matter what, it's like a, like how you have to go to Jewel and Dominick's no matter what to get our stuff, that's how I am. Mostly I get everything from Durham.

Yeah it's kind of happy like yeah, there's some place where like I feel hap, I feel happy. Like, like some of my cousin, one of my cousins she lived in D- she lives in Denver, she dies to eat Indian food, but she can't get it cuz there's no Indian stores there, no Pakistani stores. They have certain, certain grains they don't. she can't find it, yeah.

(Laughs) They go, it's like a two-hour drive, so they, they have to get the whole monthly thing, and over here we just go like every s- every now and then we go. Grocery, mostly grocery shopping, every week to get spices, this. that, weekly grocery. (Interview, May 2009)

The fact that Zahra said she has to go to Durham Avenue to get her groceries and other items, is a way of declaring her identity as a Pakistani or “Desi” woman – a part of this clustered immigrant community. Zahra explained the importance of Durham Avenue in comparison to the ways Americans shop at the local American grocery stores: Jewel and Dominick's.

“*Home*”. Most of the Pakistani students discuss home as the place where the family is currently living. In fact, the concept of home has been a matter of recarving the channels and remapping of landscapes into new possibilities of cultural flows (Tsing, 2000). Home is no longer associated with physical space, but rather is a matter of an imaginary world.

Home is the imaginary landscape where the Pakistani students speak Urdu, practice religious, cultural, and ethnic traditions with their families, and is connected to any private, physical location. While public spaces are landscapes where the Pakistani students are expected to speak English and change their identities to fit the constraints of society with the exception of Durham Avenue.

For Mazzin, a 17-year-old senior, there are two different types of “home”: one where his family is currently living, and one which is not necessarily linked to a physical location – his physical sense of home is “back in India.” Mazzin explains that home is wherever his family is currently living together. Mazzin identifies his private home space



as India, though he is currently living in his “home” in the United States with his family members. He explains:

Home, home is where you have your entire family. I mean not just your mom, dad and your sister, but like I said, I come from a joint family. Home is where you have all your uncles, aunts, their children, your cousins, everyone coming together. And just being happy, I mean, there are always family feuds, I mean everyone fights, that is part of home. Home is back in India. I mean, that is one of my goals, to send my parents back home and work here. So that they could be at home and eventually I could go there. But not anytime soon. Cause its like, I’ve got a lot to do before I do that. (Interview, March 2009)

Mazzin uses the concept of home fluidly. First, he says home is where he and his family live together, and then he explains that home is back in India, though he and his nuclear family currently live together in the United States. His references to home reflect the irregularity of his private space. Home has a fluid look and meaning to him at different moments in time and space.

Many of the Pakistani students do not connect their “home” to a single physical location because of their constant movement between multiple communities in both Pakistan and the United States. Because of globalization and transnationalism, the Pakistani students and their families are influenced by the communities in both countries, maintaining constant and direct contact with family and friends in the United States and Pakistan (Williams, 1998), as discussed later in this chapter.

Adab, a 17-year-old junior, explains the way her family has lived across borders: her father lived “here” for many years before she and the rest of her family moved to the United States. Once she, her mom and siblings moved to [Research Location], they

maintained constant communication with her family in Pakistan. In fact, she went to Pakistan this summer to visit her family there. Adab says:

Oh, my dad was here. Yeah, he was here, he moved here in 1993. He was the only person here and then uh, we [my mom and my siblings] came in 1998.

[Chuckle] I live by Emerson Park. It's cool cause I mean it's a park, you have the park right across. I see kids playing and I have a lot of friends there too.

Yeah, my rest of the family is there [in Pakistan]. I just have one um, family here, my mom's side in Florida, so we barely see them. We call them, like every Saturday or Sunday; sometimes I call, my mom calls, but we all talk on the phone, so we get a like, long phone card. Yeah a calling card. And sometimes they come on the internet, so we can chat or whatever. Uh, Yahoo Messenger and hotmail sometimes, the MSN messenger. (Interview, May 2009)

Adab uses multiple forms of technology, including the phone and internet to connect and communicate with her family in multiple locations: [Research Location], Florida and Pakistan. The use of technology allows Adab to live in an “imaginary landscape” of irregularity and cohesiveness of her entire family who are spread out across state and national borders.

The only true difference between home “here” in the United States and “there” in Pakistan is the appearance of the physical landscape. Mahdi, a 15-year-old sophomore, whose family owns a home in both locations, in a large Midwestern city and Balochistan, explains that these two locations are different societies or communities, but only in appearance:

The air and stuff is like, what do you call, the society and the communities, its like, it's different. It's like a different feel. Um, [in [Research Location] there are] bigger houses, nicer like places. Over there is not that nice, it's like, and there's no buildings; there's just houses. And

people like, build them on, wherever they feel like it, they don't really care. And over here, its like you have to buy the land first and then like, workers and then you build it. So, yeah. (Interview, March 2009)

Mahdi's family maintains ownership of their home in Pakistan even as they are currently residents of [Research Location]. Although there is a large physical distance between the locations of his family, they maintain indirect contact with them through technology and the constant movement of going back and forth. His mom calls her family in Pakistan every two days. In the summer of 2009, Mahdi's parents, three brothers and younger sister are going to Pakistan for two of his brothers arranged marriages. Mahdi's family currently resides in [Research Location], but actually lives transnationally within their imaginary and irregular landscapes of both locations.

### ***Schooling and Work***

Due to globalization, the Pakistani students are moving back and forth between their communities in the US and Pakistan, causing them to live in this ethnoscape with an irregular shaped landscape of both cultures and nations. This imaginary landscape includes components of schooling from both communities. There are many similarities between the Pakistani students' educational and schooling experiences in Pakistan and their public schools in the United States, but there are also many differences. The fact that course credit for classes completed in Pakistan is transferable to American educational institutions and highlights the fluidity of the space in which the Pakistani students currently live. Their school experiences in both Pakistan and the US are grouped into one large category of schooling, just as the concept of "home" and community are an irregular landscape of multiple locations.

There are some major differences between schooling in Pakistan and in the United States. For example, the content for the two graduation requirements is different, including the language and history courses, along with the degree of difficulty of the academic programming in each country. Urdu is the language course requirement in Pakistan, while in the United States, at Sawyer for example, students have a choice between two years of either French or Spanish. Also, the history course requirements in Pakistan are specific to that country, while the history courses at Sawyer include world, United States, and African American history, and geography courses.

Each of the Pakistani students alludes to the difference in difficulty in the curriculum and expectations of schooling in Pakistan compared to their experiences in the United States. Shamim highlights both the differences and challenges between her educational experiences in both communities:

Education was, it was kind of hard [in Pakistan]. In U-S-A it was, it's not that hard, but in Pakistan, it was challenging. Like, um, in here, they give you everything before exams, these are the questions that are going to be in your exam, but over there, you, like, they give you all notes, and you have to study and you have to prepare yourself. So, and um, I like my language [Urdu], like over there I had to speak my language. (Interview, January 2009)

Although the courses may be similar in each country, and the students' credits are transferable from one to the other, students report that the degree of difficulty is much higher in Pakistan compared to the United States.

### ***Use of Social and Free Time***

Due to globalization, Mateen is also living in an ethnoscape with collective, irregular, and multi-dimensional landscapes of culture and sports. As a result of Mateen

living in his ethnoscape, he has developed an identity of Pakistani and American, with an interest in both the national sport of Pakistan, and the professional sports teams from the United States city in which he currently resides. Mateen spends his leisure time playing cricket, the national sport of Pakistan, while simultaneously following the professional sports teams of his current place of residence: [Research Location].

Mateen explains that he plays cricket “here” because “we want to have our background sport played in America,” but he also enjoys rooting and following the professional football, baseball, and basketball teams of [Research Location]:

I play a lot of cricket. I play a lot of cricket. Cricket is uh, is uh, a very, very interesting sport, it consists of eleven men, uh, per side, and what the rule of the game is pretty much, the more you score, the other team has to beat that score. And internationally, the way you play it, is that there are fifty overs a game, one over consists of six balls and there is eleven outs. And overall the, I think the time including lunch is about seven hours a game, it is a pretty long game, seven to eight hours a game. It's, and the way we play it, since we don't play it internationally, we just play with friends, we have a small ground close to home, which, thank God we have, because we have a main ground that we can play cricket in. Um, the more people that show up in our teams, we combine them, separate them, even the numbers up, pretty much eight on eight most of the time. And we have eight over games, because we want to play three games cause it is the same as eight overs. And it's, I love cricket, that is one of the sports I play. Sports that I follow are the NFL, I love the Bears, the Bulls in the NBA, and the Cubs in the MLB.

Mateen continues, explaining with whom he plays cricket:

They're all friends, and if not friends, they are people sometimes who are walking on the street that in America you could also get cricket, they come and watch, ask to play, and they are in. Well firstly, Pakistan has a cricket team, so I root for them. So that is where I follow cricket. The way I play cricket, since America, um, doesn't have a lot of cricket, they don't have a cricket team, you know; its not one of their international sports. We want to have our background sport played in America. So that is one of the reason we play. Secondly, we play, it's, it's, a great way of having fun, I mean you kill three-four hours of your time with friends, playing cricket.

Mateen then explains what he means by “following the Bears, the Bulls, and the Cubs:”

Follow them meaning watching them, watching meaning rooting for them, rooting meaning wanting them to win. I love the Bears; they should have went to the play-offs. The Bulls I loved because even though I was young, I loved the Michael Jordan era, I always loved him, he is a role model. The Cubs because, I just love the Cubs, Wrigley field, Harry Carry, they are all signs of Cubs. And most of [Research Location] roots for the Cubs if not the [White] Sox. (Interview, January 2009)

Mateen’s hybrid identity is seen through his merging and melding interest and fandom.

He plays cricket with his Pakistani friends in his free-time, while he also “follows” or roots for the Pakistani cricket team, and simultaneously cheers for his local professional football, basketball, and baseball teams. Mateen’s multiple group, fan-based, affiliations highlight his hybrid identity of both American and Pakistani.

Ali demonstrates a slightly different hybrid identity. He chooses to play an American sport in his leisure time, football, but like Mateen he only plays with other “Desi” people, his Pakistani and Indian friends. Ali’s experience and choice to play an American sport in his “Desi” community highlights the fact that he too lives in an imaginary, irregular, and multi-dimensional ethnoscape incorporating both “here” and “there.” Ali alludes to his hybrid identity as an American Pakistani:

And Sunday I go play football with my friends. I dun-they’re my friends only through football. Like call me, Ali you ready for football? I’m like, yeah, I’m ready for football, you know. We go, we play for two-three hours, come home.

They’re [my friends], they go to different schools. Like LT College Prep. Desi, Pakistani and Indian; no other race. (Interview, April 2009)

Ali plays American football each Sunday, but only with his Desi friends. Given Ali's choice of playing an American sport within his "Desi" community he might say he is living within the ethnoscape of both his American and Pakistani communities.

### ***Family Pressure and Parenting***

The Pakistani students report that their parents have high expectations and strict rules. These expectations influence all aspects of their children's lives including their educational, social, and professional achievements. The Pakistani parents expect their children to receive straight A's in school and to be successful in their careers. The parents also want to exercise control over their children's intimate relationships (frequently with the expectation of an arranged marriage), while simultaneously maintaining their traditional cultural, national origin, and religious identities.

Suarez-Orozco (1994) explains that to the disappointment of many immigrant parents, their teenagers have a tendency to braid identities between their parents' cultures and the new culture they are currently navigating. As a result of their constant movement between Pakistan and the US, the Pakistani students have braided or hybrid identities, reflecting their multiple communities, cultures, and national affiliations, while maintaining their religious identity. These braided or hybrid identities are a point of contention for the parents of these Pakistani children.

Ali's experience highlights the point of contention between him and his parents. He first explains the importance of respecting, listening to, and obeying his parents' wishes, but then he highlights his one exception to the rule: the fact that he choose to play American football at Sawyer without his parents' approval. Although Ali's parents did

not approve of his actions, he chose to play football because he doesn't want to "think old" like his parents do. Ali explains, since they live in a "new society," its "okay to have your culture, your values," but also allow room for new experiences because "it's my passion so they won't really disagree." Ali explains:

Well, sure, cuz like in my family, everything that happens my parents decide. Our parents [have to approve], everything we do [has to be] approved by [our] parents. We put parents first. Everything, and they say no, we are not gonna argue. No? Ok. Then no. No is a no except the fact I play football. My dad said no, but I convinced him to let me play football or wrestling. He's not happy with me playing, but he still supports me. Why? Because he himself was a captain for soccer. And, in Pakistan, he used to go to high school, he was the soccer captain. So he understood how I felt right now, he was like, you're a kid go play, just don't get hurt. But they're happy. They know I'm playing. If they, as long as they know what I'm doing, it's ok. And if I'm doing something that is not, they don't know, that's disrespecting them.

My mom hates the fact I play. But they know how much I love it. It's like my passion so they won't really disagree. They did in the beginning, but then I, you know convinced them to let me play. So they kinda supported me even though they didn't come to any of my games. But my brother did come to a couple of my games, football games. Well my family doesn't really support me playing football, they didn't really come to a lot of my games or anything, but you know, I tell them I won, I showed her the medal I came in second in regionals. She was happy about it.

And where I believe, if I like something I should do it regardless of what they tell me. Even I respect them with all of my heart I would never like disrespect them or say anything bad about them, but see my parents they think, old, but I, I don't want that, you know?

I want them to open up you know. It's a new society, I don't want to think old, I think it's ok to have your culture your values and I'm sure I'm gonna be carrying those, no I'm not, just kidding, but see I believe I won't be the same as how my parents are toward me.

My parents believe they're right. Everything they do is right. Everything they do for me is right, period. That's period, that's it, no nothing else. Period is an end. With me, I think you know if I done something, maybe I should erase and write something else. You know, like, keep doing more



stuff in life. Live as much as I can. Do what I wanna be able to do. But not at a point where I you know, can't look myself in the mirror, and say oh my god you just did that, you just screwed up. I don't want to be that person looking in the mirror and being ashamed of myself. But I want to be that person who you know, I'm glad I did that, and moved on.  
(Interview, April 2009)

Ali's experience highlights the tension between the Pakistani parents and their children due to the influences of Western culture. He identifies the ways his parents live and think as the "old" ways. They now live in [Research Location], a "new society," and there are changes that affect Ali which result in his braided identity. Ali maintains his culture and values as a Pakistani Muslim while also accepting components of his new American culture, which for him is the game of football. This results in a hybrid identity, consisting of an irregular landscape of Ali's imaginary world.

Shamim explains similar pressure from her parents as Ali. Her parents expect her to receive straight A's in all of her high school courses. They believe that the only way Shamim can achieve this goal is through constant studying without time spent "hanging out" with friends. But Shamim wants to do both: be successful in school and get good grades, while also spending time with her friends. All of her friends are both Muslim and Pakistani, but her parents still think that this is not time well spent. Rather, they think her time should only be spent on her school work so she can be successful and become a doctor. Shamim's parents think that she is becoming more and more Westernized in her attitude. Other scholars have uncovered the same between Muslim parents and their children, which can be a point of contention between them (Wakil, Siddique, & Wakil, 1981). Shamim explains:

Like um, before, when I was in sophomore [year], I, I hang out a lot. I hang out a lot with my friends, but you know what happened, I had to lie with my parents. I had to lie, because if I'm going to tell them I am going out with my friends, they won't let me go.

They are like, you don't study, you are not getting good grades, you have to study, don't go out. And it's, it is like, not the right time, you have to chill and everything. You have to study first and I want to chill, I want to chill with my friends, but now, I'm like, I don't want to lie with my parents, whatever it is, I don't want to lie with my parents. I did wrong, I know. I want to chill, but now, I think I really wrong. I want to tell my parents truth, but they don't understand me. (Interview, January 2009)

Shamim continues, explaining the reasons why her parents do not understand her:

Okay, uh, they are from Pakistan, okay? In my family, the girls don't really go out. They just have to stay at home and they have to study, like, if there will be eight o'clock and nine o'clock they should have to be at home and like sometimes you get [home] late. And they, they [won't] listen to your excuses, they will be like, why you are late, you shouldn't be late.

Shamim then says that even though she loves art and wants to become an artist, her parents expect her to become a doctor. "They have a lot of expectations for" her, starting with straight A's, followed by a prestigious career path, which is not determined by Shamim's own interests. She explains:

Okay, for example, I like to draw, I love art, but my parents want me to become a doctor or a pharmacist. Even though, I don't like the subject, but still I have to do it. Because my parents want me to do it. So, yeah, you know, that's why I don't give importance to art, even [though] I love art. When I was in Pakistan, and I drew really good in biology classes, you know, they give you a lot of diagrams, so my parents they were like, why you always, ah, drawing and everything, so you know, I am like, I won't do it. When I came here, I like, in sophomore [year], I didn't have drawing, I didn't have art, so I was studying, so they get happy. And they want me to become a doctor and they [have] a lot of expectations from me, A LOT, because my sister, she got engaged, okay, and uh, I don't think she will study or not. And my brother, they all are doing work, so my parents, they think I go to high school and then to university or college so they think, may be, may be I will become something. Okay, for

example, sometimes I get uh, first quarter I got four A's and three B's and they thought, like, that is not good, you should have to get straight A's. So when ever I do, you know, I just think, like, I have to do it because of my parents.

Shamim explains what she wants, which is different than her parents expectations:

[Chuckle] okay, what I want, I will love to do art, yeah. I like the paintings that uh, and I want to show my paintings to the world; scenery and um, I want to draw the faces and everything, I just want [to draw] the beautiful places.

Shamim's parents have strict rules and high expectations. Her parents do not allow time spent "hanging out" with friends. They expect Shamim to only spend time on her studies. Shamim does not agree with her parents, she would rather both study and hang out with her friends.

She is limited in merging her Pakistani and American identities due to the strict cultural expectations set by her parents to maintain a socially secluded and traditional lifestyle. Although Shamim wants to adopt a merged identity of her American and Pakistani cultures, her parents pressure her to maintain and prioritize her Pakistani identity. Shamim explains that it is more important for her to make her parents happy than herself, which limits the way she self-expresses and identifies. She says, "I really want to give happiness to my family. . . And what ever I do, um, for example, I get my grades, and they are good, I, I am happy because my parents will see it and they will be happy, more than me." Shamim struggles with her parents' wishes which directly affect and interfere with the way she self identifies.

Pakistani immigrant families typically enter the United States with high levels of human and social capital. This capital derives from values instilled within the cultural

expectations of the Pakistani immigrant parents. These same values produce the expectation of the parents for their children to make their education the number one priority and to fulfill their expectations of being high achievers in their academic performance. Shamim's parents had expectations for her to receive straight A's in each of her classes at Sawyer and then continue her education into a higher education institution where she can become a certified doctor.

Massima is a 17-year-old senior; her parents impose the same priorities. She is a senior IB student, president of NHS, and ranked one of the top ten academically performing students in her graduating class, Massima explains that her parents expect her and her three sisters to have an arranged marriage to a Pakistani Muslim boy, which is very important to their religious and cultural heritage, but their first priority is for their daughters to have a solid education and successful career. Massima explains:

They don't want us to get married until we get a good education and we become successful in life and then have a good career and then they're not rushing us to get married, they don't want us to get married right now actually. And, I guess they, they have seen the problems that getting married at a young age could do, like what are the effects and, they want us to have a good life so they don't want us to get married right now, but I guess they'll be okay with us getting married like around twenty-six or something when we have a career.

Um, I want to graduate from high school then go on to college. And then go on to pharmacy school and become a pharmacist. I guess, I guess, you know while I'm becoming a pharmacist or in the pharmacy school I could, you know, I could settle down around that time. Same with my sisters. My sister actually doesn't want to get married right now. She wants to get married after she um, gets a good career. I don't think any of us are um, eager to get married at such a young age cuz we're not being forced by our, um, parents, and we have seen um, some of our friends get married at a young age and they just completely forgot about their education and now they're kinda struggling um, to support their family. So, after seeing all of

these things we don't wanna get married at a young age. (Interview, March 2009)

Unlike Shamim, Massima has chosen the career path that most interests her, not just her parents. Yet similarly to Shamim, Massima is also pressured by her parents' high expectations for her to be successful academically and professionally.

The Pakistani families are representative of deterritorialized communities, where their desires and fantasies are fulfilled living in these new ethnoscapas “while striving to reproduce the family-as-microcosm of culture” (Appadurai, 1996, p. 45). Massima and Shamim's experiences highlight the ways they form their hybrid identities in the environment filled with family pressure to be a certain way. While their personal experiences, schooling, and social interactions are forces that also shape them to be representative of their hybrid identity of being both Pakistani and American—in between and within both cultures and communities in which they currently live.

Another expectation the Pakistani parents have of their children is for them to maintain their traditional cultural and religious practices and identities. The adolescent subjects of this study reported that their parents are concerned with the many ways their children are Americanizing. Their children are more and more Westernized in their looks and attitudes. The Pakistani children are dating, spending less time practicing their religion, and the girls are removing their Hijabs.

Interestingly, most of the Pakistani students are dating or are part of an intimate relationship without their parents knowing about it.<sup>1</sup> Dating in the Muslim religion is

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<sup>1</sup>All of my subjects in this study, with one exception, were unmarried. The exception will be discussed below.

prohibited. Therefore, although these individuals may have a boyfriend or girlfriend, their parents cannot know about it or they will be expected to be married off in an arranged marriage. In other words, the concept of dating is a western practice not welcomed in the Muslim community. Due to the ethnoscape in which these Pakistani students live, they choose to accept the Western concept of dating, but only within their close-knit Pakistani or “Desi” community. In other words, the Pakistani students choose to date, but they will only date other Desis. Ali explains his experience:

I had a girlfriend, Pakistani. We didn't hug or anything for a while, then you know we talked and everything and everything, but then, uh Thursday she got engaged with another guy cuz her parents chose a guy.

No [my parents did not know about her]. If our parents find out we'll, if, honestly if my parents find out that I'm dating somebody I'll be in Pakistan by tomorrow, married by day after, and kids by day after.

It doesn't matter [if I were dating a Desi girl]. In my culture, in some Desi girls, parents they don't care. Like as long as it's Indian or Pakistani its ok, you know, but at certain age if it's Pakistani, ok, but where I come from, no. (Interview, April 2009)

Although Ali knows his parents are against him dating, he still chooses to take part in this American or Westernized practice, though only within his enclave or “Desi” community. Ali's actions highlight the way he has declared a braided identity of being American, Pakistani, and Muslim. Ali has braided what he identifies as his cultures, religions, and communities together.

Salma's parents' concerns were different than Ali's. Her parents feared that she would lose her mother tongue, Urdu, once she learned to speak English. This resulted in Salma's parents' aggressive pressure for her to practice speaking Urdu. Salma explains:

Um, yeah, cause, um, like, they thought I would forget my language, which is basically Urdu, my mother tongue. It should be Urdu because we are Muslims, so um, I learn how to speak it, but I would speak it brokenly. I would have English words in there and not perfect vocabulary. I would be talking to my mom and I would have some English words, ah, cook me the food or something like that [laugh and smile]. Ah, so, it was really weird cause she was like, you need to learn the vocabulary words. She used to go in like some of the libraries and she used to pick up books for me. And then she would be like, make me learn how to read the newspaper in Urdu. It was like, um, and I used to read it and she was like okay, fine [laugh and smile] that is all for today. And then when she is tired of me she used to hand me over to my dad and she was like, ah, that's your responsibility now [laugh and smile again]. So I had to deal with my mom and dad to learn and my dad was more aggressive with me. He would say, that's not right, you are not supposed to read it like that. And I was like, oh, fine. (Interview, January 2009)

Salma's parents acted in fear of their daughter changing her identity to reflect American youth culture and losing her Muslim root identity, even though the majority of Salma's friends are Muslim and when they are together they always choose to communicate in Urdu. Salma adopts a merged identity of both Muslim and American. Salma speaks Urdu because her parents feel this is essential to her Muslim identity, but she also chooses to fit into the American youth culture in the way she dresses.

On the other hand, Satta has chosen to prioritize first her American identity and second her identity as a Pakistani Muslim. Satta is Americanizing in multiple ways that threaten her Pakistani Muslim identity. And even though there is an enclave of Pakistani students at Sawyer and within the community at-large in [Research Location], Satta identifies more with the American youth culture than her Pakistani culture. Adab, a classmate of Satta explains that not only does Satta act and look more American or Westernized than other Pakistani students, she is also losing her mother tongue: Urdu.

Adab said that her mom does not want her to forget how to speak Urdu, like what has happened to Satta. Adab explained:

[I speak] Urdu [at home]. My mom doesn't like it when we speak English. She goes like, you learn English in school, she doesn't want us to forget our language, our culture, cause I've seen a lot of people here [laughing]. Do you know Satta?

Yes, so she's not very good at Urdu. So she usually speaks English, I think at home. So my mom doesn't like that. She goes, you shouldn't forget your culture, your language or anything. People are always surprised when we went back [to Pakistan] in three years, they were like, oh my gosh, you still speak Urdu? And they were like shocked to see us. (Interview, May 2009)

Satta, a 17-year-old junior, explained that she no longer has time to go to her Islamic religious school, she said:

Not anymore, no. It's just like, I guess, it takes way too much time, I guess, for me and like right now, I barely have time to go, cuz like I read [the Koran] at home though, we read at home, instead of going there. (Interview, April 2009)

Satta explained that even though she doesn't go to religious school she reads the Koran each week:

Um, probably like two times a week maybe. Yeah, and then like I started working and I have to go to school, and then after school a lot of activities so, I don't really have time.

She explained her schedule in more details:

Today my schedule will be: go to school, going home, doing laundry, sitting on computer, I don't have work today so I don't have anything to do at home, probably have to go pick up my brother at six from the Indo-Pak [community center], where he goes to do his homework and stuff like that.

Another way the Pakistani students are declaring their hybrid or braided identities is through the way they look. Many of the Pakistani girls enter the US wearing a Hijab, a



traditional head covering in the Muslim religion. But when some of them enter Sawyer and in public generally, they remove their Hijab for fear that they do not “look pretty,” compared to their Pakistani friends that do not wear a Hijab. Once again, this is a point of contention between the Pakistani parents and students; the parents feel as though their children should maintain some of their traditional cultural values and not be as influenced by Western culture.

Salma explains how she felt pressure from her other Pakistani friends, to remove her Hijab so she too can “look pretty.” Salma described the way she looks different out of school compared to being in school:

That is like my personal nerve that I have to control right now. Cause I really feel like all my friends look pretty when they go out of school, cause it is obviously different from school. Cause school is regular dress code and the way you come everyday. But like, it’s your friends birthday or you are going out to do something, everyone looks pretty and then when you wearing scarf, you don’t feel you look pretty because you have your hair tied up and then everything is covered and you have to cover it. (Interview, January 2009)

Salma gave further details and an explanation of what she meant by “you have to cover it.” She was referring to the expectations of her parents and her Muslim religion. Salma said:

Like, you are not supposed to show the shape of your body perfectly; like how perfect your body is. So you are not supposed to do that basically.

Um, hum. So that’s in my religion actually, yeah so, its like, it’s like, sometimes; its basically Safia, when she goes like, your skinny jeans are so cute, it looks good on you, put your boots on, I am like, sure, I will wear that then. And then she comes up to my closet and she goes like, oh that shirt is really cute, you should wear that and I go like, oh my sister didn’t like it when I got it (laugh). And she was like, no it’s really cute and it is tight and fitted, cause the way she dresses up. Um, and then, and

then when I go shopping with her, my sister is like oh no, you don't go shopping with her; please [loud laugh and smile].

I was a tom boy in India, so I wouldn't be all dressy at all, that's me. I wouldn't be dressy at all. I would have a regular, full sleeve shirt and I would [not] care if its fitted or not, but I like, um, when the shirt says sayings on it, I like those kind, cause um, but then my sister was like, its usually on your chest and you are not supposed to show your chest and when something is written on you, people get attracted to read what it is. And I am like, why do you think a lot of that. Cause, like, that, that's, what I used to wear in India but no one pointed out there, why here? (Interview, January 2009)

Salma explains that she put away all her shirts with phrases written across her chest, but that she would take them out of the closet for social occasions, such as Safia's birthday:

Yeah, I was like okay, what you says is right, I will follow it and I folded up all my shirt, I put them in my night closet and they are all in my night closet now. And it's like all dressy shirts now, cause the only time I dress up without the Hijab and everything is on an occasion, like, really, like bowling or like, Safia's birthday or something like that. So it's like, you have to be dressy cause everyone is dressy. And um, it's something like school events, so it's like something like that. (Interview, January 2009)

Although Salma used have a more traditional, Muslim identity, she has changed and declared a hybrid identity of both Muslim and American. This is due to the peer pressure of “looking pretty,” because her friends have either dressed up or removed their Hijab for social activities and settings. This is a concern for the Muslim parents who prefer for their children to maintain their traditional, cultural and religious identities.

### **Technoscape and Mediascape**

Similar to the ethnoscape in its irregularity and multi-dimensionality, the technoscape and mediascape also play a significant role in the lives of these Pakistani students. The technoscape is the global and fluid configuration of technology—both mechanical and informational. It is fluid and moves at high speeds across boundaries and

borders. The distribution of technologies is driven by increasingly complex relationships among money flows, political possibilities, and availabilities of unskilled and highly skilled labor throughout the world (Appadurai, 1996). Due to the technology that forms the technoscape, there is less of a sense of place or neighborliness. People, communities, and societies are connected via technology across boundaries and borders.

### *Technoscape*

The technoscape directly impacts the lives of these Pakistani students. They spend many hours each day in this technoscape using the internet, specifically Facebook, email, and Instant Messaging (IM), and their cell phones to both call and text their Pakistani friends. Technology is critical to their everyday existence. The Pakistani students live in this technoscape, which allows them to have constant communication with their family and friends throughout the United States and Pakistan.

The technoscape is another component of the Pakistani students' "imaginary world" with irregular, fluid, and multi-dimensional landscape. The internet, cell phones, and other components of the technoscape allow for multi-directional cultural flows of information, people, culture, and communication between the Pakistani students at Sawyer and their friends and family throughout the United States, India, and Pakistan. These cultural flows allow for the interconnectedness of people across borders and boundaries—resulting in a technoscape with an irregular landscape.

Many of these students, while physically within the structure of Sawyer high school, have chosen to actually live in a global, online community. For some of the Pakistani students this "imaginary world" comes in the form of an international sports

community, for others a Pakistani specific-chat room, and most of them also use Facebook, an online social networking community. The commonality of each of these “imaginary worlds” or online communities is the ability for these students to be active participants in their cultural flows of national origin, religion, and other group affiliations without being assigned to a single physical location.

Mateen, a senior Pakistani, Muslim, American, uses the internet on a regular basis to watch, follow, and stay updated on the status of the Pakistani cricket team. Instead of using his lunch period to relax, socialize, or eat lunch, each day he chooses to go to the computer lab and check out the latest statistics and possibly watch the cricket game, or highlights from the last game played by the Pakistani cricket team. One day he and I were in the computer lab together, checking on the status of his financial aid packages at DePaul University and University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). Mateen instead went to a sports website. He said, “Uh oh, Australia is one over us.” I asked, in what? He said, “[In] cricket, Pakistan is playing Australia.” As he was watching the statistics, and later the actual game, Mateen plugged his headphones into the computer to listen and watch the actual game as it was taking place. Mateen said, Australia is “one over *us*,” indicating that he self-identifies as part of the Pakistani team and declares himself part of the fandom for the Pakistani national cricket team. This example highlights Mateen’s active participation in the cricket team from Pakistan, his country of origin, through the use of the internet.

Naeema’s, a 16-year-old junior, and Ubah’s, an 18-year-old junior, experiences are similar to Mateen’s use and choice of an online community. They have chosen to use

the internet to live within an irregular landscape of being both “here” and “there.”

During seventh period, in one of their Computer Information Technology classes, where they were supposed to be following the textbook on the how-to's of Microsoft Word Processing and Excel programming, they decided to multi-task and also IM and email with their friends during this class period. Not only did both Naeema and Ubah choose to join an online community to communicate with their friends in both the US and Pakistan, but they also flip-flop between languages, using English and Urdu intermingled; both verbally and in their emails and IMs. One day in their Computer Information Technology class, this is what occurred:

On both Ubah and Naeema's Computer screens they have their email accounts open, but minimized to a small box in the lower right corner. Ubah has an MSN email account, while Naeema is using Yahoo as her email provider. Naeema looks around the room to find out where the teacher is located, she sees that he is on the other side of the room. So Naeema begins IMing with another person. Naeema continues to do both IMing and emailing, her email is open to the full screen size now; she receives an email titled, “Assalam-O-Alaikum.” Naeema opens it, reads it, and then begins responding in transliterated Urdu. Meanwhile, Ubah receives an email titled, Dosti, defined in English as friendship. The teacher comes over to Naeema and asks, what are you doing? He says, you are emailing friends, you need to do your work. They both minimize the window with their emails until the teacher moves on to working with other students. And then both Ubah and Naeema returns to emailing in Urdu. The teacher says, you need to do the assignment and then email it to me. They both continue to flip-flop between doing their work and emailing. As Ubah and Naeema bounce back and forth between doing their work and emailing or IMing, they also change the language they use, between Urdu and English. All of a sudden the bell rings, they close each window, log out of their computers, all of the students leave the classroom, Naeema and Ubah slowly walk out of the room speaking at each other in Urdu. (Fieldnotes, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009)

As Ubah and Naeema were flip-flopping between emailing and doing their work, they were also moving between worlds and landscapes of being “here” and “there.” They

were both physically “here” at Sawyer, but they were also “there” in Pakistan through the use of their language and the online communities.

Similar to Ubah and Naeema, Aadil, an 18-year-old junior, explains that he often uses chat rooms to communicate with other Pakistani students. These chat rooms are quasi-landscapes where the Pakistani students live and play out their merging identities through the use of their seamless transition between English and Urdu. Aadil explains that he and the other participants in this Pakistani chat room communicate in Urdu, but choose to swear in English. Aadil explains:

I use [my computer] for sometimes chatting, chatting, [and playing] game[s] [with] my friends from, um, here, or Pakistan, that’s all, sometimes I go to chat room, for fun, if I’m bored.

Uh, there’s a website, Yahoo Messenger, it has chat icon. Ok, so the Pakistan, the region for Pakistan, thing, just for fun. Because they talk a lot, we talk a lot, I mean we curse each other.

In a, in my language, Urdu, it just makes me laugh I dunno why, when we curse at each other. It’s, it is funny but I don’t know how to describe it. Yeah, some of the guys, are like, it was on Valentine’s Day. Maybe day before Valentine’s, um, he was playing some songs and uh, some other guy came up, with the mic, and he said, could you please stop, your music, he was really angry way, and he was like, he didn’t answer it, he, he said it again, could you please stop that, F, whatever, F music.

