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Personal and professional spirituality: Muslim social workers' perspectives

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2009

ABSTRACT

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M.S.W., University of Michigan, 1988
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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
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ABSTRACT

Research in the area of religion and spirituality in social work practice is lacking minority practitioner representation. This phenomenological study explored the questions of how American Muslim social workers define and experience the religious/spiritual, and perceive the propriety of integrating either, in practice. Ibn Khaldun and Durkheim, early social theorists, suggested that group feeling and affiliation impact personal and professional perception and decision making. American societal views of Muslims are often negative and uninformed. A group of 15 Muslim practitioners with bachelor's or more advanced degrees in social work were recruited through a survey administered via an Internet survey site. In depth telephone interviews were conducted that clarified personal and professional descriptions and experiences of the religious/spiritual. Transcript statements were critically reviewed for range of meaning (horizonalization) and reduced to their thematic essences following the phenomenological thematic analysis paradigm. Trustworthiness of the study was verified through ongoing bracketing of the researcher's assumptions and maintenance of a data collection journal. Findings indicated that participants favored a client-centered approach based on the social work standard of self determination. Most participants differentiated and acknowledged the value of spirituality more than religion in practice. Practitioners, cognizant of possible negative interpretations of Muslims and Islam, rely on the client to initiate religious themes in therapy. This finding suggests the need for future study of client views. Implications for social change are evidenced in the clients' assurance that Muslim practitioners' professional integration of the religious/spiritual is client driven and bound by competent social work ethical practice.

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DEDICATION

This investigation is first dedicated to The Almightly Creator—ALLAH who makes all things possible. Secondly, I dedicate this treatise to my now deceased mother Amma Louise Stitt Ware, whose unconditional love, support and emphasis on the value of education provided the impetus to embark on the never ending pursuit of knowledge.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Religion and spirituality are central to human beings in all contexts of existence. Practitioners and consumers of social work services are effected by religion and spiritually on a daily basis (Canda & Furman, 1999; Martin & Martin, 2002). Most have a relatively common perception of religion in general (i.e., an organized belief system, reinforced through collective practice or ritual by like minded persons). Spirituality, on the other hand has been less amenable to universal understanding as a concept (Canda & Furman, 1999). It has been thought to be a facet of religion or vice versa, personally or collectively experienced, with or without a reference to The Transcendent or G'd, as understood by some (Canda & Furman, 1999). The American population overwhelmingly reports itself as religious (Canda & Furman, 1999; Richards & Bergin, 2000).

The United States has been predominantly Christian in religious orientation since its founding (Huntington, 2004). Currently there are over 10 denominations of Christianity (some say more) and 10 or more non-Christian worldviews represented in America (Canda & Furman, 1999; Richards & Bergin, 2000; Sheridan, 2004). Islam is the most rapidly growing non-Christian religion in the United States (Hodge, 2005). "Religious diversity is a cultural fact, and most mental health professionals will encounter it in their practices" (Richards & Bergin, 2000, p. 5). This statement referenced the client/practitioner relationship. Although religious and spiritual diversity within the practitioners' ranks has been alluded to, it has not been addressed as an independent phenomenon.

This investigation focused on perceptions and experiences of religion and spirituality as expressed by 15 American Muslim social workers, recognizing them to be a minority group within the social work field per the literature and wondering how their practice might be affected by their multiple group affiliation (Hodge, 2005; Richards & Bergin, 2000). Adult religious and spiritual perspectives are developed within a multidimensional environmental context (Wilber, 2000). These contexts include but are not limited to family upbringing, current personal and society worldviews, professional ideology ethics, and principles. Phenomenology, as a philosophy and qualitative method of research is focused on the elicitation of expressed meaning and essence of a specified phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). Religion and spirituality related to Muslim practitioners' social work practice were the target phenomena for this study. The literature posited that the universal tenets of Islam provide the religious practice ideology for most Muslims in America (Ali, Liu, & Humedian, 2004; Hodge, 2005a). This study investigated how personal beliefs and professional practice principles are negotiated by Muslim social workers without compromising one or the other.

Propriety of integrating spirituality and religion in relation to professional ethics and standards has been a primary concern with social work practitioners (Helmeke & Bischof, 2002; Praglin, 2004). Some have expressed that religious integration into social work practice presents cause for caution if not avoidance when factored into the client/ practitioner relationship (Clark, 1994, Praglin, 2004). The social work profession has a history, practice, and mission that both binds and estranges itself from the religious and spiritual. The literature review provides a historical overview of spirituality and religion

in social work practice and its evolution (Canda & Furman, 1999; Schiele, 2000; Sheridan & Hermert, 1999). Societal context is also a consideration relative to perceived and actual discrimination of Muslims in America and the possible impact on American Muslim social work practitioners (Hodge, 2005a; Schiele, 2000).

There are over a billion Muslims worldwide, yet the actions and voices of a relatively small group of radical Islamists have defined the whole (Crockatt, 2004; Hall & Livingston, 2006). The dominant *civil religion* of the United States has been Anglo Protestant with a coexisting, competing liberal civil religious orientation that espouses a secular, individually determined spirituality (Hodge, 2007; Huntington, 2004). Reported public sentiment stated that some Americans feel that Islam teaches disrespect for the beliefs of non-Muslims (Panagopoulos, 2006). There are anywhere between 2 and 7 million Muslims in the United States, yet the values and worldviews within an Islamic interpretation of spirituality and religion are an enigma to many (Ali, et al., 2004; Hodge, 2005a; Pew Research Center, 2007; U.S. State Dept., 2001).

Without personal contact with Muslims, the general public relies on the media to inform and interpret Islam and Muslim behavior. National poll findings are mixed regarding the unfavorability rating for Islam in America (Panagopoulas, 2006). Some polls reported that attitudes were stabilizing after 2002, others reported that Islam is increasingly unfavorable after 2005 (p. 609). The Council on American and Islamic Relations (CAIR) cited a 2006 Gallup poll that indicated 39% of Americans voiced some prejudice toward Muslims and 22% would not want Muslim neighbors (CAIR, 2007).

Panagopoulos (2006) argued that Americans are hypocritical and cited national polls that report a majority of adult Americans do not feel they understand the basic tenets of Islam, but for some reason, think it is "very different" (p. 610) from their own religion.. These attitudes have a negative effect on the help seeking behaviors of Muslim clients (Kelly & Aridi, 1996). The effect on Muslim practitioners is unknown.

An associative link between social work, Islam/Muslims and terrorism was noted by the researcher within the Academic Search Premier (ASP) database in October 2006. A subsequent search in March 2006 noted the removal of the terrorism associative link. Terrorism continued to be linked to searches using the single key words *Islam* or *Muslim* as late as March of 2007. There was no such link association with any other religion (Christianity, Judaism, Buddhist, etc.) found within the ASP database. As of July 2008 the association was removed. This indicated that the negative associations of Islam and Muslims perpetrated in public media were also active within the academic and professional realm (Panagopoulos, 2006).

Response to Islamophobia has become a popular topic within the Muslim media outlets (CAIR, 2007; Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU), 2007). Fear of Muslims or any particular group in general has the potential to negatively affect social and professional relationships (Ali, Liu, & Humedian, 2004). Education and interfaith dialogue are purported to alleviate prejudices of this sort (Hodge, 2007).

Hodge (2007) observed that one social work intervention for prejudice and discrimination is to deconstruct and replace the errant understanding with a more accurately informed opinion through research, dialogue and education. The paucity of

research relative to Muslims is an identified problem in the literature, (Hague, 2004) "Analysis of the interplay between religion and indigenous culture on the one hand and American lifestyle on the other hand is a serious area of research" (p. 58). The current study offered a venue for Muslim social workers to replace misnomer with a counter narrative of their personal and professional experience.

Problem Statement

There is a problem of scarcity of data regarding self-reported beliefs and practices of American Muslim social workers and other minority views. While the interest in religion and spirituality increased during the last decade in the social work literature, most studies have focused on the benefits of religion and spirituality as a rationale for incorporating either into practice (Modesto, Weaver, & Flannelly, 2006). Practitioners' views regarding religion and spirituality were not heavily emphasized. When practitioners were the focus, the samples were heavily weighted with Christian oriented respondents (Canda & Furman, 1999; Hodge, 2007a; Sheridan, 2004).

Muslim and other minority religious groups' perspectives are not represented in previous studies (Bullis, 1996; Canda & Furman, 1999; Hodge, 2007; Sheridan, 2004). Bullis surveyed licensed social workers (N=294) in Virginia and did not specify religious doctrine. Canda and Furman and Sheridan noted single Muslim respondents within their sample populations of N=2,690 and N=476 respectively. Hodge and McGrew (2006) surveyed social work graduate students and noted Christians, Catholics, Jews, others, and no faith. Presumably, Muslims (if there were any) were included but not designated within the "other" category (Hodge & McGrew, 2006). Researchers have opined the need

for crosscultural data in expanding the knowledge base in social work in the area of spirituality and religion (Canda, Nakashima, & Furman, 2004; Hodge & McGrew, 2006). The lack of research on Muslims, given their increasing numbers and the challenges faced as a marginalized population in the United States exacerbate the problem (Hague, 2004; Hodge, 2005a).

Research Questions

Given the dearth of data, the spiritual orientation and application employed by Muslim social workers is a mystery to most clients, colleagues, and hiring supervisors. The current research queried:

How has spirituality and religion been interpreted within the experience of Muslim social workers?

What spiritual or religious interventions might Muslim social workers express and deem appropriate for the practice context?

What level of consciousness, relative to any challenges posed by the current media image(s) of Islam, might Muslim social workers express?

The study elicited the answers from 15 self-identified American Muslim social workers through phenomenological investigation. As in similar studies, the responses were examined for common patterns and themes regarding the meaning and relationship of spirituality and religion (Canda & Furman, 1999; Hodge & McGrew, 2006). References to the use of spirituality and religion in practice were grouped into intervention categories following the examples of Bullis (1996), Canda and Furman

(1999), and Sheridan (2004). The results enhanced comprehension of religious/spiritual experience phenomena related to Muslim social workers and their practice.

The research paradigm gathered demographic and quantitative data relative to the role of religion and spirituality in social work through a survey questionnaire recruiting tool. The primary question was: What is the religious and spiritual experience of Muslim social workers in the context of their personal and professional lives? It was assumed that just as social workers of other faiths have reported religious and spiritual experiences in practice (Canda & Furman, 1999; Sheridan, Bullis, Adcock, Berlin & Miller, 1992); Muslim social workers have experienced spirituality and religion as it relates to their practice.

Background

Historically religious in origin, the social work discipline became estranged from spirituality in general and religion in particular in an effort to establish itself within the scientific genre (Bullis, 1996; Martin & Martin, 2002). During the resurgence of the last decade authors differentiated spirituality from religion, noting religion to be an offending construct (Canda & Furman, 1999; Hall, Dixon, & Mauzey, 2004; Sheridan & Hemert, 1999; Van Hook, Hugan, & Aguilar, 2001). Non-Western paradigms, such as the African centered and Islamic traditions, did not distinguish between spirituality and religion as separate constructs (Nadir & Dziegielewski, 2001; Schiele, 1996). This point is elaborated in the literature review.

Spirituality and Religion

Two primary features of interest emerged in the literature's description of spirituality. First, spirituality was noted to have relational attributes (i.e., connections between the individual, the environment, and The Transcendent (however understood), and secondly, spirituality was linked an individual's quest to understand life's meaning and purpose (Bullis, 1996; Canda & Furman, 1999; Favor, 2004; Hodge, 2007a; Richards & Bergin, 2000). The literature often posited either or both of these interpretations of spirituality.

Religion, alternately, was commonly described as an organized system of beliefs and practices expressed within a ritual doctrine of practice (Bullis, 1996; Canda & Furman, 1999; Durkheim, 1915; Van Hook, et al., 2001). Common societal, national religious and spiritual values are said to be expressed in a *civil spirituality/religion* (Canda & Furman, 1999; Huntington, 2004). American civil spirituality has traditionally been Protestant Christian, expressed in Christian holidays (i.e., Christmas, Easter) that receive national recognition (Canda & Furman, 1999; Huntington, 2004).

Spiritual religious diversity affects overt expression of traditional civil spirituality. America's alternate civil spirituality accepts previously sanctioned mores and is increasingly more accommodating to views outside of the dominant Christian tradition (Hodge, 2002). This adapted American civil spirituality threatens traditional religious tradition. The secular, liberalist worldview often linked to the social service field, questions overt religious expressions of spirituality under any doctrine (Hodge, 2006).

The Establishment Clause of the First Amendment in the U.S. Constitution was instituted to prevent the overt expression of religion to the exclusion of other religions in the

public domain (Huntington, 2004). In 2002, it was argued that the clause prohibits expressed religious belief—Monotheism (p. 81). If this interpretation became precedent, it would prevent any monotheistic religious expression (i.e., Christians, Islam, or Judaism). This 21st century fear of religion was not part of early sociological theory (Ibn Khaldun, 1381; Durkheim, 1938).

The religious basis for society and civilization was a given understanding for some of the earliest sociological theorists, Ibn Khaldun (1381) and Durkheim (1938). There was no discernable separation between the religious and spiritual in the works of historian and Islamic scholar, Ibn Khaldun (Rosenthal, 1958). Ibn Khaldun was identified by some as the father of sociology (Rosenthal, 1958). Durkheim (1938), as a 19th century sociologist, had begun to evince societal differentiation between the religious and spiritual (Giddens, 1972, p. 241). However, his value of a religious basis was expressed within his writings (Durkheim, 1915/1960). Khaldun (1381) and Durkheim (1938) noted that religious and social identity may begin to differentiate with increased civilization.

Ibn Khaldun (1381) and Durkheim (1938) presented new renderings to common terms of their time to augment understanding of the underlying nature and function of group cohesiveness and cooperation in successful civilizations. Ibn Khaldun introduced an understanding of the Arabic concept of *aasibiyah*/group feeling or sentiment (Rosenthal, 1958). Durkheim offered the *conscience collective* and *social fact* (Khaldun, 1381/1958). The theoretical significance of Ibn Khaldun and Durkheim's ideologies will be related to the phenomenological method in chapter 3.

Aasibiyah

Aasibiyah was translated by Rosenthal (1958) as "group feeling, solidarity or group consciousness" (Khaldun, 1381/1958, p. xi). The Hans Wehr Arabic/English dictionary defined the word as a noun referring to "tribal solidarity, clannishness, zealous partisanship, bigotry, fanaticism, party spirit, team spirit, racialism, national consciousness and nationalism" (p. 615). American civil spirituality, as a national consciousness would be a type of aasibiyah (Huntington, 2004). Ibn Khaldun associated aasibiyah with kinship through blood and marriage, the resulting family, clan, and tribal affiliations (Khaldun, 1381/1958). This study expanded the concept further to include the religious and spiritual group feeling, such as that held by persons of like mind, affiliated by group membership, having a ritualistic expression of doctrine, in this case, social workers and Muslims in America.

The aasibiyah of the American Muslim social worker is multifaceted. This study explored whether a multidimensional aasibiyah, which would include individual and collective professional, religious, ethnic, and socio/cultural aspects, exists within the Muslim social workers' perception. The significance of group feeling as experienced by Muslim social workers, relative to their stated religious doctrine and their professional code of ethics (the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is unknown. The aasibiyah of Islam and the discipline of social work, as it is governed by the NASW Code (1999), will be described later in this study, in terms of its universal beliefs, practices and professional competency. Aasibiyah references societal thought that facilitates cohesiveness and cooperation. Durkheim (1960a) noted a similar construct in what he termed "conscience collective" (p. 241).

Conscience Collective

Durkheim (1938) observed that successful groups operate with a unity of common consciousness. Religion was noted as a "primary form of the conscience collective" (Giddens, 1972, p. 241). Group members holding a spiritual conscience collective and aasibiyah suggest that it would be expressed through common determinants or components of that spirituality. One such determinant of a spiritual conscience collective worldview could be religiosity (Durkheim, 1938).

Durkheim (1938) further determined that if a phenomena, such as a particular conscience collective aasibiyah operates as a social force impacting both the individual and group, it can be defined as a *social fact*. A detailed description of social fact is provided in the literature review. Whether Muslim social workers' actions are influenced by the aasibiyah or conscience collective relative to their spiritual/religious or professional education and affiliation is unknown.

Nature of the Study- Theoretical Support

Phenomenological method was the chosen research design for the current study as described by Akerlind (2005), Moerer-Urdahl and Creswell (2003), and Moustakas (1994). The latter two authors' references to transcendental phenomenology are of particular import. Phenomenology is associated with the constructivist paradigm; emphasizing that there can be multiple and varied individual expressions of an experienced event or phenomenon (Creswell, 1998).

The function of phenomenology is to, "explicate the phenomenon in terms of its constituents and possible meanings, thus discerning the features of consciousness and

arriving at an understanding of the essences of the experience" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 49). The area of religion and spirituality in social work has no shortage of gaps in the literature warranting study of a phenomenographic nature. As will be explained in the methodology section, the essence and spirit of this study is best implemented within a transcendental phenomenological genre.

Purpose

The purpose of this investigation was to explore American Muslim social workers' personal and professional perspectives in the areas of religion and spirituality. Respondents had an opportunity to reflect on and express their conception and experience of spirituality, religion, and the integration of either in social work practice. The study targeted two of the three most common purposes of social research: exploration, description, and explanation with regard to spirituality and religion in Muslim social workers' personal and professional experience (Babbie, 2004).

Assumptions

This study is predicated on three primary assumptions. First, that spirituality (if not religion) is an innate and natural characteristic of human being and consciousness. This assumption was strongly supported in the social science literature (Fowler, 1981; James, 1997; Schiele, 2000; Wilber, 2000). Secondly, it was assumed that spirituality in general and religion in particular are within the personal and professional experience of all persons, American Muslim social workers in particular for this investigation. The phenomenological investigation necessitates the third assumption: that there are Muslim social workers in the United States willing to reflect and share their personal and

professional experience of religion and spirituality (Moustakas, 1994). This assumption seems reasonable, given the fact that other social work practitioners, academics and graduate students have participated in similar studies (Bullis, 1996; Canda & Furman, 1999; Hodge, 2007a; Sheridan, 2004). These assumptions were supported and evinced in chapter 4.

Research Design

This qualitative study is a departure from previous study design in this area. Earlier practitioner oriented research relied on quantitative data elicited from survey questionnaires (Bullis, 1996; Hodge & McGrew, 2006; Sheridan, 2004; Sheridan, et al., 1992). Studies have measured degrees of spirituality and religion correlating the use of spiritual intervention and conducted surveys in an effort to delineate spiritual and religious definitions (Bullis, 1996; Canda & Furman, 1999; Hodge & McGrew, 2006; Sheridan, 2004; Sheridan, et al., 1992). In an attempt to resolve the definitional issues, Canda and Furman (1999) predefined the constructs for the survey and later offered descriptors from which coresearchers could select correlates to their personal meanings for religion and spirituality. The 1999 study queried American social workers. Later Furman, Benson, Canda, and Grimwood (2005) replicated their previous study in the United Kingdom. Both utilized a self administered survey to elicit quantitative and written qualitative responses with slight modifications for the respective countries. This study utilized an internet survey as a recruiting tool and to gather demographic and individual quantitative data regarding respondent perspectives.

The predetermined statements and definitions within the questionnaire counter the true nature of phenomenology. Moustakas (1994) stated that "the researcher following a transcendental phenomenological approach engages in disciplined and systematic efforts to set aside prejudgments regarding the phenomenon being studied" (p. 22). This researcher, recognizing the departure, sought to maintain the essence of the phenomenological framework by recruiting and interviewing volunteer coresearchers from the pool of survey respondents, without reviewing their data outside of qualifying demographic information. That is, the researcher did not read the respondents' definitions of religion or spirituality prior to the interviews. The researcher made an effort to suspend preconceived ideas throughout the information gathering and analysis study period.

Permission was requested and received from Drs. Canda and Furman to replicate their previous national mixed method study conducted among NASW member social workers (N=2,069) (Drs. Canda & Furman, personal communication, 2005). The original study had only one Muslim coresearcher in the U.S. and six in the U.K. (Canda & Furman, 2004). Dr. Furman later suggested that the U.K. study would be suitable for the proposed study replication (personal communication, September 2007). The initial thought was to replicate the Canda and Furman (1999) study as closely as possible, using Muslim social work coresearchers.

Feeling strongly that the Muslim social workers' attitudes and practices should be included among Christian, Jewish, and other American social worker's attitudes, beliefs, and practices, only Muslim social workers were targeted for study. The survey was modified slightly for Muslims at the suggestion of Dr. Furman because the previous

questionnaire was not normed for religious minorities (personal communication, December 2005). The modified survey was distributed to four Muslim social workers known to the researcher as a pretest (personal communication, December 2005).

Pretest

Babbie (2004) noted the advantages of pretesting questionnaires prior to formal study distribution (p. 256). Heeding this advice, the Muslim Social Worker Survey was distributed via email to 4 Muslim social workers well known to the researcher in order to gain insight regarding its use with the larger target group. Details of the pretest results are forthcoming in chapter 3, Methodology. An additional challenge emerged in attempts to determine the size of the American Muslim social workers' sample frame.

Sample Frame Challenge

The total number of American Muslim social workers is unknown. Babbie (2004) stated that the sample frame, from which a representative number is selected, should contain almost all of the members of the population (p. 199). No one to date has determined the total number of American Muslim social workers. This study, therefore, was nonprobabilistic in nature (Babbie, 2004). The researcher, with the assistance of the Islamic Social Services Association (ISSA) was able to compile a list of approximately 30 Muslim social workers, compiled from 2005- March 2007. Choosing a quantitative design posed a dilemma because it was unclear whether there would be adequate sample numbers.

Solution. Having obtained prior permission, the researcher was attached to the idea of using the Canda and Furman (1999) survey and pondered how it could be utilized

given the stated sample concerns. The literature search offered insight into other research methods that addressed religion and spirituality in social work practice using a semistructured interview format (Hodge, 2007a). Searching the ProQuest dissertations produced a similar study result. Egan (2002) used a survey questionnaire and interview format to gather data in order to understand the experience of HIV/AIDS prevention workers' practice with injection drug users.

Given the low database numbers and literature alternatives, the researcher began to develop a semistructured interview format for qualitative research design noting that the survey as a recruiting tool could provide additional individual data information and could serve as a secondary source for result comparison. The combined data collection methods addressed the what, when, and why posited for this research and have been documented to offset the disadvantages of using either method alone (Creswell, 1998). A detailed description of the questionnaire and proposed modifications will be outlined in chapter 3. The survey is included in Appendix A.

Analysis

The interview transcripts provided the main data source for analysis. There was no rigorous statistical analysis of the quantitative survey data outside of a general comparison of individual coresearchers' interview transcripts to their completed surveys. Content analysis of interview transcripts notes recurring themes and patterns of response and follows the dictates of phenomenology (Giorgi, 1997; Moerer & Creswell, 2004; Moustakas, 1994). A more detailed description of the analysis procedure is outlined in the chapter 3.

Definition of Terms

This study references interviewees as *coresearchers* in keeping with the literatures' phenomenological method description (Moustakas, 1994). They will be referenced as coresearchers throughout the remainder of this narrative as noted by Moustakas (1994).

Although the literature offered definitions for key terms such as religion, spirituality, Islam, Muslim, and Islamic spirituality, the nature of this study encouraged coresearchers to elucidate their personal perspectives. The following are the definitions used in the texts of Canda and Furman's (1999) survey, the ISSA (2003), Germain, 1979, and Moustakas (1994).

Civil religion and spirituality: the American societal worldview of acceptable religious orientation and expression (Canda & Furman, 1999; Huntington, 2004).

Epoche`: defined by Moustakas (1994) is the researcher's position of putting aside and disregarding all preconceived beliefs, judgments, and perceptions, in lieu of those espoused by the coresearchers (p.21).

Islam: a monotheistic Abrahamic religion. The word Islam, literally means submission to The One G'd* (* for religious reasons, this author does not use the conventional spelling in reference to The Creator; Allah is G'd in Arabic) (ISSA, 2003).

Islamic spirituality: the degree to which the Islamic perspective is expressed an individual's personal and professional lifestyle (ISSA, 2003). The meaning of Islamic spirituality for the current study remains to be defined by the respondents/coresearchers.

Muslims: those who have openly professed belief that there is One G'd/Allah and Prophet Muhammad Ibn Abdullah of Saudi Arabia is G'd's Messenger (ISSA, 2003).

Muslim social workers: those social workers who have identified themselves as adherents to the religious doctrine of Islam.

Religion: defined as an organized set of traditions and of beliefs collectively practiced (Canda & Furman, 1999).

Social work: is described as a profession through which "individuals, groups, or communities are helped toward the restoration or enhancement of their capacity for social functioning, while creating societal conditions favorable to their goals" (NASW, 2001).

Social work practice: functions to "enhance adaptive capacities and improve environments for all who function within them" (Germain, 1979, p.8). The "practice of social work requires knowledge of human development and behavior, of social, economic and cultural institutions, and of the interaction of all these factors" (NASW, 2001).

Social worker: one who has been educated and practices within the discipline of social work under the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social workers (1999). For the purposes of this study, only those holding Bachelor's, Master's or Doctorate social work degrees from accredited schools of social work will be considered as social workers.

Spirituality: described as an internally based relational aspect of human being and the quest for life's purpose and meaning (Canda & Furman, 1999).

Transcendental phenomenology: described by Moustakas (1994) is a qualitative study that is grounded in reality as it is personally experienced by the coresearcher(s) (i.e., seen, felt, heard, and intuited) (p. 49).

Scope and Limitations

The scope of this investigation is limited to respondents/coresearchers that are self-identified American Muslims with degrees in social work. The small number of potential coresearchers within an unknown total population precludes generalization of study findings to the Muslim social worker in America. However, the literature noted the value of indepth exploration of phenomenon using 6 to 10 coresearchers for phenomenological research (Hanson, Petska, Creswell, & Creswell, 2005).