Now, after that, but he said it one cursing word in English, though, like he swear in English, he like he said can you please stop fuckin music, you guys are all gay or something you know. Listening to that music. It was a, Indian music, but old songs. Yeah, old that’s why he didn’t like it, he cursed him out. (Interview, February 2009)

This example highlights Aadil’s hybrid identity, he merges both his Pakistani and American identities, through the way he spends time in a Pakistani chat room, communicating in Urdu and interjecting English swear words while discussing

Valentine's Day. Although his Pakistani and American components are easily identifiable from each other, he is simultaneously in between and within both cultures and communities. Aadil chooses to communicate in Urdu, interjecting English slang and curse words when communicating with his friends in the US and Pakistan within his imaginary, global, online community.

Zahra's experience is similar to Ubah and Naeema's in that she too lives within a global, online community, through Facebook. This online network system is where Zahra met her husband for the first time. After meeting her husband on Facebook, Zahra traveled to Pakistan for six months to meet him and his family and to get married. Zahra missed the first half of the school year due to her marriage and the length of time spent with her new family in Pakistan. Zahra explains the role Facebook played in meeting her husband:

Ah I used it (Facebook) for friends, this, that. Actually I met, there's a little, it's a funny story between how we [my husband and I] know each other. He was on Facebook, I was on Facebook. He's actually my cousin's friend, like my cousin and him they knew each other on Facebook. My cousin she was just playing around with him, and one time he was like oh this is my cousin, would you want to marry her, and he, I don't know why he's like I want to marry her, and at that time my mom was in Pakistan so my cousin told my mom, and my mom's like oh, fine I'll meet this, these people, so we kind of met on Facebook.

Yeah [my mom knows] cuz she, he's my cousin's, like my cousin's family and his family are family friends. They are family friends, and but we met on Facebook, like. I one or two times I messaged him [after we met, on Facebook] when I was in the beginning, but now we talk on the phone, text messaging. And then on Friday, Saturdays, and Sundays we talk. I, I, I like I have this plan from t-mobile, International. It's like for five dollars I can send 100 messages and have incoming messages free, and I can send anybody a, I can have unlimited no, not unlimited, I can send those 100 messages for the United States too. He calls, I call, I, whoever feels like calling. (Interview, May 2009)

Zahra went to Pakistan for six months to get married and spend time with her new family. After her marriage, she moved back to the US while her husband and in-laws remained in Pakistan. In other words, she physically moved between landscapes and created a new “imaginary world” of being divided by the borders of both countries and continents. Yet due to technology, she was able to build and create a new, irregular landscape of living within her own “imaginary world.”

After using Facebook to meet and get to know one another, Zahra and her now husband, continue to use multiple forms of technology—cell phones and the computer to communicate between Pakistan and the US. They chat daily through IMing and emailing each other. Zahra and her husband also use their cell phones to speak to each other at least three times per week.

All of the Pakistani students at Sawyer, with the exception of Shamim, have a cell phone that they use to talk and text with their friends, whether they are in a different classroom, state, country or continent.

While sitting at a table by herself during lunch, Ubah decided to make a phone call even though she knew that using her cell phone during the school day is against the school rules. Ubah is a very petite girl, about 5 feet tall with a small framed body. She wears blue contacts on a daily basis, and purple contacts for special occasions. Ubah decided to use her Hijab to hide her phone while talking with a friend. She was sitting at a table, slouched down in the booth seat, wearing a Hijab. She takes her cell phone and places it in her head scarf, up to her left ear and cheek and then pulls her scarf over her left cheek. Then Ubah begins speaking softly in Urdu. She sits there eating a slice of pizza in an American lunchroom while talking quietly in Urdu on a cell phone tucked into her Hijab. After about ten minutes, she quickly removes her cell phone from her Hijab and places it in her lap, under the table; moves her head scarf off her cheek and pushes it back to the edge of where her ear meets her cheek. Her posture changed when she was off the phone—she sat upright. Then she slouched



again in her seat, moved her Hijab back over her left cheek again and began using her cell phone again. (Fieldnotes, October 30, 2008)

This example highlights the ways Ubah, although not permitted to use her cell phone, chooses to in order to move into her technoscape. In fact, Ubah uses her Hijab to hide her phone and move from the physical space of the school lunch room to her technoscape where she chooses to communicate in Urdu.

The use of the internet, cell phones, and other forms of technology together form the technoscape and are essential to the everyday lived experiences of the Pakistani students. They are often sitting next to one of their peer Pakistani students, but through the use of technology they are actually within their own cultural flows of irregular and fluid landscape. This is especially true for Razia, Yasmin, Naeema, and Aamira; they sit together at the same table everyday during lunch, but often choose to each escape into their own “imaginary world” through the use of technology. Each girl sits at the table with a green lunch tray each eating a slice of cheese pizza, fruit cup, French fries, milk, and salad cup, the only options available for them from the lunch food choices due to their religious dietary restrictions. Razia, a 17-year-old sophomore, is talking on her cell phone in Urdu to her boyfriend who is currently in Pakistan. Naeema has earphones in her ears; she is listening to Indian music playing from her MP3 player. Aamira is also speaking on her cell phone in Urdu with her boyfriend who lives in [Research Location]. And Yasmin is sitting at the table, eating, and smiling, she said, “I am the only one without a boyfriend and not talking on the phone.” Even though these four girls choose to sit together in the lunch room everyday, they also decide to use this time to live within their imaginary technoscapes.

*Mediascape*

The mediascape allows the Pakistani students to live in their “imaginary world” of multiple communities interconnected through multiple forms of media. Mediascapes are the distribution of electronic capabilities to produce and distribute information. The mediascape provides a variety of ethnoscaples through images that are created and available to the world. For the Pakistani students, the mediascape allows for global connectivity and deterritorialization through music, movies, television shows, newspapers, and magazines.

Ali, a senior American Pakistani student, declares his identity through his choices in music. While holding his MP3 player, Ali explained that he only has hip hop, “no Desi music in there.” When asked about the type of music he enjoys listening to, Ali quickly responds, “Hip-hop. Just not a [Desi] guy. I’m dancing for international day culture songs but those are Desi” (Interview, April 2009).

Ali declared his interest in hip hop music while also stating that he is not a “Desi” guy. He said there is one exception, when he danced to his “cultural songs” on international day at Sawyer. As discussed in Chapter Four, Ali declares one identity—that of the urban youth culture – but through his actions or participation in international day, he also declares himself as part of another culture—his “Desi” roots.

Aadil’s experience or declaration of his identity is different and more complex compared to Ali. Aadil is always walking through the hallways of Sawyer with earphone wires hanging down the front of his shirt and into his pocket. These earphones or earbud wires hung from the collar of his shirt, with one cord dangling while the other runs up,

along the side of his neck and into one ear. Aadil is always listening to music—in the hallways, in the lunch room, and sometimes, even in his classes. During the interview with Aadil, I asked, you are often listening to music, he laughed. When asked what type of music are you listening, Aadil explained:

Most of the time I listen to the English songs. Yeah, uh, most of the time I listen to English songs, or sometimes like uh, if I have to listen to the Desi songs, I mean, Indian or Pakistani songs, and I listen to those, cuz I like some of the songs from India.

Interviewer: Which American musicians do you listen to?

Aadil: Oh that's a cool question but, I would say, Eminem, Eminem.

Interviewer: If you're listening to your music, are you listening to mostly Indian music, or mostly American music?

Aadil: American. Yeah I like (Indian music too). (Interview, February 2009)

Aadil explains that he listens to American music most of the time, but he also enjoys Indian and Pakistani, or “Desi” music. But every time I saw him listening to music, I asked, can I listen to the song that is currently playing? Aadil would hold out one of the earbuds to my ear, and each time, even when Aadil said he was listening to an American artist, the music playing on his MP3 player was Indian. Even when he is listening to Indian music, Aadil asserts his preference for listening to the American music that is popular with the urban, youth culture at Sawyer. Although he may enjoy both American and “Desi” music, he actually prefers listening to his “Desi” music. Aadil's identity is constantly changing. It is fluid and dependent on each individual interaction, situation, and experience.

Although Aadil struggles with declaring his “Desi” identity, Ali easily declares and confirms his preference for his American identity through his explanation of which movies he prefers. Ali said he prefers English movies because he understands them compared to Bollywood movies. Ali’s interest in genres of movies is representative of urban youth culture—movies with black lead actors, comedies about marijuana, and action movies. In declaring his identity, Ali also defines the differences between himself and his brothers. Ali said that his brothers watch and enjoy Bollywood movies, but he does not like the same movies. Ali explains:

Uh, well my oldest brother only [watches] Desi movies. And my, uh brother, my other brother he will [watch] Desi or English, which means the same thing. Mostly I watch uh, English movies cuz I understand them much better [than] when I watch a Desi movie. I make fun of them Bollywood, they make up a lot of stuff and they don’t really [make sense] so yeah there a conflict going on.

I mean you understand in Hancock you stop the train it actually goes through but you understand the guy’s strong. But it could fly and everything, but there he’s a regular guy.

The guy shoot him, he catches the bullets like it won’t go through my skin, I mean come on who, make some sense. If he shoot you it’s just like my hands um rock they won’t the bullet won’t go through. But I watch mostly like uh movies that involve African Americans. I love those I love Kent Williams he’s like my favorite, favorite. Then there’s like Dave Chapelle, Chris Rock I love them all [Short laugh].

Well, Kent Williams, all of them, Dave Chapelle, all of them, you know, like every movie that they were involved in, like high, movies about weed, movies about from their, from American culture. It’s funny I get it, I understand, I know what’s going on. They tell me like what would happen to me it’s like a lesson. I learn from it, you know, I could turn out to be like that living in a trailer with my Mom have my girlfriend like, no you know. I never drank in my life, I smoked when I was a freshman (I thought) that was cool. Cigarettes, I thought it was cool. Then when I started playing sports I realized, I don’t wanna smoke. My friends, all of them smoking. No I’m not gonna smoke. (Interview, April 2009)

Ali explained his interest and preference for watching not only American movies over “Desi” movies, but more specifically African American movies that portray what Ali explains as the “American culture” and the use of marijuana. Ali also made a clear distinction between his brothers who prefer “Desi” movies to the American movies that he watches. Ali declares himself American since he understands the American movies and thinks the “Desi” movies are funny, uninteresting, and ridiculous.

The internet allows the Pakistani students to create this imaginary landscape of living within more than one physical community. Within the walls of their homes in [Research Location], they are communicating, watching, and listening to their community in Pakistan. This includes movies, chat rooms, television, and music. There are certain websites that are frequently used by the Pakistani students to collect the music and movies from their homeland. Yasmin claimed that for music, “everybody downloads” from [www.songs.pk](http://www.songs.pk).

Second period Yasmin, Naeema, Zahra, Aamira, Aadil, and Safia all have advanced Algebra class together. Although the intention of observing them in their advanced algebra class was to see what occurs on a typical day, they had a substitute teacher one day I observed. Instead of completing the assignment written on the chalkboard, “Assign: Read pp 2-5 & write 5-6 #1-16, due Monday,” all of the students were hanging out in groups around the classroom. The students were all sitting in seats and on desks scattered around the room, while the substitute teacher was bouncing from sitting at the teacher’s desk to walking around the classroom talking with groups of students. This room looked more like the lunch room than a classroom. The students

were all hanging out with their friends and classmates. None of them did any work; instead they sat, talked, and used their technology the entire class period.

Yasmin, Naeema, Zahra, Aamira, Aadil, and Safia were all sitting in a cluster together in the middle of the classroom. Safia, an 18-year-old senior, sat at a desk talking with the others. Aamira was on her cell phone talking with her my boyfriend in Urdu. Naeema was listening to music through her MP3 player. Yasmin was talking with Aadil and Zahra was standing next to Naeema, talking with her and looking around. Naeema said she is listening to Indian music. I asked, "Can I see your IPod?" Naeema passed it over to me. I see that many songs are from [www.songs.pk](http://www.songs.pk). I ask, what is songs.pk? Yasmin smiled and said, "Everybody downloads from there." I asked, what type of music can you download from this website? Yasmin said anything you want is there. Naeema returned her earphones to her ears and continued listening to her Indian music while sitting in her advanced algebra class.

Each of the Pakistani students lives within the ethno, techno, and media scapes he or she has designed. Their scapes are influenced by globalization and the remapping of the cultural flows between the Pakistani students' communities of "here" and "there." Their imaginary, irregular, and fluid scapes directly affect the ways the Pakistani students declare their identities.

All of the Pakistanis' experiences at Sawyer fit within their ethno, techno, and media scapes. These scapes are continuously changing, being re-carved and remapped, shaped in part by their identities. At the same time, whether they choose a hybrid or braided identity, the students continue to construct and reconstruct their identities within

these scapes. In other words, both the Pakistani students' scapes and their identities are continuously being influenced, reshaped, and redefined as a result of their interactions with one another. As we will see in the next chapter, all of these scapes are at play when these students encounter the expectations, requirements, and institutional structures of an American High School.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **“STUDENTS WHO DO NOT CONFORM . . . WILL BE REQUIRED TO CHANGE”:**

#### **EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS OF AMERICAN SCHOOLING**

The American public high school is one of the institutions that constrains and shapes identity formation for the Pakistani immigrant students observed in this study. In an interview with the researcher, Mr. Newhart, the principal of Sawyer High School, explained that, “Students who do not conform to the dress code will be required to change.” Although this “change” refers to the students’ dress, it can also be applied to the overall approach to the rules and the way the students are expected to relate to them. For these Pakistani students, American schools are the first institution where they learn the social rules and behaviors typical within American society. The American public high school provides these Pakistani immigrant students with a framework of how to understand and provides meaning of how to act and think in the everyday social world (Baker & LeTendre, 2005, p. 9).

The first half of this chapter presents the ways identities connected with academic tracks (“IB,” “AP,” “AVID,” “ESL,” or “regular”) are structurally imposed on the students at Sawyer high school. These identities are imposed by two significant factors, the structural constraints of the academic programs at Sawyer and the role of teachers as agents who reinforce the institutional structures. The first half of this chapter also



includes examples of the way these structurally imposed identities affect the way the Pakistani students self-identify.

The second section of this chapter covers and discusses school requirements at Sawyer high school, including the dress code, the wearing of school identification cards, the completion of class and school requirements, keeping up with the sequence of schooling, and the way time is used and managed. For the most part, Sawyer high school is an institution that is positively embraced by the members of the school community. The school officials and society-at-large tend to see Sawyer as an institution that will transform the residents from what Signithia Fordham (1996) would characterize as a perceived “marginal human status” to “full membership in Euroamerican civilization” (p. 28). I analyze the school requirements of the American public high school deploying John Ogbu’s (1987) conceptual framework about the way schools teach and prepare citizens for the workforce.

### **Structurally Imposed Identities**

The institutional structure of Sawyer high school segregates students based on their academic programs. This segregation directly correlates with the school’s, teachers’, and administrators’ understanding of each student’s ability to succeed. There are five different academic programs at Sawyer: the International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced Placement (AP) and honors, English as a Second Language (ESL)-Bilingual, Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID), and the “regular” program. This section highlights the ways identities are imposed on students based on their academic program and how they directly affect their self-perception and self-identifications.

As a result of the segregation of the academic programming, the students acquire an imposed identity. These identities are imposed based on two significant factors: first, the institutional configurations of the different academic programs in which students are placed, and second, the teachers' and school administrators' roles as agents reinforcing these structures and labeling students with one of the following identities based on the academic programming at Sawyer—"IB," "AP," "ESL," "AVID," and "regular." The teachers and administrators identify and describe the "IB students" and "National Honors Society (NHS) students" as the *cream of the crop*; the "AP students," as *high-achieving*; the "AVID students" as *middle tier*; the "ESL students" as *respectful*; and the "regular students" as *needing improvement or more problematic students*.

The teachers and administrators at Sawyer High School represent and reinforce the structural constraints of the typical American educational institution which, I am arguing, are based on the values of the dominant, white-middle-class culture and the protestant religion. Sawyer high school is a discursive space that exerts a local influence on the Pakistani students' identity formation. Teachers and administrators can be seen as agents who enforce the institutional and structural expectations and constraints. As active agents with power, the school officials' discourse becomes the norm. "In the field discourse is defined as a collection of statements and ideas that produce networks of meanings" (Yon, 2000, p. 3). The teachers use their agency to impose identities of worthiness on each of their students. The imposed identity of *cream of the crop*, *high-achieving*, *middle-tier*, *respectful*, or *needing improvement* is dependent on both the rigor of the academic program in which the student is enrolled and student performance.

Most of the teachers agree that the *cream of the crop* is the epitome of excellence, compared to the “regular students.” Being a “regular student” is synonymous with *needing improvement*. This identity is imposed on students and it effects how they view themselves.

Although all students at Sawyer are categorized by their imposed, academic program-based identity, teachers such as Ms. Smith, an English teacher, and Mr. Gage, a history and law teacher, categorize all the Pakistani students as either *cream of the crop* or *high-achieving*. Mr. Gage, a white male teacher, with shaggy hair hanging just above his shoulders, a scruffy beard, and black-rectangular-plastic glasses, says,

You know generally I, um, am very positive relationships with, well, really with most of my students, but in particular the, the Indo-Pak population. And I've, I've learned a lot about Indo-Pak culture, both by dealing with students and talking to parents. Um, you know, course there's . . . still a great deal of variety, um, but you find some cultural themes, . . . you know, across, uh, different types of students, and, um, it's . . . been a great learning experience for me. (Interview, May 2009)

Although there are students from sixty different countries at Sawyer, Mr. Gage clearly points out that he has exceptionally positive relationships and experiences with the Indo-Pak population at Sawyer.

Ms. Smith is a white female in her mid-30s, with long blond hair. On the day of her interview, she is wearing gray slacks and a multi-colored pin-stripped button down shirt. She agrees that there are some similarities across the Pakistani population:

Um, they wanna please. They're at my door in the morning, you know, wanting to know if their percent changed, you know, and that is so not like, 70 perc – (laughs) – 70 percent of the school. Their homework is always in on time. It could be plagiarized because they want, they want an A, and they don't realize that at first right answer from, you know, the computer isn't gonna earn them that A, so. Those are the similarities, and

in general, they get along with everyone. They're kind and they're more respectful, definitely, of teachers, but also of one another, too. Very seldom do I have, um, a confrontation with two students and one is Pakistani. (Interview, June 2009)

Ms. Smith also explained that the Pakistani population differs from other student populations at Sawyer: “Yes, . . . and I think they, just their whole respect toward education and the system is, you know, what drives that, you know, self-control.” Even though there are a variety of imposed identities, most of the Pakistani students are assigned the identity of either *cream of the crop* or *high-achieving*.

***“IB Students” and “NHS Students”: The Cream of the Crop***

Mr. Newhart is the principal of Sawyer High School. He is a white man, approximately six feet-four inches tall with very broad shoulders, large rosy cheeks, and pale skin. He says that the “IB students” and National Honors Society—“NHS students” are the *cream of the crop*. The International Baccalaureate Program (IB) is the most prestigious and rigorous program at Sawyer high school. This program is one of five academic tracks in which the students at Sawyer can be enrolled. The IB program contains the most intellectual and prestigious academic programming at Sawyer high school.

The IB Program is a challenging, comprehensive college preparatory program designed for motivated, self-disciplined students. It has been offered in schools throughout the world since 1968. The mission statement for this program states:

Through [a] comprehensive and balanced curricula coupled with challenging assessments, [the IB program] aims to develop the individual talents of young people and teach them to relate the experience of the classroom to the realities of the world outside. Beyond intellectual rigor and high academic standards, strong emphasis is placed on the ideals of

international understanding and responsible citizenship, to the end that IB students may become critical and compassionate thinkers, lifelong learners and informed participants in local and world affairs, conscious of the shared humanity that binds all people together while respecting the variety of cultures and attitudes that makes for the richness of life. (Sawyer website, 7/31/09)

Mr. Newhart, the principal, says these two programs, IB and NHS, are synonymous with being a high-performing student, “The IB students are the cream of the crop.” Mr. Newhart continues, “[These] students have been evaluated and selected” to participate in the IB program. He explains the reason they have been selected: “Well, the IB students are the students that are really committed to a very strenuous academic program. And it’s very restricted; it’s a program that really prepares students for, ah, college success. The students that have gone through the IB program pretty much are guaranteed, like a 90-95 percent rate, to be successful in college.”

Even though the students in the IB program were evaluated and selected by faculty at Sawyer, it is up to each individual student to keep up with the rigor and intensity of the academic program. Mr. Newhart explained:

[A] lot of it has to do, not because of the program, but because of their commitment, you know, a lot of their own personal issues, but it sort of works with the way they’ve been prepared, they’re gonna be successful. You know, in a, I mean you can almost put down money on each one of them that they’re gonna, you’ll win 19 out of 20 times, uh, that they’re gonna be successful within college. I mean, whether or not they finish is up to what their own personal circumstances are, but as far as getting, going to college and passing and staying in school, and not flunking, you know, they’re gonna make it. Uh, and that probably hits about 10 percent of our students. (Interview, May 2009)

Mr. Newhart expressed certainty regarding the IB students’ future success based on their personal characteristics and abilities.

Similar to the prestige of the IB program is the National Honors Society (NHS), which is an after school club only open to qualified students. One becomes a member through an intense selection process conducted by teachers and administrators at Sawyer. First, an individual must be selected to apply. A list of potential student invitees to this selective society is sent to all faculty members. The faculty members then rate each of these students on a scale of zero to five, with five being the highest. Any student given the score of zero is eliminated from consideration of membership in NHS. Then each potential student member is given an application to complete. On the NHS application, the students must provide evidence of scholarship, leadership, and community service. Her application is reviewed by teachers and school administrators, and only then, are a select number of students invited to join the club. Students are chosen based on characteristics identified by the faculty and the institution, including: honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, citizenship, respect, responsibility, and diligence.

*NHS Induction Ceremony.* Being identified as *cream of the crop* is synonymous with following the rules common to the institutional structures of American public high schools, in other words, the rules of mainstream, white-middle class culture (Lee, 2005). At the NHS induction ceremony, Mr. Newhart explained to the new members that only a “small elite achieve this honor.” He continued, “This group is the elite of the elite, as part of Sawyer and in our country, faculty choose the best and brightest in this school; they represent our school population—diverse, from around the world.”

Three of the four officers, or leaders, of this selective honors society are Pakistani, and 25 percent of the new inductees in 2008 were also Pakistani. The selection process

for induction into NHS is multi-layered. First the teachers and administrators nominate students they identify as potential candidates for the honors society. These students complete an application and write an essay to be considered for induction in this society. A small committee of teachers reads through each application and decides which students to admit based on their grades, application, and essay. Safia, Salma, Massima and Maazin are already members of NHS. At the assembly to induct the new members sixteen students were inducted into NHS, four of them are Pakistani, including, Hassan, Mateen, Yasmin, and Shamim. (See Appendix A for a chart showing basic information about the students being featured in this study.)

The NHS induction ceremony took place during sixth, seventh, and eighth period classes on a regular bell scheduled school day in mid-May. This ceremony was an invitation-only event for students, their parents, and all staff members. The assembly took place in room 117, the extra-large classroom, which is often used by the teachers as a professional development center. My field notes recorder the following:

The current members, along with Ms. York, the P.E. teacher and NHS's faculty sponsor, decorated the room. Each table had a different color bright table cloth with silver, star-shaped confetti sprinkled on it and a group of balloons tied to a weight at the center of the table. On the walls around the room are signs saying, "Congratulations," and an embroidered sign states, "Sawyer high school, National Honor Society." At the front of the room there are two rows of chairs set-up facing the audience—these are for the new inductees to sit in. There is a podium to the left of the door and next to the podium are four polls, each with a light bulb on top—and the following words written, one on each poll: NHS, Service, Leadership, and Charity.

Ms. York turns on the light on the poll that has NHS written on it. Then Ms. York turns out the ceiling lights in the room. She asks the inductees to enter the room. In a single file line, each inductee walks through the door and to a seat at the front of the room. They are each holding a lit

white candle. Once they arrive at their seats, Ms. York asks them to blow out their candles. The Color Guard enters the room, carrying the American flag and Illinois State flag. Everyone remains standing. Ms. York leads everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance. She puts her right hand across her chest, as does most everyone in the room including Shamim, though Mateen does not. He remains standing with his hands folded at his hips. Ms. York then introduces Massima, the president of NHS, who introduces Mr. Newhart, the principal.

Mr. Newhart speaks to the inductees and the parents and teachers who are sitting in the audience. He says that only a “small elite [number of students] achieve this honor.” This group [National Honor Society] is “the elite of the elite, as part of Sawyer and in our country.” “Faculty choose the best and the brightest in this school.” The members of NHS “represent our school population—diverse—from around the world.” Michelle, the Master of Ceremonies, walks up to the podium and says, “One of the reasons [you] were chosen is because of [your] character,” a topic on which the NHS’s vice-president will elaborate.. The vice president walks up to the podium, speaks about what character means, and then Massima turns on the light on the poll that has “character” written down it. Then Massima calls up Moe, to speak about Service, after which Massima turns on the light on the poll marked “service.” Salma, the treasurer, walks to the podium and speaks about scholarship, and then Massima turns on the light on the poll with Scholarship written on it. After each of the polls are lit, Massima reads the Induction pledge, line by line, asking the new inductees to repeat after her:

I being aware of the honor  
 Which is being bestowed upon me  
 By the selection for membership in the National Honor Society  
 Do hereby pledge loyalty to this organization.  
 It shall be my earnest purpose  
 To give unsparingly of my time energy  
 Toward the promotion of all school activities.

I will strive to be at all times a model student,  
 And will never knowingly bring reproach upon my school.  
 I pledge myself to uphold the high purpose of this society  
 For which I have been selected.

Striving in every way  
 By word and deed  
 To make its ideals  
 The ideals of my school and to my, life.



After the inductees read the induction pledge, Massima and Ms. York congratulate the inductees. Ms. York directed the students to go sit with their guests who have joined them today. Shamim, Salma, Hassan, Mateen, and Yasmin join Safia, Yasmin's sister, and me at a table. Salma turns to me and said, "Last year it was just the IB students at one table and then Safia and I sitting together alone, but this year, we have a 'brown Table.'" Maazin and Massima chose to sit at a table with IB students, rather than the "brown table." The students eat fruit, cheese, and crackers, but no one at the "brown table" eats the chicken wings because they only eat Halal meat. Meanwhile, the students talk about cross-dressing day for the seniors, which is scheduled for the next day. Safia says, "I want to be preppy, not ghetto." After eating, the students take many pictures. At first, the photos only consist of different combinations of the students at the "brown table," but later they include all of the NHS members. (Field notes, May 20, 2009)

This event is representative of one of the many rituals and ceremonies experienced by these students within the American educational institution. Each component of this ceremony is significant to the design of American public schools. First, before the induction of the NHS members began, the Color Guard entered the room carrying patriotic symbols of both the nation and the state—the American and Illinois State flags. As is typical of American schools, everyone was expected to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance with their right hand on their heart. But some students, including Mateen, did not put their hands on their chests, and did not recite the Pledge. Another essential part of the American public school experience is the use of a podium. During this ceremony, the podium was at the front of the room. Each speaker stood and spoke from it when addressing the audience of teachers, parents, other NHS students, and staff members. A number of individuals addressed the audience, each identified characteristics and values important to the inductees' success: scholarship, service, leadership, and charity. The teaching of values and characteristics defining success is

embedded in the American school system. Lastly, similar to the way the Pledge of Alliegence was recited, the new inductees were required to recite the NHS induction pledge. This ceremony included the use of many rituals important to membership in this selective society. These rituals, and the ceremony in its entirety, significantly impact the lived experiences of the Pakistani immigrant students. Through this, and similar experiences, these students learn American rituals and what to expect during other school sponsored ceremonies and events.

At this academic ceremony, most of the Pakistani students choose to socially segregate themselves from the other National Honor Society members. A result of the social segregation made is also racial segregation from all the other members. Salma announced this segregation, saying, “We have a brown table.” She also expressed her satisfaction with the significant increase in the number of students at her “brown table,” compared to last year. Interestingly, Maazin and Massima choose not to sit at the “brown table,” but instead to sit with their peers from the same academic track. Salma’s awareness of the segregation of the “brown table” highlights the consciousness of her decision to choose friends with racial and religious commonalities.

***Ambition of Pakistani Students.*** As noted earlier, many of the Pakistani students are identified by their teachers as *cream of the crop* or *high-achieving*. The Pakistani students are one of, if not *the*, most ambitious groups of students at Sawyer High School. Eleven out of the twenty-nine participants in this study were either in the IB program, NHS, or both: Massima is in the IB program and is the president of NHS; Maazin is in the IB program and NHS; Satta and Adab are both in the IB program; Shamim, Hassan,

Mateen and Yasmin are all members of NHS; Salma is a member and the treasurer of NHS; and Safia is a member and secretary of the club.

Portes and Rumbaut (2001) found significant differences in aspirations and expectations among immigrant students from different national backgrounds. The social capital that the Pakistani students possess is significantly higher than other immigrant populations at Sawyer, including higher educational aspirations, parents' educational aspirations, parents' interaction with their children, and parents' education. This is one reason for their academic success in the more rigorous programs, and why the teachers and administrators identify them as either *cream of the crop students* or *hardworking students*.

Shamim, a female, senior Pakistani student who grew up in Karachi, Pakistan where she attended school from the age of five through ninth grade and then began attending Sawyer her sophomore year of high school, was recently selected to become a member of NHS. She explains that her teachers have imposed the identity of *cream of the crop* on her, but she does not see herself in the same way:

At Sawyer, um, people think I am – not, not even people, teachers – think I am a really good student. Um, I don't think I am that smart, but teachers, like, they are like, oh my god, you have a straight A's, that means that you are really smart, you, you will be, like IB student. I am, I like to study, but not all the time, you know. There will be some time, when you will go home, do your work, study, and then you can do what ever you want, but my parents, they want me to study all the time. (Interview, January 2009)

Mr. Gage explained the criteria he used to identify *the cream of the crop students*:  
 “They're all different. Um, . . . there are a few students that, um, [are] very driven, um, . . . and tend to also have, um, high skill levels probably because their drive gets them to

practice more and, . . . you know, and . . . do more work and then so on, and which they're, they're getting better.” He continues, “Mateen and, uh, and Maazin, um, Massima, I think fall, you know, fall into that category.” In contrast, Adab, who is also an “IB student” but is performing inconsistently, is identified only as a *high-achieving student*, rather than *the cream of the crop*. Mr. Gage says, “I’ve kind of had mixed results with, with Adab. She’s, she performs well sometimes and less well other times but, um, you know, sh-she, she shows, uh, a lot of promise and generally, I think she’s interested in academic success.” Mr. Gage identifies Adab as a *high-achieving student*, but not *the cream of the crop*, due to the fact that she is inconsistent and needs to make some improvement to her academic performance. This is contrasted with Maazin, Massima, and Mateen, whose performances and academic achievements are consistently *cream of the crop students*.

**“AP Students:” *The High-Achieving Students***

The Pakistani students in the Advanced Placement (AP) and honors courses are given the imposed identity of being *high-achieving students*. This academic program represents one academic track in which the Pakistani students are placed at Sawyer. The AP and honors courses are the second most rigorous and prestigious, after the IB program.

The Advanced Placement program is a national program administered by the College Board. AP courses offer in-depth study in single subject areas. At the end of the course, the students are required to take the AP assessment, which is scored by a national

testing service in New Jersey. The AP courses allow students an opportunity to earn college credit for classes taken in high school (Sawyer website, 7/31/09).

Ms. Smith, an AP English teacher, explained the characteristics that define Mateen, a senior, male Pakistani student, whose educational experiences have been entirely in American public schools. She described Mateen's *high-achieving* identity in the "AP program," as compared to his peers. Ms. Smith says, "[He is a] complete gentlemen, open-minded, willing to put himself out there. He led the class, I would say, 20% of the year because I left it open to them and most of the students would sit, and he would finally say, oh I'll do it, Mrs. Smith, and he would lead the class. And he did a job, he did a good job!" Ms. Smith continued to explain Mateen's good work:

[He] led the class discussion, call[ed] on people, you know (she laughs). He was really, really good at praising students, what I'm not so good at, um, so he would be like, 'Thank you for your comment.' I mean just, he's wonderful, but again he was always looking, am I doing a good job? You know he always wants that adult's, so [approval]. (Interview, June 2009)

Although Mr. Newhart identifies Mateen as a *cream of the crop student* because he is in NHS, Ms. Smith identifies Mateen as a *high-achieving student*; she feels there is room for improvement. Ms. Smith says Mateen needs to build his confidence for him to be identified as a *cream of the crop student*. Either way, Mateen has been identified as both *high-achieving* and one of the *cream of the crop student* by his teachers and administrators at Sawyer.

***"AVID Students:" The Middle Tier Students***

The Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program at Sawyer High School is another academic program that imposes an identity of *middle tier students*.

Ms. Gray, the Curriculum Coordinator is a white female, approximately five feet-four inches tall with red hair and wire rimmed glasses, wearing black slacks and a bright-colored blazer. She explains that this program is intended to assist students with study skills to prepare them for college:

It's designed for the middle-tier kid, for the student who, um, is probably the first generation to go to college. The student takes the AVID course one period every day—meets five days a week. In the AVID course the students learn skills that'll help them in high school and college: time management, organization, structure, and study skills. They work on reading, writing, inquiry, and they learn how to study in groups. Two other days a week there's tutoring; the kids work together in groups, the tutors are college students, so that the AVID students can identify with someone in college, someone close to their age. Then on the fifth day, the students have an opportunity to go on field trips to local colleges.

Fridays are also binder checks; every student in AVID must have a binder. It's a five-inch thick binder and the students are required to keep notes from every class. The notes have to be done in the Cornell note-taking fashion. This teaches them how to organize their thoughts, reflect on what they've learned, and how to do inquiry and ask questions about what they've learned. The AVID students also have to take at least one AP class. These are middle-tier kids; these are kids who might not have thought about taking an AP class, and they have diverse needs. (Interview, April 2009)

Mr. Newhart agrees with Ms. Gray, the AVID students are the *middle-tiered student* or *average students* at Sawyer. He explained that the students in the AVID program are not *cream of the crop students*, but they are *middle tier students*:

And so we looked at the AVID program. The AVID program really appeals to our more average students at Sawyer. Now an average student at Sawyer would actually be a below average student on nationally standardized tests. . . . I think, when you look at Sawyer's population, your standardized rate usually goes 1 to 7 as opposed to 1 to 9 because your 8's and 9's are all at the selective enrollment schools. So your, if you have a 1 to 7 rate your average is 4 which puts it between 28 and 42 percent, which is roughly the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile on standardized types of tests.