Researcher's Profile and Role

Because qualitative study, such as phenomenological inquiry, is based on the researcher's interpretative analysis, it is necessary to declare personal worldviews and potential for bias (Creswell, 2003; Nastasi & Schensul, 2005). The researcher is a member of the National Association of Social Workers; the National Association of Black Social Workers and holds a master's degree in social work in clinical practice. As a state licensed social worker for 20 years, the researcher has practiced on both the macro (community/ organizational) and micro (clinical) levels of social work in an urban setting.

The researcher is an African American, female, Sunni Muslim Hajjah (female who has made the Hajj) having converted from Christianity in 1976. As such, there is a level of familiarity with the basic tenets and pillars of Islam commensurate with one who

takes part in daily prayer, weekly mosque attendance, pays charity, fasts during the month of Ramadan, and has performed the once in a lifetime Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia. The researcher is most familiar with the Sunni African American Muslim community that evolved from the original Nation of Islam in 1975, but has interacted extensively with many ethnicities that comprise the broader Muslim community of the Midwest United States (i.e., West African, South Asian, Lebanese, Egyptian, Indian, Pakistani, and White American).

It is the researcher's experience that most self-identified American Muslims (including Muslim social workers) are aware of the basic tenets, beliefs, and practices of the Islamic tradition and the practice ethics of social work. Practice levels among Muslims vary (ISSA, 2003). The notion of a single American Muslim spirituality is a misnomer and will more likely present as a continuum of thought and practice rather than a single concept or mode of spiritual and professional practice (Nadir & Dziegielewski, 2001).

The researcher captured some of these variances in the American Muslim social workers' descriptions and explanations of their views and professional practice relative to religion and spirituality. Throughout the process, to the extent humanly possible, phenomenological epoche` (suspended judgment) also referred to as "bracketing" was maintained by the researcher (Morrow, 2005; Roberts, Priest, & Traynor, 2006). "You hold all preconceptions in abeyance in order to reach experiences before they are made sense of and ordered into concepts that relate to previous knowledge and experiences" (Wall, Glenn, Mitchinson, & Poole, 2004, p. 21).

Lietz, Langar, and Furman (2006) noted in their comparative autoethnographic study of Jewish experience that analyzing researchers' spiritual worldviews seemed to influence interpretation of findings (p. 455). The current researcher's personal worldviews and definitions were suspended in lieu of those expressed by the respondents/coresearchers. A reflective diary, as suggested by the literature was used to audit the researcher's presumptions and augment emerging epoche` / bracketing skills (Lietz et al., 2006; Wall et al., 2004, p. 20). Chapter 3 will elaborate on this process.

Social Desirability

The researcher acknowledged that respondent/coresearchers' awareness of the fact the study was being conducted by an American Muslim could have had an impact on respondents' answers. The pretest results suggested that concerns regarding the rightness of responses might influence return response rates, as well as individual answer responses. Tourangeau and Yan (2007) indicated that respondent concern regarding sensitive questions in studies may be expressed by opting out entirely (no response), declining to respond to certain questions, or minimizing/ inflating certain responses. The literature indicated that most research in the area of spirituality did not control for social desirability coresearcher effects (Gray, 2006; Slater, Hall, & Edwards, 2001).

Anonymity is believed to nullify social desirability effects in regard to surveys since the coresearcher does not have to provide personal identification (Slater et al., 2001; Tourangeau & Yan, 2007). Reviews of social desirability effects gleaned over 40 years of surveys reported that the self-administered survey is less likely to produce sociality desirable responses (Tourangeau & Yan, 2007, p.863). The researcher cannot

claim anonymity of the participant/coresearchers given that responses were solicited from a database of Muslim social workers, some known to the researcher. The database includes persons (5 of 38) with whom the current researcher was personally acquainted. That is, the researcher has either worked as a colleague on various committees or projects or has briefly discussed the nature of the investigation with the individual during recruitment. The remaining 33 knew only that the researcher had obtained their contact information from an Islamic data source, the ISSA and was most likely a Muslim given the researcher's Arabic/Islamic surname, El-Amin.

There was no way of knowing specifically who would respond to the questionnaires and there were no personal identifiers for respondents who declined to participate in the interview phase of the study and did not submit contact information. In that sense, there was anonymity for those survey respondents. For respondent/ coresearchers who chose to participate in the indepth interview, the researcher ensured that the final written narrative would not contain any specific identifying data. The study sample initially was proposed to be the first 12 to accept the invitation to participate in the interview. The final number of coresearchers was 15. The rationale for this change is detailed in chapter 4.

The literature recommended triangulating the compared trends, themes, and patterns gleaned from the qualitative interview narratives with those elicited through self administered survey as a means of checking for social desirability effects (Gray, 2006; Tourangeau & Yan, 2007). The current study compared the definitions of spirituality and religion, as well as the degree and nature of religious and spiritual interventions reported

in the survey results against interventions described in the individual interview transcripts. Any differences were expected to manifest within the survey findings. Beyond its stated purpose, another value for this study is that it offers a protocol for the study of culturally specific practitioner attitudes and beliefs about spirituality and religion in social work practice.

Social Change

Walden University has defined "positive social change as a deliberate process of creating and applying ideas, strategies, and actions to promote the worth, dignity, and development of individuals, communities, organizations, institutions, cultures, and societies" (Walden catalog, 2006-2007). Recalling the definition of social work and social work practice, it is the nature of social work to facilitate improved social transactions individually and collectively (Germain, 1979). The literature indicated that the current professional and societal environments within which the American Muslim social worker operates are lacking in general knowledge and sensitivity in the areas of religion and spirituality (Ali et al., 2004; Hague, 2004; Hodge, 2005a). One way to remedy this deficit is through exploration and education.

Significance of Study

Besides offering a culturally specific research paradigm, this study facilitates personal and professional social change providing a venue for increased understanding. The survey and semistructured interview asked the coresearcher to explore the very core of their spiritual/religious relations in the personal, familial and Transcendent areas. Coresearchers were asked to explore and relate their professional experience(s) and

beliefs regarding the integration of spiritual and religious practice interventions. Readers of the study have the opportunity to learn about the practices and beliefs of Muslim social workers from Muslim social work practitioners, which may dispel or confirm previous opinion.

Finally, society benefits as the newly informed researcher/coresearchers and readers reconstruct their personal and practice beliefs and interaction based a new paradigm. This could lead to increased sensitivity and advocacy for all underrepresented religious minority practitioners and clients. The study has and can continue to impact social work competence for the primary researcher, coresearchers and social work colleagues who may read this dissertation. The investigation expands the knowledge base of society in general regarding Muslim professionals in the United States.

Summary

This chapter presented the current state of the literature regarding Muslim social workers' perspectives relative to religion and spirituality, the background for including the religious and spiritual in social work practice, and the rationale for targeting American Muslim social workers for study. The following literature review documents previous research in the area of spirituality and religion in the social work and the sociological constructs of 7th century philosopher Ibn Khaldun's aasibiyah (Rosenthal, 1967) and 19th century Durkheim's (1938) conscience collective and social fact in the context of America's civil religious/spirituality, social work, and Islam. Moustakas (1994) rendering of transcendental phenomenology, will provide the theoretical research foundation.

Canda and Furman (1999), Martin and Martin (2002), and Van Hook et al. (2001) are major contributors to a historical review of social work practice in the United States and the theoretical framework for integrating spirituality into practice. Current attitude research is examined, particularly relative to public perceptions of Islam and Muslims. Various aspects of multidimensional aasibiyah (group feeling), as expressed in the literature is examined as it relates to American Muslims and social workers.

The National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics (1999) and Standards of Cultural Competence (2001) are noted and provide the context for basic social work values and practice ethics. Islamic tenets as they relate to Muslims and social work are delineated and examined within the review (Canda & Furman, 1999; ISSA, 2001; Richards & Bergin, 2000; Van Hook et al., 2001)

Studies regarding social workers' religious and spiritual beliefs and perceptions regarding social work practice are highlighted, particularly the work of Bullis (1996), Canda and Furman (1999), and Hodge (2005) in the section describing the study of social workers' attitudes and perception. Islamic applications will be noted as appropriate (ISSA, 2003; Nadir & Dziegielewski, 2001).

Chapter 3 provides a detailed description and rationale for the research design. Moustakas (1994) is referenced for the theoretical basis of applying the phenomenological procedure throughout the data collection and analysis; building on the scientific methods and rationales originally described by Ibn Khaldun and Durkheim (Durkheim, 1938; Rosenthal, 1957). The results of the survey questionnaire pretest are detailed relative to the development of the final investigational protocol. The rationale for

sample selection, questionnaire, semistructured interview questions, and data analysis strategies was implemented as purported by Akerlind (2005) and Moustakas (1994).

Chapter 4 and chapter 5 report and discuss respectively the data collection results and interpretation. Commonality in theme and patterns are elucidated, examined, and synthesized as they relate to the research questions and previous literature. Implications for future study are generated and explored in the conclusion. The ultimate goal of the study was to facilitate understanding of the interplay between American Muslim social workers' personal and professional integration of religion and spirituality.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Moustakas (1994) defined the nature of the literature review in phenomenological investigations, "The investigator assesses the prior relevant studies; distinguishes their designs, methodologies, and findings from the investigator's own study; and indicates what new knowledge he or she is seeking and expects to gain" (p. 111). Toward this end, the current literature review provides the theoretical background and brackets the conscience collectives of the contextual domains of Islam, American society, the social work profession, and the current research in the area of religion and spirituality in the social sciences and social work.

Description of the Literature Search

Doctoral course work in the areas of social change, systems theory, human development, and advanced practices in social work were all related to some aspect of spirituality or the integration of spirituality in social work practice, particularly concerning Muslim clients and practitioners. The interest generated, served as the impetus for the present investigation. Selected articles and book citations provided a snowball sampling of additional references.

Over 70% of current articles selected for this study were written between 2002 and 2007. They were peer-reviewed; gleaned from university computer library databases: the ASP, the Sociological Index (SOC Index), and ProQuest Dissertations, as well as monographs and bibliographies listed by local university and public libraries. The increased interest in spirituality, relative to the social sciences became more focused during the search (Beck, 2003; Modesto, Weaver, & Flannelly, 2006; Sheridan, 2004).

The literature search evinced an expansion in breadth and depth the areas of spirituality and religion.

One hundred and sixty five selected articles and texts were found within the subject areas of: nursing, psychiatry, social science (i.e., anthropology, sociology, and psychology), social work, spirituality, religion, Islam, Muslim, qualitative research, and phenomenology. These topics were used as single key words or in combination. The ASP reported over 4,800 results in academic journals using the keyword *spirituality* in October of 2006; 5,536 results were reported as of March 19, 2007. The ASP database produced 361 results for the keywords *spirituality and social work*; 451 for *religion and social work* and; 165 for *faith and social work* (March 19, 2007). The SocINDEX database produced 469 results for the keywords *spirituality and social work;* 710 for *religion and social work* and; 306 for *faith and social work (*Retrieved March 19, 2007).

The literature search discovered a circle of contributors within the genre of religion and spirituality in social work, particularly during the last decade. Canda (1999, 2004, and 2005), Furman (2004, 2005), and Hodge (2001-2007a) were noted writer/researchers in the field of social work spirituality and diversity. Hodge had 14 articles dating from 2001 – 2007. Hodge, Canda, and Furman's original works dominated the database and were often cited by other researchers. Schiele (1996) and Martin and Martin (2002) offered spirituality paradigms from the African-centered and Black helping traditions. These works, among others, are cited throughout this dissertation.

Islamic reference material was drawn from the *Holy Quran* (Trans. Ali, 1989), the ISSA (2003), and various supporting texts and articles. Demographic data sources

included the United States State Department (2001), The American Mosque Project (2001) published through the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), and the American Religious Identification Survey (ARIS) (2001). Public opinion polls and additional demographic data was referenced from academic journals, popular media sources, public interest groups, and research organizations (i.e., Newsweek, USA Today, ABC News, Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU), and the PEW Research Center.

Search results increased from a previous search in December, 2006. The ASP database had 16 additional results for the year 2007 using the key words *spirituality*, *religion*, and *social work* (ASP retrieved July 15, 2007). Given the rapidity of change, this review provides just a snapshot of the literature related to spirituality and religion in social work and the American Muslim within the current socio/historical context.

Scarcity

Despite the noted expansion in the area of religion and spirituality, studies focusing on Islamic spirituality are scant. The ASP produced 64 results for the keywords *Islam and spirituality*; 61 results using the keywords *spirituality and Muslim* (Retrieved July 15, 2007). These were reduced to four when the search was limited to studies having an American focus. The SOC Index database produced 54 academic journal results for *Muslim and social work* keywords; 54 results for *Islam and social work* (Retrieved July 15, 2007). These results are an increase of more than 20 results from a previous search (Soc Index retrieved March 19, 2007). This is not to say that other minority groups were

represented in the literature. As previously indicated, minority perspectives from the practitioners' perspectives are practically nonexistent in the literature.

There were few peer reviewed articles referencing Muslim practitioners in the field of social work. No articles were found that focused on American Muslim social workers attitudes, beliefs, or practices. A search within the ASP (Retrieved June 23, 2007) yielded 38 results using the keywords *Muslim and social work*. Only four of the 38 were written from an American framework. Other articles referred to services provided outside of the United States.