And that's basically what our AVID students are. Now that doesn't mean that they aren't exceptional students or have abilities, just that they're not that adept at taking standardized tests, for a whole bunch of reasons. Uh, but they certainly have the ability to be successful, so we developed an AVID. This is our second year in the AVID Program, we have 175 students; we eventually wanna get it to about 300 students. (Interview, May 2009)

Mr. Newhart also explained the difference between the "AVID students" and "IB students," as well as the expectation for the AVID students to be prepared to attend a four year university at the conclusion of their senior year at Sawyer:

You look at the Avid students and you know, they're committed as well but they're provided with a lot more, uh, academic supports than the IB students. The IB students you know, they're, they're provided with support but they're also a little bit more self sufficient. The Avid students come in and they don't have that kind of uh, self sufficiency yet, but their provided with the support and by the time they leave us, should if they, our expectations are if they've taken several AP classes they'll have been in difficult curriculums they'll have really done a lot of, had a lot of experiences that will really prepare them for a four year university.

Aamira, a female, junior Indian student from Hyderabad, India, who was schooled entirely in the U.S., was identified by the AVID teachers as an "All-Star," which translates to a committed and prepared college bound student within the AVID program. But that is still not at the same caliber of *cream of the crop* as the "IB students." Aamira explains how she made it on the wall of All-Stars in the AVID program, "Well, um, I made it the honor roll every quarter, every semester. . . I have perfect attendance, um, I don't have any behavior problems. You know, just, I study and then that's how I came up to here. You know, GPA, class rank. . . I have decided that if I achieve a lot in high school, I'll achieve a lot in my future." Aamira is identified as a *middle tier student*. She follows the rules and is identified as a successful "AVID student," which means she is, as

Mr. Newhart explained, an experienced and prepared student for a four-year university. But there is also room for improvement. Aamira is a *middle tier student* and not *the cream of the crop*, because the academic program in which she is enrolled is not the most prestigious and rigorous. In other words, part of the institutional structure at Sawyer is the ranking of academic programming based on the values and beliefs embedded into the American educational institution.

***“ESL Students:” The Respectful Students***

Another academic track at Sawyer is the ESL/Bilingual program. The students in this program are given the imposed identity of being *respectful students*. The definition or identification of a *respectful student* in the ESL program is different, with lower expectations than that of the Pakistani students in the AP and AVID programs. The Pakistani students in the ESL program are assigned the identity of a *respectful student* when they meet what would be only basic requirements in the more prestigious and rigorous programs.

The ESL program offers instruction in English as a Second Language to limited-English proficient students while they are transitioning from their native language. This department provides classes taught in "sheltered English," a technique in which limited-English proficient students receive instruction in modified English. The goal is to convey the same information in a way these students can understand. Teachers may use a simpler methodology, guard against using complex sentences, and spend more time on vocabulary and demonstrations. Once students understand English at a transitional level,



they enroll in classes in the general program of instruction and many go on to enroll in AP courses, and some to the IB Program (Sawyer website, 7/31/09).

Ms. Kelly, a white female, ESL and Bilingual Lead Teacher, described the ways in which the ESL students are respectful of their educational opportunities, adult authority, and their families:

I would say that most of the ESL kids come with a greater respect for education, a greater sense of responsibility to their families, for having brought them here, um, um, a built in respect for authority, which maybe I said before, doesn't hang around as much as we would like it to, um, and um, I think um, at least the new kids that don't speak any English at all kind of a sense of awe that ya know, that is going on. It doesn't last like I said, as long as, as long as it um, used to, ya know. (Interview, February, 2009)

Ms. Endler, a white female English teacher, agrees with Ms. Kelly and also describes these students as motivated, yet shy due to their lack of experiences with the English language. Ms. Endler explained:

Students who are motivated but their very, especially of ESL students, they are motivated but they are very shy, they wont necessarily ask for help, you have to go and find out, you know, how they are doing, uh, check on their progress because they wont necessarily speak up and say they are having a difficult time. (Interview, April, 2009)

To be *respectful*, the ESL students need only be courteous to their teachers and complete their assigned class work and homework. Haleema, a female, sophomore Pakistani student, who grew up in Faisalabad, Pakistan and attended an all-girls school in Pakistan until 2008, explains, "I show my respect to - I respect my teachers. Even I didn't do my homework, but I, I'm never use bad word for teacher for teachers." Apparently Haleema has a different view of herself then the grades she has been given. She explains, "(I)n my progress report, I got A and B." Haleema isn't sure if she is proud of her

grades. She pauses for five to six seconds before responding, “I don’t know. Because I’m not hard working, I’m never, I’m not good student. I don’t know how I got A and B.”

Haleema says she does her homework because she wants to get good grades. Those grades are a change from how she performed at her school in Pakistan,

Yes, I do [my homework] here, because I want grade. (She laughs) If we here, in America, if we, nothing do, if we finish homework, then we got B and C. In Pakistan, the teacher only check homework and never give us a grade. I answer, I, I te-I told her, I, I was lazy my school, my, my Pakistani school, I don’t know how I came here. Like every day I don’t went to school everyday. Here I got perfect attendance (laughs).

Even though Haleema is making an effort at being an “ESL student,” many of her teachers assign her the identity of *respectful* but not as *motivated* as the “IB students.” In some cases, this imposed identity of *respectful*, but not *cream of the crop* is because of her lack of participation in the class and because her effort outdistances her academic achievement. In fact, Haleema received a grade of a B instead of an A in gym class because she did not swim. She did not swim because it is against her religion to show her body or wear a bathing suit in a co-ed swim class. Therefore, she did not fail the class. Instead, her grade was lowered from an A to a B. Haleema says, “Swim coach gave us a B . . . because I, um, I didn’t . . . go swimming . . . [because it is] not allowed in religion. . . . That’s not culture, only for boys, not girls.” The swim coach imposed an identity other than *motivated* on Haleema based on her lack of class participation. This is an example of how the teachers act as agents, assigning students grades is one way of imposing an identity on them.

***“Regular Students:” Needing Improvement***

The least respected and academically challenging program at Sawyer is the “regular” program. Students in the regular program are often identified by teachers as *needing improvement*, disrespectful, and less motivated. Ms. Smith explained the ways in which the students in her regular English class differ from those in the AP and IB programs. She explained that the “regular students” are *disrespectful* and *less motivated*:

I couldn't hold those kinds of discussions with my regular students until like the last three weeks of school. . . . They're just, they don't respect one another, um, they don't respect what we do. They answer phone call—they attempt to answer phone calls in class. They attempt, they come in with their head phones on. Um, and again this isn't everyone in the class. Um, but that's the difference. They don't come prepared for class. . . . They were at the end, but like I said, it takes all year to get them just to want to be in school. Whereas, the IB students and the AP students both come with, half of them come with motivation. They like it. They, they wanna be here. They're interested. They care about their educations and the other ones they're being forced by their parents, and they've gotta do it cuz other, you know, otherwise they get kicked out of their homes.  
(Interview, June 2009)

Ms. Endler agrees with Ms. Smith in that the IB students are *extremely motivated* and *self directed students* while in her regular classes there are *less self motivated students*.

My first class of the day is an IB prep class. These students are extremely motivated, they are very self directed. So the biggest thing I need to do in regards to meeting their needs is really give them the little push to the next level and make sure they are working with challenging enough material and getting the help and direction they need to work with that. But once their given a task or a text, they are really good about diving in and, you know, applying their own curiosity and independent thought. My other classes are a little less self motivated. And so there is much more prodding, there's much more concern about what's going to be high interest and engaging as far as reading materials. And that's just to get them to the first step of, will they pick it up? So that we can do lessons and do work on a given text. (Interview, May 2009)

Although the teachers impose the identity of *needing improvement, less self motivated*, and *disrespectful* on the “regular students;” Razia, a female, Pakistani Junior in this program, who attended a British school in Karachi, Pakistan until she came to the US in 2003, recognizes that there are both “good” and “bad students” in the program.

Razia explains,

I mean good students are not only the students that study and listen to the teacher. Good students like, you know, in fact I’m not like the person who just study and look at the teacher like, you know, being nice, just respecting teacher. I mean students too, the, a person, I mean I should respect the students, too. If I’m cursing at them of course they’re gonna curse back. So respect the teacher and students, I think that’s the mainly part that makes the person, you know, nice.

That they’re mostly bad students, now, they’re mostly bad students, um I wouldn’t prefer any race or something, but there are a lot of people, I mean, Pakistani’s are bad too, Hindi’s are bad too, I mean Indian, and uh, black people are bad too, Mexicans are bad too, in every class. And bad students: they cursing, not respecting teachers – she’s talking something and, you know, making some noise for no reason. That’s a, I mean bad students are not only not doing their homework that’s not really being bad. Being bad is, you know, not disrespecting everyone.  
(Interview, March 2009)

Although Razia is in the “regular” program, she is still considered a “good student.”

Razia has similar characteristics to the “AP” and “AVID students” because she is a *high-achieving* and *middle tier student* who completes her class work. She is also comparable to the “ESL students” in that she is a *respectful student* to her teachers and classmates. Razia often separates herself from the “bad students” within her classes in the regular program. Yet, she is able to clearly identify who are the “good” and “bad students” in each of her classes.

When Razia first entered Sawyer, she was in the ESL program. But now as a student in the regular program, Razia explains that being a “regular student” is more difficult than ESL:

Razia: If you see the studying part regular is a little hard. It's harder than bilingual. Bilingual is much easier to do. The test and everything [in] regular is a little harder for me. Not for me, like generally it's hard I could do it I know I could do it but you know it's hard. Like biology is kind of hard, not really, English sometimes it makes, you know sometimes you have to write too much and in English literature. If I was, uh, right now my friends a sophomore and they're in Miss Shaw's [ESL] class. You don't have to write that much, she just teaches about grammar and a little bit about everything.

Interviewer: So would you rather be with your friends?

Razia: Not with friends, because it depends on teacher too. Like Mr. Suh, I don't know anyone in there but still his class is interesting. You know, sometimes it just depends on teachers, how they keep us, you know, if they're gonna keep us alone then of course we're not gonna like.

Interviewer: So you enjoy biology

Razia: Yeah

Interviewer: What else are you enjoying?

Razia: Miss, I mean, Geometry class is giving me a lot of problem. I dunno why. Math is favorite subject, and this year I hate math.

Interviewer: What do you think it is?

Razia: I dunno. Algebra when I was with Mr. Lucas it was like I used to wait for that class, you know, I wanna go to that class. And now I have second period geometry, and I don't wanna go to that class. It's like, you know, it's not that we have to do work or something, she just give us homework we gotta do it and everything. She explains it, too, but I don't get it, and most of the people don't get it. Rarely people get it.

Interviewer: How can you do better? Can you get help in that class?

Razia: Um, I have no idea. I, I . . . just like the teacher is kind of weird, I guess. I don't like the teacher, and she don't teach. She just want every single student to be quiet, and that's not possible in any class, any, I mean,

there are like 35 students and every single person can be quiet for 5 seconds, but someone is gonna do something, and they're good, bad, both students in class but she's just like you know, every single person sometimes she's gonna yell, yell, yell, yell, 15 minutes then she's gonna study for 5 minutes, and then she's gonna yell again cuz everyone's talking.

Interviewer: You said in the class there's good and bad

Razia: Yeah, of course, in every class there are.

Interviewer: What do you mean?

Razia: Good students, bad students, as in some students curse, some students. (Interview, March 2009)

Razia recognizes the differences between the "ESL program" and the variety of students who sit in the classrooms of the "regular program." She is very aware of both the "good" and "bad" students. Razia identifies that one factor in the students' behaviors is the role of the teacher. In other words, Razia identifies the teachers' agency at Sawyer influencing actions and achievement of the students in the "regular program."

***The More Problematic Students.*** The imposed identity of being a *repeat offenders* or a *more problematic student* is defined by having little to no work completed in each of the regular classes or being caught in the hall sweeps without any explanation as to why the required assignments are not completed.

Mr. Newhart explains that he, along with other school officials, tries to reinforce the school expectations and make changes in these *more problematic students*. Mr. Newhart emphasizes his goal of balancing the need to teach these "repeat offenders" how to behave or improve their performance, without turning Sawyer into a prison or an oppressive place:

Uh, yeah, you don't wanna, you don't wanna make the school seem like it's some kind of prison or oppressive place, either. So, but trying to let them know also that, you know, it's disrespectful to the teachers to these students that are also in class, if they come in a few minutes after the lesson has begun, and that means things have to be re-introduced, and you know, so we try to established a sort of sense that ok, you know there's a mutual respect here that we wanna get things going, so, let's uh, try and work together as a community to stay on schedule as much as possible. (Interview, May 2009)

Mr. Newhart tries to makes changes in the *repeat offenders* or *more problematic students* through the use of hall sweeps. On October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008, at the end of seventh period and the beginning of eighth period, Mr. Newhart's voice projected from the loud speaker at Sawyer announcing there is going to be a hall sweep. My field notes recorded the following:

The bell rang indicating the end of 7<sup>th</sup> period. One of the male administrators voice began projecting from the loud speaker. He said, "we are going to have a hall sweep. I need all the teachers in the hallway, please help students get to their 8<sup>th</sup> period class. Once the bell rings for 8<sup>th</sup> period, please help or send all the students that are still in the hallway to the auditorium." Three to four minutes after the bell rang, indicating the start of 8<sup>th</sup> period, I went down to the auditorium. The principal, assistant principal (AP), and intern assistant principal (AP) were all in the auditorium. The principal and AP were standing in the auditorium watching the students as they sat in chairs talking with their classmates. While Ms. Polk, the AP-intern, was standing at the entrance to the auditorium taking each students school ID as the entered the room. I asked her how does this [the hall sweep] works. She said, we take their IDs, write their names down to see if they are "repeat offenders," and then we either keep them here [in the auditorium] or send them back to class.

I walked further into the auditorium to see if any of the Pakistani students were in here, they were not. The student population in the auditorium consists of forty-two students in total, almost all of them black, with the exception of 5-6 Latino/as. Ms. Polk said this is a much larger group of students then earlier in the day. She said most of them were probably trying to leave school early. The AP announces to the students, "if any of you are in here tomorrow during the hall sweeps, you will be thrown out, we will show you the door and you will leave immediately."

The students had to sit in the auditorium the entire class period. They sat and talked with their friends. I heard many swear words and a couple of the students using their cell phones. One boy came Ms. Polk and said “come on man I am trying to get my grades up.” She said, “Do I look like a man to you.” He said, “sorry, come on mam.” She asked him, “What is your plan?” The boy responds, “I do not know, I like history.” She said, “that is not going to get you a job—you need a job, what are you good at?” He responded, “I have a lot of talents, I am not sure which one I will use, but I have a criminal background.” She said, “I did not ask you about that, I want to know what you are going to do?” The boy turned and walked back into the auditorium and sat down.

After 55 minutes of sitting in the auditorium, talking with their peers, hanging out, and using their cell phones, without the expectation to complete any academic task, the bell rang and the students just walked out of the auditorium. As the students left the auditorium, they were handed their school IDs. And they were free to leave during the regularly scheduled dismissal with the other students. (Field notes, October 30, 2008)

Interestingly, Ms. Polk, the AP-Intern, a white female in her mid-thirties, identifies the students who have been caught multiple times in the hall sweeps as “repeat offenders.” The identity of “repeat offenders” is directly associated with the criminal justice system. In fact, the one student who speaks to the AP-Intern about his future, actually references his criminal record.

As stated earlier in this section, Ms. Smith clearly identifies the *repeat offenders* or *more problematic students* both in the hallway and in her regular English class. But she does not find them in her AP or IB classes. Ms. Smith explains:

Mr. Newhart has suspended the *frequent flyer hall walkers* ‘til the end of the year, so they’re no longer in the building; not only the *frequent flyer hall walkers*, but the, the *more problematic students*. The one who, the ones who’ve been suspended at least 5 times—they’re, they’re done. They’re not coming back so. Yes, in my regular class. (Interview, June 2009)



Ms. Smith highlights the way her “regular English class” has changed since this one particular girl has been suspended, “It’s just less eventful [she laughs]. The girl who was suspended, comes in late with her head phones on and she doesn’t really give me a problem but she’s a huge problem in the hallway.” This girl was suspended because she did not follow the rules, or meet the expectations and criteria established by the institutional structure at Sawyer. Ms. Smith explains why this student has been identified as a *more problematic student* by the teachers and administration, “So, I mean that’s about the extent of her dis- you know her misbehaviors: wearing head phones, being out of dress code, and coming in late in my room. But she’s nasty in the hallway. I’ve seen her, defiance I mean is, call teachers c-u-n-t, ‘get out of my business,’ just gross.” This example also highlights the clear difference between the Pakistani students, who are universally assigned the identity of being “IB,” “in NHS,” “AP,” “ESL,” or “AVID” students, and the many others who are either “regular” students or “repeat offenders” at Sawyer.

In contrast to Ms. Smith’s experiences with most of the “regular students” acting as *disrespectful students*, Ms. Preeti, a female Indian, Spanish teacher in her early-thirties, explains that many of the students identified as *more problematic students* are actually smart, but they choose not to do their work. In other words, Ms. Preeti explains that it is not a matter of the “regular students” being lazy; rather they are consciously in opposition to their academic success. This highlights the role of student agency within the constraints of the educational system. Ms. Preeti clearly states the intersection of both the imposed identities of the school officials and the role of student agency: “I think

a lot of the student[s] here are super intelligent, but they don't wanna play that card. I think a lot of them have great potential and they need to know they can get far, but they won't do it because it's the, it's not the right thing to do in this building. . . . They're very lazy, most of them are the same, lazy. They're not working to their potential; they're not doing what they need to do." In other words, Ms. Preeti thinks that the students with the imposed identity of *more problematic students* could actually be identified as *needing improvement students* or even *middle-tier students* if they made an effort to do so, and became agents of change in their academic achievement.

### ***The Impact of Structurally Imposed Identities***

One result of an imposed identity of *cream of the crop*, *high-achieving*, *middle tier*, or *respectful* is that the students receive additional or special privileges within the constraints of the institutional structure at Sawyer. For example, Abdul-Azeez, a male, sophomore Pakistani student who moved to the U.S. in 2007 from Karachi, Pakistani where he attended a private, co-ed British school in Pakistan, says, that because he is identified as a *respectful* student, he does not need a hallway pass:

Interviewer: Would you like me to write you a pass?

Abdul-Azeez: No, it's like lunch period.

Interviewer: Yes, but you need a pass to go down there?

Abdul-Azeez: No.

Interviewer: The hallway? The teacher's gonna yell.

Abdul-Azeez: No, they will not yell, if they say you are good student they will not yell to you. (Interview, March 2009)

In other words, the teachers, security guards, and school administrators treat students identified as either “IB students,” “AP students,” “ESL students,” or “AVID students” differently than students with the imposed identity of *more problematic students* within the constraints of the institution.

The only agency students possess in the process of the structurally imposed identity resides in their academic performance and how they choose to act within the constraints of the institutional structures of Sawyer. For instance, they can choose to complete their homework or not, and then based on their actions or agency in response to their teachers’ requests, the students will either be identified as *high-achieving*, *respectful*, *middle-tier*, *needing improvement*, or *more problematic students*.

The case of Zahir, a senior Afghani male, whose first time attending school was in fifth grade when he moved to the United States, highlights the role of student agency within the structural constraints of the institutional structure and his imposed identity at Sawyer. When Zahir entered Sawyer, the teachers identified him as a *respectful student*. Zahir decided to change his academic performance, and the teachers then changed his imposed identity to a *high-achieving student*. Zahir’s imposed identity changed from being a *respectful* to a *high-achieving student* enrolled in the “AP program.” Zahir explains how he changed his academic performance and therefore, the identity imposed on him changed from being in the “ESL program” to a student in the “AP program.”

Interviewer: Tell me about your first school experiences here.

Zahir: Freshman year memory was my English wasn’t really that good I was, I had, I was in ESL II.

Interviewer: Are you still in ESL II?

Zahir: ESL no, it's English II now.

Interviewer: It's English II?

Zahir: Yes.

Interviewer: So you're not in ESL or the bilingual program?

Zahir: I mean it's, I think it is bilingual program, but I don't have bilingual classes anymore. Yes, but I don't have bilingual class, I have all honors, and AP class now.

Interviewer: What are your grades like?

Zahir: My grades is really good: a straight B's, A's and B's.

Interviewer: Excellent.

Zahir: I kept it up good, and freshman year I was like, not really good, and then I started, realizing that I struggle in the past, and I know I need to keep it up, my grades, and, and then I just kept my grades up, getting A's and B's, be honor roll and each year, each year honor roll.

Interviewer: Mhm.

Zahir: Honor roll student, then, yes, that's it. (Interview, May 2009)

Zahir's experience highlights the role of student and teacher agency in changing the imposed identity from a *respectful* to a *high-achieving student* within the structural constraints of the academic programs at Sawyer. Because Zahir was treated differently by his teachers and school administrators in a different way. All of the teachers at Sawyer know Zahir, I often heard teachers say, oh Zahir, he is such a "good" student, and if you ask him to help you, he is always willing to help out.

Another impact of these imposed identities is that it affects students' academic achievement. The identities imposed on each student affect how she declares her self and collective identities, as well as, her academic performance (Fordham, 1996; Lee, 2005;

Yon, 2000). Even though most of the Pakistani students are given the identity of either “IB students,” “AP students,” “ESL students,” or AVID students,” the misrecognition of students by teachers and administrators may cause distortion or damage to one’s individual and collective identities (Taylor, 1994). Talal Asad (2003) agrees with Taylor, but also takes this one step further, arguing that now, more than ever, our identities depend on how others recognize us.

The misrecognition of Salma’s identity by her teachers, directly affects her academic performance and achievement. Salma, a female, senior Indian student who was born in Hyderabad, India where she attended an all-girls Catholic school until she moved to the U.S. when she was fifteen, does not agree with the way teachers have identified her based on the academic program in which she is enrolled. She is enrolled in one ESL class in which she feels out of place compared to her enrollment in an AP Biology course. Salma explained:

So I feel really out of place in that class, because the perfect—I can’t say that like, but the fluent speaking English is only me and no one else can speak that good. And its like, um, everything that people have a task to do, like bell ringer, they take twenty minutes to do it, or like, half an hour and then teacher keeps on yelling at them, “Keep quiet, you have to be silent, others are working.” And you have, and then when she gets mad, she writes all these page numbers on the board and you have to turn it in at the end of the period. And then the people, that have to do it, are doing it, but then she doesn’t get it cause they, they’re, she is punishing those people that are not doing. So it’s, like, it’s like, you have to do all these things and she doesn’t realize that we are doing it. And she is punishing us for no reason and it’s like so much work to do in that class that does not even make sense to me, and I get done like, its a piece of cake for me.

Cause like, I was comparing my AP class, how decent it is. I am in AP biology and three other honors class. And I feel like, yeah, yeah I deserve that class. I deserve to be in this class. But when I go to my English class, I feel so out of place cause they always yelling around, they’re talking,

they're eating in the class and Ms. Kelly is all going crazy with this.  
(Interview, January 2009)

This example highlights the way Salma feels different about herself in the AP and honors courses compared to the one ESL class she is required to complete. Taylor (1994) explains that “Our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others” (p. 25). Salma’s identity is shaped by the “misrecognition” by the teachers at Sawyer of her academic identity. She does not self-identify the way the teachers describe the “ESL students” as *respectful*. Academically she identifies herself as a *high-achieving* “AP student” or as Mr. Newhart identifies the members of the National Honors Society (NHS), *cream of the crop*. There is a disconnect between the way Salma self-identifies and this imposed identity. The imposed identity has a negative effect on her, because she feels she has been misrecognized.

In contrast, Massima, a female, Pakistani student who has attended school in the US since kindergarten, proudly accepts the imposed identity of being an “IB student” and in the National Honors Society. Massima is both, an IB student and president of NHS. She is identified by both the institutional structure and the teachers as *the cream of the crop*. She accepts and is proud of this identity. Massima explains:

So, I joined [the IB program] my sophomore year and I just loved the classes that I had and the environment and the students that I was with. And it kind of excluded me from all of the other problems that, um, some of the other students were having, such as regarding the gangs and the fights cuz I wasn't a part of it cuz I was with the same people throughout the whole day. But, I mean, I was aware of it, but if a fight or something went on, I excluded myself from it. If there was one in the hallway, I walked away from it cuz I don't like any of the drama or anything. But it was difficult at some points seeing, you know, fights going on and blood all over the floor, but, I had to make the right decision of walking away.

Um, being in IB actually means a lot to me because it shows, like, how far I have gone with my education, um, from being in regulars to honors and then, now, on to IB, which is the highest level in Sawyer, and in most the high schools here in, um, Chicago, um, and like from being in IB, I know that I could, you know, I could be successful in my career and in my, in my education and I have higher chances in doing the best I can.  
(Interview, March 2009)

The recognition or misrecognition by the teachers as agents imposing an identity based on the structural constraints of Sawyer, directly affects how the Pakistani students self-identify. This is highlighted by the ways Salma and Massima are tracked into different academic programs, and the ways in which they declare their identities. Salma does not declare her identity based on her academic program of ESL, but prefers to be identified by teachers, school officials, and herself as a good “AP student.” On the other hand, Massima easily accepts her imposed identity as an “IB student.” Therefore, Massima is better off than Salma, because she has been recognized in the same manner as she self-identifies. As opposed to Salma who, in her eyes, has been misrecognized. The teachers and administrators, in combination with the structural constraints of the five academic programs at Sawyer, impose an identity on each of the Pakistani students. This not only affects with whom the Pakistani students interact, dialogue, and have relationships, but also the academic and group affiliations they obtain.

### **School Requirements and Expectations**

Many scholars and educators have argued that one of the purposes of the American educational system is to Americanize all students into the mainstream, dominant culture of the White-middle-class. Schools are one of the key places where the Americanization process takes place for immigrant students. The Americanization

process includes changing the way students look, dress, act, and talk. At Sawyer, there are a number of expectations and requirements that represent the mainstream culture, including dress code, wearing school IDs, completing course work, learning the English language and keeping up with the routines of schooling. Each of these expectations and requirements are both critical to schooling in America and also important characteristics for success within society-at-large in the United States. In other words, formal schooling seeks to Americanize all immigrant students into United States “citizens” prepared to be productive workers, consumers, and producers within the democratic society in which they live (Ogbu, 1987).

The expectations and requirements at Sawyer high school directly correlate with Ogbu’s (1987) argument that the structure and purpose of schools in America is to prepare citizens, “to teach them to believe in the system” and “to train the citizens to support other institutions” (p. 324). In other words, the schools Americanize immigrant students and then place them in the American workforce. Schooling is where the Americanization process takes place for immigrant students, in the following ways, so they can be prepared to enter into the labor force by,

- (1) Teaching young people the beliefs, values, and attitudes that support the economic system;
- (2) Teaching them some practical skills, like reading and computing, which make the system work;
- (3) Enhancing the development of personal attributes compatible with the habits required at the workplace; and
- (4) Credentialing young people to enter the workforce (Ogbu, 1987, p. 324).

Each of these items identified by Ogbu (1987) as essential for students’ to enter into the American workforce, is directly correlated with the requirements and



expectations at Sawyer—a typical American public high school where the Americanization process begins for the Pakistani students. For instance, Ogbu’s first qualification is seen through the course requirements at Sawyer; his second recommendation is correlated with the expectation for all the immigrant students to learn English, Ogbu’s third credential is integrated in many school requirements, including, dress code, school IDs, and the need of keeping up with the tempo and sequence of schooling, and the structure of the bell schedule; and lastly, the expectation that each student acquire the credentials to enter the workforce, is fostered by their overall educational, social, and academic experiences at Sawyer.

Although Ogbu (1987) argues that the American high school prepares students for the workforce, the students at Sawyer are prepared in different ways depending on their academic programming, whether they are “IB students,” “AP students,” “ESL students,” “AVID students,” or “regular students.” These different academic programs are forms of tracks or pathways – the hierarchical system of categorization and grouping of students based on their intellectual capabilities and accomplishments (Oakes, 1985). In other words, the imposed identities discussed previously are the tracks or pathways in which the Pakistani students at Sawyer are classified and then trained for the workforce. The type of academic programming and training is different for each track at Sawyer. The result of this classification process is neither neutral nor equal. Instead, this hierarchical system of stratification allows for teachers to label and segregate students into a top group – identified as “Academic, college preparatory, gifted or high” – or a bottom group – “Vocational, low, or basic” (Oakes, p. 60). At Sawyer, the “IB students” are identified

as the *cream of the crop*, the most academically successful group of students, compared to the “regular students” and *more problematic students*, who are labeled the lowest, less respectful, and least academically proficient students.

The result of these tracks or pathways for students is that they are prepared for different types of careers within the workforce. Jeannie Oakes (1985) argues that high schools push students for specific skill training and occupational careers instead of a balanced manual and academic program. Oakes argues that schools push for vocational training for the following reasons:

1. Supplying the nation with a needed corps of skilled industrial workers
2. Providing students with marketable skills and thereby enhancing their employment opportunities
3. Making the school experience more relevant to students’ life experiences
4. Equalizing educational opportunities by meeting the needs and interests of students for whom the more academic high school curriculum was seen as inappropriate (p. 32).

The “regular students” at Sawyer have the option of enrolling in vocational type classes, including auto shop or other “Education-To-Careers” courses that equip “students for successful transitions after high school, whether that be postsecondary education, advanced career training, or viable jobs with a meaningful career path” (Sawyer website, 10/6/09). While the IB program is a “challenging, comprehensive college preparatory program designed for motivated, self-disciplined students. Besides offering a curriculum with high academic standards and intellectual rigor, the IB Diploma places a strong emphasis on international understanding and responsible citizenship” (Sawyer website, 10/6/09). The different academic programming for the “regular students” compared to

the “IB students” highlights Oakes’ argument that the American high schools push the students into a track within the workforce, either vocational or managerial type careers.

Oakes (1985) further argues that the multiple pathways or tracks should include a balance of both academic and real-world or work experience. She argues that instead of students being tracked into just one type of programming, the following should be included for all students, preparing them for either high-skilled or low-skilled employment within the workforce:

1. A college-preparatory academic core that satisfies the course requirements for entry into a state’s flagship public university.
2. A professional or technical core well-grounded in academic and real-world standards.
3. Field-based learning and realistic workplace simulations that deepen students understanding of academic and technical knowledge through application in authentic situations.
4. And, additional support services to meet the particular needs of students and communities, which can include supplemental instruction, counseling, transportation, etc. (pp. 6-7).

Rather than providing a similar diverse academic experience to all students, the academic programming at Sawyer is very different for each group of students. There is a spectrum, with the “IB students” receiving the highest, most intellectually stimulating education, the “AP,” “ESL,” and “AVID students” experiencing a cross between the “IB” and “regular students” programming—including both academic and occupational preparation—and the “regular” receiving an education that only provides specific vocational or work skill training.

For example, in an interview Mr. Gage, the law and IB history teacher, explained the differences between the law class he teaches that is open to all the students at Sawyer

and consists of the “regular students” and his Theory of Knowledge course, a requirement for all the “IB students.” Mr. Gage began by explaining the “IB students:”

Mr. Gage: The IB group, they you know, they tend to be you know, exceptional students, and so you know, in my senior law class there’s no, it’s not selective at all, 50 or 60 percent of the seniors I think take the take the law so either one of mine or my colleague also teaches the law classes. So, you know, the class is open to pretty much anybody.

Interviewer: Okay.

Mr. Gage: But I really enjoy teaching those classes as well. They’re challenging in a different way, you know, I have to sort of navigate through lower skill levels in reading and writing, but I find that analytically, they can be, you know; many of my law students are just as sharp, and they’re really into oral argumentation, especially, a lot of them are very comfortable speaking, not all of them, but many of them so, I do a lot of performance assessments in law so it tends to work out pretty well, but I really enjoy teaching those students as well.

Interviewer: You explain that you have two different student populations, the IB students and the general classes in which you teach. . .

Mr. Gage: um, hum.

Interviewer: Do your teaching strategies change, and if so how, for teaching these student populations?

Mr. Gage: I’d say I might use some slightly different tactics. My overall strategy is still the same. I sort of engage them, come up with interesting concepts, and fun activities and ways to get them to learn without making them feel like, oh this is, you know, this is hard learning. I want it to be rigorous and challenging for both groups, but in the strategy is still the same. If all I did was get up and lecture to either group, I’m not gonna, they’re not gonna learn as much as I want them too.

Interviewer: Right

Mr. Gage: So the general strategy is the same. I’ll do a few things differently because I have, students that struggle more with some basic, the more basic skills in my law classes, I may do a few things differently. So I’ll spend a little bit more time on vocabulary [in my law class] for example that I might otherwise.

Also the degree to which the students that are not in the IB program are conscientious about things like making sure they do a reading or completing homework assignments, uh it's not the same as it is in with the IB students and so, I you know of course I push [them] to do the readings and do the assignments, but I also have to be cognizant [to] the fact that, that's not always going to happen and so rather than just sort of leaving them behind then ok we haven't done the reading now I'm gonna move forward and if you're lost too bad, it's, you know I'm not comfortable doing that. So I have to sort of adjust, I'll do more of that kind of thing in class, so that I keep all them sort of, where generally, where I need them to be. And I'll leave my IB students to do more independently.

Mr. Gage continued, explaining more details about the Theory of Knowledge course he teaches to the "IB students:"

Mr. Gage: First of all the nature of the class is inquisitive; whereas a typical class is acquisitive in nature. You're gaining some knowledge, some new knowledge, but in the theory of knowledge class, it's more about let's question the knowledge that we have and then sort of look at the legitimacy. So it's very much an inter-disciplinary study because we look at and learn how to question knowledge that's gained in the different subject areas that the students are taking. Specifically, natural sciences, human sciences, mathematics, history and in the arts; so we look at knowledge in those different areas and sort of break it down. Well how do we know, how do we know, what we know, how do we sort of categorize knowledge? How do we go about studying these things? An example in history, when we look at knowledge in history, the theory of knowledge class, we would tend to focus on more of what you call historiography; we would look at sources but really evaluate, the legitimacy of good the knowledge and sources. What's the origin of this information, what's the purpose of it, and most importantly what are the values and limitations based on, who wrote it, and why they wrote it, what value does it have for just somebody studying "X", what were the limitations of it, and it's something you know one thing you see also is that that knowledge can't so easily be categorized as either good or bad but rather, the degree to which it has value and has limitations.

Interviewer: What a fantastic class.

Mr. Gage: Yeah it's, a lot of fun. We do a lot of fun projects and a lot of interesting studies and there's presentations and it gets interesting. I try to make it a little bit more concrete at times. It's difficult to do that, but

students overall seem to enjoy it and I love teaching it. (Interview, May 2009)

This example highlights the ways Mr. Gage has to “navigate through lower skill levels in reading and writing” for the “regular students,” compared to the ways he challenges the “IB students” in his Theory of Knowledge course.

***Code of Conduct, Preparing Students for Economic Roles***

In fact, the “Student Code of Conduct” for Sawyer High School advances the four ways Ogbu (1987) identifies in which schools prepares students to support and succeed in the American economic system. The Student Code of Conduct is explained to each student in her Sawyer Agenda books. Every student at Sawyer is expected to conform to the Code.

The student Code of Conduct at Sawyer affirms Ogbu’s (1987) theory that the purpose of American schools is to prepare citizens, “to teach them to believe in the system” and “to train the citizens to support other institutions.” The first agenda item of the education system that Ogbu identifies is teaching students the values to believe in the economic system – is advanced by requirements that students “respect yourself and others,” and “respond to members of their community in a respectful manner at all times” (Sawyer, Code of Conduct). The language used in the “Student Code of Conduct” at Sawyer is directive in the way the students are required to act, dress, and perform on a daily basis. A requirement that students “complete all work” advances the second agenda item in Ogbu’s theory, providing students the practical skills to be productive in the workforce. The third agenda of the education system that Ogbu identified is the requirement for students to “come to school prepared” to learn the habits that will allow

them to be successful in the workforce. This criterion most directly correlates with the Code of Conduct at Sawyer. The students are expected to “be on time for school, classes, division, and other school activities; comply with the dress code, wear your school ID, and avoid disruptive behavior” (Sawyer, Code of Conduct, 2008). Each of these “habits” is essential to success in both the intellectual and vocational tracks or pathways in the workforce. The final agenda of the education system that Ogbu identifies is credentialing young people to enter the workforce. In order for the students to receive the credentials necessary, specifically, a high school diploma, to enter any of the tracks in the workforce, ranging from vocational training to managerial or leadership positions – they must comply with each of the codes so they can successfully complete the requirements and expectations of the American high school institution.

A high school diploma is essential for entering the workforce, but the diploma represents something different for each of the academic programs or tracks at Sawyer. Historically, schools are a site where complex processes of alignment with other significant forces in society, i.e. the workforce, government, and family are at work (Gee, Hull, & Lankshear, 1996). The students at Sawyer are trained and tracked into an academic program based on their skills and the “habits” required to be successful within one track in the workforce. The “IB students” or the *cream of the crop students* are learning different habits compared to the “regular students” *needing improvement* and *more problematic students*. The *cream of the crop students* are learning the critical thinking and problem solving skills, and “habits” necessary for them to enter the workforce in management and other leadership positions, while the *more problematic* or

“regular students” are trained to enter the workforce as laborers and other physical, less intellectually challenging positions. The “AP,” “ESL,” and “AVID students” are also taught, trained and prepared for a career track within the spectrum between the “IB students” and “regular students.” In other words, the students in each of the academic programs at Sawyer are tracked for a different place within the workforce. In fact, other sectors of the capitalist society, i.e., businesses, government, media, and the public sphere, often “define what counts as knowledge, at least knowledge worth having” (Gee, Hull, & Lankshear, 1996, p. 54). There is a significant difference between an “IB” and a “regular” diploma.

This difference between the IB and regular diploma was explained to the new IB students and parents at an evening IB parent informational session I attended in September. At IB Parent Night, an event led by the current IB students and teachers, the importance of the IB diploma was discussed. All of the new IB students and parents were sitting at student desks, filling the large classroom, while all the current IB students and teachers were standing around the perimeter of the room. First a professor from DePaul University, Dr. Washington, a middle-aged white man with white hair and beard, wearing a tie, sport coat, and dress slacks, spoke to the audience. In his British accent, he explained:

Congratulations to all you parents that have a child in the IB program. The IB program is a select program that pushes you more than the regular education program. Once you have completed the IB program, you will be eligible for universities anywhere in the world, not just the US. I was educated in Britain, the system there wanted it [the IB program] to be implemented for all. The IB program is a challenge that requires hard work, emphasizes writing, provides an international perspective which is an advantage to you. The IB program allows students to fulfill scholarship



criteria, gain college credit, which allows the students to shorten their time in college, take more advanced courses, more courses of the topics they are interested [in], and possibly study abroad. (Field notes, September 23, 2008)

Dr. Washington continued, explaining the way the IB students have been tracked at DePaul University. He said:

We have been tracking the IB students at DePaul over the past four to five years. There are approximately one-hundred students (From your school district] at DePaul. The IB students have a better retention towards degree, a higher rate of retention, higher GPA, and graduate at a significant rate.

Then Mr. Newhart, the principal, stood in front of the new IB students and parents and explained the ways in which the IB students are successful. He said:

The IB students are the cream of the crop. I have lived in [Research Location] all my life, I used to work at a college prep high school as the admissions counselor and I have been here [at Sawyer] for five years. This IB program provides success because of all the rigor and demands by the faculty in this program.

Mr. Newhart then specifically addressed all the new IB students. He explained:

“This is hard, you have the talent, it is a matter of commitment.” Then Mr. Newhart speaks to the new IB parents, “Parents, you need to support and encourage your child.” He then returns to speaking to the entire audience, “These students have been evaluated and selected to participate in this program. We know they can be successful.” Mr. Newhart poses the question, “You may ask; what are the rewards at the end of the road?” He then answers the question, “Guaranteed success in this country or even if they go abroad. They will have the skills, research, and determination. I know because I have earned many masters. Let’s give a hand to the students.” (Field notes, September 23, 2008)

In an interview with Mr. Newhart, he further explained that the IB program “really prepares students for college success.” He also said that “the students that have gone through the IB program pretty much are guaranteed, like a 90-95 percent rate to be

successful in college.” In fact, he even said “you can almost put down money on each one of them (IB students), that they’re gonna [be successful in college], you’ll win nineteen out of twenty times.”

Through course requirements at Sawyer, students learn the values, beliefs, and attitudes that support the economic system. They also learn the necessary practical skills through course requirements that allow them to be productive workers within the tracked or multiple pathways within the economic system. These skills include, learning the English language, as well as learning to read, write, analyze, debate, compute, and solve, along with technical skills of typing, programming, designing, and searching for information.

English, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, World language, fine arts, Physical education, and other courses teach the Pakistani students the values and beliefs that support the American economic system. These values and beliefs include leadership, respect, balancing expectations, following instructions, completing assignments, and cultural norms. For example, Mateen has a narrow face, slicked back, black hair, long sideburns to the bottom of his ear, and a pointed chin. He wears a plain white t-shirt, light khaki pants and a red sweatband around his right forearm. His school ID is in his back right pocket with the lanyard hanging down his leg; instead of it hanging around his neck where it is visible to school officials. This is the one exception to Mateen’s conformity to the school dress code. He explains how his experiences in Advanced Placement (AP) English course have taught him values necessary for him to be successful

in the workforce. In fact, Mateen directly applies these values, beliefs, and attitudes to his place of employment—Target, a large corporate American superstore.

As a student in AP English class, Mateen was required to work with four of his classmates to write a skit based on the required book, *Pride and Prejudice*, and then act out the play for his classmates and teacher. Mateen took it upon himself to be the leader of his group. He demonstrated his ability to lead and show initiative. He took responsibility for writing the skit and producing a product, in this case the skit. He followed the directions of his teacher. And he fulfilled the course expectations. The structure of the American educational system is constraining and shaping Mateen's development by promoting values that support the American economic system. We can conclude that Mateen's work fits into within the "AP" academic track at Sawyer prepares him to enter into the workforce in middle management, between the highest "IB" or store managers, and the entry level forms of employment at Target. The academic track and the structurally imposed identities of being an "AP" student at Sawyer are directly correlated with his placement within the workforce.

On Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, two days before the two-week winter break began for the students and teachers, the students entered sixth period AP English, Mateen and his classmates were directed by their teacher, Ms. Smith, to sit with their group and begin practicing their skits. Mateen said, "I wrote the skit myself. I took parts of the book and turned it into a skit and I typed it so everyone will have a copy." As each of Mateen's group members arrived, he handed them a typed copy of their skit. After 10 to 15 minutes, Ms. Smith called Mateen's group to the front of the classroom to present their

skit. The other members of his group stood forming a semi-circle facing their peers.

Mateen stood in the center of his group and began narrating the skit. The other members of his group read their parts, but Mateen took it upon himself to be the primary actor and narrator in his skit. His group members followed Mateen's leadership. After he and his group finished performing, Mateen asked his peers if they have any questions, feedback, or suggestions.

Mateen seems to place a premium on completing required tasks and meeting the expectations of his teacher. These attitudes and beliefs are directly transferable to fulfilling the expectations of a boss within the American workforce. In an interview, Mateen explained the importance of following instructions and the need to fit within the structural constraints and expectations at Sawyer. He said:

So I think it is nothing about enjoying or not, I just think it is just that, if there is something that needs to get done, it needs to get done. I mean, a teacher tells you, you have to create a play, you have to create a play; and not only for your grade analysis, but only, because you learn something. I mean you learn what the book is about; you are showing to your classmates and your teacher what you have learned. (Interview, January 2009)

Mateen communicated the value in completing a task assigned to him by Ms. Smith; he explained that he learned something in writing this play and the importance of proving to himself, his classmates, and teacher what he has learned.

Mateen models the way these beliefs, values, and attitudes are transferable into the workforce through his success as an employ at Target. He is punctual, professional, and respectful. Mateen's success as a productive worker has been validated as he has received a number of promotions. He began as a regular employee and was quickly, at a

young age, promoted to the head of a department. He also received a second promotion as a security guard. Mateen has Americanized through his many experiences at Sawyer, an institution that has shaped his development in the mold of mainstream, White-middle-class American culture. Through each of his course requirements, he has learned the values, beliefs, and attitudes necessary to be a successful and productive worker, consumer, and producer, and support the American economic system. As an “AP student,” Mateen is prepared to enter into the workforce in middle management, between the highest “IB” or store managers, and the entry level forms of employment at Target. The academic track Mateen was placed and the structurally imposed identities of being an “AP student” at Sawyer are directly correlated with his placement within the workforce.

Mateen recognizes the similarities between working at his job and being a student at Sawyer, and he seems to have internalized the values of the American economic system:

Oh, well, here is the thing, if I am going from Sawyer to Target, once again, I am always, always, battling time because if I get off at Sawyer at three, at three o'clock, I have to, you know, I have friends who go that I have to drop, so by the time I get off from school and the time I sit in my car, it is four, four-thirty by the time I am home. So I am always racing time to wear the red and khaki, to eat, and fresh up and then go to Target. From Sawyer to Target, what's the difference, both ways you are working, you are working at Target, you are working at school. At Target you are working for money, working for people to like you in a sense that you do great guest service, you get things done, you, you have a five to eight hour shift. Excuse me, in those five to eight hours, you get done what is recommended [sic] of you. At school you attend eight classes a day or seven classes a day. Um, every other class has a different meaning to it. There is law, then there is English, there is math, you are different, you are dealing with different things . . . But here is what changes: as far as [Research Location] to Karachi is concerned, it is the biggest change in

the world. They are two, two different parts of the world. [Research Location] um, very high living, um, middle class, nice environment, where I want to be. Karachi, my homeland, I've never, I mean, don't get me wrong, there is nothing against Karachi, but it is just I prefer, [Research Location] or America itself. (Interview, January 2009)

Mateen works hard to keep up with the tempo of his busy schedule of being both a student at Sawyer and an employee at Target. This example highlights the ways, as Ogbu (1987) stated, the experiences in American schools prepare and recruit students to believe in and support the country's economic system. Mateen prefers the middle class environs of [Research Location] to his homeland, Karachi, and he will work hard to secure that lifestyle for himself.

In order for the American economic system to work and be successful employees must be prepared to take orders, directions, and assignments from their bosses. Some scholars have proposed that workers are now increasingly expected to show more autonomy, employees are still expected to take responsibility, make decisions, adapt easily, and effectively communicate their needs and knowledge to their leaders or coaches within the "new capitalism." The second way, according to Ogbu (1987), that schools prepare students for the workforce is by giving them the skills that make the American economic system work. Abdul-Azeez has a square face, large, round, dark colored eyes, thick black hair, long, and narrow legs that account for two-thirds of his height of approximately five feet-nine inches tall. He frequently wears light colored jeans, black sneakers, and a short sleeve, forest green polo shirt that says "Sawyer" in large bold font on the left side of his chest. He explains the need for him to learn the English language to complete the tasks required of him within Sawyer high School.

Abdul-Azeez must learn to speak and understand English for him to follow the school and course requirements of his academic program. He explains how difficult it was moving from Pakistan to the United States and the pressure to learn English:

Then I came here that was so hard to make it because everybody was like speaking another language, the English language. I wasn't know the English language, then I find some friends that were from my country, and I started speaking to them, and then that's I'm here right now (laughs).

For example:

Lunch period I don't know we have to show the ID, and I didn't have the ID yet because that was my first day school, and I have a program that was in my pocket and the guy, he was like Indian. He came and I ask him, what- I was like what I have to do, to get the lunch, uh, he said you have a program? I say yeah I have a program. He said I will talk to the lunch manager. He can let you in, and take the food, but tomorrow go to main office. But I don't know where is main office? The, oh Room 149. Where is 149? I don't know. Then I find another one friend, and I go with him, make my ID. Then I go to lunch.

Yeah, (I speak] little more [English], but not perfectly English. Uh another thing like, in lunch period I got a lot of friends but they say, if you want to learn English, you go to somewhere like English institution something in here. I don't know where is that. That's how I just live and live and live coming up.... Cuz I'm the country, I have to use English. (Interview, March 2009)

Abdul-Azeez feels the pressure to Americanize – to learn to speak English – so he can understand what is happening around him because, as he sees it, “I'm the country. I have to use English.” At home, away from Sawyer, a public American educational institution, Abdul-Azeez maintains his first language and Pakistani identity. Abdul-Azeez explains, “[A]t home all I used Urdu. . . Yeah, but in school I use English, or at the public places, like library or something. Cuz a lot of there people speak English.” Abdul-Azeez has learned, as Ogbu (1987) argues, a practical skill necessary for him to be part of

America's economic system: how to communicate in English. He is aware of the changes and Americanization process that is taking place to him through his experiences at Sawyer, and Abdul-Azeez chooses to restrict this process to the public sector. He maintains his ethnic and national identity of Pakistani when he is in the privacy of his home. Although Abdul-Azeez feels the need to learn the practical skills necessary for him to succeed in the workforce, he maintains his traditional Pakistani identity at home, even though his identity is changing within the public sector.

In contrast to Abdul-Azeez, who explained how he is Americanizing only in public spaces, Safia, a female, senior Pakistani student who was born in Karachi, Pakistan where she attended an all-girls elementary school and then went on to the two-year high school in Pakistan, moved in 2005 to attend high school in the United States, seems to be internalizing the Americanization process. She is approximately five feet-three inches tall, with long legs, high eyebrows, large brown eyes, a narrow waist and long straight black hair hanging halfway down her back. She is wearing a forest green t-shirt that says "Sawyer High School" on the left-hand side of her chest with a white long sleeve shirt underneath and jeans. She explained her opposition to illegal immigration in the United States through a class assignment to write and type a persuasive essay. Safia said she had to write three reasons to support her argument, "See, I wrote out my reasons, and now I have to type it." Safia explains:

I was saying no [to illegal immigrants] because like it was unfair to the people who are legal over here. So yeah, probably I'm looking it in a way since I'm legal too, but I think its wrong cuz like they, like illegal people, they give other people chance to come to United States you know and then they become illegal too, like that, and that's how this whole environment it just messes up.



Uh, well illegal people they should be like, they shouldn't like, they shouldn't like send them back to their country, but some kinda like legal stuff that they they're supposed to have. That's what I would say. That, that can like make them stay here or something, cuz being illegal is like unfair to the legal people cuz they work with taxes and they don't so they get the whole money and everything you know? So I don't like this fact. (Interview, February 2009)

Safia, an American citizen, has been taught the importance of paying taxes and contributing to the country's economic system as a legal immigrant. Even though further conversations revealed that when she first arrived to the United States she was an illegal immigrant herself, she does not support illegal immigrants in the United States because they do not pay their taxes and contribute the economic system that is in place.

The assignment simultaneously reinforced values crucial to Safia's support of the American economic system, and advanced practical skills Safia learns at Sawyer that allow her to contribute to making that system work. She learns the technical skills of using a word processing program, typing, and using current technology that is critical for success in the labor force. Safia also learns how to communicate in written English and how to write persuasively, which are also important skills for succeeding in corporate America. The practical skills Safia has gained from this one course requirement prepare her to enter the workforce.

### ***Dress Code, School IDs and Keeping up with the Routines of Schooling***

A third way Ogbu (1987) says schools Americanize students is by “[e]nhancing the development of personal attributes compatible with the habits required at the workplace” (p. 324). Sawyer does this by imposing a dress code, the wearing of school identification (ID) cards, bell schedule, which sets the tempo and sequence of schooling

at Sawyer. All students at Sawyer are expected to conform to all school policies, especially the dress code and wearing of school IDs. The Pakistani students are required to follow each of these policies, even if the policy is culturally or religiously offensive or unreasonable for them obey based on their Pakistani or Muslim identity, for example the school dress code and bell scheduled discussed in the following sections. Following these policies imposes personal attributes or habits that the American economic system will demand of the students in the future.

Each of these school policies is stated in the students' agenda books. The following is the Sawyer Dress Code as stated in the 2008-09 Agenda Book:

Students are to be suitably dressed for school.

Students are required to adhere to the established dress code for Sawyer High School. Students who do not **conform** to the dress code will be required to change.

**Students are to wear:**

- A white shirt, sweater, sweatshirt, or approved SawyerWear. (Students are not permitted to wear colored shirts or colored garments underneath.)
- Dark solid pants or skirts, knee-length shorts, blue jeans, khakis, dark dress pants, or skirts
- Shoes with original laces

**The following items of clothing are NOT allowed:**

- Clothing with writing, names, logos, symbols, illustrations, or other graphics on them
- Wearing shirts inside out
- Wrinkled, discolored white, or off-white tops
- Torn or ripped tops and bottoms
- Any item which can be used as a weapon (chains, spiked belts, etc)
- Drug related, sexually explicit, or any apparel related to illegal activities
- Rubber bands or similar items to shorten pant legs
- Flip flops, slippers, house shoes, or aqua shoes
- Sweat clothes, jerseys, athletic team uniforms, sports gear or beach wear
- Sun glasses, hats, hoods, scarves, rags, bandanas, masks, headbands, or other head gear

- Jackets, coats, hooded sweaters, or sweatshirts (hoodies)
- Pajama tops or bottoms and swimsuit tops or bottoms
- Halter tops, tube tops, off-the shoulder tops, strapless tops, spaghetti straps, bare midriffs, etc.
- Mesh, sheer, see-through or patterned tops or bottoms
- Short shorts, mini skirts or high slit skirts
- Any clothing that is considered to be too revealing or provocative
- Any clothing/color that can be considered to represent an affiliation with any organization, group, club, or team other than those sanctioned, recognized, and/or sponsored by Sawyer High School
- Unless students are attending a special event they are not permitted to wear formal attire including ties, suspenders, sport coats, suits, etc. (Sawyer Agenda Book, Student Dress Code Policy, 2008-09 (Emphasis in original))

Therein, students are required to “conform” to the dress code policy. The word “conform” in the dress code policy is significant, indicating the expectation that students change to look the way school officials have determined is appropriate and acceptable in mainstream, American culture. “Students are required to adhere to the established dress code for Sawyer High School. Students who do not conform to the dress code will be required to change.” This “change” is referring to the changing of their clothes, rather than transforming themselves, but clearly that’s in the works too. Yon (2000) found that the student dress code at Maple Heights school in Toronto, Canada, created one large homogenous population where previously there were noticeable and identifiable individual and group cultures (p. 124). The Pakistani students at Sawyer generally speaking, do not like the school dress code policy, but they have no choice but to conform to it. The fact that the Pakistani students are required to change out of their traditional clothing into American style clothing consistent with the dress code directly affects how they see themselves and self-identify.

For example, Nadia, a sophomore, female, Pakistani student who moved from Lahore, Pakistan where she attended a private school until she move to the U.S. in 2008, has a medium build, was wearing very light colored jeans, a forest green “Sawyer” t-shirt hanging down her body to the top of her thighs, and a black Hijab leaving only a small circle of her facial features exposed on the day she sat down for an interview as part of this study. She said that she would rather wear Shalwar Kameez, her traditional clothing, than the school dress code of jeans or dark colored pants and a white or green shirt:

I don't like actually jeans, to wear jeans. (I wear jeans] only for the school, like I can wear and I don't like, uh that skirt style so (laughs), I just like Shalwar Kameez. Shalwar Kameez is like its 3 pieces, one is bottom and then the shirt, and then the scarf, a big scarf not like this [pointing at her Hijab], a big scarf so we wear it. I have only five jeans at home, that's it, no more than. I have no t-shirts.

Nadia explained that she did not own jeans before arriving at Sawyer high school:

Oh no, like I bought [jeans] from here when I came to school. First day of school I just wear Shalwar Kameez because I don't know when I gonna wear it, so I just came her and, uh, Mr. C. [an assistant principal] he just tell us about, what you're gonna wear and, says something. So that day I just go back I didn't took the class, any of classes. (I] leave and I just go back with my sister. So, that day I just buy five jeans, after cuz I never buy (laughs).

[At home I wear] Shalwar Kameez. I go to work, so I wear Shalwar Kameez . All the time I wear Shalwar Kameez. Like Shalwar Kameez in, uh, you can say a Pakistani dress, a Muslim dress you can say, uh, Shalwar Kameez. And the, uh, Shalwar Kameez is, uh, three types of Shalwar Kameez. Like you can wear, there's, uh, uh, it just depends on the, there's so many fashion in Shalwar Kameez. It's the name of the suits (laughs) in fashion, like you say jeans and there's more stuff for, I mean pants, you say that, there's something like this, uh (laughs). (Interview, February 2009)

Nadia is clearly uncomfortable wearing jeans and the required shirt in compliance with the school dress code. In fact, she missed the first day of school so she could go to an American store to purchase jeans, which she otherwise never would own. In her first encounter with the school administration, she was told that she needed to begin the Americanization process immediately. Nadia's first step in the Americanization process required her to change the way she dressed—from her traditional, cultural identity as a Pakistani Muslim, into a mainstream-American student wearing jeans and a t-shirt.

This change in Nadia's physical appearance directly affects how she sees herself and self identifies. Nadia sees herself as more American and less Pakistani by the second day of school. As she looks in the mirror, she will become less familiar with the image she sees each day. Nadia explained:

[A]nd like over here when I just, I was so scared like, I just say no, I don't wanna go [to] school, I don't like actually [wearing] jeans, to wear jeans...I just like Shalwar Kameez. . . I just asked Ms. Kelly, she said no you can't [wear Shalwar Kameez to school], because it look totally different so it would be problem for you.

Without her Hijab, Nadia would look like a typical American high school student, part of one large homogenous student population in white shirts and jeans. Nadia would see herself as part of the racial diversity within Sawyer without the religious or cultural label of her Hijab. The dress code at Sawyer represents one of the many pressures and institutional structures forcing her to Americanize.

The teachers at Sawyer understand the need for a dress code policy, but not complete uniformity. Mr. Gage wears a pin-stripped button down shirt and gray dress

pants with black leather loafers as he explains the need for a dress code, but he is frustrated and wants to remove what he calls prison-like elements from the policy:

[T]he purpose is to sort of, have a way to identify who's supposed to be here and who's not, . . . and to some extent it, you know, there there's a logic to it and I think it makes some sense. The dress code I think makes less sense, um, although I, I think that the main reason . . . that it's done is also security. It's to prevent the, the showing of gang colors, uh, the representation of gang colors through, through dress. I think a dress, uh, dress code to some extent always make sense. I mean I, I don't think that it's a good idea to allow, um, young women to wear extremely revealing clothing or, or for, . . . you know, young men to, uh, to wear, . . . you know, gangster t-shirts or, . . . you know, uh, marijuana t-shirts, or whatever, you know (laughs).

I, you know, I think there's sense to some code, but, uh, but in terms of the, the lack of color, white shirt and, you know, or green shirt and, and the, the solid pants, um, you know it's a bit stifling and I think, I think it depresses, uh, a kid a little bit and makes them feel like a, you know, . . . almost to an extent with the ID's and the dress code it's like a prison, you know? Uh, you're not an individual here. You're, . . . you know, you must conform, in extraneous ways, and it's almost a little bit, um, emblematic that that they have to wear white you know? It's stark it, it lacks color, um, ironic and in, uh, school where their very few white students (laughs).  
(Interview, May 2009)

Mr. Gage is interested in changing the dress code policy to allow for more freedom for students and less requirement to conform to a single, restricted ideal.

On the day I interviewed Mr. Newhart, he wore a light grey suit, a white button down shirt and a tie with the beloved children's character – Sponge-Bob Square Pants – as he discusses how the school asks Pakistani students to conform with a traditional, Western dress code. Mr. Newhart moves at a pace that is very comfortable to him—steady, not rushed, with an even-keeled personality. He views the dress code policy very differently than Mr. Gage. Mr. Newhart has chosen to continue to impose the current strict dress code policy for the entire student population. He feels there is a need to have

the students “conform to what we’re trying to do,” which amounts to Americanizing all students – giving them the personal dressing habits needed to enter into the American economic system. This is an example of Ogbu’s (1987) folk theory, a form of Americanization in that “one gets a good job that pays well by getting a good education. Since white middle-class Americans have traditionally obtained jobs and earned wages commensurate with their school credentials, they have usually not only perceived schooling from this point of view, but have also responded by investing the time and effort necessary to do well in school” (p. 324). Ogbu further states that the immigrant populations are inclined to accept the dominant, white-middle class’ folk theory of being successful or getting ahead. Mr. Newhart explains:

Well, you know, we, we ask the parents to either make it [the Hijab] black and white, or you know, something along those colors. So, we do that. We don’t have anyone that’s wearing the full, uh, burka outfits.

But, uh, mostly the girls are wearing head scarves, and things like that, and as we ask them to keep them either black or white. And that sort of conforms to what we’re trying to do.

I mean, the purpose of the dress code is not to impose uniformity. The purpose of the dress code is to deal with gang violence that, uh, is, all too prevalent in our community. When I say our community I mean within [the City], generally, not just Water’s Edge. (Interview, May 2009)

Although Mr. Newhart says the school accommodates students’ individual religious needs and practices, as well as other forms of cultural diversity, the dress code policy undermines his assertion statement. Sawyer High is not alone. Accommodations by public schools have generally been limited and conflicting (Olneck, 2001, p. 313). Many of the Pakistani Muslim girls at Sawyer would say there is no accommodation at all when they cannot wear their traditional clothes or Shalwar Kameez. They must conform to the

school dress code: dark colored pants or skirts and a white or dark green top. The lack of willingness to accommodate the needs of Muslim students at Sawyer is highlighted by Nadia's first interaction and experience with school personnel at Sawyer. When Nadia first arrived at Sawyer, she asked Ms. Kelly, the Bilingual lead teacher, if she could wear her Shalwar Kameez to school. Ms. Kelly told her that would not be acceptable. Nadia said, "No I can't [wear Shalwar Kameez]. I just asked Ms. Kelly. She said, no, you can't because it [will] look totally different so it would be problem for you. You just leave it. So that's why." Although Muslim girls are permitted to wear white or black Hijabs to school within the school dress code, they are not allowed to wear their traditional garment, the Shalwar Kameez, at Sawyer high school.

The fact that both the boys and girls at Sawyer are required to conform to the school dress code highlights the way this American educational institution is preparing the Pakistani Muslim students to be ready for the American workforce. The Pakistani Muslim students are expected to conform to the way the dominant culture looks and acts—wearing pants and white, unwrinkled shirts. Even as it instills personal habits that will prepare them for the American economic system, this conformity reduces the place of "Pakistani" and "Muslim" in these students' identities, replacing components of their self with white-middle-class culture, also known as reacculturating. This is seen in the ways students self-identify and are active agents in selecting membership in school clubs and making friends at Sawyer, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four.



### *School Identification Cards*

As with the dress code, students at Sawyer are also expected to conform with a requirement they wear their school IDs on “a chain or lanyard around the neck” (Agenda book, p. 33) at all times. “Students must wear their ID card every day while they are in school” (Sawyer agenda book, 2009, p. 33). The students’ ID cards include pictures of their faces, their names, and their “program” or their schedule of classes. On the front of the students’ ID cards are pictures of their faces with their names written under the photos, and in large print, their lunch periods, i.e., “5<sup>th</sup> period,” “6<sup>th</sup> period,” or “7<sup>th</sup> period.” Then on the back of their ID cards are their schedules or programs of courses, including their assigned divisions or homerooms. As part of their programs are the class periods, titles of courses, and locations for all the courses they are assigned. Most of the course titles also indicate the academic program; for example, AP US History, room 240 or IB BioChem, room 306, or AVID III, room 204. Therefore, the teachers, security guards and administrators are able to look at each student’s ID and determine her name, grade, and academic program, as well as where she is supposed to be throughout the school day.

This school requirement mirrors one familiar in many business-settings around the country. Mr. Gage recognizes that ID policies are becoming more universal, “Yeah, I mean the ID[s] that’s, that’s sort of, it’s becoming more and more universal right? By all places of business even, you know? You work at a building downtown you get an ID. Um, (laughs) so I, I guess there’s some sense to it. I don’t know how effective it is.” Requiring high school students to get into the habit of wearing an ID at all times is

compatible with of the behavior with which they will have to conform in the workplace. The wearing of ID cards is a common requirement of many forms of employment, both managerial and vocational, and therefore relevant to all students in each of the academic tracks at Sawyer: “IB,” “AP,” “ESL,” “AVID,” “regular,” and “repeat offenders.”

The “habit” of wearing an ID card developed at Sawyer is also useful to be part of the American workforce. Within the past nine years, since 9/11, many businesses, government agencies, schools, and other places of employment have required their employers to wear IDs showing information including their legal names, photos, company names, and locations of employment. As in an office building, the ID cards at Sawyer are used to easily identify students by their program of study, enabling administrators to know where each student should be during each class period on sight. In other words, when students are in the hallways at Sawyer, any teacher or administrator could ask them where they are supposed to be, look at their ID card, and immediately direct them to the appropriate location. The student ID cards at Sawyer are used the same way for the teachers and faculty, to “check in” or “clock in” for attendance and time of arrival each day. The use of ID cards at Sawyer has a dual purpose: to maintain a safe learning environment and to prepare students for the American workforce.

### ***Keeping up with the Tempo or Routines of Schooling***

Another habit that students learn in school that serves them well in the workforce is following a fixed daily schedule. Although the expectation of keeping up with the routines of schooling is not an official policy at Sawyer, the students are required to know and understand how the school system works. The key to complying is understanding

and following the bell schedule. There are eight class periods each day, beginning at 8:00 a.m. and ending at 2:55 p.m. Mr. Newhart explained that the bell schedule, a distinct component of American schooling, is also Eurocentric in style:

[O]ur students view [passing time] as a, the bell that dismisses class, and then now that you have a 4 minute social period, there's another bell that starts class, which then encourages students to begin meandering to their next class. Uh, and a lot of, there's a lot of I think cultural issues that, uh, you know the Germanic, Eurocentric type of, uh, schedule where everything is very, uh, regimented, very, uh, down to the minute, is, uh, I think in some cultures it's less, uh, strict, whereas it's sort of well, you know, now it's time to move on and do something else. And, um, so, we're sort of in a conflict there where we encourage them to get to class, get, you know, not lose any educational time, but, understanding that there's a certain socialization process to their transition to, uh, America, and, . . . you know that's an important part as well, that they don't feel isolated. So that's sort of, uh, a mix, a trick that you sort of encourage them to get moving, get out of the halls, but you don't wanna necessarily be too oppressive. (Interview, May 2009)

Mr. Newhart says Sawyer is “Eurocentric” in design, especially in the structure of the school day and the bell schedule. Mr. Newhart, the principal and most senior administrator at Sawyer, identified the ways the school attempts to use the bell schedule to Americanize the immigrant students as “Eurocentric,” and says and that there is “a certain socialization process to their transition to America.” Schooling for non-citizens and immigrant students in the United States is significantly impacted by the attempt to Americanize them.

Mr. Newhart explained how he manages the bell schedule and passing time:

Well, we can do things like hall, if things get a little too lax, then we have things like hall sweeps where we tell the students, ok, we're gonna close all the doors and put everyone in the auditorium that's not in their class, and they, we'll do that for a while and that gets them going, and then we, but that's a very labor intensive activity. That we kind of back off of that

and they, you know, you just try to encourage students to, to, get to class in a timely fashion if not on time.

The bell schedule is another component of the Americanization process. As Mr. Newhart explained, the fixed, rigid schedule is a new concept for many immigrant students, but compliance with such a schedule is necessary to foster a professional level of respect in American settings. Therefore, according to Mr. Newhart, the Pakistani students are required to conform to what he views as a culturally-specific, mainstream system.

After first and second class periods, there is division. This is an assigned homeroom class—official attendance is taken and reported to the district for the day, announcements are made by the principal and other school officials over the loud speaker, and necessary paperwork and documents are passed out to the students.

Division is part of the typical school day and bell schedule at Sawyer. When the bell rings after first period, all the students are required to report to their assigned teacher and classroom for their division section. There are two bell schedules: the “regular” daily routine and the “extended division” bell schedule that is used only for days there are assemblies or special events. During the “regular bell schedule,” division or homeroom lasts for fifteen minutes. During “extended division bell schedule,” division is almost one hour long. Division is the part of the school day when school officials communicate with the entire student body, school and district documents are completed and other paperwork or school-wide business is accomplished. Divisions are based on grade level, academic success, and academic programming. The students are assigned to a division section, which gives them an assigned number as a way teachers and school officials identify each student. Every student at Sawyer is required to report to their assigned

division or homeroom class everyday. For example, Maazin, who moved from Bombay, India to the United States in 2005, the summer before his freshman year at Sawyer, is an academically successful senior, is in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. Therefore, he is assigned to a division with only IB program seniors.

Division or homerooms and rigid class schedules may seem obvious to “American” students, but they can be part of the Americanization challenge for the Pakistani students. They are expected and required to understand the way the American educational system works, including the bell schedule and division. The Pakistani students explained that the purpose or expectation of division was not explained to them, which caused much confusion for their first days at Sawyer. “People operating within institutions make sense of ‘construct’ a cognitive reality through the rules, roles, and meanings that the institution organizes” (Baker & LeTendre, 2005, p. 27). Making sense of the institutional structure of American schools did not come easy for many of these students when they first arrived at Sawyer, especially in Maazin’s case. Maazin, who is from India, explained how he felt when he first arrived at Sawyer, the first United States school he attended:

(I felt] pretty nervous, don’t know what was going on [the first day of school]. I mean, I understood what teachers thought and stuff. But the whole system was new to me. The whole thing was a challenge.  
(Interview, March 2009)

Maazin explained that he was very confused and unable to keep up with the sequence of the bell schedule when he first arrived at Sawyer:

Oh first, they give us a program that says first period go here, second period go here, then there is division, then there is third. So I took division for third period and actually went to someone else’s division and

that was a P.E. class and that person was absent, like they gave us numbers, and mine and that person's number matched coincidentally and that one was absent so I had to stand on that number. So that guy got marked present, but I got marked a cut from Ms. B[ 's class]. Then for my fifth period, which was lunch, I took that for some other period, like the period before it so I've been screwing up since the morning, so I was going to my English class and [my teacher] was like, what are you doing here? And I was like, isn't this class time? She's like no, this is lunch time and then she actually went to my division teacher and you know, asked him to not mark me as a cut, because there was, um, an honest mistake.