The African American Muslim convert and their progeny comprise the largest indigenous Muslim group in the United States (Jackson, 2005; Ohm, 2003). While some studies included African American Muslims as client/coresearchers only one monograph denoted the African American Muslim as practitioner. Even with the increasing number of academic journal results over the last three years, the gap persists relative to Islam and Muslims in social work. Muslim practitioners' views are practically nonexistent. This paucity in the literature provided an additional drive to implement the proposed study.

Framework of the Literature Review

The goal of the literature review was to provide the background and rationale for the proposed investigation. The value of the spiritual/religious theme is expounded in the works of primary theorists, Ibn Khaldun (1381), and Durkheim (1938). Key concepts from Khaldun and Durkheim are synthesized throughout the narrative.

Attitudes and decisions, both personal and professional, are influenced by life experiences and the environmental context in which they occur. Each of these contextual

domains has a culture, or as Tolliver (1997) observed, a "stream of consciousness inclusive of systems, practices, rituals, symbols, taboos, and other schema" (p. 483). Most people live and work in the midst of several cultural conscience collectives that may constrain, liberate, or have no effect depending on the individual's perception and experience. For the purposes of this study, the exploration will be focused on the domains in which American Muslim social workers are presumed to exist.

The following sections examine the group sentiments within three primary cultural schemas of religion and spirituality as purported in the literature; Islam, the religious/spiritual domain in general and in relation to the American public sentiment and practice, and the profession of social work. Religious diversity effects will be noted in the examination of American civil religion/spirituality and the religious perspectives of American Muslims and Islamic spirituality (Ali et al., 2004; ISSA, 2003). The NASW Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice (1999), and Cultural Competence (2001) will be outlined and synthesized into religious and spirituality context, relative to social work practice (Canda & Furman, 1999; Martin & Martin, 2002). Universal understandings of Islamic spirituality will be described, noting the current American attitudes toward Islam (ISSA, 2003; Jackson, 2005). Pertinent texts in all areas will be augmented with current literature. The identified domains will be critically examined relative to their ideology and potential influence on Muslim social workers' personal and professional practice decisions and actions.

The conclusion summarizes the literature, noting gaps in knowledge and the need for additional study. Chapter 3 provides the rationale for the investigation's

phenomenological research design. The study is based on the premise that spirituality (inclusive of religion) is a vital aspect of human existence.

Spirituality—the Basis for Human Being

Islamic religious text and much of the literature attests to the importance and inclusiveness of spirituality (Ali, 1989; Nadir & Dziegielewski, 2001). The Islamic scriptural text, *The Holy Quran* (15:29) stated that life begins when Allah (G'd) breathes His Spirit into the fetus (Ali, 1989). In Islam, all human beings begin as Muslims; born submitting their will to the Will of G'd (Nadir & Dziegielewski, 2001; Rehman & Dziegielewski, 2004). Tolliver (1997) described spirituality with an African American interpretation, "it is not bound by time or physicality, it is integral to the human being, it is the renewable life force, the energy that enlivens the physical and the space where human communion is possible" (p. 479). Van Hook et al. (2001) stated that spirituality "by its very nature, is eclectic, inclusive", and generally described with broad definitions (that does not refer to a specific dogma or creed)… more widely endorsed (than religion) in social work literature (p. 12). The Islamic and African centered ideologies do not readily distinguish between spirituality and religion. Social science has emphasized the Van Hook et al. (2001) approach to the study of spirituality.

Spirituality was noted as relational and holistic, secular and religious by researchers (Hodge & McGrew, 2006; Krieglstein, 2006). One literature review reported that most definitions for spirituality referenced relational features, the feeling or experience of connectedness with G'd/Christ/Higher Power/Transcendent Reality/ Nature etc. (36%); or the personal belief in the same (34%) (Hodge & McGrew, 2006).

Spirituality as a construct was approached from a linear, static perspective, and as a dynamic state of being. The literature was inconclusive relative to the individual or communal nature of spirituality.

Canda and Furman (1999) identified two common categories of definition for spirituality: (a) emic descriptions are individual and person specific (p. 39). Personal expressions of spirituality may vary depending on the socio/historical/cultural context in which they are formed; (b) etic descriptions are broad and universal. The relational spirituality could fit either criterion, without additional clarification. Canda and Furman (1999) coined a third term; transemic, which combines the optimal features of the etic and emic "to affirm both the particular and universal aspects" (p.39). Many considered religion to be a determining transemic characteristic of spirituality (Martin & Martin, 2002; Schiele, 2000).

Benefit of Religion and Spirituality

The current literature almost exclusively pointed toward positive emotional and physical health benefits in their findings (Hassouneh-Phillips, 2003; Miller & Thorensen, 2003). Spirituality and religion is associated with a "personal sense of well-being that transcends declining physical health" (Miller & Thorensen, 2003, p. 11). Prosocial interactive relations are noted among the benefits of being "highly religious" (Mattis & Jagers, 2001, p. 524). Martin and Martin stated that "spirituality is a strength and gift" (p. 203) to African Americans. Quranic recitation, prayer and meditation were among the Islamic practices reported as sources of solace in times of distress for Muslim women (Hassouneh-Phillips, 2003).

Richards and Bergin (2000) summarized research in the area of mental health, religiousness and spirituality. The authors reported a synopsis of 15 advantages to religious commitment including decreased depression, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse, divorce rates, and juvenile delinquency (p. 14). Spirituality and religiousness are linked with an overall sense of well being, particularly for the elderly and in palliative care (Oliver, 2003; Williams, 2004). Studies reported that people commonly turn to their religious tradition and practice in times of crisis and in everyday affairs (Favor, 2004; Hall, Dixon, & Mauzey, 2004). Noting the importance of spirituality, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) now mandates that client evaluation include an assessment of spirituality (Hodge, 2003). The literature was not unanimous in its embrace of religion and spirituality.

Criticisms

Social science ideology was alleged by some to be the antithesis of spirituality. Sperry (2001) recounted a history making event in which dual treatments (psychological vs. Priest/exorcist) were administered to the same patient. The exorcism failed and, per Sperry, religion was there after deemed lacking (p. 6). Freud's psychoanalytic theory, which has dominated the social sciences, linked religion with "neurotic reality-denying fantasies and normative controls" (Canda & Furman, 1999, p.162). The literature did not refute that religion has been linked to delusional thoughts and socially unacceptable behaviors in some patients (Griffith & Griffith, 2002). However, what is considered abhorrent in one culture may be an accepted practice for others (Canda & Furman, 1999). Public witness of the ritual washing preparation for prayer practiced by Muslims might

look strange or compulsive to the uninformed. Psychiatric patients have indicated that religion and spirituality serves as a resource in "self-development, spiritual relations, resolve, and restraint" rather reinforcing illness (Bussema, 2000).

The primary issue has been the fundamental difference in ideology. Religion and spirituality are based in the metaphysical and transpersonal (Schiele, 2000; Wilber, 2000). Psychodynamic theory considered religion and spirituality as sources of psychopathology and it was studied as such (Schiele, 2000, p. 162). Psychodynamic theory is focused on drives motivated by passion and aggression (Schiele, 2000, p. 8). Based on these arguments, opponents have insisted that spirituality and religion be left to the theologians with no legitimate place in social science (Clark, 1994; Praglin, 2004). Clark (1994) and Praglin's (2004) comments were specific to social work and are detailed later in the narrative.

The mysticism and vagueness associated with the emic nature of spirituality and the specificity of religious doctrine have been noted issues of concern relative to the aforementioned criticisms (Bullis, 1996; Krieglstein, 2006). Social science researchers have challenged negative associations and the nebulous aspects of the religious and spiritual (Canda & Furman, 1999; Miller & Thorensen, 2003).

Differentiating Religion and Spirituality

Researchers have been divided in their approach to the study of spirituality in the social sciences (Schiele, 2000). The etic and emic challenges have been declared. In response, most researchers have quantified religion and spirituality by noting the operational determinants that distinguish the two (Hodge, 2007a; Worthington &

Sandage, 2001). Some non-Western paradigms, including the Islamic worldview, the African centered paradigm, and transpersonal psychology have not differentiated the religious from the spiritual. The terms are used interchangeably, each as a facet of the other (Martin & Martin, 2002; Wilber, 2000).

Religion

The literature described religion as a socially organized institutional dogma and belief system (Hodge & McGrew, 2006; Modesto et al., 2006). Krieglstein (2006) noted that religion often consists of a prescriptive set of "rules and regulations" (p.24) exemplifying a doctrine of belief. These constraints on human behavior may be experienced from within (intrinsic) or without (extrinsic) as imposed by Divine or human authority (Para, 2). Bullis (1996) stated that religion refers to observable practices performed within a particular tradition, including but not limited to "rituals, dogmas and creeds, and denominational identity" (p. 2).

Religious Purpose

Hugen (2001) expressed that religious "social and communal" (p. 11) functions are of equal interest when considering spirituality (Van Hook et al., 2001). Just as the individual function and purpose of spirituality and religion may vary from person to person, the collective effect will likely be socially interpreted and expressed on an individual and collective basis.

Religion is characterized by tradition specific collective rituals, symbols, and beliefs (Bullis, 1996; Krieglstein, 2006). Batson, Schoenrade, & Ventis, (1993) observed reciprocity between a person's religious and spiritual life (p. 21). Spirituality is reinforced

through religious practice, which in turn, reinforces spirituality. In Islam, religious practices, such as prayer are associated with increased G'd consciousness (Taqwa/Spirituality); increased G'd consciousness enhances the likelihood of remembrance of worship (prayer) (Shaarawy & Schaffer, 1998).

Historically, religion has served both functional and dysfunctional communal purposes. Religious extremism is one example of dysfunction (Batson, et al., 1993). Bigotry and fanaticism in the name of religion has been a disruptive, divisive, and oppressive constraining force (p.12). African American religious history denotes both functional and dysfunctional experience with religion. Religion provided protection and vulnerability during the period of enslavement and in the aftermath of sociohistorical economic disenfranchisement (Jackson, 2005). Concurrently, the American Protestant church sanctioned and at times, fostered slavery and prejudice (Jackson, 2005; Martin & Martin, 2002). Jackson credited the Black religious movement in America with setting the stage for many African Americans' conversion to Islam (p. 29).

Religiosity

The manner and degree of religious expression has been identified as religiosity. Canda and Furman (1999) described the observable aspects of religiousness as "religious propensity" (p. 57). They noted that people may present with a "spiritual religious propensity" (i.e., a spirituality with religious references) or a "nonreligious propensity", that is, having an absence of religious reference (p. 57). Religious and spiritual propensity is evidenced in individual or collective expressions of religion.

The unifying influence of performing religious practices in concert and cooperation were noted keys to success. The early sociologists and historians associated religious consciousness and religiosity with successful civilization (Ibn Khaldun, trans. Rosenthal, 1957; Durkheim, trans. Giddens, 1972).

Early Religious Social Philosophy

The literature referenced pioneers of social and spiritual thought, such as Durkheim, Husserl, Ibn Khaldun, James, Jung, Marx, Weber, and Wilber, among others (Canda & Furman, 1999; Van Hook, et al., 2001). Ibn Khaldun and Durkheim were selected as primary theorists for this study because of the religious foundation for most, if not all of their works. Their terminology (i.e., aasibiyah, social fact, collective conscience) interfaced well with the phenomenological paradigm and the social and individual cultural aspects of spirituality and religion (Rosenthal, 1957).

Selected Theorists Ibn Khaldun and Durkheim

Ibn Khaldun (1381) and Durkheim (1938) offered early reference to religion and spirituality in the social sciences. Khaldun was a 14th century Berber historian and Islamic scholar. Hitti has noted him as the "father of sociology" (as cited by Simon, 2002, p.8). The literature primarily referenced the work *The Muqaddimah* (1381), translated from the original language of Arabic (Rosenthal, 1958; 1967).

The Muqaddimah was the introduction of *Kitab al Ibar (History of the World)*. Ibn Khaldun described it as, "The nature of civilization….The causes and reasons thereof" (p. 33). As stated, Ibn Khaldun's philosophy was religiously based and is thought to represent the "Muslim intellectual mind" (Dhaouadi, 2005).

Successful human civilization, per Ibn Khaldun, was achieved only through a consciousness of The Divine. Ibn Khaldun followed an Islamic process for discerning the truth: first he sought guidance from The Creator (Holy Quran, 2; 38); secondly he observed Creation (Holy Quran, 50; 20-21) and when necessary; he sought consult from knowledgeable sources (Holy Quran, 39; 9) (Ali, 1989; Rosenthal, 1958; Shararawy & Schaffer, 1998). Khaldun credited G'd as giving human beings the power to overcome individual desires in the interest of the common good (p.125).

Ibn Khaldun's (1381) basic theory of aasibiyah/group feeling has contemporary application. Aasibiyah refers to the bond between human beings, usually forged through kinship (i.e., marriage and birth). It has been the basis for cooperative relational living in the human experience. In the traditional Islamic sense, it had a negative connotation, because it was generally translated to mean "blind allegiance, intense clannishness, or tribalism" (Hans Wehr, 1976). This interpretation was denounced in the Islamic Holy Text, *The Holy Quran* (6:153) which encouraged human kind to honor truth and righteousness (G'd Consciousness) regardless of possible implication or consequence to relatives and clan (Ali, 1989).