Maazin's experience highlights the difficulty newly arrived immigrants have keeping up with the tempo of the American public educational system. Although the teachers and administrators have made sense of and constructed rules, expectations, and requirements for the students at Sawyer to follow, this does not mean that the immigrant students are able to make sense of the institution and its structural constraints. However, in learning to make sense of these constructs, the Pakistani students develop habits of time management and obedience to a fixed schedule that will be essential to surviving in the American workforce.

***Graduation Requirements=Credentials for Workforce***

The purpose of earning a high school degree is ostensibly to prepare every teenager in the United States with the practical skills, habits, knowledge, values, and beliefs of the dominant American culture of the white-middle-class. The American public high school does two things to the Pakistani students: first it Americanizes them in ways that will cause them to support and function in the American economic system, and second, it provides them the credentials necessary to enter the workforce (Ogbu, 1987).

The graduation requirements at Sawyer high school highlight the credentials that are valued by the American economic system. Every student must meet the expectations previously identified, along with the graduation requirements, to be fully transformed and learn all the necessary beliefs, values, and information to support the American economic system. The graduation requirements consist of 24 credit hours, including courses in each of the required content areas: English (4), Mathematics (3), Social Science (3), World Language (2), Fine Arts (2), Physical Education (PE) or ROTC (2), and Career Education (2), and three elective credits. There are also additional graduation requirements that provide the Pakistani students with the credentials to enter the workforce, including, passing the United States constitution test, earning consumer education credits, performing at least forty hours of service learning, passing drivers education, and taking the state standardized test—the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE). The students must successfully take and pass each of these exams and meet all graduation criteria. These requirements function to attempt to prepare the Pakistani immigrant students for participation in American society—through learning English, the US Constitution, completing service learning hours, the required academic courses, and the consumer education course, the Pakistani students are transformed from their national origin identity to one of an American citizen. Shamim explained that she used to identify herself as both Muslim and Pakistani. Now that she is living in the United States and is an American citizen she is now, “Pakistani and Muslim and American,” because she continued, “even if not born there, [I] get nationality.” Additionally, the credentials awarded for completing these programs, such as a high

school degree and a driver's license, are pre-requisites to entering the American workforce.

Although the American educational system functions to Americanize immigrant students; the immigrant students may have mixed emotions, or even awareness, of this process. As Ogbu (1987) argues, many view schooling in the US as a great opportunity. Some of the Pakistani students are resistant to, or simply unaware of, the extent to which their cultural identities are changing as they attempt to become members of the American society:

Immigrants see the cultural differences as barriers to be overcome in order to achieve their long-range goals of future employment and not as markers of identity to be maintained. They therefore do not perceive or interpret learning the cultural features of the school required for social adjustment and academic performance as threatening to their own culture, language, and identity, but rather as an additive learning, that is, as acquiring another language (standard English) and aspects of the dominant group culture that will help them succeed in school and later in the labor market (Ogbu, 1987, p. 328).

Mateen, on the one hand, is proud and confident of his academic success within the American educational system and middle-management workforce. Shamim, on the other hand, felt pressure to remove her Hijab and physically change herself to better fit in with her peers and be more like the typical American high school student. But when Shamim goes home each day, she reverts back to her traditional Muslim Pakistani cultural and family enclave. Shamim has felt peer pressure since freshman year to remove her Hijab, but it was not until senior year that she actually choose to do so due to the pressure from her family to maintain her traditional Pakistani identity, which includes the wearing of



her Hijab at all times in public. Shamim's experience highlights the way the students at Sawyer change over time.

Olneck (2001) found that teachers were active agents in changing immigrant students' concepts of what was familiar, including their identities within the institutional structure. Olneck found that, "American teachers and fellow students present immigrant youth with models that put in doubt their own sense of what is normal, right, and proper, and that beckon them away from the worlds of their families and communities" (p. 317). As Mr. Newhart said in describing the school's various requirements, the system needs the Pakistani students to "conform to what we're trying to do."

The Pakistani students are aware that they are not given a choice about how to look, act, talk, and dress as a student at Sawyer high school. They are required to conform to the school dress code, wear their school IDs, meet the school requirements, learn and be proficient in the English language, and complete the expectations for graduation, in order for them to be successful in the American educational system. And even if they do not realize that this system is teaching them values to support the American economic system, and providing them skills, habits and credentials necessary to succeed in the economic system, they do see increased earning power as a reward for their successful participation in the school system.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### IDENTITY ACQUISITION THROUGH STUDENT AGENCY

One other reason I could not join school was school is very expensive in Pakistan. Schools require monthly fees over there. Books, school uniforms and other school supplies also have to be purchased separately. All my relatives and people I knew kept urging me to join school as I was not doing much sitting at home. It had come to a time when even my parents wanted me to join school but I just was not in that mental frame of mind to join school and I told them that I wanted to go back to the U.S. It had been three months now and I had yet to settle down in Pakistan. One day after I woke up, I just told my dad that I was not ready to live in Pakistan and I should go back to the U.S. I told them if they wanted to stay there they could but I will go live with my older brother who was finishing his college studies in the U.S. After much debate they decided to send me back to [the U.S.] as even they had realized that I was wasting my time there when I should be studying. I could not tell you how excited I was to come back to the U.S. (Mateen's College Essay, November 2008)

This chapter discusses the relationship between the multiple variables that play a significant role in identity acquisition and formation for Pakistani immigrant students.

These variables include student agency and the constraints of the institutional structures of Sawyer. They affect the way these students choose to declare their identities within each social interaction and the academic setting. Most importantly, the Pakistani students each have multiple group affiliations and are constantly shifting their identities. In other words, their identity is elusive, fluid, and malleable.

Each student's school identity is a unique constellation composed of academic, club, and social elements. This chapter, along with the next, discusses these school identities and constellations. Each student is continuously reshaping this constellation

through his or her role as an active agent defining his or her cultural, group and school affiliations. This chapter presents the students' constellations, including their many different group affiliations and identities. First, it will present the way race plays a significant role, both as a structural element, and in regards to how each student is both racialized as an agent and acts as an agent in the racialization of others. The next section of this chapter discusses ethnicization, the ways the institutional structures at Sawyer both accept and provide a venue for these students to construct their "Desi" identities. Then the chapter will explain the ways these students choose to define themselves and their culture, and the ways identity is elusive for these students. Then it explains the difficulties the Pakistani students have in selecting or prioritizing which of their identities is most important to them when asked to "check the box." This leads to a discussion of the ways that self identification is actually part of the Americanization process and the fact that Pakistani students, through their own agency, choose multiple root and route identities when declaring their individual identities.

### **Race: Black and "Desi" Ghettos**

The example of Ali, a senior Pakistani student, highlights the struggle and experience within the institutional structure and environment at Sawyer by some students:

Ali: And sometimes I like messing because I don't look Pakistani. So I..

Interviewer: What do you mean you don't look Pakistani?

Ali: I don't.

Interviewer: Well,..

Ali: I look [like I'm] from here. I look black.

Interviewer: You look black?

Ali: I look African American, most people think I'm from Cuban, most people think I'm Puerto Rican, some people think, some, uh, Dominican Republic. Nobody really thinks I'm from Pakistan.

Interviewer: Do people come up to you and say something?

Ali: Yeah.

Interviewer: What do they say?

Ali: They get shocked when I'm talking Urdu in Durham and Dash. That really ticks me off kind of.

Interviewer: Well tell me more about it.

Ali: I don't want people to not know where I'm from, cuz you know how African Americans are here? They think I'm African American so you know in Pakistan to be honest, people from Pakistan and India are supposed to be scared of, um, African Americans. If you call it, they're racist I guess most of them. They won't treat them the same. I come buy a pack of gum here, here's the gum thank you, see you later have a long conversation. Uh, African American come in, hey what are you doing you know, keep an eye on him until he leaves the store and I really don't like that.

Interviewer: So, I want to better understand this. Do you not want to be misidentified because you don't like the black culture, or because of your pride of being from Pakistan?

Ali: Pride.

Interviewer: Your pride.

Ali: My pride. Cuz this way, cuz the first thing honestly when I meet a guy the first thing they tell me, oh you must get a lot of girls, like, oh you must get Mexican girls, you must get black girls and you must get Pakistani girls cuz you could do all three. And first thing I tell them to shut the [whispers] *fuck* up you know. Cuz I don't want the people looking at me and getting the wrong impression. To be honest I wanna be a role model and I know it's a hard, it's hard to do that, but it's just I can't do it

when people are on me [and] won't treat me the same. And I could get that right, I know cuz most of the time I come in I go to shows with my friend, Moses, he is my best friend. (Interview, April 2009)

Ali has well-formed ideas about his own self-identity, yet he struggles with the ways others, including teachers and peers, act as racializing agents and impose an identity on him. Both the institutional structure of Sawyer, along with the administration, teachers, and students, are all racializing agents. They act as powers of authority in the reproduction and transformation of the racialization of others (Lewis, 2006). Ali expresses frustration with the role these racializing agents play in the formation of his identity. Ali often declares a fluid or elusive identity due to his many identity group affiliations, including aspects of his root identities – being Pakistani and Muslim – along with components of his route identity—as a football player, student at Sawyer, and other constantly changing affiliations.

Many of the Pakistani students use the racial categories of “Desi,” which is sometimes also defined by both themselves and teachers as “good,” in contrast to “ghetto,” which is negatively coded. This is reminiscent of Lee’s (2005) finding that Hmong immigrant students at an American public high school were seen in one of two ways: either as blackened and Americanizing in bad and dangerous ways – this included students who dressed and spoke in hip hop or urban styles – or as “good” students, Americanizing in “good” ways – which is synonymous with following the rules set by the institutional structure and culture present in American public high schools, those of the mainstream, white-middle-class. Because the Pakistani students are considered “good” and the black students are categorized as “bad” within the institutional structure at

Sawyer, the Pakistani students are more similar to the white-middle-class students and are therefore usually racialized in positive ways compared to the black, “ghetto,” or “bad” students.

The Pakistani students categorize themselves as a racial group called “Desi,” which includes all Pakistani and Indian students. Aadil was born and lived in Sukkor, Pakistan until 2006 when he moved to the United States. He is a sophomore at Sawyer and defines “Desi” by music and dress that contrast with American styles. He explains how he prefers English music, but that he has to also listen to “Desi” music, “Yeah, uh, most of the time I listen to English songs, or sometimes like, uh, if I have to listen to the ‘Desi’ songs, I mean, Indian or Pakistani songs, and I listen to those.” Aadil defines “Desi” as anything Indian or Pakistani. In fact, when describing the way he looks and dresses, he says that he used to be “kinda ‘Desi’ guy,” but now he “feels new.” Aadil explains, “I was uh, kinda ‘Desi’ guy, like looking, looks like a ‘Desi’ guy. My hairstyle, it was like, some kind of like, I dunno how ‘Desi’ people do just comb around. I don’t remember that.” Aadil describes himself now, “I wanted to change, uh, I changed my hairstyle, I changed my clothes, I changed my jeans, I changed everything.” He continues, “That’s why, what’s what makes me feel new, I mean. That’s why looks like of good style.” Aadil clearly defines the contrast between looking like a “Desi” and the ways he changed to look more American. To him, looking like a “Desi” means having bad style: a more Indian and Pakistani style of dressing and wearing his hair.

In contrast, the Pakistani students often categorize all black students as “ghetto.” These classifications are an example of how the Pakistani students are racializing, and

racialized, agents within Sawyer. Lewis (2006) has proposed that “racial categories are not merely sociological abstractions but are potent social categories around which people organize their identities and behavior and that influence people’s opportunities and outcomes” (p. 6). This is true for Razia and Shamim, who both self identify around the social classification of being “Desi.” For example, at an Indo-Pak club party, Razia walked over to Ms. Gita’s computer, plugged in her MP3 player, and began playing music. The music Razia chose to play was Indian, and not in English. Shamim asked me, “Do you know what this song is?” I said, “No, can you tell me about it?” Shamim said, “This song is all about a ‘Desi’ girl—a girl from India or Pakistan—I am a Desi girl.” Shamim smiled and explained, “Desi means country, from my country.” Shamim continued to sing each word of the song, while Razia danced around the room. Shamim said, “Do you want some rice, you know what it is?” I asked the name of the dish. Shamim said, “Biryani, it is rice, masala, you know the seasoning, and meat.” Shamim and Razia declared their identities as “Desi girls” by singing and dancing to Indian music while eating traditional ethnic food.

In contrast to Shamim’s positive association with being “Desi,” she defines the term “ghetto” in a negative way, “You should come to my third period class. The teacher has no idea what he is doing and all the urban kids are in there, you know, all the ghettos [sic] kids.” Shamim contrasts herself as a “good” student to the “urban” or “ghetto” peers in her World History class. As the students entered the classroom, the teacher handed each student a document. It read, “[F]ind [your school] ID number on handout—look at assignments.” The heading on the document each student is given is “Grade List

Report,” which lists each of the students by ID number instead of name, their grades on all assignments, if they were completed, and their current cumulative grade for the semester. Shamim walked into the classroom and took a seat in the middle of the second row. As soon as she sat down, the girl sitting in front of her turned to her, holds her ID and says, “What’s your (ID] number?” The girl looked at the grade list report, found Shamim’s number and then said, “You smart.” Then Shamim stood up and walked over to me. She asked, “Do you want to see my grade Ms. Fischer?” I said, “Sure.” She points to her cumulative grade of 101.86 percent. Shamim has no missing assignments. Shamim explained that she has a grade over 100 because she likes to do extra credit assignments. Based on Shamim’s grade and the fact that she had no missing assignments, she is defined by her teacher as a “good” student.

In contrast to Shamim, two black male students act in “bad” ways, which characterizes them as “ghetto,” according to Shamim. These boys show up late to class, in one case without books or other supplies, but carrying only a Gatorade with him. The other boy is wearing earphones that hang down into his chest pocket. The boy with the drink finished it and then shot it at the garbage can like a basketball. Shamim sat in the classroom quietly while the teacher talked about the “grade list report” to the class. While the teacher talked, the boy threw the bottle again, and missed again, so the boy next to him threw it. The second boy got in trouble. He said, “He threw it and I rebounded it.” Mr. Collins told the boy to stand in the hallway for a little while. Shamim looked at me and says, “see,” a reference back to her comment about the “ghettoness” of the fellow students in her third period class.



Mr. Collins began the class by lecturing. He said, "I want to review the material we have covered in this unit for the quiz." Shamim opened her notebook and began writing whatever Mr. Collins' wrote on the board, as did a number of other students, but not the male students on the left side of the classroom. The teacher turned to them and said, "This is not what 'good' students do. This is not what people do in class. I have 35 students." Then, all of a sudden Mr. Collins stopped lecturing and went back to discussing the grades. He said, "I am very fair with grades." While the two boys in the front of the room continued to talk, Mr. Collins turned to these boys and spoke to them in an "urban"-style, rather than the more formal English one usually hears from Sawyer teachers, and said, "I am not trying to sweat you or ride you." He looked at me, sighed, and said, "Headache."

The bell rang, indicating the end to the class period. Shamim and I walked out of the class together. She said, "See, wasn't that awful. I can never ask him [Mr. Collins] any questions, because he is always dealing with this or them. It is like this everyday." And then she smiled.

Although the Pakistani students use the term "ghetto" to mean black or "bad," the word's original definition identified the site of an ethnic, enclave community. In other words, each of these racial or ethnic groups, both the "Desi" and black communities at Sawyer, are examples of ghettos. There is a black ghetto and a "Desi" ghetto within the social setting at Sawyer. These ghettos demonstrate Mead's (1934) and Appiah's (1994) theories of collective identities—each of these ghettos is an example of a social group consisting of individuals who share at least one root identity or affiliation.

### **Ethnicization**

Although the Pakistani students are active agents in the construction of their identities, the structural institution of Sawyer also play a significant role in this process. In fact, even though the students at Sawyer are constrained by the structure, rules, requirements, and expectations of this American public urban institution; Yon (2000) explains, “Individuals are seen not merely as objects of structures but as subjects who are producing and acting upon structures even as they are constrained by them” (p. 126). Usually the constraints of Sawyer impact these students in a way that makes them choose an American identity. But sometimes the structural constraints at Sawyer influences these students in a way that makes them choose to be Pakistani or “Desi”, and not American.

The school accepts and constructs the Pakistani culture. Ali, a senior, declares his identity through his preference for American music and movies; he does not identify as “Desi.” He said there is one exception, when he danced to his “cultural songs” on international day at Sawyer. The school provided a venue for Ali to dress, act, dance, and hang-out with his “Desi” roots, and as an active agent in this setting, he choose his Pakistani identity. At this event, Ali chose to dance with the other “Desis,” dress in his traditional Pakistani clothing, and hang out with the other “Desis” in the Indo-Pak club at the school International Day Festival.

Due to this structural constraint, Ali decided to dance with the other “Desis” and chose his Pakistani identity, even though he explains his music and movie preferences are

for American hip-hop and “English” films. When asked about the type of music on his MP3 player, Ali quickly responds:

Hip-hop. You won’t find any ‘Desi’ songs in there. Just not a [‘Desi’] guy. I’m dancing for international day culture songs but (2-3 second pause) those are ‘Desi.’

(I like] Kanye West, Lil Wayne, almost all of them. I will listen to anything, except rock, I hate rock. I’m sorry if you like rock, but I hate rock. No ‘Desi,’ no country. Some, some country. (Interview, April 2009)

Ali declared his interest in hip hop music while also stating that he is not a “Desi” guy.

During the interview, Ali also discussed his preferences for “English” compared to “Desi” movies. He said, “Mostly I watch English movies cuz I understand them much better. When I watch a ‘Desi’ movie I make fun of them. Bollywood—they make up a lot of stuff. . .” Interestingly Ali explained the way the Bollywood movies are funny and do not make sense to him compared to the action and adventure scenes in the “English” movies. He laughs as he explains one Bollywood movie, “the train was going and the guy pulled himself up, like flew, not flew, but jumped, you know. Hops and he jumped on the train and the plane, I mean the train, crashed it bended.” Then Ali argued that the events in Hancock, a big Hollywood picture, make much more sense to him, “I mean you understand in Hancock, you stop the train. It actually goes through, but you understand the guy’s strong, but it could fly . . . but he’s a regular guy.” It appears there is some fantasy in each of these movies, but Ali said he prefers the “English” movies because the “Desi” movies do not make sense to him. In fact, Ali explained his genre preference within the “English” movies, “I watch mostly like African Americans, I love those [movies]. . . It’s funny, I get it, I understand, I know what’s going on.”

Ali declares one identity—that of the urban youth culture, but through his actions or participation in international day, he also declares himself as part of another culture—his “Desi” roots. At the school sponsored international day he was influenced to choose his Pakistani identity. In fact, at the festival, Ali chose to spend majority of his time at the Indo-Pak tables instead of the Ahinsa table, which is not the club he usually chooses to actively participate in on a regular basis. The differences between these two clubs will be discussed at greater length in the following chapter. On this day, within this school sponsored event, Ali declares his identity with his root culture as “Desi,” compared to the other times when he declares himself as part of the urban youth culture.

### **Defining Self and Culture**

The Pakistani students identify themselves based on a number of factors: where they were born; how long they lived in Pakistan; when they entered the United States; and, for some, whether they are United States citizens. One common denominator among them is an awareness of the institutional structures of American schooling and the ways these structures impact the formation of their identities. At the same time, one must acknowledge the role of the students’ own agency in making the decision about how they prefer and choose to be identified.

The institutional structures, constraints, and experiences within Sawyer, impact the construction and formation of identity for the Pakistani students. Sawyer is an example of a global space, with global and local influences of culture, people, ideas. Sawyer, with its global spaces and institutional structures, is where these students define

themselves. The school exerts a local influence while the students' cultures exert global influences on their identity formation.

There are multiple ways in which school experiences impact the construction or formation of identity for the Pakistani students. This is especially true for Mateen. He not only defines himself within the context of the school curriculum, but also is aware of how his identity changes within the structure of passing-time between classes at Sawyer. Moreover, the formation of his religious identity is restricted by the bell schedule and timing of classes at Sawyer.

For example, Ms. Smith, Mateen's AP English teacher, says Mateen defined himself in relation to the texts they read in class. For Mateen, and many of the students in this study, their parents' expectations are for an arranged marriage. Ms. Smith explained, "We talked about, when we read *Pride and Prejudice*, yes. Of course yes, the arranged marriage, the marriage for anything but love concept came up and he said his parents were arranged so we learned all about his parents and, um had an arranged marriage." Mateen also made connections to himself and his Muslim identity while reading the book, *Huck Finn*, Ms. Smith explained in an interview:

Um but also just when we read Huck Finn. Um he would, you know stereotypes and he would share with the class when he um felt like he was stereotyped and, after 9/11 and um it was interesting because he was one of two [Muslims] in the class and um, so it was him and Obaid and then the rest of the students were a majority Hispanic and then African American um I don't know he was able to be-friend everyone in the room and also relate to everyone in the room. (Interview, June 2009)

According to Mateen and his teachers, he made connections to his identity with the required text in the AP curriculum, and used these books to share his identity with teachers and classmates.

The diverse composition of the student body at Sawyer is one structural constraint on Mateen's identity. Mateen says he acts differently and has a different attitude in each class, based on a number of factors, including the content, the instructor, and his peers:

Well here's the thing, I believe that every class has a different input in it [me]. Every class has a different attitude in it. . . So during first period is math class, I see all my peers, not only do I study, but I, at the same time, joke around. Second period law, I know that it is a group of intelligent students and an intelligent teacher; you've got to be into it. . . . I am all about law. I am all about getting it, I am all about acting as a lawyer, but proving my points. (Interview, January 2009)

Mateen is aware and able to articulate the fact that he changes himself within each academic and social setting at any given moment. In fact, he goes one step further; Mateen explained how he shifts who he is to fit in with both the teachers and students within each of his required academic courses. This means that he is making these changes to his identity at least seven times each day, once for each class period.

Another structural constraint at Sawyer is passing time, the four-minutes that occur in-between class periods. The structure of passing time both influences Mateen's identity, and also highlights how his identity is consistently changing. Mateen explained his experience during passing time, "You see different faces, you see maniacs, you see smart ones, you see a girl holding her books with her bag, you see a guy who is goofing around sagging his pants, you see teachers who you know, you see, you see a lot of things. The hallway is a whole different atmosphere itself." Mateen then explained who

he is in the hallway at Sawyer, “It’s whatever you see. If you see a smart guy or a smart girl you are going to try with them the smart way, if you see a maniac, you put your jokes on. . . . It’s a different experience in the hallway.” Mateen is constantly changing how he behaves and acts based on his experiences within the constraints at Sawyer.

Mateen constructs his identity within the structural framework or constraints of Sawyer, which also restricts the formation of his religious identity. As a practicing and observant Muslim, Mateen is required to pray five times a day, which does not fit within the bell and class schedule at Sawyer. This became a point of contention during the most religious time of the year for Muslims, Ramadan. Amy Gutmann (2003) argues that the democratic state protects the dominant culture through the calendar, curriculum, and educational system. Mateen’s is not the dominant culture in America. He explained that during Ramadan there is an important prayer on Fridays at 1:30, Juma, but he has class during this time. Mateen said that he could skip class, but he does not want to do that either. Mateen is restricted in practicing his religious ceremonies and prayers due to the bell schedule and rules at his American high school.

Mateen’s experiences at Sawyer highlight multiple ways in which the institutional structures, including the curriculum, class discussion, and passing time have impacted his educational career and identities. He is given ways to connect his religious, national origin, and cultural practices to the required text in his AP English class, while simultaneously affected by the many faces he passes by in the hallways of Sawyer each school day. But he is also restricted in the practice of his afternoon prayer because of the bell schedule. Mateen’s experiences show the ways the students have agency at Sawyer,

but only within the constraints of the structural integrity of the American public high school.

### **Appearance and the “Americanization” Process**

Sawyer is an example of a global space with global influences, but there is also strong local influence: the school itself is an institutional structure that requires the Americanization process and impacts the identity formation of the Pakistani students. The Pakistani immigrant students form their identities within the context of a global, encompassing and mobile lifestyle (Ong & Collier, 2005). But one intended or unintended outcome of attending an American high school is the pressure to Americanize. The Pakistani students significantly change their appearance to fit in with their peers. Ms. Kelly defines the Americanization process based on her experiences at Sawyer:

I think that I’ve seen what I generally mention is that I see the, what I call the Americanization process really telescoped into a lot less time than it used to take. When I was first here it took kids one or two years to become cool, you know, I mean to become Americanized. Now it takes I dunno 3 months ya know, you see kids with a cool haircut or the boys are wearing their pants down, so that’s a big difference. (Interview, March 2009)

I asked Ms. Kelly, “What do you mean by the Americanization process, how would you define it?” Ms. Kelly responded:

I’m talking about um, uh, changing the way you dress, changing the way you wear your hair, changing the way you talk to teachers, um, changing how you spend your time after school, um changing the way uh, you respect your parents, I think that, that’s been a big issue. . . . It happens really, really fast, so, yeah, I think it’s a big change.

The changes Ms. Kelly identifies as part of the Americanization process are highlighted by Shamim’s senior photographs. Shamim defines herself as an observant



Pakistani-Muslim, who on a day-to-day basis wears a Hijab covering her hair, wears no make-up, always follows the school rules, and is in school dress code each day.

But for her senior photographs, Shamim changed the way she looks because she wants to “look pretty” in her photos. She removed her Hijab, wore significant amounts of eye make-up, and wore a different shirt. On the day of the photographs Shamim’s thick, black hair was parted to one-side and flowed down her back ending at the back of her knees. She was wearing make-up, including black eye liner, eye shadow, mascara, and blush. She was wearing the same or similar faded jeans and sneakers that she wore on a daily basis, but she was not wearing her dress code shirt. Instead, Shamim was wearing a tightly-fitted grey shirt with a black flower pattern and ruffles around her neck line and her biceps. Underneath the grey shirt, she was wearing a long sleeve black shirt that covered her arms, because she is a female Muslim, and is not supposed to expose or show her skin. Shamim changed her appearance significantly for her senior photographs – she removed her Hijab, put on face make-up, and wore a tight fitted shirt. Shamim explains that under the influence of her school friends to “look pretty,” meant wearing make-up, removing her Hijab and wearing fitted clothing, as opposed the more traditional, “conservative” appearance she adopts on a daily basis. The identification of “pretty” with modern, slightly racier attire and make-up is part of the Americanization process.

Salma and Shamim explain the reasons or excuses they have for removing their Hijab. They only remove their Hijab in social settings. Salma explains that there are different types of women who wear a Hijab. She says that a Hijabi is someone who always wears a Hijab by choice. Salma explains that there are also “Convertible Hijabis”

and “Perfect Hijabis.” Salma identifies that she is currently a Convertible Hijabi, but this will change when she gets to college and becomes a Perfect Hijabi. She says a Convertible Hijabi is a “way to describe someone; someone who didn’t [wear a Hijab], but then changed and began to wear a Hijab.” Salma says, “You weren’t willing to wear the Hijab, but [sometimes] willing to and sometimes get to take it off.” Salma states, “Like I am a convertible hijabi because my sisters forced me to wear one.” She continues, “But I take it off sometimes.” As Salma explains this, she is not wearing a Hijab—her long, black, curly hair is hanging over her shoulders and down her back. Salma then explains that there are also Perfect Hijabis, “Women who always wear their Hijab, by choice, all the time. This is what I will do in college. Not now.”

Shamim confirms Salma’s distinction, and also explains why she is not a Perfect Hijabi, which includes many social reasons or excuses why she cannot be a Perfect Hijabi. Shamim’s reasons stem from her experiences at this American educational institution, but do not reflect mandatory policies or her academics in anyway. She says, “There is a lot going on, school, lots of events in high school like cross dressing day, dress like a twin day. Real life starts in college. I will be a Perfect Hijabi in college, now I am just a Hijabi.” Once again, Shamim will change the way she looks or declares her identity once she arrives in a new educational institution—college.

### **Performing Identity at the High School Dance**

On Wednesday, February 11th from 3:30-7:00 the National Honors Society hosted a Valentine’s Day school dance. At this event Salma and Shamim both made the decision to change the way they look by removing their Hijabs and wear slightly racier,

fitted attire. It took the NHS members, including Massima, Salma, and Safia, three weeks to plan the event, which, as is with all events, required approval from Mr. Newhart. After school hours, all the doors of the school close except for the back entrance, which is located at the parking lot. My field notes include the following:

I enter the door and am greeted by a security guard. She says, "Hi girl, go ahead, I think the gates should be open so you can get through to the small gym." I walk down the hall, past the swimming pool, and then make a right. As I turn, I can here music blasting and begin to feel its vibration. Each step I take, I can feel and hear the music getting louder. At the end of the hallway I can see Ms. York, the sponsor of the club, standing with two other teachers. I turn right and enter through the doors of the gym and as soon as I do I can feel very strong vibrations from the DJ's music. I hear the words of a hip hop song, "Apple Bottom Jeans," coming from the large speakers on either side of the DJ's table. The room is decorated in pink, white and red. Dozens of balloons are hanging above the center of the gym floor, which is the dance floor for this event. Taped to the walls are all types of Valentine's day decorations: hearts, cupids, "Happy Valentine's Day" signs, and other pre-made, purchased decorations. Even the basketball nets are covered in red and pink streamers. It is evident that the NHS committee worked hard at preparing the room for this special event.

As I walk into the gym, Massima is standing at the entrance with a heart shaped basket handing out sweetheart candy to each student who enters the room. Other then the male DJ and the female police officer, there are no other adults or teachers inside the gym. As I stand against the wall, close to the entrance to the gym, I see Safia, Shamim and Salma walk into the room. I think to myself, I would like to talk with them, but it so loud in here, I am not sure if I will be able to hear them. Safia is wearing three inch black heels with her ankles unsteady, she slowly takes each step. Salma and Shamim look like twins, their long, straight, black hair hanging down their backs. They are wearing fitted black jeans that show the shape of their legs from their hips down to their ankles, and bright, fire-engine red shirts that shows the curves of their hips, chest, shoulders, and upper thighs. Salma is also wearing black boots with three inch heels, Shamim is wearing black flats. All three of them see me and head over. I tell them they look pretty. Shamim, Salma and Safia thank me with a smile, and explain that they had to get ready in the bathroom after school. Then they ask me if we can take a picture together? As we pose for the photo each of the girls turns their bodies to a forty-five degree angle to the camera, while

also turning their heads with their chin facing down and to the side and their eyes looking up – a teen imitation of a fashion pose found in any one of dozens of American magazines.

After taking a couple of photos, Shamim, Salma, and Safia walk toward the center of the room, onto the dance floor. Salma and Safia are standing together. They are not so much dancing as shifting their weight from one leg to the other, without moving their feet. Shamim is standing a couple steps behind them. She is looking around as though she is lost. The expression on her face is one of Alice in Wonderland—the land and people all look strange and out of place to her. The three of them then end up standing together on the dance floor, watching the other students dance.

Later, Salma, Shamim, and Safia are all sitting on the bench in front of the cooler where two NHS members are selling beverages. They are watching the boys and girls on the dance floor. One hip-hop, R&B, and rap song after the next booms through the large speakers. Then one particular hip-hop song begins and the students on the dance floor begin screaming in excitement. Most of the girls on the dance floor pair up with a boy and begin grinding against each others bodies; first while they are standing up and then one girl and boy begin doing this horizontally -- the boy on the ground and the girl on top of him. Ms. York quickly runs into the gym, takes the girl's arm and pulls her off of him. Both the girl and boy smile in response to Ms. York's actions. Then two of them begin grinding while standing up and a number of other students join in, forming a grinding train, where every other student is a boy and then a girl, they are firmly rubbing up against each other's bodies. Around the room, some students are standing against the walls and grinding. One boy and girl are in the corner of the room with the boy against the wall and the girl in front of him and they are grinding. Ms. York again begins walking around the room and breaking up the couples. Once she breaks up each couple, she walks out into the hallway.

Shamim walks over to me and says, "This [she points at the students on the dance floor] is gross," while making a face, raising one side of her mouth and one eye brow. I ask Shamim whether she has been to a school dance before? She smiles and replies "No, I've never been." She continues, "I told my parents I have part of my club and they don't know [that I am at the dance]." As I am talking with Shamim, Beyonce's voice is piercing through the speakers singing the refrain of her ubiquitous hit of the moment, "All the single ladies." All the girls on the dance floor begin dancing and waving their left hands in imitation of Beyonce's routine from the music video. I ask Shamim if she likes the song? She says, "I don't know, I never heard it before." (Fieldnotes, February 11, 2009)

Shamim took off her Hijab, and wore tight fitted clothing and make-up, but she does not look comfortable. Shamim may be dressed like the other American girls at the school dance, but compared to them she appears uncomfortable, as though she has not truly or completely let down her hair. She is continuously fidgeting with her hair, moving around the room looking for a place of comfort—she stands up against the wall, sits down in front of the drink cooler, walks around the perimeter of the room, and follows Salma and Safia, but does not look like herself. She stands with her shoulders rolled forward, constantly scanning the room, and fidgeting with her hands.

During the school days Shamim looks different: she makes eye contact, holds her shoulders back, and approaches me in a more confident manner. At the dance, however, she looks like a girl that is trying to fit into the mainstream culture. The difference between Shamim, and Salma and Safia, is that even though they are not dancing, Salma and Safia do not look uncomfortable, or as uncomfortable as Shamim does, at this event. Shamim did not dance, she spent the time at the dance watching the other students dance or standing next to Salma and Safia. The entirety of this event was a new experience for Shamim, one that she felt was part of her educational experiences at Sawyer High School.

### **The Elusiveness of Student Identities**

Students also acquire identities that are less imposed or assigned, but rather are acquired through their own personal active agency within the institutional structure of Sawyer. Students only take selective opportunities to be active agents forming their identities by choosing who they sit next to during class or lunch time; deciding which, if

any, after school clubs and sports in which they want to participate; and deciding whom they befriend or date.

The Pakistani students' identities are elusive. In much the manner that Charles Taylor (1989) describes, the Pakistani students continuously change who they are based on with whom they interact and have relationships. Identity is always understood in reference to time (Friese, 2002). The construction of the Pakistani students' identities is continuous, fluid, and constantly changing as they interact with others at Sawyer.

Mateen's experiences in his classes and the hallway at Sawyer highlight the fluid and elusiveness of his identity. His experiences emphasize the way his classes, peers, teachers, and the school setting change his identity and attitude from moment to moment.