This study expanded the rendering of meaning of aasibiyah to include shared beliefs by persons allied by social associations, such as those within professional, national, socioeconomic, racial, and religious bonds. In this sense aasibiyah may have the potential to influence beliefs, attitudes, and practices of the individual and group. Group feeling/aasibiyah was a precursor construct to Durkheim's (1938) conscience collective and an example of what Durkheim called a social fact (Giddens, 1972).

Durkheim brought new understandings and terminology to sociology. It is unknown whether he was aware of Ibn Khaldun's work, but his conscience collective and social facts seem to be correlates of group feeling/aasibiyah. Social facts were described by Durkheim (1938) as:

> A social fact is every way of acting, fixed or not, capable of exercising on the individual an external constraint; or again, every way of acting which is general throughout a given society, while at the same time existing in its own right independent of its individual manifestation. (p. 13).

A social fact can exist with or without a social organization (p.4). The aasibiyah of religiousness or spirituality could qualify as a social fact under the given criteria.

Durkheim stated that "religion is the primary form of the conscience collective" (p. 172). Conscience collective, as described by Durkheim refers to the value system consciously shared by most within a culture or group (Giddens, 1972). The group sentiment within the conscience collective would represent the aasibiyah of the group. The conscience collective can exist on different levels and is strongest when group adherents forgo their individual desire in lieu of the groups' goals and values (p.9). This is the kind of communal aasibiyah referenced by Ibn Khaldun.

Conscience Collective Domains

Aasibiyah, conscience collective, and social fact terminology is applicable to understanding culturally specific ideology in group affiliation. Batson et al. (1993) observed multidimensional individual and collective influences on religious/spiritual expression. Gender, race, socioeconomic statuses, level of education, size of community, and parent's religion were noted areas of influence (p. 37-43). The aasibiyah/conscience

collective mindset associated with any one of these schemas may affect an individual's religious/spiritual consciousness and behavior.

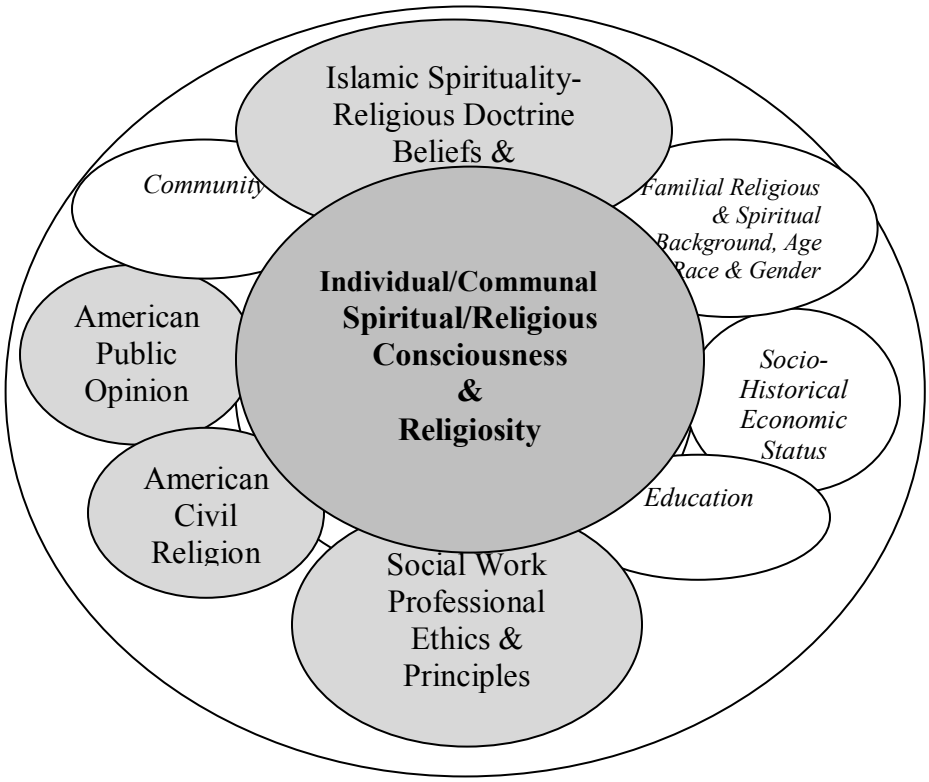

Figure 1. Influential domains of conscience collective.

The Batson et al.(1993) concept of influential domains has been adapted for the current study and is presented in Figure 1. The schema depicts the central prominence of spiritual/religious consciousness surrounded by circles representing influential conscience collective domains.

The socio/historical, education, age, gender, community, and familial factors are encircled with a light background in italics. These factors will not be part of this study's focus. The remaining domains featured in the shaded circles of Figure 1, are described

and synthesized as social facts (i.e., potential forces that individually or collectively affect spiritual/ religious consciousness or behavior).

The literature review has thus far noted monograph philosophies and meta-analyses of research in the area of religion and spirituality denoting the benefits or criticisms relative to the social sciences (Bullis, 1996; Canda & Furman, 1999; Schiele, 2000). The following sections will integrate the conscience collective domains of the American public, traditional, and new class American civil religious views, social work perspectives, and Islamic spirituality.

Current American Spiritual/Religious Perspectives

The literature indicated that most Americans (90%) believe in G'd and while church attendance has been declining, the majority (96%) acknowledged religious affiliation (McCauley et al., 2005; Worthington & Sandage, 2001). Surveys conducted among American Protestants and Americans in general indicated that views on religion and spirituality are changing in favor of spirituality rather than religion (Marler & Hadaway, 2002; Shahabi et al., 2000). While most view themselves as religious and spiritual, younger generations are more inclined to view themselves as spiritual only rather than religious only (Marler & Hadaway, 2002). Americans that viewed themselves as both religious and spiritual tend not to distinguish between the concepts to any great extent (p. 293). Most understand them to be separate overlapping constructs. American religiosity is expressed through its civil religious/spirituality.

American Civil Religion and Spirituality

Civil religion is defined as the "fundamental values and beliefs about the relation between people and sacred powers that become pervasive through a society, even beyond the bounds of a particular religious institution" (Huntington, 2004, p.55). Four features of civil religion are: (a) The American religious foundation for government and its acknowledgement of divine authority, (b) Belief in American's "being G'd's chosen" (p,104), (c) religious language common to American rhetoric an example would be "In G'd we Trust"(Para 3), and (d) The religious aura of national ceremonies and holidays (Huntington, 2004, p.105). Canda and Furman (1999) offered a similar description of civil religion that included spirituality (p. 55).

Civil religion in America does not recognize any particular denomination, but is understood to be representative of Christianity with allowances for Judaism (Canda & Furman, 1999; Huntington, 2004). Kristol (1999) stated "Americans have always thought of themselves as a Christian nation, equally tolerant of all religions so long as they were congruent with traditional Judeo Christian morality" (as cited by Huntington, 2004, p. 101). The dominance of Christian belief was documented in a national survey conducted in 1998 (Shahabi et al., 2002). Newsweek (2007) reported that of the 87% that stated they identified with a specific religion, 82% indicated they were Christian. Hodge (2002) suggested that the strength of traditional American civil religion is threatened by a migration of religious thought in America.

America's new class. Hodge (2002; 2006) expounded on a theme originally presented as Hunter's (1994) new class theory. The new class spiritual adherents were described as professional and individualistic, having antitraditional and proliberal mores

(Hodge, 2002). A product of the information age, new class interests are pushed through media based power and political prowess (p.402). Hunter's theory was not new, Durkheim (1938) too theorized that mankind has an inherent need to question and mentally reconstruct traditional religion (p. 242). As the traditional religious worldview is fragmented, a new conscience collective emerges. Ibn Khaldun (1381) similarly noted a cyclical power shift in what he called the "royal authority" (p. 47).

Other researchers observed an evolution in American and social science views but did not identify the changes as new class (Goud, 1990; Schiele, 2000). Shahabi et al. (2002) found ideological elements of this group within a national study of American adults. Self-reporting as spiritual only, adults were aggregated to be in the nonreligious, female, college educated, politically liberal, and nihilistic strata of society (p.65). Nihilistic was defined as feeling life has no purpose (p. 64). These findings corroborate the previously reported decreases in religious identification (Marler & Hadaway, 2002). The new class of American thought actively competes with traditional aasibiyah.

The right to religion. Some argued that the secular worldview is imposed on any who would claim to be religious (Moens, 2004; Schweitzer, 2005). Citing the First Amendment a vocal minority have called for the removal of predominantly Christian religious references and symbolism (Moens, 2004). Religion and spirituality have been made to seem trivial and passé. Schweitzer (2005) argued that the lack of clarity defining the human right to religion in the 1989 United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child, infringes on the child's right to religion (p.104). The author noted that the "right to religious freedom" (p. 104) deemed important in the Oslo Declaration on Freedom and

Religion (1989) has not been afforded to children (Schweitzer, 2005). In its effort to protect the rights of the non and other religious, the new class's secular worldview has been applied as standard to all.

The resultant conscience collective, as Durkheim might have predicted, has actively subverted fundamentalist ideologies, particularly those of Evangelical Christians, Catholics, and Muslims, according to Hodge (2002). Durkheim suggested that the strength of a religious conscience collective lies in the active members' participation in the ritual and practice of the tradition, which reinforces Batson et al.'s theory of reciprocity (Giddens, 1972, p. 243). Despite the new class concerns, the majority of adult Americans has a religious affiliation, attend religious services and pray (ARDA, 2007). Most Americans continue to adhere to Christianity and are deemed highly religious by popular and academic data sources (Huntington, 2004; Worthington & Sandage, 2001). The literature noted, however, that highly religious is not exclusively Christian (Hodge, 2006). America's religiosity has a pluralistic perspective.

Religious/Spiritual Diversity

Religious diversity is not just new class versus traditional Christian or Jewish mores. The literature reported a growing multiplicity in American religious orientation and spiritual thought (Richards & Bergin, 2000; Van Hook et al., 2001). America has served as a haven of religious freedom for incoming immigrants, apostates, and converts alike, who wish to establish and maintain their religious/nonreligious traditions on American soil (Huntington, 2004).

Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, New Age, and others are part of an expanding religious/spiritual mosaic in the United States (Shahabi et al., 2002; Van Hook et al., 2001). In 2001, the religious profile in America was reported as: 84.1% Christian, 9.3% nonreligious, 1.9% Jewish, 1.6% Muslim, .9% Buddhist, .5% Atheist, .5% Neo-religious, .4% Hindu, .4% Ethno-religious, and .3% Baha'i (ARDA, 2007). Since 1989 there has been an increase in the percentage of Muslim, Baha'i, Jewish, Mormons, and Evangelical Protestants. Huntington (2000) identified the influx of varied religions and ethnicities as a challenge to "American core culture" (p.171). The social science literature overall did not emphasize the new class threat which seems more seated in the political science genre.

American Response

Barna, President of Barna Research Ltd. stated, "While many Americans are not practicing Christians, they retain some identity with the Christian faith and remain protective of it. They are suspicious of other faith groups because they are unknown but different" (as cited by Religious Tolerance.org, retrieved December 6, 2006). The American societal mindset is comprised of more than its civil religious aasibiyah. Public opinion of any particular group is mitigated by personal experience and knowledge of communication venues of academia and the media (Bateson, 1994).

Islam is the reported fastest growing non-Christian religion in the United States (ISSA, 2003; Hodge, 2005a). Islam was just another religious piece of America's multicultural pie until the 9/11 attacks in 2001 (CAIR, 2007). Huntington (2000) stated that after 9/11, Islam became the enemy of American civil religion (p. 263). The following section examines public opinion regarding Muslims in America.

American Public Opinion—Islamophobia vs. Reality

Islamophobia as a concept originated in Europe and predates 9/11. It is defined as "the unfounded hostility towards Islam" (Hopkins & Kahani-Hopkins, 2006, p. 251). A 2007 ASP database search produced 76 academic results using the keyword, *Islamophobia* alone. The results were dated 1996 to 2007. Public opinion regarding Islam and Muslims has varied over the years; commensurate with American civil religious/spiritual sentiment.

When asked about Islam, most Americans reported feeling fearful, adverse, and uninformed. Panagopoulos (2006) reported on poll trends regarding American perceptions of Islam, Arabs, and Muslim Americans. Americans are said to be resentful and have an increased anxiety about the compatibility of Islam and American values, as Huntington (2000) implied (Panagopoulos, 2006). Most have little or no knowledge of the basic Islamic tenets. Forty percent of the American public feel that the 9/11 attacks represent Islamic teachings (Panagopoulos, 2006)

Jackson (2007), a University of Michigan professor of law and Islamic Studies, was asked to comment on Islamophobia. He stated that misconceptions (as the new class perspective would predict) are largely due to misinformation purported by non-Muslim sources and their reactions to reported actions of Muslims in the Middle East (Islamic Social Policy and Understanding [ISPU], lecture, April 6, 2007). He challenged the predominantly American Muslim audience to stand up, and not let extremist Middle Eastern Muslims' behavior define American Islamic spirituality. Jackson noted that no other American religious group allows itself to be defined outside of it and asserted that

American Jewish identity is not determined by Jewish behavior in Israel). The investigation of Muslim social workers' personal and professional perspectives on religion and spirituality conducted by a Muslim practitioner is a step toward the address of Jackson's challenge.

The literature supported Jackson's (2007) blame of the media for much of the Islamophobic conscience collective in America (Crockatt, 2004). Hodge (2005a) has referenced literature indicating that media influence is largely responsible for shaping public discourse by defining and creating terminology through which the public "understands" distinct populations (p. 46). Through the media, Muslim and Islam have become synonymous with Arab and terrorist (Haddad, Smith, & Moore, 2006). Muslims' values and interests are presumed to be very different from American values (Panagopoulos, 2006). Not so different, according to the Pew Research Center (2007) report.

The United States Department of State (2001) reported that Muslim involvement in the political process is a growing trend (U.S. Dept. of State, 2001). The first Muslim congressman was recently elected by the state of Minnesota (Congresspedia, 2006). Even though the congressman is an African American Muslim, criticism referenced the increasing number of immigrant Muslims and Islam as a threat to the American way (Gray, 2006). The issue became heated when the newly elected lawmaker chose to swear in using the Holy Quran (Islamic holy text). Rep. Goode sent a letter to his constituents:

> I fear that in the next century we will have many more Muslims in the United States if we do not adopt strict immigration policies that I believe are necessary to preserve the values and beliefs traditional to the United States (Congresspedia, 2006).

The founding fathers of America seemed to quill the dissent; Thomas Jefferson's Holy Quran, loaned from the United States' Library of Congress was the scripture used for the official swearing in ceremony. Again, the major contributor to the problem was the general lack of knowledge about Islam, its history in America, and America's Muslims.

Intervention Needed

The American religious cultural domain is multidimensional and complex. The country's civil spirituality, both secular and religious has the potential to be tolerant and bigoted or constraining and liberating. Post 9/11 Islamophobia has stimulated the public's desire to learn and the Muslim community to educate about Islam (Bagby, 2001; Nadir & Dziegielewski, 2001). Bagby's (2001) report on American mosques noted that many masajid now have outreach programs and participate in interfaith dialogue. The ISSA has produced several publications aimed at desensitizing the American healthcare professional to Muslim clients' concerns. The authors indicated that sensitivity training is essential relative to Muslims and Islam (p. 162).

Islamophobia is a real phenomenon. It is unknown whether it qualifies as a social fact. The social work profession realizes a need to counter bigotry and ignorance through the inclusion of an Islamic perspective in an increased effort to provide competent social services to Muslims (Canda & Furman, 1999; Hodge, 2005a; Van Hook et al., 2001). Hodge (2005a) cautioned that Islamophobia has infiltrated social work education and service delivery toward Muslims (p. 163). Reamer (2003) countered allegations regarding bias in the profession and stated that "Whatever position social workers take; however,

they must do so in a way that is consistent with the professions' democratically determined mission, values, and ethical standards" (p. 430). It is the duty and responsibility of social work to advocate for a more accurate understanding and sensitivity for all religious cultures.

Social Work Values and Practice Ethics

Social workers that opposed the integration of religion in practice often cited concerns of practitioners' violation of the social work Code of Ethics or Standards of Practice. It is feared that through proselytization, lack of training or an inability to resolve perceived or real incompatible ideologies, the treatment may be harmful rather than beneficial (Clark, 1994; Praglin, 2004). Including spirituality, religion in particular, some have feared will cause others to question the legitimacy of the profession or infringe on church and state separation (Modesto et al., 2006; Praglin, 2004). Advocates for inclusion retorted that to omit religion and spirituality from practice infringes on clients' treatment needs (Canda & Furman, 1999; Hodge, 2005a).

Definition

The social work profession is defined as "The professional activity of helping individuals, groups, or communities to enhance or restore their capacity for social functioning and to create societal conditions favorable to their goals" (NASW, 1973 as cited by Hepworth & Larsen, 1986). The 1999 mission of social work has not changed, it is to assist the marginalized, oppressed and impoverished by meeting "the basic human needs of all people" (NASW, 1999). The Social Work Code of Ethics was established by the NASW to provide the framework for professional social work in the United States.

Values

The NASW has established 6 core values and accompanying ethical principles within the mission of the social work profession. The NASW stated that the Code of Ethics is provided to assist with "decision making and conduct when ethical issues arise" (NASW, 1999).

1. Service: Social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems.
2. Social Justice: Social workers challenge social injustice.
3. Dignity and worth of person: Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person.
4. Importance of human relationships: Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships.
5. Integrity: Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner.
6. Competence: Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise.

Researchers argued for inclusion and exclusion of religion and spirituality in social work practice based on interpretations of how Code of Ethics and Standards should be applied (Canda & Furman, 1999; Clark, 1994).

Religion and Spirituality in Social Work

Social science literature indicated that most American spiritual and religious beliefs are diverse (Van Hook et al., 2001). The social worker in the United States is likely to encounter consumers who expect to have their religious/spiritual orientation be

included or at least addressed in the treatment process (Hermert, 1994). Carroll (1998) stated "To address the spirituality of our clients is not to practice religion but is to affirm the wholeness of their being." (as cited by Canda, 1998, p. 11). Social work researchers throughout the literature referenced the religious beginnings and the impact of spirituality in the provision of service within the helping traditions (Canda & Furman, 1999; Martin & Martin, 2002).

Historical Overview

Social work in the United States had its origins in social welfare through Christian and Jewish religious institutions (Canda & Furman, 1999; Martin & Martin, 2002). The settlement house movement and race work within the Black helping tradition were often housed within the church (Bullis, 1996; Martin & Martin, 2002). Canda (2004) and Martin and Martin (2000) suggested that social work is a special calling to serve. After World War II, government funded social welfare agencies became the base for social work services, separating church and state (Canda & Furman, 1999; Martin & Martin, 2002). This shift coincided with the evolution of the new class ideology. Efforts to establish social work as a legitimate profession led many to answer their call outside of a religious context.

During the 1920s thru the 1970s religiosity in social work was shunned in lieu of Freudian and behavioralist paradigms (Canda & Furman, 1999; Modesto et al., 2006; Praglin, 2004). The reader may recall that the battle between the physician and the priest exorcist was lost in favor of the former, which reinforced the sentiment that religion and social science were mismatched (Sperry, 2001). Siedenburg (1922), then Dean of Loyola

University's School of Sociology, recognized the changing sentiment and argued that religious value was the very essence of social work. "Social work and religion alike tend to a normal life in a normal world, to the physical, mental, and moral development of man. Social work aims in particular that man have life; religion that he have it abundantly" (p. 637).

Even as social work schools and service providers began to estrange themselves from religion, the ties of service were not completely severed. Social work continued to thrive in organizations such as the Jewish Social Services, Catholic Charities, and Lutheran Social Services (Bullis, 1996; Modesto et al., 2006). It was especially strong in the African American community (Martin & Martin, 2002). Krieglstein (2006) argued that while the discipline eschewed religion and spirituality, practitioners in the field recognized its value on a daily basis through their client interaction.

During the 1990s quest for greater spiritual understanding in America, social work began to revisit the benefits of integrating spirituality and religion into practice (Bullis, 1996; Hodge, 2006b; Martin & Martin, 2002). The Bush Administration's faith-based initiatives advocated and provided governmental support to religious institutions for provision of services (Massey, 2006). This initiative and the public religious sentiment have encouraged social science to reconsider the value of the religious and spiritual.

Resurgence

In response to the increased public interest and the fact that spirituality and religion in social work was never entirely absent, there is an expanse of new research and

literature pertaining to religion and spirituality in social work (Canda & Furman, 1999). The current clinical studies advocated and supported the use of spirituality as part of a strength based paradigm of treatment (Banerjee & Pyles, 2004). Therapeutic examples of spirituality in family practice addressed death, marriage, divorce, aging, and other family concerns (Carson & Erickson, 2002). Spiritual assessment strategies are a growing topic of interest (Hodge, 2001; 2002; Sheridan, 2004).

Professional bodies have begun to necessitate the address of the religious and spiritual in social work practice. The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) has required spiritual assessment as part of practice since 2001 (Hodge, 2006c). The American Psychiatric Association's (APA) Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) added religion and spirituality as a V-code to its "Other Conditions That May Be a Focus of Clinical Attention" (Praglin, 2004, p. 16) in 1994 (Praglin, 2004). The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) (1994) has added a spiritual component to the social work education curriculum (Praglin, 2004). Graduate and undergraduate level courses in social work are teaching spirituality in social work in over 51 schools (Bethel, 2004; Canda, 2004). The inclusion of religion and spirituality in mental and physical healthcare and in social work education reinforced the legitimacy of practitioner and researchers' interest.

Addressing Opposition

During resurgence of research in the area of religion and spirituality in social work, former criticisms resurfaced regarding the ambiguity of spirituality and religion and social work discipline's general lack of preparedness to integrate spirituality (Clark,

1994). Advocates have admitted that practice guidelines are lacking, leaving spiritual integration to the individual social worker's discretion (Canda & Furman, 1999). Those against the prospect of spiritual/religious social work have voiced fears that without standards, inclusion enables social workers to impose their worldviews, harming individual clients and the profession at large (Clark, 1994).

O'Conner and Vandenberg (2005) reported a disturbing study regarding practitioner's predisposition to find the beliefs of some religious clients pathological. The DSM- IV guidelines caution practitioners to consider the client's religious beliefs in diagnosing mental illness. The study compared practitioners' diagnoses with and without knowledge of the clients' religious orientation. The results suggested that the greater the disparity between practitioner's view of normal and the clients' worldview, the more likely the client was viewed as delusional (p. 613). The Nation of Islam's ideology was deemed pathological with and without knowledge of the religion (p. 614). Given the current misconceptions and lack of knowledge of Islam, Muslims in general may be vulnerable to a similar type of discrimination.

The general position evinced in the literature review directs the social worker toward a position of neutrality and advocacy, promoting equality in rights, treatment, and opportunity (Hodge, 2005, 2005a; Richards & Bergin, 2000). Harmful spirituality in whatever form it may present (i.e. bigotry, delusions, etc) is to be confronted (Canda & Furman, 1999; Hodge, 2005, 2005a). Social workers who find themselves incapable of implementing social work standards and values, religious or other reasons, should seek an alternative profession (Krieglstein, 2006).

The lack of experience and training in the integration of spirituality and religion into practice has been a major caveat in the drive to have spirituality and religion integrated into social work (Hodge, 2005; Sheridan, 2004). Hugen (2001) noted that "social workers have been trained think that their own or their client's religious involvement or faith has little or no relevance for everyday professional practice" (p. 1). Social workers, who employ spiritual interventions, do so without formal guidelines (Canda & Furman, 1999; Hodge, 2005).

The NASW (1999) offered the following directive when social workers are attempting to provide services in an area without generally recognized standards: The practitioner is enjoined and expected to assume responsibility for the acquisition of the necessary knowledge and experience for the protection of clients rights (p.6; NASW, 2001 Standard # 8). As noted, the CSWE addressed spiritual/religious educational deficits through the addition of religion as a feature of their human diversity in social work curriculum (Krieglstein, 2006). While the curriculum is now open to the inclusion of spirituality and religion, some social work texts do not apply the same sensitivity and neutrality (Hodge, 2007). Another aspect of conflicting ideologies is manifested in intolerance within the ranks of social work practitioners.

Discrimination within the Ranks

Social justice is not relegated to the client/practitioner relationship alone. Hodge (2002) argued that the new class influence on social work policy has led to disparate application of social work standards to the religious in favor of the liberal worldview. Universities and social service agencies reportedly have been reticent to support staff or

students with interests in integrating spirituality into practice. Hodge argued, "Just as gay men, lesbians, and feminists are treated with sensitivity and respect, so too should Evangelicals, Catholics and Muslims" (p. 406). Fell (2004) rebutted Hodge's (2002a) claims questioning the veracity of alleged bias.

Hodge (2007) conducted a survey among the ranks of the NASW in order to confirm or disprove religious discrimination. The study did not confirm the contention of an increased number of religious discrimination reports among respondents. Fundamentalists did report feeling more discrimination than others. Recent curriculum inclusion of spirituality and religion in social work education was attributed with decreasing bias toward religiosity within the social work ranks (Hodge, 2007).

Research

Increased knowledge and clarity of meaning as evinced in the previous example was the result of an effective educational spiritual intervention in social work education. This represents the kind of social change that is possible through phenomenological research. The literature cited theoretical and qualitative examples of spiritual/religious applications to assessment, cognitive therapy, and narrative therapy as part of a general strength based paradigm (Boyd-Franklin, 2006; Sheridan, 2004). However, there was little empirical or qualitative data relative to the effectiveness or client's attitudes regarding specific spiritual interventions (Sheridan, 2004; Sheridan et al., 1992). The primary emphasis in the literature was religion and spirituality as part of a cultural competence/sensitivity paradigm.

Spiritual/Culturally Specific Sensitivity

The previous sections reported that the ethnic/spiritual and cultural composition of America is changing despite the dominant Christian and secular civil spiritual/religious worldviews. Global communication advances have allowed immigrants to maintain ties to their homelands, making them less likely to assimilate into American cultural and behavioral practices (Huntington, 2004).