Mateen explains:

Well here's the thing, I believe that every class has a different input in it. Every class has a different attitude in it. You go to a math class, like my math class, has a lot of peers that I know from outside and now they are in my class. So you could go with a funny attitude, you know, you also go by the teacher a matter of fact, like Ms. F, my teacher, she's very strict but at the same time, I believe she's hitting her age so she let's something go by. Like she doesn't catch everything. So during first period is math class, I see all my peers, not only do I study, but I at the same time joke around. Second period law, I know that it is a group of intelligent students and an intelligent teacher; you've got to be into it. And when you are walking the halls, it is a whole different attitude because you see a whole different, different of faces. (Interview, January 2009)

During math class, Mateen is a jokester but during law he chooses "to be into it" because he is among other intelligent individuals including his teacher and classmates. Mateen acts differently and changes how he declares his identity during his law class. He explains:

(I am) into law class. I am all about law. I am all about getting it. I am all about acting as a lawyer, but proving my points. Like nowadays, we are learning about euthanasia. Euthanasia is pretty much, you know, you kill yourself or a physician in Asia helps you get killed. The question that arose on Thursday, was morally, do you think euthanasia is right? I personally believe that life is a gift from G-d. And no one has the right to take away life from you, beside whoever gave it to you and that is G-d itself. I am totally against euthanasia, morally, ethically, religiously, in every way possible. Because you do not, anyone does not have the right to take away your life.

Mateen takes himself much more seriously in law class than math class.

He is also constantly changing his identity in the hallway. Mateen explains all the many faces in the hallways at Sawyer:

You see different faces, you see maniacs, you see smart ones, you see a girl holding her books with her bag, you see a guy who is goofing around sagging his pants, you see teachers who you know, you see, you see a lot of things. The hallway is a whole different atmosphere itself.

When asked, “Who are you in that hallway?” Mateen responds, “It’s whatever you see.

If you see a smart guy or a smart girl you are going to try with them the smart way, if you see a maniac, you put your jokes on.” Mateen continues to explain the difference between the maniacs and smart people and how they act differently in the hallway during passing time:

Interviewer: What is a maniac?

Mateen: A maniac is a guy who doesn’t go to class, a guy who is always joking around, that’s what maniac is. A guy who is pretty much, hey what’s going on Oliver, you know.

Interviewer: And describe, what did you say, a smart person?

Mateen: A smart person is pretty much, there is four minutes to get to class. I am holding my books, I have a heavy book bag, I have to get to class. I mean, you. Being in the hallway for, what there is eight classes, eight time four. For thirty two minutes a day, is, is, very interesting, very

interesting. Because some classes, you too cannot get to in four minutes, but some classes you are like, I have five, six minutes, I can relax, go by, ya know. It's a different experience in the hallway. (Interview, January 2009)

Mateen's continuously changing identity is an example of the elusiveness of identity in general. Mateen declares more than one identity. He redefines himself within each individual setting, interaction, and institutional structure at Sawyer. Within the brief four minutes of passing time between each class, Mateen is constantly redefining and declaring his identity based on which classmates or friends he may happen to interact with at that moment in time.

Charles Taylor (1989) maintains that one's identity is determined by with whom one interacts and has relationships, including people and the institutional structures at Sawyer. In fact, some students change the language they speak based on which of their identities they currently have activated. When a student chooses to speak Urdu, she presents and activates a certain kind of identity as a Pakistani. Haleema, a traditional Pakistani student who arrived in the United States last year, explained that she speaks two different languages at school. When I ask Haleema what language she speaks in school she differentiates between her American friends and her Pakistani and Indian friends. She explains, "My American friends in English. I'll try. . . . My Pakistani friend or Indian friends, we can speak Urdu." When Haleema refers to her friends she says my American friends, disassociating herself from them. Yet, when she speaks of her Indian or Pakistani friends, she says "we" speak Urdu. Haleema said she speaks Urdu to her Pakistani and Indian friends "because Pakistan and India is neighbor, is border, and is almost same. We have same cultures, same dress, [and] same food." Interestingly,



Haleema does not identify herself as Pakistani, “I’m not Pakistani right now . . . because this now [sic] I have to live here.” Yet, she clearly declares herself as part of the Indian and Pakistani enclave at Sawyer. Haleema is required to learn and speak English as a student at Sawyer, but chooses to also speak Urdu to her friends who she identifies as the same as her—part of the Pakistani and Indian enclave at Sawyer. Haleema did not know how to respond to the question, “Are you American?” The fact that Haleema alternates between speaking Urdu and English highlights the elusiveness of her identity.

Haleema is significantly impacted by the fact that she had to learn to speak English as a student at Sawyer. During the interview with Haleema, I asked, “What is it like to be a student at Sawyer?” Haleema quickly responds, “English.” I probe for clarification, asking her, “What about English?” She says, “English. If we can’t speak English. If we know English, we can use English in the whole world, but in Pakistan, it’s not only some kind of English.” Haleema’s responses highlight the significant impact that the requirement to speak English has on her identity and experiences at Sawyer.

Haleema is constantly choosing which root or route identity to have present at each moment, in each individual interaction (Clifford, 1997). Before arriving in the United States, Haleema spoke Urdu, the language of Pakistan, and Punjabi, her official state language. These two languages are part of her root identities, while English is a component of her route identities. She did not speak the English language before moving to the United States in March 2007. Haleema explains, “Like when I came to school, even I, I can’t say ‘hi Miss teacher,’ and you know, I can’t, I, I, I, my last teacher Ms. Coral, she tried to understand me. I didn’t speak English. Last time, last, like, when I, I

came to school of March [I learned English].” One minute she identifies with her root identity of being Pakistani – speaking Urdu – and the next minute she changes her identity to her new American culture – conversing in English. In other words, Haleema has no *one* identity – the formation of identity recurs within each individual social context. In fact, Haleema continues to balance her root and route languages in and out of school. She explains that at home she speaks Urdu and Punjabi with her family and only uses the English language when she is at School.

Sawyer is a discursive space where students are active agents in constructing their identities (Yon, 2000). Ali, a male senior, explained that since he lives in a new society, he thinks differently than when he lived in Pakistan, “I think the way I am here, the state of mind I have . . . in the United States.” Aadil has had the same experience as Ali. It highlights the importance of dress and clothing in relation to the way he self-identifies. If the Pakistani students look like a Pakistani or “Desi,” then he will be identified as Pakistani or “Desi.” The change from dressing like a “Desi” to wearing American name brand clothing is one way Pakistani students announce or declare a change in their identities. Aadil explained how he has changed his identity both physically and mentally, “The change is, I just like to be an American now.” Aadil only shops at American stores: “Yes, cuz, I don’t go to ‘Desi’ stores ever, uh, I go like for the shopping. For example, I go for American stores, like the uh, American Eagle, Hollister, these things.” Aadil said he wanted to change the way he looks because he wanted to feel new:

I wanted to change, that’s what I did, like, I changed my hairstyle, I changed my clothes, I changed my jeans, everything, once my jeans out, the best thing is, the jeans were old, I used to wear that in freshman year. Now I wear the other, different jeans, like every, other day, in school, and

every um, other shirt, I mean, different shirt every other day. (Interview, February 2009)

Aadil exercised his agency to shift his identity. By changing from dressing and shopping "like a Desi", to dressing in American styles and name brands he effectively declared a shift in his identity. He wanted to "feel new," so he changed the way he looked to look more "American," and no longer look like a "Desi."

### **Check The Box(es)**

Although a common expectation for individuals in the United States is to "check the box" to identify oneself, the Pakistani immigrant students cannot check just one box due to the complexity and multi-dimensional aspects of their identity. In other words, they do not have only one root or route identity, instead they have multiple and often hybrid identities (Suarez-Orozco, 1994). This concept of checking the box or categorizing individuals based on their identity is part of the Americanization process, which for the Pakistani students, takes place within the walls of Sawyer High School (Miller & Tanners, 1995).

In the United States, individuals are often expected to "check the box" to identify themselves. In other words, individuals must identify which race or ethnicity they "belong" to by selecting from among a pre-determined list of options. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, categories available for students to self-select their race or ethnic origin are limited to white, black, Asian, Hispanic, or other. There are many other "categories" that students might have selected if given the opportunity. And the Pakistani students do not fit into the category of "black," "White," "Hispanic," or even "Asian."

The concept of fitting into the checked box is especially difficult for immigrant students, who have moved from their “root” culture into a new country and culture. For example, Pakistani immigrant students have the choice of “black, white, Asian, Hispanic or other,” but many prefer to “fit” into a box according to their religion, national origin, or a hyphenated identity of Pakistani-American or Muslim-Pakistani-American. The lack of “boxes” available for self-identification, limit the options available for immigrants to self identity as they choose (Bonnett & Carrington, 2000).

Due to the lack of “boxes,” the Pakistani students are limited to the options available as they choose how to self identify (Bonnett & Carrington, 2000). One problem with the concept of checking the box to self-identify is that the United States Census does not have a “box” for Muslim or Pakistani. The identities “Muslim” and “Pakistani” are two separate, but equally important categories or classifications of identity for the Pakistani students (Sen, 2006). Because their identity is so complex, the Pakistani students cannot choose only one box to check.

Satta is a junior Pakistani student. Her “character trait” project for art class highlights the complexity of her identity. In her leather bound art notebook she was required to complete a list of all her character traits along with a picture representing herself, which she intentionally or not, also defines her identities. She listed the traits she identified as important to her, and then painted a line of color next to each one:

**Character Trait Project**

**Trait—color of paint**

Lover—blue

Studious—orange

Dance—dark orange

Aunt—yellow

**Trait—color of paint**

nail biter—dark green

Facebook—green

daughter—red

IB student—purple

Leo—brown	Crazy—magenta
Teenager—gray	family member—light purple
Pakistani—light green	Muslim—light blue

On the next page in Satta’s art notebook, she made an abstract painting representing her character traits. In this painting, she showed the connections of each of her traits through overlapping shapes representing specific traits. For example, she drew an orange circle representing that she is studious and then a larger circle around it in purple—representing that she is an IB student. Satta also drew a large flower-like shape in light green, representing her identity as Pakistani, then on the right side of this shape she has an overlapping oval in light blue, representing that she is Muslim. Satta’s painting represents the connections between her route identities as “studious” and “IB student,” as well as those between her root identities of her national origin, Pakistani, and her religious identity, Muslim.

On another page in her art notebook, Satta drew a large Pakistani flag directly in the center of the page. Above the flag she wrote 8:14:66, “that date means the day Pakistan had gained its independence and it was standing alone as Pakistan itself and not with any other country,” on the right side of the flag she wrote “Step aside cuz we da. . .” which interestingly represents an urban language style and then under the flag in large print she wrote, “Pakistani Pride—Till I die.” Satta’s character trait project along with her drawing of the Pakistani flag, represent the multi-dimensional nature and complexity of her identity. Satta clearly identifies herself as Pakistani, but she is also Muslim, studious, an IB student, and incorporates some aspect of modern, urban American culture.

### **Multiple Root and Route Identities**

Given the opportunity to self-identify, without the restrictions of the United States Census or other Americanized processes, the Pakistani students identify with multiple root and route identities. The ways in which the Pakistani students self-identify fit within Rumbaut's (1994) four types of ethnic self-identities: (1) immigrant or national-origin identity, (2) hyphenated identity, (3) American national identity without the hyphen, and (4) dissimilative racial or panethnic identity. Each student represents her identity differently: some hyphenate Pakistani-American, defining themselves with a "hybrid identity;" some define themselves primarily based their national origin as Pakistani; some identify based on their national identity without a hyphen or a "braided identity," such as American Pakistani; and many choose to define themselves with a three tiered identity of American, Pakistani, and Muslim. Still others might dissimilate a racial or panethnic identity. Each of these students prioritizes her multiple root and route identities differently. But every student's identity is a complex combination of her numerous identities.

Even within the restrictions of the institutional structure of American schooling, the Pakistani students are active agents who choose multi-dimensional identities. In a study of Pakistani immigrants, Raymond Brady Williams (1998), found that they depend on their religion to "shape and strengthen" their identities. Massima, a senior, explained that it is difficult to define who she is because her identity is so complex:

I mean it's hard to explain it because I really don't know how to explain it. If you were to say appearance-wise then you would have to compare me to all of the other Muslim students in the school that are, um, that are female. And you would also identify me as one of the Muslim girls who was in IB,

and who doesn't wear a Hijab, um, also, the one whose family has a restaurant, and um, I don't know.

Mm, cuz I consider myself as an American. I was born here, um, I speak English, I'm familiar with the various, um, things, um, that usually Americans do. Um, the parades that we have here, the history of America, I consider myself an American since I was born here, which I think is important if you were to consider yourself an American. (Interview, March 2009)

Satta, a junior IB student, explained similar confusion and complexity with her identity:

[I am] Americanized you can say at home. America, this is my mentality, how I think, the way I dress, the way I talk, the way I hang out with people, that's Americanized. I mean Muslim, it's how I pray, or how I look at my religion. And Pakistani is basically, um, being with the culture, about like being like, following the tradition, being Pakistani, the henna, the clothes, the food, the people. So I guess they all combine together – I put them together. Cuz, there's times like everyday I'm a Pakistani Muslim person, and yet at the same time I'm dressed as an American. I'm dressed, I talk like an American, or whatever you know, I think about this so it's all together. (Interview, April 2009)

Satta clearly states the multifaceted nature of her identity – being a Pakistani-American-Muslim – as well as the fluidity and elusiveness of her identities. Each of her root and route identities is activated at different times depending on her interactions or social and religious settings. Satta also highlights the fact that she connects and overlaps all three aspects of her “hybrid identity,” including her national origin, religious identity, and current country of residence. This is evident in the picture she drew in her art notebook with the shapes representing her multiple identities overlapping each other.

In contrast to the ways Satta self-identifies, one female, Indian, Muslim student walking the halls clearly identifies with her national origin. In the plastic pocket around her neck holding her school ID is a red piece of paper proclaiming, “I love my India.”

She explained, “Everybody love their country because you are born there and live there. I am Indian.” “Are you Indian-American?” “Indian,” she declares.

Adab, a junior IB student, identifies with the same three root and route identities as Satta, but she categorizes and prioritizes them in a different way. Adab declares a panethnic identity similar to when black students are categorized as African Americans, “Uh, yeah, cause I’m Mus-, I’m Pakistani-American, like you know how people say they are African-American, so I am Pakistani-American.” Adab also explained that she connects or hyphenates these two identities of being both Pakistani and American. Adab further explained, “Yeah, so I guess I would say I am Muslim first and then I would be like I am Pakistani-American.” Adab self-identifies with a “hybrid identity,” she hyphenates her national origin with her current country of residence, but chooses to separate and prioritize her religious identity as a Muslim.

### **Conclusion**

The Pakistani students’ identities are very complex, as are the multiple ways the structure of American schooling and the Pakistani students’ experiences impact the construction and formation of those identities. Each identity or constellation is different and, therefore, each student’s identity map is unique. In fact, through each interaction, class, and social experience, the students are continuously working through and redefining their identities – how they see themselves and how others see them.

Due to the complexity of the Pakistani students’ identities and many group affiliations, they have a difficult time selecting or prioritizing which of their identities is most important to them when asked to “check the box.” Each student associates with



multiple root and route identities. Most of these students are Pakistani Muslims, some of them would say American, and these root identities are combined with the many route identities, including group affiliations based on their academic programs, after school clubs, and other social and collective identities. These many root and route identities make the identity formation for the Pakistani students very complex. They are continuously changing who they are and how they identify. Therefore, the ways the students self identify is a complicated process that is continuously changing as they define and redefine themselves within each moment in time.

In this way, the Pakistani students are active agents in self identifying with their root and route identities, but the institutional structures at Sawyer limit them in this process. The institutional structures at Sawyer significantly impact and constrain the ways these Pakistani students self, individually, and collectively identify. For example, as discussed in this chapter, Mateen's educational experiences directly affect his religious identity. He is required to follow the bell schedule at Sawyer and, therefore, is unable to pray five times per day and follow the tenants of his Muslim religion. Mateen's self identity is also affected by the structure of Sawyer's passing time—the four minutes between each class. He explained how he changes who he is based on with whom he interacts in the hallways. If Mateen runs into "a maniac" he "puts his jokes on;" if he sees a "smart" peer, he explained, "you are going to try with them the smart way." The structural constraint of passing time highlights both the influence of the institutional structure as well as the ways Mateen is continuously changing and redefining his identity. In other words, Mateen's identity is elusive; he is changing his self, individual, and

collective identities within each interaction. Each of the Pakistani student's identities is continuously being defined and redefined as a result of the institutional structures of Sawyer in combination with their role as active agents within this American school setting.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **“BE A BULLDOG:” AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS**

This chapter examines specific ways the students exercise agency within the constraints of the academic institution of Sawyer. The structural constraints imposed by the institution, such as after school clubs affect how students can exercise their agency, by for example, constraining with whom they interact, collectively identity, and make friends.

The Pakistani students are continuously restructuring their identities and constellations through their roles as an active agent defining group, school, and cultural affiliations. Each identity or constellation is different and, therefore, each student’s identity map is unique. In fact, through each interaction, class, social experiences, after school club, and passing period, the students are continuously working through and redefining their identities – how they see themselves and how others see them. The Pakistani students talk about their identities in the following three ways: first, according to the academic program in which they are enrolled; second, in reference to the after school clubs to which they belong; and third, socially, in relation to their friendship networks. This chapter focuses on the latter two.

Institutional structures and student agency both come into play as the Pakistani students choose which after school clubs to join and which peers to befriend. This is a significant part of the constellation of their school identities. The after school clubs these

students join significantly impact the peers with whom they interact, how they self-identify, and how they want the teachers at Sawyer to view them.

### **Introduction to After School Clubs**

After school clubs and sports teams are part of the institutional structure of American high schools and are linked to the school identity at Sawyer. The bulldog is the school mascot at Sawyer. To be a *cream of the crop* bulldog, students<sup>2</sup> must extend their educational experiences to the after school clubs and sports teams. They present an extension of the educational experiences and opportunities for students before and after the academic school day. There are more than forty different clubs available for students to join at Sawyer, including Student Council, Spanish Club, Indo-Pak Club, Chess, Peer Jury, Piano Club, Ahinsa, and Yearbook.

Although students have the freedom to choose which clubs to join, they are still constrained by the structural limitations of the institution--in that after school clubs are officially recognized and sanctioned by the school. Even though the process for establishing an after school club seems straightforward, it is another example of how there is a particular process within the institutional structure at Sawyer that the Pakistani students are expected to follow. An idea to start a new club may originate from either the students or teachers at Sawyer. If initiated from the students, they must first ask a teacher to be the club sponsor, then that teacher is responsible for asking permission from Mr. Newhart. If a teacher chooses to start a new club, they must also first ask Mr. Newhart, and then recruit students to participate in the club.

The origin of the Ahinsa club shows one way in which student agency is present within the institutional structures at Sawyer. Ahinsa started four years ago, when a group of girls wanted a dance club. Ms. Preeti was not onboard with the idea, “I said no, if we have a club it has to be something that is productive, that we do something.” So Ms. Preeti, along with this small group of female students, came up with the Ahinsa Club where they would do fundraisers, raise money for the homeless children at Sawyer, and conduct cultural awareness programs in the local community.

Involvement in extracurricular activities is part of the typical educational experiences and opportunities provided to students in the American public educational system. Therefore, students are expected to join clubs or sports teams to be identified as *the cream of the crop* or *high-achieving students*; because these students take time to contribute to their school communities. The relationship of being *the cream of the crop* or *high-achieving students* and participating in clubs is stated on Sawyer’s website: “One thing is known for sure: Students involved in activities not only have more fun in high school, they also do better in their classes and are ultimately more successful” [School website, 7/15/09). The after school clubs are closely linked to the school identities; you become part of the school through participation in these clubs.

Student agency plays a significant role in the decision for students to join clubs. Among the Pakistani student population there is a distinction based on their membership in one of two particular after school clubs. The choice to join either Indo-Pak or Ahinsa club gives each of them a collective identity that is dependent on their individual self-identities. All but seven of the Indian and Pakistani students at Sawyer join either the

Indo-Pak or Ahinsa club. Indo-Pak has been a club at Sawyer for many years, enrollment is open to all students, but only Indian and Pakistani students are members in this club. They focus on promoting the Indian and Pakistani culture to the students and teachers at Sawyer. Ahinsa Club has been active at Sawyer for the past five years; they promote a message of peace, unity, and non-violence. The mission of the Ahinsa Club is to bring this message to the members along with the school population as a whole and the local community. All students at Sawyer are welcome to join the Ahinsa Club, but all but two of the student participants are Indian and Pakistani.

### **Constraints of Institutional Structures**

Although the students are given the “flexibility to choose” to which after school clubs they want belong, the “Bulldog Fair,” which takes place during the first month of each academic school year, is the institutional structure at which the students are expected to make this decision. Again, the students are provided with a specific setting in which they are expected to activate their own agency, and to make the decision of whom to identify with in regards to the extracurricular activities available to them.

The Fair took place on Tuesday, October 6, 2008, during the school day in the largest gym at Sawyer. The room was set up in several rows of five to seven round tables. On each table was a poster board with details and information about each of the activity clubs or sports teams and a sign-up sheet. The lowerclassmen were expected to write their names and division or homeroom numbers on the sign-up sheets for the clubs in which they are interested, with the expectation that they will receive information about them.

The purpose of the Fair is for freshman and sophomores to decide which clubs or teams they want to join. This is what took place:

While the freshman and sophomores walk around, the juniors and seniors run the stations. The freshmen and sophomores are each given a blue “Be a Bulldog: Bulldog Activity Fair” pamphlet to walk around and decide which clubs and teams they would like to join. Not all of the organizations listed in this pamphlet are set-up at the Bulldog Fair, but the majority of them are present.

Within the structural constraints at Sawyer, the freshman and sophomores are given the freedom, as active agents, to decide which clubs to join. In the case of the Pakistani students, this decision highlights the role of agency in identity formation.

The fair seems as though it is an opportunity for groups of students to “hang out” instead of being in their classes. For example, at the Latin Dancers Club, there are two couples dancing and a large group of Latinos and Latinas standing next to the table with the poster board. In fact, the event seems more like a social event than an academic one. The freshmen and sophomores come to the fair during their social studies classes. In other words, these students missed out on part of their academic school day for the club fair. This highlights the way the school officials and administrators emphasize participation in these clubs. It is clear that the school officials value the participation in the after school clubs.

The room is literally divided by clubs, organizations, and sports teams; which largely means it is divided by ethnicity, race, culture, language, or religion. Interestingly, the pamphlet the students use to select clubs says, “Be a Bulldog.” The intention of the fair may be to unite the students, but in fact, it actually divides them into groups.

I notice Mateen sitting on the table in front of the Ahinsa Club board. There is another boy sitting next to him. I walk over and ask them what they are doing. The other boy says, “We are just hanging out.” On the board for Ahinsa they have pictures: the group ice skating from last year; Mohandas Ghandi; Martin Luther King, Jr.; and members of the club. This boy sitting with Mateen says “The more clubs [you join], the more scholarships you get.” Mateen and his friend used this time to socialize and hang out, instead of being in their regularly scheduled classes.

I also ran into Salma, she said, “I am here representing four clubs, National Honor Society, Indo-Pak Club, Ahinsa, and Key club.” Interestingly, there are a large number of students sitting in the bleachers—these are the students who have gym this class period, but do not have class because the fair is set-up in the gym. I asked, Salma, “When are you in the gym until for this fair?” She said, “All day, I do not have to go to classes today.” (Fieldnotes, October 6, 2008)

Mateen and Salma were both selected by their teachers or club sponsors to be a part of the Bulldog Fair. They were going to miss their classes all day for the fair. Both of them have been identified as *high-achieving* students. This highlights another special privilege given to the students identified as either *the cream of the crop or high-achieving students* by their teachers.

### **Collective Identity**

Membership in after school clubs represents the collective dimension of the Pakistani students’ individual identities (Appiah, 1994; Mead, 1934) as well as their self-selecting or mutual identification into an identity group (Gutmann, 2003). Both Ahinsa and Indo-Pak Clubs, are after school clubs with similar defining features—the individuals that make up the club have a shared identification around common “social markers” (Gutmann, 2003). Both clubs, Ahinsa and Indo-Pak, are as much social gatherings as they are identity groups.

The Pakistani students befriend Indian students because of their shared experiences, language, culture, and religion; in other words, because of their common root and route identities (Clifford, 1997; Suarez-Orozco, 2001). More specifically, their first language is Urdu; they share their South Asian national origin, and their Muslim religion. They form clusters within the larger student population at Sawyer. Tomlinson



(2007) explains, “Globalized culture is less defined by location because of the consistent movement and connectiveness of people on a global scale.” The result of globalization is the deterritorialization of borders for the Pakistani immigrant students. Indeed, they have formed an enclave of “home” within the global society at Sawyer.

Although the members of both the Indo-Pak and Ahinsa clubs share many of the same root identities, including their national origin, first language, and religion, their route identities are different, including which language they choose to speak, the way they dress, with whom they socialize, and their educational experiences. Therefore, the collective identities of the members in Indo-Pak are different than those of the Ahinsa Club members. The collective identity of the members of the Indo-Pak club creates and maintains an enclave of their traditional cultural identity and lifestyle. The members of the Ahinsa Club share a collective hybrid identity of their root and route identities—being both Pakistani and American.

### **Indo-Pak Club**

More specifically, the collective identities of the members of the Indo-Pak club include a shared culture, religion, nationality, and language. These collective identities are clearly stated in the club’s goals on the school website: “Students also help promote awareness of the Indo-Pak culture to students and faculty at Sawyer.” This club also defines itself through its involvement in the school International Festival, by completing community service projects, art projects, and by watching movies.

The events and activities planned by the Indo-Pak club are very different from those of the Ahinsa club. All of Indo-Pak’s events took place at Sawyer and included at

least one aspect of their national origin or religious identities. Each activity included part of their “Desi” roots: either the music, clothing, or food. In comparison, Ahinsa Club events took place both at Sawyer and in social settings throughout the city. Also, Ahinsa’s activities were often either geared toward socializing, experiencing new “American” pastimes, or supporting the school administration at special evening events for parents at Sawyer.

Throughout the school year, the Indo-Pak had many social gatherings, which included parties to celebrate milestones for the members, the winter holiday season, one student’s birthday, and an end-of-the-year party for the seniors. At each of these parties, the students would play “Desi” music, eat “Desi” food, and speak primarily Urdu to each other. They also participated in service learning projects, which again, were focused on supporting “Desi” women. They collected and donated cans for a women’s organization, Apna Ghar (“Our House”), which cares for abused and homeless women from Pakistan, India, and elsewhere in Asia. The cans of food had to be either vegetarian or Halal (compliant with Muslim dietary laws). The more American focused activity Ms. Gita planned for the members of this club was to watch the Hollywood movie *Napoleon Dynamite*. Ms. Gita selected the movie because she said, “This is a nice Hollywood movie that I watched with my son.” The events planned by the Indo-Pak club were not limited to the members, they were available to other students at Sawyer, but no other students participated. The biggest and most important event for Indo-Pak is the international festival that takes place each year at Sawyer.

To the members of Indo-Pak, the international festival is an important opportunity to share with other students and faculty at Sawyer their collective identity based on their cultural roots— of both Muslim-Indian and Pakistani descent. The students dressed in their traditional garb, brought their traditional food to sell, and also had a station set-up to do Henna tattooing. For only one day out of the entire school year, these students have the opportunity to dress, act, talk, and represent themselves to the entire student population consistent with their collective identities—as Muslim-Indian and Pakistani boys and girls.

Although the Ahinsa Club also participates in this festival, it is not as significant as it is for the Indo-Pak Club. In fact, Ms. Gita demanded that that Ahinsa Club not sell “Desi” food at the festival, because the Indo-Pak Club was selling that type of food and Ahinsa could not do that too she said. So the Ahinsa Club sold food, but other Asian style dishes, including fried rice, egg rolls, a pasta and vegetable dish and a Chinese style chicken dish along with bright colored frosted cupcakes. The Indo-Pak club sold only “Desi” dishes including Samosas, rice, two vegetable, and a chicken entrée along with three different types of chutneys. Ms. Preeti only had the opportunity to be at the festival during her lunch period of the regularly scheduled school day, compared to Ms. Gita who did not teach any of her science classes for the day. Instead, she spent the day at the festival with the members of the Indo-Pak club. My field notes record the following:

As I enter through the doors of the boy’s gym, there is a table directly in front of the entrance. Two teachers are sitting at this table selling tickets – all the food is priced out in tickets. As I look around the room, there are flags and words written on colored construction paper on the walls around the room. Under each flag, phrase, or word was the relevant country of origin. Beginning in the corners of the room crossing over each other at

the center of the room and continuing to the other side of the room were small flags attached by ribbons to form a long banner. There are tables set up around the perimeter of the room and then another set of four tables set up as a square in the middle of the gym, with room in the center for students to dance. Each of the tables is covered in a different color plastic table cloth. There are post-it notes on the tables indicating which tables belong to which clubs or groups of students.

Indo-Pak's set-up differed from Ahinsa's. I went to Ms. Gita's classroom fourth period. She told all of her students in her fourth period science class to "go next door" for this period. Also in Ms. Gita's classroom are many students participating in the Indo-Pak Club for the festival today. The Indo-Pak students are dressed in their traditional garb and stand out from the "regular" students who are in the school dress code—green or white shirts and jeans. There are approximately ten to twelve Indo-Pak students in Ms. Gita's classroom. She said, "Okay, everyone carry something, we need to go set-up." One by one, the students picked up an aluminum tray, a plastic bag of food, a twelve pack of soda, a chocolate cake, or another tray of food. Each student filed out of the classroom down the hallway, three flights of stairs, and directly into the boy's gym. Ms. Gita and the students set up one table of food and another one for Henna. Only some of the Muslim girls know how to do Henna. Naeema, Haleema, and Razia signed up to do Henna for the festival and then when Satta arrived at the festival, and she began helping do henna too.

All the freshman, sophomore, and junior Indian and Pakistani students who are more reserved, newer to the United States and members of the Indo-Pak club are dressed up in their traditional cultural garb. For example, when Haleema dresses for a typical school day, she wears a white or dark green t-shirt and jeans, but today, she is wearing Shalwar Kameez with bright colors and sequins, and jewelry—silver bangle bracelets on her left wrist and a thick green and black beaded bracelet on her right wrist, as well as long, dangling silver earrings.

Haleema's Shalwar Kameez has an emerald green top edged in gold beading, which hangs loosely down her body to right above her knees. The sleeves end mid bicep and are also lined in gold sequins. Haleema's top is covered in silver, gold, and red embellishments of sequins and beading. Haleema usually wears a Hijab, covering her forehead and hair, but today, she is wearing her long, black hair hanging down her chest and back. Haleema is also wearing green contacts, which match the green of her outfit. She is also wearing eyeliner around her eyes and blush on her cheeks, and fancy, strappy silver heels on her feet.

Nadia has undergone a similar transformation. She also wears her required dress code – a white shirt and jeans – to school each day. Today, she looks like a different person. I did a double take when I saw her walking in the hallway. She usually wears a Hijab covering her forehead, neck and hair, but on this special day, she is wearing her long black hair hanging down past her shoulders—halfway down her back. Nadia is surprisingly also wearing a top that shows skin on her chest, right above her breasts. Nadia is wearing an elaborate outfit in comparison to her daily dress code outfit. She is wearing Shalwar Kameez with black top with red and gold embellishments—red and gold flowers around the edge of her shirt with a pattern of gold shapes three inches apart around her entire top. Nadia is also wearing a bright-fire engine red scarf around her neck and hanging down to her knee caps. She is wearing black pants with the same gold design around her ankles. Nadia is also wearing noticeable amounts of make-up on her face, including eye shadow, eyeliner, and blush.

Ms. Gita has also changed her dress and appearance for the International Festival. Today, Ms. Gita is wearing black pants, black sandals, and a long black cultural gown/shirt with red embroidery and beading along the edge. Ms. Gita spent the entire day at the festival; she oversaw the students in the Indo-Pak club, including the selling of food and the Henna.

Throughout the festival, there were a variety of cultural songs playing loudly in the gymnasium and a number of scheduled cultural dance performances. There was a boom box set up next to the Ahinsa Club tables. The two students sitting behind the boom box, acted as dee-jays. They played music loudly through the speakers, so loud, in fact, that it was hard to make out the music from the rumble of base. First, they played a Latin song, followed by songs from each of the different nationalities and cultures represented at the festival. There were a couple of dance groups that performed for the students. A group of five female students from Ethiopia danced in their traditional clothing to their cultural music. The Ethiopian dancers stand in a line, put their hands on their hips and raise and lower their shoulders while simultaneously turn their heads to the left and then to the right. Then a group of four other African students – three females wearing all black leotards and an African fabric tied around their waist, covering their mid-section and the one male wearing black pants and the same African print fabric as a shirt – go to the center of the room. These four African students do a dance to a different song. Then three Latin couples walk to the center and began dancing the salsa. As each of these groups begin dancing, Safia, Shamim, Salma, Haleema, and Nadia walk over to watch the performances.

During 6<sup>th</sup> period, an Indian song, or as the students say, a “Desi” song, is blaring from the boom box. The students from the Indo-Pak Club ran to dance to the “Desi” music. The Ahinsa students remained at their designated table.

This highlights the cultural and collective identities of the members of the Indo-Pak club.

One Indian boy from the Indo-Pak club stands in the center with all the Ethiopian girls and other African girls around him and begins dancing. All the “Desi” girls and boys quickly walk over to see what is going on in the center of the gym. They all begin laughing, screaming, taking pictures—Naeema, Salma, Shamim, Yasmin, Razia, Abdul-Hakim, Abdul-Azeez, and some of the other Indian boys from the Indo-Pak club. The “Desi” song ends, and this one student stops dancing, and the “Desi” students go back to their clubs’ tables laughing and pointing at the one “Desi” boy’s dancing.

Whenever the DJs put on a “Desi” song, most of the male students from the Indo-Pak Club were in the center of the room dancing in a circle. Ms. Gita walked over to the students dancing and joined in on the dancing. Ms. Gita was smiling and dancing in a circle with the other “Desis.” The students began to scream. Some students joined her in the dancing, others took pictures, and some stood around the outside of the circle smiling, laughing, and even pointing. Ms. Gita continued to dance for a couple of minutes before leaving the center of the dance circle and walking back to the Indo-Pak table. As Ms. Gita stepped out of the dance circle, her face is bright red and she is smiling.

Later during 7<sup>th</sup> period, Yasmin gives the student DJs her Ipod. They connect it to the boom box and play another “Desi” song. Once again, the same group of “Desis” from the Indo-Pak Club goes onto the dance floor and dance in a big group, including Ali and the other male Indian and Pakistani students from this club, they dance in a circle, jumping up and down with one arm raised to the center. And once again, all the “Desi” girls stand around the perimeter to watch, laugh, and take photographs. Although many members of the Ahinsa Club were also at the festival at the time, none of them choose to dance to the “Desi” music. Apparently, it is not appropriate for the female “Desis” to participate in the dancing. Yasmin and the other girls said to me that there was one “Desi” girl dancing too, the new girl. They said, she should not dance with all those boys. (Field notes, May 14, 2009)

### **Ahinsa Club**

Both the activities and members of the Ahinsa club are more Americanized. They declare a hybrid identity of being both Pakistani and American. The activities and events that take place in Ahinsa also represent the members' hybrid identities, including some Pakistani traditions but mostly many socialized American activities. The first club meeting of the school year took place on September 18, 2008. Ms. Preeti, the club sponsor, explained the events that took place in the club in the past. The previous year, Ahinsa raised money for homeless children in their school, conducted a cultural awareness program at the daycare center in the neighborhood, and collectively, its 47 members completed 1200 hours of community service. Ms. Preeti shared that the club also has social events like ice skating in Millennium Park, "The last three years we got together for Ramadan for a celebration, and done Henna tattooing at the Sawyer Fine Art Festival each year." Ms. Preeti explained that all the money the club raises is given to charities and donated to a variety of organizations. Ms. Preeti said, "There is one fundraiser we have that the money goes to the club's funds. We sold carnagrams [messages accompanied by a carnation] on Valentine's Day at the school." Ms. Preeti explained other fundraisers they have done, including gift wrapping at a Borders bookstore during the holiday season, and walking around the school with cans and asking for change for charity.