Race, ethnicity, and religion have an accompanying individual and collective aasibiyah (group feeling) that results in a diverse expression of religiosity within traditions (Canda & Furman, 1999, p. 97). Practitioners are cautioned against applying a homogeneous approach to individual clients based on their ethnicity or religious identification. Clients are sensitive to how they are being received by practitioners whom they imagine have a preconceived notion of who and what they are religiously, ethnically and racially (Aymer, 2002). The competency issue has been a point of contention between opponents and advocates of including spirituality and religion in social work.

Cultural Competency

The literature noted new emphasis on the need for increased competence, sensitivity, and knowledge in response to diversity in the workplace and the clientele (Hyde & Hopkins, 2004). Clients are reportedly reticent to seek help from practitioners whom they perceive as uninformed or misinformed regarding religious and spirituality specificity (Ali et al., 2004). Culturally competent social workers' are to incorporate the spiritual and religious reflecting "a heightened consciousness of how clients experience their uniqueness and deal with their differences and similarities within a larger context" (Hyde & Hopkins, 2004, p.8).

It is important for practitioners to recognize the inherent strengths and challenges for a particular religious orientation (Canda & Furman, 1999; Hodge, 2002). Aymer (2002) stated that Black clients and practitioners are influenced by their socio/historical experiences relative to the interplay between and amongst their varied cultural domains. Societal and institutional racism was noted to generate a "smoldering anger" (p. 18) within Black practitioners and clients. This anger can be channeled productively in treatment by accessing dormant and conscious spirituality (Martin & Martin, 2002; Schiele, 1996). The literature delineated challenges specific to the Muslim in America as targets of overt and covert Islamophobia (Hodge, 2005a; Nadir & Dziegielewski, 2001).

The social worker is ethically bound to seek a general understanding and sensitivity of the salient conscience collectives of the clients' environment (Martin & Martin, 2002). They are to assess the client's level of associative aasibiyah and plan treatment accordingly. The spiritually sensitive practitioner should consider religious and spiritual orientation (theirs and the client's), as well as the client's needs and desires as part of a holistic treatment approach in the application of each of the stated values and principles (Canda & Furman, 1999).

American Social Workers

Likeminded social workers have organized around their religious or ethnic aasibiyah and conscience collective since the inception of the profession. A general internet search using the key words *social work* and a specific cultural title has offered associated links to the National Association of Jewish Social Workers (NAJSW) born of the Graduate School for Jewish Social Work founded in 1932; the National Association

of Christian Social Workers (NACSW) founded in 1957 and; the National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW) founded in 1968 (Google Search, 2007). One of the oldest social work educational institutions was The National Catholic School of Social Service, founded in 1918 (Dogpile, 2007). Academic databases did not produce results for these social work organizations and schools (Search attempt, ASP, July 26, 2007). Most of the journal articles cited the National Association of Social Work (NASW) which was founded in 1955 when referencing social work in the United States (NASW, 2007).

The literature has considered the NASW membership to be representative of social workers in America (Canda & Furman, 1999). The NASW website reported a membership of 150,000 social workers in 56 chapters nationwide (NASW, 2007). It was estimated that 75% of the social workers in the United States are NASW members (Hodge, 2004).

Hodge (2004) compared NASW demographics from 1988 to the General Social Survey (GSS) demographic data for social workers. The racial compositions were similar, although African American social workers were noted to be less likely to affiliate with the NASW membership as noted in Table 1.

Table 1

Comparison of General Population and Social Work Demographics

Ethnicity	*GSS*	*NASW*
Majority White	85%	88%
African American	12%	6%

A comparison of the social worker perceptions to the general public suggested that social workers were more likely to live in a racially mixed neighborhood and be proponents of free speech, whether the proposed speaker was antireligion, racist, communist, homosexual, or militarist. Most social workers presented a more neutral attitude/liberal attitude than the general public would convey. New class/post modern conscience collective has likely been a factor in current social workers' perceptions, as well as the fact that social workers are trained to approach treatment with a nonjudgmental neutral eye. Overall, the research suggested that the composition of the NASW reflects that of the general social work population at large. Social workers' opinions, compared to those of the general public, are reflective of the aasibiyah of the profession, such as the right to self determination (NASW, 2001).

Social Work Demographics

The NASW (2003) reported that the demographic composition of its membership is almost entirely White (88.5%), female (78.0%), born prior to 1960 (73%), hold masters degrees in social work (91%), and are married (66%). The remaining ethnicity figures reported: 5% African American, 2% each, Asian American and Latino, 1% each, Mexican American and Native American, with 2% no answer. The average age of the practicing social worker was 50 years, with 16 years average professional experience (NASW, 2003).

Research indicated that the staffing of social work agencies reflects the ethnicity of the NASW membership. Most social work agencies are predominantly staffed with White female practitioners (Hyde & Hopkins, 2004). Hodge's (2002a) statement that

most social workers were characteristically new class (White, female, highly educated) seems plausible, given these surface statistics. However, most social workers were older than the new class article suggested.

Aymer (2002) made assertions about the marginalization of minority social workers. Minority social workers (i.e., African American, Asian, Hispanic, Jewish, or Muslim) are the exception rather than the rule in most agencies. Noted exceptions would be agencies with a specific cultural/religious foundation, such as family service agencies carrying a culturally specific moniker, such as Jewish Family Service or Black Family Services, Incorporated.

The reality of social workers' attitudes and practice, whatever their workplace, was unknown until recently. During the last ten years, researchers explored American social workers' personal and professional experiences of integrating religion and spirituality in practice in order to gain deeper insights (Hodge, 2006a).

Religion and Spirituality – Practitioner Research

Individual studies varied in the level of specificity reported in respondent demographics and the nature of their investigations. Canda and Furman (1999) surveyed NASW members (bachelor's and master's degrees) regarding their beliefs and experiences in using religious and spirituality in practice. Hodge and McGrew (2006) targeted the NASW social work graduate students regarding the differentiation between religion and spirituality, noting their clinical use of spirituality. Bullis (1996) and Sheridan et al. (1992) surveyed licensed social workers in Virginia. Sheridan (2004)

surveyed licensed social workers in a mid-Atlantic state regarding their use of spiritual interventions in practice.

Respondent Characteristics

The highest percentage of respondents in reviewed studies was White (76%-97%) and female (68.9%- 79.1%). The next largest ethnicity of social workers or social work students was African American (3.6%- 26%) in all but the Sheridan (1992) study, which did not report ethnicity beyond the majority. Christianity was by far the religion of choice for most of the social work respondents, percentages ranged from 56.7%- 80% (Hodge & McGrew, 2006; Sheridan, 2004). Canda and Furman (1999) observed that 9.9% of the religious respondents and 9.1% of the nonreligious choose multiple orientations (i.e., 5% of the Christians also chose Buddhism; 3.8% of the Christians co-identified with Existentialism) (p. 94). Sheridan (2004) did not indicate whether respondents chose multiple orientations.

A study comparison of the Canda and Furman (1999) sample and the Sheridan (2004) sample is presented in Table 2. The studies reported similar strata categories at different points in time, 1999 and 2004. The 2004 study samples' ethnicity was almost identical to that of the 1999 study. Sheridan's (2004) was much more diverse in religious affiliation than the former study. Although there are a number of possible reasons (relative to research design) that could account for the differences, it is possible that the social work demographics are reflecting the increases over time in the spiritual diversity reported in the American public.

Although there were more Muslim social workers in the 2004 sample demographics, Muslims were not represented to any great degree (Canda & Furman, 1999; Sheridan, 2004). Canda and Furman (1999) reported one Muslim respondent of their total 2,069 sample of NASW members. Sheridan (2004) reported two Muslim respondents out of the total 204 sample. Other researchers either collapsed the Muslim respondents into the other category or there were no Muslim respondents (Hodge, 2005; Hyde & Hopkins, 2004; Sheridan, 2004). The narratives did not delineate the other category.

Canda and Furman (1999) reported data from several surveys conducted among social workers indicating that most had a religious affiliate upbringing and were Christian (p. 91). The reported decrease in Christianity (Hodge, 2002) can be attributed to denomination switching within Christianity, as well as moving to a non-religious position (Canda & Furman, 1999). The literature suggested that, since most social workers have characteristics of the dominant culture, their resultant aasibiyah and conscience collective reflects that of America's civil religion/spirituality (either secular or Protestant) (Hodge, 2002).

Bullis (1996) challenged the myth that most social workers are nonreligious (p. 6). Studies indicated that American social workers, like the general public, are actually more religious than nonreligious. Canda and Furman (1999) reported a combined total of 22.2% in the nonreligious category which consisted of agnostics, atheists, existentialists, nonaffiliated Jews, and those claiming no spiritual affiliation. Sheridan (2004) did not identify a nonreligious category. Combining the affiliations named in the 1999 study

without the nonreligious and nonaffiliated Jewish categories totaled 22.4%. This indicated that social workers, at least in the mid-Atlantic, may be more nonreligious than the national group in 1999. The overall the majority of social work respondents self-identified with a religious tradition.

Social Workers' Perceptions

The literature indicated that religion and spirituality is considered by social workers to be an important personal resource for clients and practitioners (Canda & Furman, 1999; Sheridan, 2004). Canda and Furman, (1999) and Sheridan's (2004) studies explored social workers' views and experience in similar categories of religious/spiritual interventions. Even though the studies were 5 years apart, the results are generally within a few percentage points on most items.

Propriety. Social workers in both studies were generally within 5-10% of each other on the propriety or impropriety of specific religious or spiritually based interventions (Canda & Furman, 1999, p. 261; Sheridan, 2004, p. 15). Over 90% of the social work respondents felt it was appropriate and had explored the strengths of the religious/spiritual with clients. These findings are in concert with the current JCAHO mandate requiring spiritual assessment (Hodge, 2006c).

Over 80% of the respondents found it appropriate to use spiritual/religious interventions to explore: (a) perceptions regarding after death expectations, (b) the meaning of their current circumstance and, (c) the potential for harm within the clients' spiritual/ religious support system (Canda & Furman, 1999; Sheridan, 2004).

Table 2

Demographic Comparison- 1999-National/ 2004- Mid-Atlantic Studies

Ethnicity	*Canda & Furman (1999)*		*Sheridan (2004)*
White	90.0%		93.0%
African American	3.6%		4.0%
Other	6.4%		3.0%
	Religious Affiliation		
	Multiple	*Singular*	
Christian (combined denominations	80%	57.5%	56.7%
Judaism	8.7%	6.1%	11.9%
Buddhism	7.3%	1.2%	18.4%
Native American	4.7%	.3%	6.0%
Shamanism	3.4%	.2%	6.0%
Goddess	2.6%	.3%	10.9%
Hinduism	1.4%	.1%	3.5%
Religious others	2.6%	2.6%	16.8%
Unitarian	1.6%	1.6%	Included in other
Wiccan	1.1%	.1%	2.0%
Muslim	.1%	.0%	1.0%
Confucianism	.4%	---	3.0%
Existentialist	5.4%	.6%	13.9%
Atheist	2.9%	1.5%	.5%
Agnostic	6.5%	3.4%	8.0%

Recommending religious/spiritual texts and community resources was felt appropriate and was within the experience of a majority of social work respondents (>75%) (Canda & Furman, 1999; Sheridan, 2004). Nonsectarian language was the preferred communication when employing spiritual/religious strategies for 87% of the 1999 respondents and 92% of the 2004 respondents (p. 261; p. 15 respectively).

Direct spiritual/religious interventions met with a lesser degree of confidence. Over 67% of the respondents felt comfortable with praying for clients. Praying with clients and exploring the spiritual/religious meaning of dreams was approved by a lesser majority of 60%. Healing touch and participating in client's religious/spiritual rituals was deemed unacceptable by over 60% of the respondent sample. Bullis (1996) observed that the level of comfort in integrating spiritual/religious interventions was positively associated with personal experience and whether the topic was client initiated.

Experience. Multiple groups of social workers expressed approval of utilizing spiritual/religious based interventions in theory (Bullis, 1996; Canda & Furman, 1999). Actual experience was reported to a lesser degree in every instance in both studies. Bullis (1996) asked social workers to recall personal assessment experience noting the percentage of clients with whom spiritual or religious issues were a factor in their clinical experience. The mean percentages were reported.

The reported degree of practitioner implementation is low relative to the perception of appropriateness. Some theorize practitioners' worldview and experience may be the real reason for the failure to address clients' spiritual/religious concerns (Bullis, 1996; Sheridan, 2004). The literature found a positive correlation to the degree of

comfort and professional development (Sheridan, 2004). This finding strengthens the arguments of those that advocated for spiritual/religious perspectives in social worker education.

Clients' views. The Bullis (1996) study respondents were asked to answer questions from the client's perspective. The practitioners reported that the overall client perception of religion and spirituality as a resource was less positive than the clinicians. Clients' were reported to feel religious and spirituality as more a contributor to problems (not to a great degree) than clinicians.