The communities or organizations that the Ahinsa members contribute to are more Americanized compared to the organizations that the Indo-Pak club have selected. The members of Ahinsa spend a significant number of hours contributing and

volunteering to both their local school community and the community at large. This past school year the members of Ahinsa, helped out at Sawyer for a variety of special events, including Open House, IB parent information night, Parent-Report Card pick-up, and a special breakfast for important community leaders. During the winter holiday season, they wrote cards to American soldiers stationed in Iraq and donated significant amounts of money to a variety of local organizations.

During the year, the Ahinsa Club went ice skating at Navy Pier, bowling at Lincoln Lanes, pottery painting at Glazed Expressions, and volunteered for parent night, open house, parent report card pick-up day, and other events at which Mr. Newhart needed student assistance. They also sold flowers and chocolates on the morning of February 11, 2009 for Valentine's Day. In contrast to the Indo-Pak club, the Ahinsa club recognizes and observes Valentine's Day, a Saints day celebrated across America.

Mr. Newhart, the principal, approved Ms. Preeti's request that her Ahinsa club members be out of dress code for the day. He approved them to wear red tops and jeans, but banned black, white, or khaki pants to avoid any associations with common gang colors and dress patterns. Ms. Preeti made name tags for each of the members of the club to wear with their name on the front and a typed message: "This student is a member of AHINSA and is authorized to be out of dress code on Wednesday, February 11, 2009." Ms. Preeti told the student to wear these heart-shaped name tags all day so that they did not get in trouble. The students were very excited to be out of dress code for the entire day.



Each of the students in Ahinsa wore a red shirt and black pants or jeans. Even though Ms. Preeti told them that they could not wear black with the red because red and black together are the colors of a gang, many wore black pants. Each of the girls wore a bright red shirt fitted to her body. In contrast to their normal dress code attire, this “uniform” was much more revealing of body shape.

Salma and Shamim each wore a black Hijab. Salma has her hair tucked inside her scarf, while Shamim’s covers her jaw bone, ears, part of her forehead and top of her head, but not her hair. Her hair is in a large clip hanging down her back reaching to the top of her thighs. Shamim told me that she was going to take off her scarf later that day for the school dance. I have never seen her in a social setting not wearing her Hijab. Only for her senior photos has she ever removed the scarf at a school function. Other than Shamim exposing her hair, she and Salma are dressed identically. They are both wearing bright red, fitted, sleeveless shirts that cling to their bodies, showing off their chest and curves of their bodies all the way down to almost the top of their thighs. They both have on a black shirt under their red shirt, covering their arms all the way to their wrist; they are both wearing jeans. Shamim and Salma both are wearing noticeable amounts of make-up; they have on eye liner, eye shadow, powder, shiny lip gloss, and blush.

Safia is also dressed in the exact same outfit as Shamim and Salma, wearing a fitted, bright red shirt and tight black jeans. She too has on an obvious amount of make-up on her face. The only difference is that Safia is not wearing a head scarf, which is consistent with her usual habit at school. The boys are similarly attired, as well, although the outfit is not as dramatic a departure for them. Mateen is wearing a fire engine red button-down shirt with a design in black velvet running down his right arm. He is also wearing black dress pants and black lace-up dress shoes.

Razia, Naeema, Salma, Massima, Shamim and Salma stand behind the table and sell flowers and goody bags. They ask students and teachers what they would like as they approach the table, what color flowers they would like, and collected their money. Yasmin is sitting on the floor behind the table collecting the money and giving the customers change. The sales began at 7:30 a.m. and ended at 8am, when first period began. The members of Ahinsa were a couple minutes late to their first period classes. One female teacher walking down the stairs looks at the members of the Ahinsa Club and says, “You girls look so cute, look at you girls.” A

number of teachers bought flowers in support of the club, including Mr. C, the assistant principal. (Field notes, February 11, 2009)

The members of the Ahinsa club share the collective hybrid identity of their root and route identities—being both Pakistani and American. These students are interested in making Ahinsa Club both an identity group of cultural relevance to themselves as Pakistani and Indian-Muslims, as well as a center for social interaction and gatherings. Throughout the school year, many social gatherings took place, including ice skating, pottery painting, bowling, and a variety of parties, including birthday parties, an end-of-the-year celebration, and many others. These students choose to join Ahinsa because of the shared root identity of national origin, culture, religion and language, but also their route identities based on their current country of residence, and a hybrid identity as Pakistani-Americans. In exercising their agency to select which root and route identities are important to them, students declare a shared collective identity group. The Pakistani students have established extreme and potent within group distinctions by choosing to join and therefore identifying themselves as either “ABCDs” or “FOBs.”

### **Student Agency in Joining Clubs: FOBs v. ABCDs**

The Pakistani students are active agents in the construction of their identity within the constraints of Sawyer. By constructing their identities within the differentiated programs available and presented to them (Lipman, 2002), such as the after school clubs on display at the Bulldog Fair the Pakistani students establish extremely potent within-group distinctions. A prime example is the difference between those who are considered "ABCDs" and those who are considered "FOBs."

Hassan, a senior, explained that his dad was Indian and Iranian and his mom was Pakistani. He said, ABCD is an American-Born Confused Desi (“Desi” in the students’ parlance is anyone of Indian or Pakistani descent), “[They are] born in the US that don’t follow their culture and are more American; kids like me, who were born here—I am counted as one.” Hassan points at Salma [an Indian Muslim] and says, “She would call me that. ABCD’s think of themselves as normal, you know, like normal Americans that don’t go around talking like this,” at this point Hassan adopted a heavy Urdu accent, “I want to see a Hindi movie.” Hassan further explained, “The others are FOBs—Fresh Off the Boat. These are the difference [sic] between the immigrants.”

These two distinct clusters of students are identifiable by their memberships in one of two after school clubs: Indo-Pak or Ahinsa. The Indo-Pak Club is composed of the traditional enclave of Pakistani students, the FOBs, who choose to maintain their first language, culture, and identity. The Ahinsa Club – *ahinsa* means peace and non-violence in Hindi – is composed of students who have visibly Americanized in their style of dress and language, and “fit in” to the American youth culture. Its members are what some of them refer to as the ABCDs. Both the activities and members of the Ahinsa club are more Americanized than those of the Indo-Pak Club (see Appendix A for member information).

The students in the Indo-Pak club are usually younger and they typically have arrived within the last two years and thus they generally conform to the identity category of “FOBs”—students who have arrived in America within the last two years. At the meetings, the students and teacher speak Urdu, rather than English. The teacher-sponsor

of the club is an older, Indian woman, closely tied to her root identities, who grew up in India and whose first language is Hindi (see Appendix A for member information).

According to Hassan, the FOB students quickly construct their identity as they enter Sawyer, by choosing to join Indo-Pak. Haleema, a traditional, female student who arrived in [Research Location] last year and is a member of Indo-Pak, clearly joined this club because of her interest in maintaining her Pakistani identity through the commonalities of language, culture, and nationality. Haleema explained, “Because it’s chance for me to friendship [sic] with Pakistani or Indian girls.” Her group of friends comes largely from her membership in the club, “Yeah, Nadia, it’s everybody.”

Haleema explains that she is comfortable with the traditional Pakistani students, and thus joined Indo-Pak. She also tried to join Ahinsa, but felt like an outsider within the group of ABCDs. Haleema explains that she wanted to join Ahinsa too, but didn’t because of her negative experience at one of the meetings, “One day I went for there and I don’t know, everybody speak English, and I’m just sitting and I feel shy. Then Ms. Preeti say, why you not coming? I told her, I don’t want to come here, because everybody speak English and teacher too, and I Indo-Pak club, if; um, I that’s good because those people who can speak English, then they’ll other people speak Urdu with us new student. And Ahinsa club’s student they never, nobody care about the people, children, who new in Sawyer” (Interview, February 2009). I asked Haleema, why the fact that everyone speaks English in Ahinsa made her not want to go. She responded, “Because I feel shy.” Haleema makes a clear distinction between “they,” the Pakistani students who choose to speak English in Ahinsa, and “us,” the “new students” in Indo-Pak. She claims that

“they,” the Ahinsa club members, do not care about the newly arrived Pakistani students. Through the clear distinction she draws between “they” and “us,” Haleema declares her identity as one of the newly arrived students. According to Hassan’s explanation, this would make Haleema one of the FOB students.

The members of Ahinsa are mostly juniors and seniors, and the more Americanized Pakistani students. Some of the students that attend this club also attend the Indo-Pak meetings, but do not admit this to their friends. These students have less of an accent, more often switch between speaking Urdu and English, and dress less traditionally, removing their Hijab and wearing baggier clothing. Ahinsa is also sponsored by an Indian teacher, Ms. Preeti, who is a young woman who grew up in the United States. Ms. Preeti only speaks English and permits only English to be spoken during meetings. She does allow Urdu to be spoken before and after meetings.

Mateen, a senior member of Ahinsa, was born in the US, and has consistently identified himself as an “ABCD” and not a “FOB,” since freshman year. He clearly communicates that his membership and participation in Ahinsa is due to commonalities of root identities that he shares with the members and the sponsoring school faculty member. Mateen explained why he joined Ahinsa:

Two reasons I did that, one the diversity at Ahinsa and the sponsor. You know it was, our own, meaning an Indian or Pakistani sponsor. And the students from there were also Indian and Pakistani, not necessarily all of them, but most of the students in the club are Pakistani or Indian, which I think is a great, a good thing because when I am in classes I usually don’t see a lot of, you know students that are the same language as I do. They are usually other languages, when I come at this club, I see people that are my own. Secondly I choose that club because of the subject, ya know, Yasmin, non-violence and peace. (Interview, January 2009)

Through Mateen's explanation of the reasons why he joined Ahinsa, he is also identifying the characteristics of his collective identity with the members and sponsor of the club. He uses language explaining that the club is "our own, meaning Indian or Pakistani," "students are the same language as I do," or "I see people that are my own." Each of these phrases represents ways in which Mateen is choosing to self-identify with other members of this club. In fact, he even prioritizes his reasons for joining the club: first, based on his shared or collective identities with the members of the club; and second, for the purpose of this organization. His shared identity with its members takes precedent over the club itself.

Shamim's identity is elusive: part FOB, part ABCD, as indicated by her membership in both clubs. She was born in Pakistan, but according to Hassan's description of ABCD's, she acts as though she is a "confused Desi." Shamim, a senior, arrived in the United States in 2006, became a United States citizen earlier this year, is president of Indo-Pak, and is also an active member of Ahinsa. Although she arrived in the United States fairly recently, and could technically be considered an FOB, she identifies herself with her closest friends, who are members of Ahinsa. She has chosen to be a member of both clubs, but because of social pressure from her friends, she prioritizes her identity within Ahinsa and distances herself as a member of Indo-Pak. Shamim explained;

It's kind of silly, but Indo-Pak club, the people, they, they don't really know how to react and they get so hyper and they get so excited. When teacher speaks, they talk a lot; they talk too much, which I don't like it. But, they choose, they vote for me for the president, so I am the president. I don't want to become past president, but they just write the name and

that's how I become president. And Ahinsa I like more because they have manners, I like this more. (Interview, January 2009)

I asked Shamim to explain what she meant when she said the students in Indo-Pak did not “know how to react.” Shamim responded, “Like, okay, first thing, I don't like [that] they speak Urdu in this club. Some people don't know how to speak Urdu; you should speak English. If you don't know, but still try, all the people at least know how to speak English, but they don't speak English.” Shamim sees a clear distinction between the ways the students in the Indo-Pak act compared to the members of the Ahinsa club. She disagrees with the way the Pakistani students conduct themselves and act in the Indo-Pak club. She distances herself from their behavior and does not choose to self-identify as one of them. Even though the members of Indo-Pak view Shamim as one of them, voting for her to be the president of their cultural or collective identity club, Shamim does not view herself in the same way.

Shamim identifies herself as Muslim, Pakistani, and American, which includes her root and route identities. She also admits to the fact that her identity changes. Shamim said, “Pakistani and Muslim and American, because I am living here and citizen; [before becoming a citizen, I was American, because] even if not borned [sic] there, get nationality.” I asked Shamim to rank the importance of these characteristics to her. She said: Muslim, Pakistani, American: “I was born a Muslim, born in Pakistan and came to America.” Finally I asked Shamim whether her identity ever changes. She immediately responded, “Yeah.”

### **Making Friends**

The Pakistani students are active agents within the constraints of the institutional structure of Sawyer. The act of making friends is not completely random, rather it is the role of agency within social settings that provides the Pakistani students opportunity to make friends and declare their social identity. They consciously make friends based on the commonalities they share with others. In other words, one's self identity plays a significant role in their social identities; making friends with individuals who are the "same" or "others"—individuals with different root identities, including national origin, religion, and cultural, but with whom the students often share a route identity. One's social identity is part of her self-concept, which originates from her membership in a social group combined with the value and significance attached to this membership (Tajfel, 1978). The Pakistani students make the decision with whom they will interact, have relationships, and sit with during each class period and lunch time; each contributing to their social identity.

In the 1970's Henri Tajfel, along with other social identity theorists, established Social Identity Theory (SIT). Tajfel found that individuals define themselves in terms of their social group membership, which results in group-defined self-perceptions that produce psychologically distinctive effects in their social behavior (Turner, 1987). Membership in social groups both positively and negatively affects the image that each student has of herself (Tajfel & Turner, 1978). Also, individuals have a preference and a sense of distinctiveness for others that fit into their "ingroup," also known as "ingroup



favouritism” or “ingroup bias” compared to others (Tajfel & Turner, 1978). This is apparent through each individual’s positive social identity.

The majority of the Pakistani students show “ingroup favouritism;” they make friends with other Pakistanis, Muslims, and peers that share the same root identities. Their identities are based on with whom they interact, dialogue, and have relationships (Taylor, 1989), which is why these students make friends with peers who share the same root identities. There are two sequential ways in which the Pakistani students declare their social identities, both of which represent their “ingorup favouritism” or “bias.” First, they choose to make friends with their peers who share the same root identities. Second, they choose peers with the same route identities, which often include befriending peers who are considered “other” because they have different root identities.

They often prioritize their root identities of Pakistani and Muslim, before declaring social identities or interacting with “other” students. As a result, they have developed an enclave, or imagined world, in which they physically live “here” in the United States, and socially live “there” in Pakistan (Appadurai, 1996). This is due to the fact that declaring one’s social identity is the act of adopting significant positions and values that make an individual feel and act “most like oneself” (Kroger, 2004).

Naeema and Shamim had similar experiences defining their social identities, both selected “ingroup favouritism.” They each made friends with peers with whom they shared root identities of national origin, religious identity, and traditional dress—the other girls were also wearing Hijabs. They assumed the other girls also shared the same religious practices based on their appearance. Naeema explained that the first friend she

made at school was also Pakistani, “First person there was a girl she was a Pakistani girl. Yeah. She lived in my same building so she helped me a lot.” Naeema also explained that she communicated in Urdu with her friend, and knew she was Pakistani and Muslim because she wore a scarf: “And then, second day, I would talk to um, my other friend then we talked and [she is now my] best friend for life. . . Cuz I know she wore a scarf, so. . . I used to, yeah. . . Yeah, I wear it like freshman and sophomore year. This year I don’t wear it.”

Shamim’s experience is very similar to Naeema’s. Shamim explained how she met Salma and Safia, her two best friends: “[U]m, um, my history class, it was my first period in sophomore year, so um, Salma got her schedule changed, she came to history class and she sat in front of me and she was Muslim and I was Muslim, so we were wearing our scarf, so I said hi. She was like, hey.” When Shamim spoke with Salma and said, “Hey,” she actually greeted her in Urdu rather than English, “No, in my language, like, A salaam aleikom, and she was like, Wa aleikom es salaam, in her language.” Salma’s languages are Urdu and Hindi, “Her’s is Hindi and mine is Urdu,” explained Shamim. “Hindi, yeah. Hindi and Urdu are the same thing but they have some vocabulary words, so, and that is how we start talking, talking. And, ah, and, she had lunch with me too, so we were talking and I got, I met Safia in division, you know. I remember she was Muslim, because she doesn’t wear a scarf, right? She came up to me and she was like, hi, where are you from? I am from Pakistan and she was from Pakistan too.” Interestingly, when Shamim met Safia for the first time, they spoke in English, not Urdu, but they quickly made connections with their shared root identities:

We were talking in English. So, and, and then she just asked me, what was your date of birth, and I am like twentieth of October and she was like mine is the thirtieth of October. I am like third October and she was so excited, oh my God, we were from Pakistan and we have the same era and the same month, so like, yeah that's true, so but then, and, and she had lunch me too. So me, Salma and Safia we had the same lunch and then we meet everyday we talk, and then we live the same places, like you know. I skip one, ah, one alley, Salma lives at, I live on Durham, Durham and Dalton and Salma live Durham and Hickory, Safia live at Prairie or something. (Interview, January 2009)

Shamim explained that she quickly became friends with Salma and Safia because they share the same religion – they are all Muslims – and even though Salma's first language is Hindi and not Urdu, the languages are very similar and easily understood by each other. In addition to Shamim's shared root identities, she also lives close to her friends—they all live close to Durham Street, home to a large Indian and Pakistani community discussed in chapter three. In other words, each of the three girls lives in a community that also shares the same root identities.

The second stage of making friends is based on the Pakistani students' route identities, or befriending “others,” often based upon the academic program or track in which they are enrolled at Sawyer high school. In other words, student agency in declaring one's social identity is constrained by the structural constraints of the academic programming at Sawyer high school. The fact that the Pakistani students choose to also define their social identity by their academic program is another way of selecting “ingroup favouritism.”

For example, Mahdi, a student in the AVID program befriended Kamil, a peer who is also in the same academic program. Although Mahdi is a male, Pakistani, Muslim student, he has befriended Kamil, a black male who defines himself as “smart, funny,

ladies man, football player, and all around athlete.” Kamil explained the reasons why he and Mahdi are friends: “We understand each other, we make up our own slang, we like food from other cultures, we both like rap, we both admire Kanye West, we both like technology, we came up with cool slogans. For example, ‘hold on lemme change my swag,’ [we like the] same music, same jokes.” Kamil clearly explained the similarities in route identity between him and Mahdi, even though they are “others” in terms of root identities. Ms. Endler, Mahdi and Kamil’s AVID teacher, explained their friendship:

He [Mahdi] is, uh, he’s always been a very good student, very diligent in my AVID class. Really staying on top of things. Something that I have been impressed with second semester is he has kind of come out of his shell a little bit. Uh, he was very kind of quiet and retired first semester. I didn’t hear him speak up a lot, and I was like, I really want to get him to speak up. And he seems to befriended one of the more gregarious young men, uh, in that class, and so he’s really sort of speaking out now and he will speak up in class, uh, but he’ll also kind of talking trash back and forth with this, this other kid, which is, which is fun to see. Ah, and they have both also started coming to my extra-curricular after school build-on. So, yeah, he and, Mahdi and Kamil have started coming to that program after school. Um, I don’t know if he has gone to any of our service projects yet. I think, it sounds like he has things going on the weekend so he’s not always able to do that. Uh, but now he has been coming and participating in the meetings, so, its been nice to get to know him a little better that way too. (Interview, May 2009)

Through the role of agency on the part of Mahdi and Kamil, they have decided to be friends based on their route identities and shared academic experiences at Sawyer within the structural constraints of their academic program.

The same, “ingroup favouritism” is true for students in the IB and ESL programs. Mufta, an ESL student explained how he met his friends in his ESL class, “They are, when I was in ESL II, one of them was in my class, ESL II. Then we met over there, and then Miss Abramovich sent both of us to ESL III. So then we were friends.” Massima, a

senior IB student, explained a similar experience as Mufta's. Her closest friends are all IB students because they have classes together all day, everyday: "Um, I have class with all of the IB students. So we're, we're in all the classes like, throughout the whole school day. . . . Um, my classmates all of us, we are very diverse. So, they're students from different nationalities and different cultures and backgrounds and all of them are my friends, all in my IB class and in, um, students from Sawyer and outside of the school also." Massima defines her closest friends as her IB classmates at Sawyer. Even though her classmates are diverse and "from different nationalities and cultures and backgrounds," they all share the root identity of the same academic program and experiences at Sawyer. In other words, they still have a shared, collective identity of being an IB student.

Making friends with peers that are the "same" or "other" in terms of root identity, influences the development of both the self and social identities of each student. At each stage, identity – both self and social or collective – is constructed within each individual social context and interaction that allow for each student to act and feel, "most like oneself" (Kroger, 2004). The Pakistani students' experiences demonstrate Mead's (1934) two-stage development of an individual. In the first stage—the individual self is comprised of both the specific social acts in which one participates and the organization of attitudes of others toward oneself. Collective identities are developed when the social attitude of the group to which one belongs, in addition to the attitudes of the individuals, constitutes the full development of the individual (Appiah, 1994; Mead, 1934).

Although students choose to befriend peers who share their root or route identities, the formation of their identities is continuously changing within each individual social context. Therefore, the Pakistani students sometimes have different groups of friends or social identities based on which aspect of their self identity is activated at any given moment.

For example, some students have one set of friends in school and another group of friends they spend time with on the weekends. In other words, they may have more than one social identity, and therefore multiple “ingroup” memberships. As explained earlier, Mahdi has befriended Kamil because of their shared route identity of both being AVID students. Mahdi has other friends as a result of the institutional structure at Sawyer, “Yanni, Aaron, um, Daquan, [and] Trig, are my close friends, those [are] like the friends I mostly hangout with in school. Uh, Daquan is in my second period and Yanni in my third. Aaron – I have after school with him and that is it. But we have lunch together, but we play the quake, the game.” Mahdi explains that Yanni, Aaron, Daquan, and Trig are his closest friends at Sawyer, but that he does not spend time with them out of school. Mahdi has different friends, Pakistani friends, with whom he hangs out with on the weekends: “I don’t spend most my time out of school with the friends in Sawyer, no. Just like, uh, different sets of friends.” Mahdi further explained that his closest friend with whom he spends time “over there,” on the weekends, shares the same root identity – he too is Pakistani:

Um, in school, I hang out with like, different people, but in, uh, like, over there, where I live I hang out with completely different people. Um, it’s um, I guess, me and my friends over there, we’re like really close. They come to my house, I go to their house, like we could play. And like over

here, I just see them for like forty-five minutes, and like sometimes after school – after school programs, but I don't like see them a lot. But over there I can just like go to their house just like anytime, their house and, um, just like hang out with them. If I want to play outside, I just go call them and we just play outside and stuff. Um, we're really close, like really, he knows my family, I know his family, so it's just like, um, were really, really close. (Interview, March 2009)

The formation of identity for Mahdi recurs within each individual social context. Rumbaut (1994) found, "Youth see and compare themselves in relation to those around them, based on their social similarity or dissimilarity with the reference groups that most directly affect their relationship" (p. 754). Mahdi constantly flip-flops between which "ingroup" membership or root and route identity he has present and active within each individual social interaction.

Mateen's experience mimics Mahdi's. He too has friends with *different* root identities in school, but chose his "ingroup" membership with peers with the *same* root identities outside of Sawyer. Mateen explained:

Um, mostly they are my, uh, they are my religion or my own background, either Pakistani or Indian, pretty much outside of school, that is what they are. In school, I have, you know, a lot of friends from different regions, I have Latin Americans, African Americans, um, but pretty much outside of school, there is a little group that we have consisting of five friends. . . I have many friends that I could trust. They are pretty much my own age, my own background, that, I think that is the way to describe them. (Interview, January 2009)

Mateen is friends with "others" or "outgroup" members in school, but only peers who are have the "same" root identities also known as "ingroup favouritism" out of school (Tajfel, 1978). These examples highlight the role of student agency in making friends, and the fluidity in their multiple affiliations (Yon, 2000).

In both the lunchroom and classrooms, one way in which student agency plays a significant role for Pakistani students is through the decision of with whom they will choose to sit. Students clearly define which identity is activated at any given point in time by with whom they choose to sit. The modern self is a mobilizing agent for herself and often for other agents as well. Modern social structures are shaped by human agents who endorse their identities through agency for collective purposes (Meyer & Jepperson, 2000). The Pakistani students are “human agents who endorse their identity” through their actions within the constraints of their school environment at Sawyer.

Many of the Pakistani students talk about how they decide with whom they will sit during class, in the lunch room, or at special events. Abdul-Azeez explained that he made friends and decided to sit with a group of students because they are all from Pakistan;

Uh, I, I make friends on fifth period because I have lunch, and all my from my country, they sit at the one table. There's, there's a separate table they go just go over there only. Once I see them, uh, I talk to them, because first day when I walk in I don't have anything [know anyone] and I [see] the guy who helped me, he was going over there so I followed him.  
(Interview, March 2009)

Salma recognized that she too chose to sit with students that are part of her “ingroup,” peers that share the same root identities. At the National Honor Society (NHS) Induction Ceremony, Salma, Shamim, Mateen, Hassan, Safia, and Yasmin all sat together at one table. Salma looked around at the table and said, “Last year it was just the IB students at one table and then Safia and I sitting together alone. But this year, we have a brown table.” In a group consisting of only NHS members, all the Pakistani Muslim students chose to sit together at one table. In other words, these students continue to show a



preference for “ingroup favouritism,” which is based on their social identities of national origin, race, and religion.

The same “ingroup favouritism” occurred at the senior luncheon. All the Pakistani students sat at one table together, including Shamim, Mateen, Safia, and Salma. The students who occupied the remaining four seats at the “Pakistani” table also shared a route identity—they too were immigrants, two from Argentina, one from Kenya, and one from Afghanistan. Although these “other” four students did not share the same national identity, they did share the route identity of emigrating from “their country” to the United States.

The Pakistani students actively decide which root and route identities or “ingroup favouritism” are present within each individual social interaction. The role of agency is the determining factor in whom students befriend – both in and out of school – who they choose to sit next to in class or other situations at Sawyer, and with whom they interact, dialogue, and have relationships. That is why these students make friends with peers who share the same root or route identities. At each stage the individual, self, collective, and social identities are constructed within each individual social context and interaction.

There are structural and institutional constraints on the actions and choices of Pakistani students at Sawyer. But within these constrictions, each student is an active agent of her own self and social identity formation. Their identities are elusive, fluid, and constantly changing within each social interaction and relationship. They depend on with which after school club, class, or academic program the students choose to affiliate. Both the structural constraints at Sawyer, along with student agency, shape the many

individual, self, collective, and social identities that the Pakistani students declare for themselves or have imposed upon.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **SUMMARY, REVIEW OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS**

#### **Overall Summary**

The experiences of the Pakistani students at Sawyer High School have never been told. Their experiences tell two important stories: what it is like to be an immigrant student attending an American public high school; and their individual stories and lived experiences as Pakistani students at Sawyer High School. The findings and analysis in this study are specific to these twenty-nine students and are not intended to be generalized to all immigrant or Pakistani students within the American public school system, but they are significant in that they highlight the many ways the American educational system, globalization, and agency of both students and teachers influence the experiences of these Pakistani students.

I tried to portray each of these students as active agents within this American educational institution and also to explore the ways they are enclosed within the structural constraints present at Sawyer High School.

Although I tried to capture each student's experiences authentically, there were a number of limitations present within each participant observation and one-on-one interview. The most significant limitation in my study was the lens through which I observed and analyzed each of the Pakistani student's experiences. I can only conduct this study through the lens through which I see the world, that of a white-American-

Jewish-women (I consciously choose to hyphenate my identities). I am aware of this limitation and understand the importance of noting this in my research. I am also aware of the fact that I entered Sawyer High School as an outsider; I was not an employee or a student at Sawyer. I had to gain trust and build relationships with each of the students, teachers, and administrators at Sawyer prior to conducting each interview and asking personal questions to the participants. However, I must also make note of the way each participant voluntarily shared his or her experiences. The participants trusted me with their personal stories. Although I was technically an outsider, many of the participants soon came to see me as an insider. With this change in my status, the participants also changed. They began sharing more information with me, including many personal and private stories of their life experiences.

### **Outline of the Study**

#### ***Question***

The central question this study tried to answer is: how do agency, institutional structures, and globalization, impact the lived experiences of Pakistani immigrant students at an urban public high school? This research presents how agency, institutional structures, and globalization shape the lived experiences of Pakistani immigrant students at an urban high school in the Midwest.

#### ***Statement of the Problem***

Identity is a complicated concept that can be understood in many different ways. The process of forming one's identity is equally complex and shaped by a variety of factors, both local and global in scope. For instance, this study revealed that these

students' identities are multi-dimensional, including their structurally imposed identity along with their many self declared identities, collective identities, and preference for "ingroup favouritism." The identities these students declare at any given moment depend on with whom they are interacting and whether the individual is looking for an identity she shows to the world or one she shows to her own self. Adding to the complexity, technology, media, and other forces have conspired to create a degree of globalization unique to current times. And yet it is essential that educators do understand identity formation because the identity a student takes on may be the deciding factor in her educational attainment.

### ***Purpose***

The purpose of this study was to describe and re-create the everyday lived experiences of a group of Pakistani immigrant students at Sawyer High School using ethnographic methods, including participant observations and in-depth interviews. As presented in Chapters Three, Four, Five, and Six, the results of this ethnography provide descriptive portraits of these students' social interactions, academic experiences, and lived experiences within an American public high school.

### ***Significance of the Study***

The school setting is the first formal introduction to American culture for many immigrant students. Thus, the social and institutional structures of this setting are critical to identity formation for these students. Furthermore, the social interactions that immigrant students encounter heavily impact which one of their identities they set in motion and activate at any given moment. These students are continuously defining,

declaring, and activating different constellations of their identity while simultaneously trying to fit in to the context of each individual social interaction and experience. This research focused specifically on how these institutional structures along with the many academic and intimate interactions impact the identity formation of these Pakistani immigrant students.

Additionally, changes in technology, media, and the use of the internet altered the landscape in which their identity formation occurred. Globalization has changed the cultural flows from one localized place to another, as well as the actual flow of humanity from one place to another. Therefore, the Pakistani students expressed the feeling of living “here” and “there,” which significantly impacted their social and academic experiences.

There has been a significant increase in Pakistani students entering American public schools. Due to this change in the population of American schools, the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of students, teachers, school administrators, researchers, and policy makers has changed. This diversity has challenged teachers, administrators and policy makers to ensure academic programming for immigrant students with English as their Second Language and with unique learning styles. Social, academic, and institutional structures are changing quickly in American schools. For these reasons, understanding how the Pakistani immigrant students form their identity is critical.

### **Review of Findings**

Each of the four findings chapters had a different theme, yet together the chapters analyzed, summarized, and explained the lived experiences of the Pakistani students at

Sawyer High School. Chapter Three argued the ways these Pakistani students live in an “imaginary world,” living within a community made up of both their worlds “here” in the United States” and “there” in Pakistan. In other words, due to globalization, these students live in less of a physical location but instead in a more irregular global landscape. Chapter Four discussed the way the institutional structures at Sawyer prepare them for the American workforce, along with the way the teachers, as active agents, assign them with a structurally imposed identity based on their academic performance. Chapters Five and Six analyzed the ways the students act as agents within the structural constraints of this urban public high school. Chapter Five focused on the way the Pakistani students define themselves, self identify, and their multiple root and route identities, while Chapter Six discussed the role after school clubs play in the students’ collective identities, and how the students make friends within the structural constraints at Sawyer High School. The following are summaries of my findings and analysis as presented in Chapters Three, Four, Five, and six.

### ***The Imagined World***

Chapter Three discussed the relationship between globalization and the identity formation of the Pakistani immigrant students at Sawyer high school. It makes use of Arjun Appadurai’s concept of “scapes:” first—ethnoscape, second—technoscape, and third-mediascape. Although each of these sections covered a different scape, they also share the suffix, scape, which “allows us to point to the fluid, irregular shapes of these landscapes, shapes that characterize international capital as deeply as they do international clothing styles” (Appadurai, 1996, p. 33). These different scapes together

form a collective, irregular and multi-dimensional landscape of the complexity of the Pakistani students' culture, lived experiences, and the fluidity of their identity.

The first section of Chapter Three identified the ways the Pakistani students live both “here” and “there.” In other words, the way they create their own “imaginary landscape” of home, also known as an ethnoscape, inclusive of both communities. This section covered the way the Pakistani students defined their sense of home in regards to being “here” in the United States on Durham Avenue, while mentally and simultaneously also living within their community in Pakistan. Other components of their ethnoscape are also defined and discussed in this chapter, including schooling and work, social and free time, and family pressure and the influences of their parents on the lived experiences of these Pakistani students.

The second half of Chapter Three covered the two other significant scapes in the lived experiences of the Pakistani students at Sawyer high school—the technoscape and mediascape. The technoscape section discussed the way the internet, emailing, and cell phones, both calling and texting, allow the students to physically be located in one environment while they communicating with their friends and family members around the world. The technoscape identified the ways the students are technologically constantly moving between borders and the ways they are interconnected to others in their imaginary and irregular landscapes. The mediascape is also significant to the lived experiences of the Pakistani students and the ways they form, acquire, and declare their identities. Although the Pakistani students were living in the United States they chose to watch and listen to Indian movies and music. The techno and media scapes are



significant ways globalization has influenced the lived experiences for these Pakistani students.

***“Students Who do not Conform. . . Will be Required to Change:” Expectations and Requirements of American Schooling***

Chapter Four explained the variety of different academic programs at Sawyer, including: International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced Placement (AP), English as a Second Language (ESL)-Bilingual, Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID), and the “regular program.” The students at Sawyer are imposed with an identity based on which academic program they are enrolled. The identities associated with these tracks that are then imposed on students directly affected their self worth, self-perception, and self-identifications.

Chapter Four presented the ways the identities of “IB students,” “AP students,” “ESL students,” “AVID students,” and “regular students” are structurally imposed on the students at Sawyer high school. These academic programs correlate with one of four broader identities: *the cream of the crop*, *high-achieving*, *middle tier*, *respectful*, and *needing improvement or more problematic students*. The teachers, administrators and institutional structures identify the “IB students” and “NHS students” (National Honors Society) as *the cream of the crop*; the “AP students” as *high-achieving*; the “ESL students” as *respectful*; the “AVID students” as *middle tier*; and the “regular students” as *needing improvement or more problematic students*. These identities are imposed by two significant factors, the structural constraints of the academic programs at Sawyer and the role of teachers as agents who reinforce the institutional structures. The imposed

identities of *cream of the crop*, *high-achieving*, *middle tier*, *respectful*, and *needing improvement* or *more problematic students* are dependent on both the rigor of the academic program in which the student is enrolled and student performance. The majority of the Pakistani students are identified as the *cream of the crop* or *high-achieving* by their teachers at Sawyer High School.

Being identified as *the cream of the crop* or *high-achieving* is synonymous with following the rules common to the institutional structures of American public high schools, in other words, the rules of the mainstream, white-middle class (Lee, 2005). At the NHS induction ceremony, Mr. Newhart explained to the new members that “This group is the elite of the elite, as part of Sawyer and in our country, faculty choose the best and brightest in this school; they represent our school population—diverse, from around the world.” The vast majority of the Pakistani students are viewed as the “elite,” *cream of the crop* or *high-achieving students* at Sawyer High School.

Three of the four officers of this selective honors society were Pakistani students, and 25% of the new inductees in 2008 were also Pakistani. Many of the Pakistani students are identified by their teachers as *cream of the crop students*. The Pakistani students are one of, if not *the*, most ambitious groups of students at Sawyer High School. Ten out of the 24 participants in this study were either in the IB program, NHS, or both.

These structurally imposed identities affect the way the Pakistani students self-identify. The identities imposed on each student affect how she declares her self and collective identities, as well as, her academic performance (Fordham, 1996; Lee, 2005; Yon, 2000). Even though most of the Pakistani students are given the identity of either

“IB student,” “in NHS,” “AP student,” “ESL student,” or AVID student,” the misrecognition of students by teachers and administrators may cause distortion or damage to one’s individual and collective identities (Taylor, 1994).

Salma does not agree with the way teachers have identified her based on the academic program in which she is enrolled. The misrecognition of Salma’s identity by her teachers, directly affects her academic performance and achievement. She is enrolled in one ESL class in which she feels out of place compared to her enrollment in her AP Biology course. Salma’s identity is shaped by the “misrecognition” by the teachers at Sawyer of her academic identity. There is a disconnect between the way Salma self-identifies and this imposed identity. The imposed identity has a negative effect on her, because she feels she has been misrecognized.

In contrast, Massima proudly accepts the imposed identity of being an “IB student” and “in NHS”. Massima is both, an IB student and president of NHS. She is identified by both the institutional structure and the teachers as *the cream of the crop student*. She accepts and is proud of this identity. The recognition or misrecognition by the teachers as agents imposing an identity based on the structural constraints of Sawyer, directly affects how the Pakistani students self-identify.

The second half of Chapter Four covered and discussed school requirements at Sawyer high school, including the dress code, wearing of school identification (ID) cards, completing class and school requirements, keeping up with the sequence of schooling, and the way time is used and managed. Sawyer high school is an institution that is embraced by the members of the community. I analyzed the school requirements of the

American public high school deploying John Ogbu's (1987) conceptual framework about the way schools teach and prepare citizens for the workforce.

Ogbu's (1987) framework presents the ways American high schools prepare students for the workforce, the students at Sawyer are prepared in different ways depending on their academic programming, whether they are an "IB student," "AP student," "ESL student," "AVID student," or "regular student." These different academic programs are forms of tracks or pathways (Oakes, 1985). The pathways in which the Pakistani students at Sawyer are classified and trained continue within the workforce.

The expectations and requirements at Sawyer high school directly correlate with Ogbu's (1987) argument that the structure and purpose of schools in America is to prepare citizens, "to teach them to believe in the system" and "to train the citizens to support other institutions" (p. 324). In other words, the American public high schools is where the Americanization process takes place for immigrant students and then places them in the American workforce.

The Student Code of Conduct at Sawyer High School advances all four components of Ogbu's (1987) argument that the purpose of the American High School is to prepare and teach citizens "to believe in the system." For example, the first component of Ogbu's argument, "Teaching young people the beliefs, values, and attitudes that support the economic system," is evident in the Code of Conduct because it directs students how to act, behave, communicate, and treat their peers, teachers, and school administrators. The students are directed to "be respectful" to their peers, teachers, and community members. The Code of Conduct states that students are

required to “complete all work,” this correlates with Ogbu’s second identified agenda that argues schools teach students’ practical skills which make “the system work.” Ogbu’s third identified agenda includes the habits students learn at Sawyer, which are essential for them to be prepared for the workforce. The students at Sawyer are required to “come to school prepared” to learn, complete their work, and also “be on time.” These habits are essential to becoming a productive member of the American workforce and these habits are taught and reinforced through every aspect of their American high school experiences. Ogbu’s fourth and final identified agenda item argues the importance of credentialing for preparation into the American workforce. The high school diploma is essential for entering the workforce, and the diploma represents something different for each of the academic programs or tracks at Sawyer.

Ogbu’s (1987) theory and four identified agendas are threaded into all components of the Pakistani students’ experiences at Sawyer High School. Ogbu’s first agenda of the values, beliefs, and attitudes are taught in each of the courses these students participate in throughout their four years at Sawyer. These values and beliefs include leadership, respect, balancing expectations, following instructions, completing assignments, and abiding by cultural norms. These values are directly transferable to their experiences into the American workforce.

The second way Ogbu (1987) identifies that schools prepare students for the workforce is by giving them the skills that make the American economic system work. For the Pakistani students, this includes the need for them to learn and speak the English language. Abdul-Azeez explained how difficult it was moving from Pakistan to the

United States and the pressure to learn English. He must learn to speak and understand English for him to follow the school and course requirements of his academic program.

The third way Ogbu (1987) argues schools Americanize students is by “[e]nhancing the development of personal attributes compatible with the habits required at the workplace” (p. 324). Sawyer does this by imposing a dress code, the wearing of school identification (ID) cards, and the bell schedule, which sets the routine of schooling at Sawyer. All students at Sawyer are expected to “conform” to all school policies, especially the dress code and wearing of school IDs. The Pakistani students are required to follow each of these policies, even if the policy is culturally or religiously offensive or unreasonable for them obey based on their Pakistani or Muslim identities. Following these policies imposes personal attributes or habits that the American economic system demands of these students in the future.

The American public high school does two things to the Pakistani students: first it Americanizes them in ways that will cause them to support and function in the American economic system, and second, it provides them the credentials necessary to enter the workforce. Chapter Three highlighted the ways in which the teachers at Sawyer impose an identity on each student based on their academic performance while simultaneously prepare the Pakistani students to enter into a track within the American workforce.

### ***Identity Acquisition Through Student Agency***

This chapter discussed the relationship between the multiple variables that play a significant role in identity acquisition and formation for Pakistani immigrant students. These variables include student agency and the constraints of the institutional structures

of Sawyer; which affect the way these students choose to declare their identities within each social interaction and academic setting. Most importantly, the Pakistani students each have multiple group affiliations and are constantly changing their identities. In other words, their identity is elusive, fluid, and malleable.

Each student's identity is a unique map consisting of three significant constellations: an academic, club, and social configuration. Each student is continuously reshaping her constellations, through their role as active agents defining their cultural, group and school affiliations. Chapter Five presented the students' constellations, including their many different group affiliations and identities. First, it presented the way race plays a significant role, both as a structural element, and in regards to how each student is both racialized as an agent and acts as an agent in the racialization of others. Then the chapter discussed the ways these students choose to define themselves and their culture, and the ways identity is elusive for these students. Then it explained the difficulties the Pakistani students have in selecting or prioritizing which of their identities is most important to them when asked to "check the box." This led to a discussion of the ways that self identification is actually part of the Americanization process and the fact that Pakistani students, through their own agency, choose multiple root and route identities when declaring their individual identities.

The Pakistani students are active agents in the racialization of themselves and others. The Pakistani students categorize themselves as a racial group called "Desi," which includes all and only, Pakistani and Indian students. In contrast, the Pakistani students often categorize all black students as "ghetto." They identify themselves as

“good” students and the black or “ghetto” students as “bad.” And these classifications are confirmed by the structural constraints of Sawyer High School. They are also an example of how the Pakistani students are racializing, and racialized, agents within Sawyer.

Chapter Five discussed the ways the Pakistani students identify themselves based on a number of factors: where they were born; how long they lived in Pakistan; when they entered the United States; and, for some, whether they are United States citizens. While these factors determine how each Pakistani student self identifies, we must also acknowledge the role of the students’ own agency in making the decision about how they prefer and choose to be identified.

For example, the diverse composition of the student body at Sawyer is one structural constraint on the students’ identities. Another structural constraint at Sawyer is passing time, the four-minutes that occur in-between class periods. The structure of passing time both influences the Pakistani students’ identities, and also highlights how her identity is consistently changing. There are just a few of the structural constraints at Sawyer that impact the way these students choose to self identify or declare their identities at any given moment in time. One significant intended or unintended outcome of attending Sawyer, an American high school, is the pressure to Americanize. The Pakistani students significantly change their appearance to fit in with their peers. This outcome is consistent among each of these 29 students’ experiences at Sawyer High School.



Chapter Five also analyzed the ways the Pakistani students' identities are elusive. They continuously change who they are based on with whom they interact and have relationships. The Pakistani student identities are fluid, and changing within each moment in time based on with whom they are currently interacting. The construction of the Pakistani students' identities is continuous, fluid, and constantly changing as they interact with others at Sawyer.

This is especially true for Mateen. He is continuously changing the way he self identifies based on his environment and with whom he is interacting with at any given moment in time. Mateen's many experiences in his classes and the hallway at Sawyer highlight the fluid and elusiveness of his identity. He explained how he is different or acts differently based on each individual academic and social setting. Mateen said he is one person in his math class, but someone else during law and AP English classes. On top of that, he is continuously changing his identities during passing time based on who he sees in the hallways during the four-minute passing time between classes.

Although part of the expectation for everyone living in the United States is to "Check the Box," to declare an identity in alignment with census-style categories. This is very difficult for the Pakistani students due to the complexity of their identities. In other words, they cannot check only one box, they do not have only one root or route identity, instead, they have multiple identities. This concept of checking the box or categorizing individuals based on their identity is part of the Americanization process, which for the Pakistani students, takes place within the walls of Sawyer High School. Because their identity is so complex, the Pakistani students cannot choose only one box to check.

Given the opportunity to self-identity, without the restrictions of the United States Census or other Americanized processes, the Pakistani students identify with multiple root and route identities. Each student represents her identity differently: some hyphenate Pakistani-American; some define themselves primarily based their national origins as Pakistani; some identify based on their national identity without a hyphen, such as American Pakistani; and many choose to define themselves with a three tiered identity of American, Pakistani, and Muslim. Still others might dissimilate a racial or panethnic identity. Each of these students prioritizes her multiple root and route identities differently. But every student's identity is a complex combination of her numerous identities.

***“Be a Bulldog”:* After School Clubs**

Chapter Six examined specific ways the students exercise agency within the constraints of the academic institution of Sawyer. After school clubs play a significant role in the ways students self identify, which also affects with whom they interact, their collective identities, and “ingroup favouritism.” However, the structural constraints imposed by the institution affect how students can exercise their agency in making friends and making these “ingroup biases.”

After school clubs and sports teams are part of the institutional structure of American high schools and are linked to the school identity at Sawyer and therefore also discussed in Chapter Six. Involvement in extracurricular activities is part of the typical educational experiences and opportunities provided to students in the American public educational system. Therefore, students are expected to join clubs or sports teams to be

identified as *cream of the crop* or *high-achieving* students; because these students take time to contribute to their school communities.

Student agency plays a significant role in the decision for students to join clubs. Membership in after school clubs represents the collective dimension of the Pakistani students' individual identities. Among the Pakistani student population there is a distinction based on their membership in one of two particular after school clubs. The choice to join either Indo-Pak or Ahinsa club gives each of them a collective identity that is dependent on their individual self-identities.

Indo-Pak focuses on promoting the Indian and Pakistani culture to the students and teachers at Sawyer. Ahinsa Club promotes a message of peace, unity, and non-violence. Both Ahinsa and Indo-Pak are after school clubs with similar defining features—the individuals that make up the club have a shared identification around common “social markers” (Gutmann, 2003). Both clubs, Ahinsa and Indo-Pak, are as much social gatherings as they are identity groups.

The collective identities of the members in Indo-Pak are different than those of the Ahinsa Club members. The collective identity of the members of the Indo-Pak club creates and maintains an enclave of their traditional cultural identity and lifestyle. The members of the Ahinsa Club share a collective hybrid identity of their root and route identities—being both Pakistani and American. Although after school clubs are part of the educational experiences of the Pakistani students at Sawyer, as active agents in this setting, they have the choice of which, if any at all, after school clubs to join and become a member.

Lastly, Chapter Six discussed the ways in which the Pakistani students make friends at Sawyer. As active agents within the social setting at Sawyer, they choose to make friends with others that have commonalities, also known as “ingroup favouritism” or “ingroup bias.” First, they choose to make friends with their peers who share the same root identities. Second, they choose peers with the same route identities, which often include befriending peers who are considered “other” because they have different root identities.

The Pakistani students consciously make the decision with whom they will interact, have relationships, and sit with during each class period and lunch time; each contributing to their social identity. The majority of the Pakistani students show “ingroup favouritism;” they make friends with other Pakistanis, Muslims, and peers that share the same root identities. As a result, they have developed an enclave, or imagined world, in which they physically live “here” in the United States, and socially live “there” in Pakistan.

### **Conclusions**

This study demonstrated how American public schools Americanize immigrant students through the process of educating them. They are expected to speak and understand the English language, follow the daily bell schedule, “conform” to the dress code, and be successful, as defined by the school, which is to be college bound. Some of the Americanization process is intentional and conscious on the part of the school, administrators, and teachers, while other components are so imbedded in the institutional

structure and agents within the school, that they are unconsciously changing and Americanizing each immigrant population.

The expectation to Americanize begins from the moment each student enters the doors of an American public high school. The school administrators meet with each new student to explain the ways they are required to look and dress, which courses they will be required to take, and where they are to be each time the bell rings. The dress code, bell schedule, and course requirements at Sawyer are typical of American public high schools. Each student must speak English to understand all of the components, requirements, and expectations to communicate with the authorities of power within this institution. By the end of the required four year experience, each immigrant student looks, dresses, acts, and speaks more American than when they first entered the school.

The teachers and school administrators are active agents reinforcing the Americanization process. They stand in the hallways checking that students have conformed to the school dress code. The Muslim immigrant students are allowed to wear head scarfs or Hijabs, but they may not wear their cultures' traditional clothing. Instead, they must follow the dress code or the teachers will write them up or send them home to change before attending their classes.

Each moment of time the immigrant students spend within the structure of the American public high school influences them. Both the formal and informal components of students' educations impact their experiences and the formation of their identity. The formal school times include academics, school work, homework, course curriculums, and learning objectives. The informal school time includes social interactions, passing time,

the lunch room, assemblies, field trips, after school clubs, sports teams, school dances, and the time spent before and after school “hanging out” with peers.

The most formal experiences spent at school are the classes and time spent within the academic setting. But there are other, more informal settings that have an equal influence on the immigrant students and the formation of their identities. After school clubs and passing time are two of the most important. The after school clubs play a significant role in both the students’ educational experiences and the ways they self and collectively identify. Participation in after school clubs is not a requirement, but it is highly recommended by the school and teachers because they say students that participate in clubs are more likely to be successful. The immigrant students choose to join the clubs as a way to define their self, individual, and collective identities. At Sawyer, the students who join the Ahinsa club are more Americanized Indian and Pakistani students compared to the members of the Indo-Pak club, who choose to speak Urdu and maintain their Pakistani and Muslim identities. The after school clubs play a significant role in the educational experiences and identity formation for immigrant students within the American public high school. The one student in this study who chose to play on the school football team had different experiences and identities compared to the members of the other school clubs. The immigrant students are active agents, with the ability to make their own decision on which, if any, of the school clubs or sports teams to become a member.

Similarly, although passing time is part of the structure of the American public high school, there are no formal learning objectives or academic requirements for these

four minutes between each class. But passing time is another significant component of the American high school experience for immigrant students. One student explained how he continuously changed his identity within each moment of passing time, based on with whom he interacted in the hallways. The immigrant students are expected to know that they walk on the right side of the hallway and other American social expectations that are imbedded in the United States educational system. The school experience in its entirety, both formal and informal, is significant to the education and identity formation for immigrant students.

While the formal and informal educational experiences impact the ways the immigrant students' self and collectively identify, the immigrant students are also given an imposed identity by the teachers within the American public school system. The combination of the ways the immigrant students choose to self and collectively identify and the imposed identities, impact them both consciously and unconsciously in the ways the students view themselves and their experiences. Each identity independently and in combination with one another defines and constrains the immigrant students. Each identity also acts to constrain and shape a student's other identities. For example, the more Americanized Pakistani students befriend others who are similar to themselves; they choose to join the Ahinsa club and not the Indo-Pak club. In other words, the way immigrant students choose to self identify directly influences the ways they collectively identify. This impacts the peers they befriend, which, if any, after school clubs they choose to join, as well as, possibly, their academic success.

The same is true of the students' imposed identities. The immigrant students begin to see themselves in certain ways based on the identities that are imposed on them. This directly influences and constrains their self and collective identities. If their imposed identity is one that defines them as academically unsuccessful, the immigrant students will begin to see themselves in this way. And they will befriend peers with the same imposed identity. The results are constraints on the ways one chooses their self and collectively identities. Each identity is continuously being defined and redefined within each interaction. Each individual identity is defining to the immigrant students, and the combination and interaction of the identities are defining and constraining to the ways the immigrant students self and collectively identify. All of these identities significantly impact the ways the immigrant students view themselves and who they befriend at each moment in time.

The Pakistan immigrant population has brought a new, complex lens to the discussion of the racialization of themselves and others. Some of these immigrant students identify themselves according to their religious identities, others their national origin, some based on their race, and others a combination of their multiple root identities. Although some of the Pakistani students identify their race as "brown," the teachers and school administrators actually see these immigrants students as white, or whitened compared to their black counterparts, because most of the Pakistani students are academically successful compared to the black students.

The immigrant populations that are currently entering the American educational system are racially diverse and therefore no longer blend into the mainstream white



student body. But the immigrant populations that are academically successful are being treated with privileges and given more positive imposed identities compared to the urban black students who attend the same educational institutions. In other words, the school officials within the American public school system emphasize their value in the ways the academically successful immigrant students perform in comparison to the ways the other students are blackened. The urban black students are continuously being told that they need to improve academically and that they are the more problematic students. In other words, there is a spectrum of goodness and badness that is imposed on each student in the American public school system. The students who are academically successful are seen as white, or good, while the bad, or unsuccessful, students are blackened and treated poorly compared to their white, or in this case “brown,” counterparts.

Due to the immigrant students’ movement between continents, countries, and cities their definition and sense of home has significantly changed. Home is not necessarily linked to a location. Rather, it is a sense of belonging and their uses of space. Immigrant students think about “home” in regards to the people, practices, and language that together build a sense of familiarity. “Home” is where the family is practicing their religious, national origin and cultural traditions, and speaking their first language. In other words, “home” is the private use of space, compared to the other, more public spaces of school, work, and other social settings. There is a more distinct difference between home as the private space and their experiences within the public setting, than the association of home with a specific physical location. The concept of “home” is

transferable to multiple locations as long as the variables, including family, cultural practices, food, and language, remain the same.

These private and public spaces for immigrant students are significantly impacted by technology. The students are able to move between spaces through the internet, media, and modern communications technology. These forms of technology are what allow immigrant students to change their concept of home because their ability to communicate, watch, learn, and be in contact with their family, friends, and “neighbors” as though they were physically living next door.

The immigrant students are influenced by each experience and interaction that takes place. In fact, they are even shaped by the environments, settings, and public and private spaces in which they reside. The public American school system has intended learning objectives for each subject and school year, but these do not include the informal or unintended learning experiences within the hallways, in the after school clubs, and during the less structured parts of the school day. But each of these situations is a learning opportunity that significantly impacts the immigrant students, their educational experiences, and their self, collective, and imposed identities.

### **Implications of My Research**

There are many implications from my research that are critical to the field of education, and more specifically to Sawyer High School. This research reaches conclusions important to the learning environment, curriculum, and overall educational experiences of these Pakistani students within an American Educational institution. Although this study is informed by one particular group of Pakistani students, the

findings are useful for educators, researchers, and policy makers, when making decisions about the educational needs of this immigrant student population, and to a lesser extent when addressing the educational needs of any immigrant student group. Due to the many variables in this study, these implications should not be generalized too broadly to all immigrant populations, schools, or districts. The implications of this study are significant; they highlight the many ways the American educational system, globalization, and agency of both the students and teachers influence the experiences for these Pakistani students.

Most importantly, the school, district, and field of education can better meet the educational needs of this immigrant population by first understanding their cultural, national origin, and religious identities. As I have found in this study, these students are living both “here” in the United States and “there” in Pakistan, which impacts their multi-dimensional identities and therefore their educational experiences on a daily basis. It is critical for the teachers, school administrators, and district officials to understand these Pakistani students’ identities due to the impact these identities have on their academic achievement. In order for the Pakistani students to achieve academic success in the classroom, their teachers need to know how to meet their educational needs, especially because the number of Pakistani students entering American classrooms is increasing significantly.

### **Recommendations**

I have a number of recommendations for Sawyer High School. First, instead of an international festival that includes the cultural food and dance of the Pakistani

students, I recommend more authentic educational opportunities for the entire student population at Sawyer. The school should provide the Pakistani students opportunities to teach their peers and teachers about their cultural, national origin, and religious identities. The eating of “Desi” food and watching “Desi” dances does not educate or provide genuine learning opportunities for the school community about the Pakistani, Muslim, or immigrant identities of these students. I highly recommend a more authentic educational experience for the students, teachers, and administrators at Sawyer, especially because there is a lack of knowledge of the Islam religion within our society and a continuously growing Islamic community at Sawyer High School.

I also recommend more parental involvement at Sawyer. Many of these students’ parents have little or no experience with the American educational institutions. But they support, push, and want the very best for their children. I suggest parent information sessions targeted at this specific population, with Urdu translators. The translators for these parent information sessions would not be costly to Sawyer. The Pakistani students themselves could act as translators for these events. These sessions would help the Pakistani parents acclimate to Sawyer, as well as assist them in supporting their children, which in turn would help their children succeed academically.

I recommend that Sawyer High School, in collaboration with district officials, establish guidelines and policies for schools to allow Muslim students to observe their religion, especially during the holiest month—Ramadan. Finding ways for Muslim students to pray or practice their religion within the structural constraints of the American

educational institution is critical, even if the solution is as simple as providing a classroom for the students to use during their lunch period during the month of Ramadan.

The findings and analysis of this study have led to additional questions. There are an increasing number of students from non Judeo-Christian religions and from national origins that differ from the “American” students in United States educational institutions. Therefore, there is a need to study how the institutional structures impact the educational experiences for each of the student populations currently present within American public high schools. There are multiple components of the Americanization process imbedded into the public school system; is this process intentional? If so, what is the purpose, or intentional and unintentional goals, of the Americanization process? And what is the purpose of the American high school experience? These are critical questions that need to be studied, discussed, and answered, followed by necessary changes in policy, curriculum, and the overall educational institutions as needed to meet the educational demands of the student populations present in today’s American public high schools.

There is also a need to study the Pakistani student population within different educational settings, possibly elementary and middle schools as well as in higher educational institutions. Further research should also be conducted to compare the different generations of the Pakistani student populations to analyze their experiences.

This purpose of this study was to answer the question, how do agency, institutional structures, and globalization, impact the lived experiences for Pakistani immigrant students at an urban public high school. These findings should not be generalized. They can only be interpreted within the constraints of this particular study.

Although these findings are significant, they are just a small fraction of the research that needs to be conducted on this topic.

APPENDIX A  
PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

<b>Name</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Grade [at Sawyer]</b>	<b>Membership in afterschool clubs</b>	<b>Schooling</b>
Aadil	Male	Sophomore	Indo-Pak	Aadil was born and grew up in Ahinsa Sukkur, Pakistan. He moved to the US in 2006. From first grade through fifth grade, Aadil attended a public school in Sukkur. He then went to high school in Sukkur for one year, for sixth grade, before going to Karachi to study prior to moving to the US. Aadil completed through ninth grade in Pakistan, but he did not bring his transcript to the US, so he started as a freshman at Sawyer.
Aamira	Female	Junior	N/A	Aamira moved to [Research Location] from Hyderabad, India, in 1994 at the age of two. All of her schooling has been in the US, in an urban public school system.
Abdul-Azeez	Male	Sophomore	Indo-Pak	Abdul-Azeez moved to [Research Location] in March 2007 from Karachi, Pakistan. He attended a private, coed British school in Pakistan for fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Abdul-Azeez first attended American school as a freshman at Sawyer, but he arrived near at the end of the school year, so he received no credit for his first couple months at Sawyer. Abdul-Azeez had to complete his entire freshman year the following year. He did not speak English prior to his experiences at Sawyer, he could only say the alphabet. He could read and write in a limited capacity. Abdul-Azeez is Abdul-Hakim's brother.



Name	Gender	Grade [at Sawyer	Membership in afterschool clubs	Schooling
Abdul-Hakim	Male	Sophomore	Indo-Pak	Abdul-Hakim moved to [Research Location] in March 2007 from Karachi, Pakistan. He attended a private, coed British school in Pakistan for fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Abdul-Hakim went to an urban public elementary school in [Research Location] for seventh and eighth grades prior to his high school experiences at Sawyer. He did not speak English prior to his elementary schooling in the US. Abdul-Hakim is Abdul-Azeez's brother.
Adab	Female	Junior	N/A	Adab grew up in Lahore, Pakistan and moved to the US in 1998 at the age of seven. Adab attended two years of schooling--pre-k and kindergarten--in Pakistan. Her father moved to [Research Location] in 1993 and then sent for her and her family. She has attended the public educational system in the US since she moved to [Research Location]. Her mother requires that Adab speak Urdu at home; she does not like English spoken in her home.
Ali	Male	Senior	Football team, Ahinsa	Ali moved from Balochistan, Pakistan approximately eight or nine years ago. He started school in the US in sixth grade, where he attended a urban public middle school. He has not been back to Pakistan since he moved to [Research Location], but he remembers his school in Pakistan as very strict and very different from Sawyer. Ali is Mahdi's older brother.

Name	Gender	Grade [at Sawyer	Membership in afterschool clubs	Schooling
Haleema	Female	Sophomore	Indo Pak	<p>Haleema grew up in Faisalabad, Pakistan until 2008 when she moved to the US. Her dad moved to [Research Location] ten years prior to the rest of Haleema's family. Haleema attended a public, all-girls school in Pakistan, but did not enjoy her educational experiences. Haleema explained that there was no art, PE, or music at her school in Pakistan and the teachers would hit the students as a form of discipline.</p>
Hassan	Male	Senior	Magic Club and National Honors Society	<p>Hassan was born in the US, moved to Mumbai, India at the age of eight, and lived there until he was fifteen. He moved back to the US because he felt the education system was better compared to the one in India. Hassan has attended a number of public high schools throughout suburban and urban [Research Location]. English is his first language.</p>
Kafi	Male	Sophomore	Reading Club	<p>Kafi moved to the US in 2005 from Karachi, Pakistan. From kindergarten until Kafi moved to the US, he attended an Air Force school in Pakistan. Then he went to a public school in Boston, MA for one year before attending Sawyer High School. Kafi explained that he learned "British English" in Pakistan, "not American" English.</p>

<b>Name</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Grade [at Sawyer]</b>	<b>Membership in afterschool clubs</b>	<b>Schooling</b>
Kamil	Male	Sophomore	N/A	Kamil was born in [Research Location]. He has been a resident of the US all his life. He has attended the urban public school system in [Research Location] since kindergarten.
Khaleel	Male	Junior	N/A	Khaleel declined participation in an interview. Therefore, specific details of his educational experiences are unavailable.
Maaz	Male	Sophomore	Indo-Pak	Maaz moved to the US in 2008 from Lahore, Pakistan. In Pakistan, Maaz attended an all-boys high school beginning in sixth grade. Although he took English classes in school in Pakistan, he was limited in his English speaking abilities. Maaz is Nadia's sister.
Maazin	Male	Senior	National Honors Society	Maazin was born, grew up, and schooled in Bombay, India until 2005. He moved to the US the summer before his Freshman year of high school. Maazin attended an all-boys school from first to fifth grade that was considered one of the top schools in Bombay. It was a public school, but more expensive than the government school. He learned how to speak English at this school.
Mahdi	Male	Sophomore	Ahinsa	Mahdi moved to [Research Location] from Balochistan, Pakistan when he was seven or eight years of age. He attended a school that was two blocks from his home in Pakistan. He, his siblings and cousins all lived together and walked to school

Name	Gender	Grade [at Sawyer	Membership in afterschool clubs	Schooling
				together each day. His school was an all-boys public school from first to fifth grade. In Pakistan, sixth grade is considered part of the high school. Mahdi attended school up to fifth grade in Pakistan, then he moved to the US. He and his family moved around from city-to-city for a year before settling down in [Research Location]. Once settled in [Research Location], Mahd registered at an urban public primary school where he redid fourth grade by his father's demand. Mahdi did not know or speak English before entering the US. Mahdi is Ali's younger brother.
Massima	Female	Senior	National Honors Society and Ahinsa Club	Massima was born in the US. She has attended the urban public school system in [Research Location] beginning in Kindergarten. She is proficient in both English and Urdu.
Mateen	Male	Senior	Ahinsa Club and National Honors Society	Matten was born in the US, but moved to Karachi, Pakistan when he was an infant until he was 3-4 years of age. He then moved back to [Research Location] except for an extended visit to Pakistan during his sophomore year of high school. When he went to Pakistan as a teenager he did not attend school because he felt uncomfortable and could not afford to attend school in Pakistan. His entire education has been through the American system.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Grade [at Sawyer]</b>	<b>Membership in afterschool clubs</b>	<b>Schooling</b>
Nadia	Female	Sophomore	Indo-Pak	Nadia grew up in Lahore, Pakistan, where she attended a private school until she moved to [Research Location] in June 2008. Nadia's dad moved to [Research Location] ten years prior to her family. Nadia is Maaz's sister.
Naeema	Female	Junior	Ahinsa Club	Naeema moved to the US eleven years ago at the age of five from Karachi, Pakistan. Naeema attend a small primary school in Pakistan, and then an urban public elementary school when she arrived in the US. Naeema did not learn or speak English prior to arriving in the US.
Rabah	Male	Senior	None	Rabah was born in Karachi, Pakistan. He then lived in many different places due to his father's business, including Dubai, Singapore, Bangkok, and New York. He moved to the US in 2003-04. At this point, he began attending the urban, public educational system. Rabah is Razia's older brother.
Razia	Female	Sophomore	Indo-Pak and Ahinsa Club	Razia was born in Karachi, Pakistan. She moved to [Research Location] in 2003-04, at the age of seven or eight. Razia attended Sir Michael in Pakistan, a British school, where she first learned British English. Razia attended the public school system in [Research Location] since she arrived in the US. Razia is Rabah's younger sister.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Grade [at Sawyer]</b>	<b>Membership in afterschool clubs</b>	<b>Schooling</b>
Safia	Female	Senior	Ahinsa Club and National Honors Society	Safia was born in Karachi, Pakistan. She moved to the US in 2005. She attended an all-girls elementary to high school (which is two years in Pakistan) where she completed her freshman and sophomore years. When Safia arrived in the US, she began at Sawyer as a sophomore.
Salma	Female	Senior	Ahinsa Club and National Honors Society	Salma was born and grew up in Hyderabad, India until she was fifteen. She moved to the US with her parents and siblings, first to Michigan for two months and then to [Research Location]. Salma attend an all-girls Catholic school in India where English was the first language. However, Hindi was spoken by majority of the population.
Samir	Female	Senior	Indo-Pak Club	Samir declined participation in an interview. Therefore, specific details of his educational experiences are unavailable. He was born in India and then moved to the US within the past ten years.
Satta	Female	Junior	Ahinsa Club	Satta was born and grew up in [Research Location]. English is her first language. She is no longer fluent in Urdu. Satta has been attending the public school system since kindergarten.
Shamim	Female	Senior	Indo-Pak, National Honors Society and Ahinsa Club	Shamim grew up in Karachi, Pakistan. She attended school in Pakistan from the age of five through ninth grade. Shamim first attended Sawyer high school as a sophomore. All of her credits from her schooling

Name	Gender	Grade [at Sawyer]	Membership in afterschool clubs	Schooling
				in Pakistan transferred to the US, allowing her to begin as a sophomore at Sawyer.
Ubah	Female	Sophomore	Ahinsa and Indo-Pak	Ubah transferred schools halfway through the school year. Therefore, she was unavailable for an interview. The details of her educational experiences are unknown.
Yasmin	Female	Junior	Ahinsa Club and National Honors Society	Yasmin was born in a small village in Pakistan and lived there until she was eleven. She attended the one school in her small village, which had the students divided by gender. Yasmin attended an urban public school in the US for middle school, and is now the only student representative on the Local School Council (LSC).
Zahir	Male	Senior	Ahinsa Club	Zahir was born in Afghanistan and lived there until a young age. He then moved to Pakistan at the age of six and lived there for four years. Zahir's family was sponsored by a US family to move to the US. He lived in Philadelphia for one year before moving to [Research Location], where he completed fifth grade. Zahir's first time attending school was when he moved to the US. He learned to read and write in English when he went to school. Zahir attended a public elementary school for seventh and eighth grade before attending Sawyer high school.

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<b>Name</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Grade [at Sawyer</b>	<b>Membership in afterschool clubs</b>	<b>Schooling</b>
Zahra	Female	Junior	Ahinsa Club	Zahra grew up in both the US and Pakistan. She was born in the US and attended kindergarten through fourth grade in the American educational system. She then finished fourth grade through seventh in Pakistan. She returned again to the US to complete eighth grade through high school. She missed school for most of her junior year because she moved to Pakistan for six months to get married. She has to make up all the time lost while living in Pakistan to earn the required credit hours to graduate at Sawyer High School.

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## VITA

Melissa Gersh Fischer was born in Buffalo, New York. Before attending Loyola University Chicago, she attended Syracuse University, where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Inclusive Elementary and Special Education, in 2000. From 2000-2003, she attended Bowie State University, where she received a Masters of Elementary Education. In 2005, Melissa completed a certification of School Supervision and Administration at Johns Hopkins University in Maryland.

While at Loyola, Melissa was a Teaching Assistant for the course American Education and later became an Adjunct Professor for this course. She also co-published her first piece, a book chapter on “Mobilities, Migration, Minorities and Education,” and presented her research on the Pakistani students at Sawyer High School at several conferences. Melissa was also awarded the Advanced Doctoral Fellowship at Loyola.



## DISSERTATION APPROVAL SHEET

The Dissertation submitted by Melissa Gersh Fischer has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the Dissertation Committee and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the Dissertation is now given final approval by the committee with reference to content and form.

The Dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Date

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