The study noted religious factors less frequently than the spiritual. Fifty-four percent of clients were reported to have spiritual factors (29.5% religious factors) that contributed to the problems/situations. Fifty-two percent of the client's used spirituality (33.4% religious) as a strength and resource (Table 2.2). Indeed, clients have expressed a desire and expect to have their religious/spiritual system be included in the therapeutic milieu (Bullis, 1996; Hodge, 2005).

Sheridan et al. (1992) reported about 33% of their respondents' clients had religious/spiritual concerns. Practitioner's views of client perceptions seem counter intuitive. Previously reported research suggested religiosity and spiritual consciousness in America is generally high. Therefore, it would seem more likely that the general public would initiate spirituality or religion in therapy more than the practitioner, unless the clients have bought into the myth of the nonreligious social worker. Minority religious clients, presuming the social worker to be of the dominant worldview, may avoid or

hesitate in help seeking (Hodge, 2005). Research is lacking on clients' actual perceptions regarding the use of spiritual interventions.

Studies indicated that social service practitioners on the whole have maintained and preferred a neutral position. Sheridan et al. (1992) surveyed social workers, psychologists and counselors in Virginia. Practitioners did not appear to show any overt bias toward clients' relative to the client or practitioners' religious or spiritual orientation.

Practitioner's Religiosity

Childhood and current experience with religion and spirituality has been linked to religiosity and practitioner behavior (Furman, Benson, Canda & Grimwood, 2005). Most social workers participate in religious and spiritual practices to a much lesser degree than they did as children (67% vs. 33%). Although Hodge (2002) suggested that this may be a reflection of new class orientation, the decrease could be linked to additional adult responsibilities and time constraints compared to those of a child. Furman et al. (2005) cited past and present negative religious or spiritual experience as a deterrent to religious participation and expression.

The degree of practitioners' religiosity was also connected to the level of comfort for clients and social workers regarding the address of spiritual/religious interventions (Canda & Furman, 1999). One study compared graduate students in New York and reported that some social work students' level of discomfort was positively related to their religiosity (Streets, 1997). The students that expressed a stronger adherence to their religious aasibiyah were more conflicted regarding social work values. The literature found a positive correlation to degree of comfort and professional development

(Sheridan, 2004). Social work education and professional development in the area of spirituality and religion may help alleviate conflicted values.

Conscience Collective--Complexity of Domains

Individual and collective group feeling (aasibiyah), informed by the spiritual/ religious conscience collective of American society, the civil traditional Protestant Christian and new class worldviews and the social work profession, exert an influence personally and professionally. Muslim social workers in America do not live or provide services in a vacuum; their level of consciousness of the American publics' curiosity and possible distrust relative to the media and other's Islamophobic responses to Muslims and Islam after 9/11 has not been documented (CAIR, 2007).

Whether Muslim social workers are members of the NASW or not, they have been trained to offer services within the context of the professional ethical standards of practice and the six core values of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the individual, the importance of human relations, integrity and competence (Germain, 1979; NASW, 2001). Unless they work in a faith based institution or in an ethnically polarized enclave, they are likely to be employed within a predominantly Christian, female, and White work environment (Hyde & Hopkins, 2004). Most likely, they have received no previous training in the area of religion and spirituality as it relates to social work practice (Hodge, 2005; Sheridan, 2004). Depending on their employment setting, they may be aware of the JCAHO mandate for spiritual assessment and the DSM-IV's V code for religious and spiritual problems (Hodge, 2006c; Praglin, 2004).

Nursing literature indicated that nurses, like social workers recognize spirituality and religion as a source of strength, but in most instances have never openly discussed the issue of integrating the religious spiritual subject in practice outside of palliative care (MacLaren, 2004). Muslim social workers too, may have never considered whether or how to implement spirituality. It is unknown whether they have ever considered the impact of their own spiritual/religious orientation.

Hodge (2002a) indicated that "worldviews can affect attitudes and practices in such diverse areas as bereavement, child care, death, diet, marriage relations, medical care, military participation, recreation practices, ritualized practices, and schooling" (Rey, 1997, as cited by Hodge, 2002a, p. 6). This statement can be applied to clients and practitioners alike. The remaining religious/spiritual aasibiyah and conscience collective to be examined is that of Islam and Muslim social workers in America.

American Muslims

Muslims are described as those persons that adhere to the universal tenets of Al-Islam (Ali et al., 2004). The Holy Quran (believed by Muslims to be the last revealed Scripture) stated that all of creation is born in submission to The One G'd/ALLAH (Holy Quran, 31:36). Human beings, having been given limited free will, have the choice to acquiesce or not. There is no compulsion in Islam. An individual becomes Muslim upon the conscious utterance of the first pillar of practice: "I openly declare that there is no god, but the One G'd (ALLAH), and I openly declare that Prophet Muhammad Ibn Abdullah is the Messenger of Allah" (Ali et al., 2004, p. 4).

Islam has been practiced in the Americas for hundreds of years, by some reports as early as the 1300s (Hague, 2004, Rashid, 2000). The first known Muslim immigrant to America was reportedly Chinese, arriving 1178-1312 (Hague, 2004). A large group of West African Muslims came to the United States during the period of enslavement (Hague, 2004; Jackson, 2005). Over the last 10 years, there was a 50% increase in the number of Muslim immigrants to America from all over the world, Middle Eastern (Arab and non-Arab), Indonesia, Pakistan, India, China, the African, European, and other (Bagby, 2004; U.S. State Department, 2001).

The Muslim population is numbered at 1.5-2 billion worldwide (ISSA, 2003). Arab ethnicity is not synonymous with an Islamic worldview. Media, particularly post 9/11, and some articles have perpetuated a misnomer by using Arab and Muslim interchangeably (Hall & Livingston, 2006). Arabs account for only l8% of the Muslim population worldwide (ISSA, 2003). Hall and Livingston (2006) observed that if Arab is defined as one whose native language is Arabic, it would include Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Syria. The estimated number of Arab Muslims in the United States was reported as 26.2% (U.S. State Department, 2001). Muslims can be found in most countries of the world; therefore, those who migrate to the United States from those countries do not compose a monolithic religious ethnicity.

There are 2 - 7 million Muslims in the United States by varied accounts (Hodge, 2005a; ISSA, 2003). South Asians have outnumbered the Arab Muslim immigrant population in the United States (ARIS, 2001; CAIR, 2002). Two thirds of the Muslim

population are said to be immigrants or their descendants, one third are indigenous American born (Bagby, 2001).

The literature reported that there are Latino, Native American, and second and third generation immigrant Muslims in the United States (Bagby, 2004; Rashid, 2000). The largest group of indigenous Muslims in the United States is notably African American (23-25%) converts and their progeny (Bagby, 2001; Haddad, Smith & Moore, 2006; Jackson, 2005). Although each ethnicity has a culture and aasibiyah unique to itself, the basic tenets of Islam are universal and have no cultural bias. "Muslims are an international group of people and their religion, Islam, is a universal one" (Sakr, 1991, p.31).

Islam

Islam is an Arabic term, defined as the "peaceful submission to The One G'd"—Allah (ISSA, 2003, p.3). Allah is the Arabic translation for G'd. Arabic speaking Christians' usage is the same. Islam is the last in succession of the Abrahamic faiths, through the patriarch Abraham following Judaism and Christianity. Dr. Suliman Nyang, (2007) Islamic scholar noted that the reference to Abrahamic faith is a new construct, coined in America (Lecture Madonna University).

Beliefs. Nadir and Dziegielewski (2001) outlined the Islamic belief system which is common to Muslims worldwide: (a) Oneness of G'd-Allah, Creator of All, (b) Belief in the Angels of G'd, (c) Belief in the Prophethood including Adam, Abraham, Noah, Lot, David, Solomon, Jacob, Isaac, Ishmael, Jonah, Joseph, Jesus, Moses, and Muhammad (The Last of the Prophethood), (d) Belief in the Revelations of G'd including

the Torah, Gospel, and The Holy Quran (The Quran was revealed to Prophet Muhammad over a period of 23 years in the Arabic language). The Quran's Arabic text is believed to be protected by G'd and has remained unchanged, (e) Belief in Divine Destiny, accepting the preordination of events and limited free will of humanity, and (f) Belief in the Hereafter, life after physical death. These beliefs are the basis of the Islamic mindset. They are incomplete without the practice. Muslims worldwide adhere and uphold their Islamic identity based on the commonality of belief and ritual practice (ISSA, 2003).

Islamic Groups in America

"Muslims are not denominational or sectarian like other religious groups; rather, they form a society that is multicultural, multilingual, and multiracial" (Sakr, 1991, p.31). Bagby's (2004) mosque study, divided Muslim mosques into two groups, Shia and Sunni. Sunni Islam is commensurate with Orthodox or traditional renderings of the faith and is the largest overall Islamic group (Rashid, 2000). Shia Muslims share basic Sunni tenets and beliefs with the additional belief that Ali, cousin and son-in-law to the Prophet Muhammad should have been the successor religious authority after the Prophet's death (Canda & Furman, 1999).

Sufism is a third mystical branch of Islam (Canda & Furman, 1999; Haddad et al., 2006). Through Sufism, a regime of pietism and spirituality, the personal and moral development of the soul is enhanced and elevated (Jackson, 2005). Sufism may be within or independent of the Sunni or Shia population of Muslims. Haddad et al. (2006) reported that Sufism, previously associated with the "New Age" (p.8) religious movement, is now strongly linked to Sunni Islam. . Some Sufis are still considered to be quasi-Islamic (not

in full adherence with the universal tenets) (Rahman, 1982). At least two Sunni Sufi groups have been identified among Blackamerican (Jackson's (2005) (terminology) Muslim groups.

Many African American Muslims converted to Islam by way of what some have called quasi-Islamic Black Nationalist groups such as, the Moorish Science Temple, led by Noble Drew Ali and the Nation of Islam (NOI), first led by Elijah Muhammad, currently under the leadership of Louis Farrakhan, as well as introductions through Orthodox venues (Jackson, 2005; Rashid, 2000). Black Muslims were generally thought to be members of the NOI which has not always upheld the universal Islamic tenets.

American Muslims who are Black are most often identified as Sunni Muslims, a fact that eludes even some immigrant Muslims (Jackson, 2005; personal communication, July 2006). Most Sunni African American Muslims were led by the late Imam (religious leader) W.D. Mohammad (son of Elijah Muhammad former leader of the Nation of Islam). For the purposes of this study, a Muslim is anyone who self-identifies as such, regardless of ethnicity or affiliation.

Pillars of Practice

There are five pillars or practices of Islamic faith required from the mentally stable post pubescent individual:

1. Shahadah: Declaration that "There is no god, except the One G'd, Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger." Persons, wishing to adopt the Islamic faith make this declaration before G'd and usually at least two witnesses (Nadir & Dziegielewski, 2001).

2. Salat/Prayer: Prescribed at five specific times daily; approximately 10 minutes per prayer (ISSA, 2003): (a) Fajr, before sunrise; (b) Thur, mid afternoon, prior to the sun's zenith; (c) Asr, early evening prayer; (d) Magrib, dusk, prior to the sun's setting and; (e) Isha, night.

Jummah/congregational prayer is held weekly on Fridays worldwide for the Thur prayer. Ritualistic washing (wudu) is performed prior to performing prayers.

Eid/congregational prayers are held annually commemorating the end of the Ramadan fasting- Eid Al- Fitr (The Festival of Fastbreaking) and Eid Ad-Adha (The Festival of Sacrifice, commemorating Hajj and Ibrahim/Abraham's willingness to Sacrifice his son) (Nadir & Dziegielewski, 2001).

3. Zakat/Charity: Muslims are to give 2.5% of their net income (monies that exceed living expenses) for those less fortunate.

4. Sawm/Annual fasting during the lunar month of Ramadan: Muslims abstain from food, drink and conjugal relations from dawn until sunset for 29 or 30 days. Persons who are unable to fast due to age, illness, and pregnancy or nursing are not required to fast.

5. Hajj/Pilgrimage: An annual event required once in a Muslim's lifetime (health and finances permitting); consists of rituals performed during the pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

Governance

The Holy Quran (accepted by Muslims as the Last Revealed Word of G'd (ISSA, 2003) and the Sunnah and Hadith (traditions and sayings) of the Prophet Muhammad are

generally accepted as the ruling authority by Muslims (Nadir & Dziegielewski, 2001). There are four schools of Islamic Sharia (Law/thought) that govern the details of Islamic practice. Muslims may or may not identify with a particular school of thought (Bagby, 2004).

Islamic Spirituality

Islamic spirituality like other religious traditions is a social fact, an influential unique group feeling and worldwide conscience collective governed by "Tawheed" Oneness of G'd (Rasool, 2000, p. 1482). Islamic spirituality was alleged to be the antithesis of American values and beliefs (Goode in Congresspedia, 2006; Huntington, 2004). Islamic religious spirituality exemplifies a way of being Muslim; it encompasses individual and collective thought and action, body and soul.

Lifestyle

Islam is more than a religion or spiritual dogma; it is a way of life (Ali et al., 2004). In addition to the basic tenets and beliefs, the Islamic lifestyle is sometimes a direct contradiction to current American liberal mores. Islam forbids the consumption of intoxicants, gambling, sex outside of marriage, homosexual practices, the eating of pork and pork byproducts, immodest dress for males or females, and loose fraternizing between the sexes (ISSA, 2003). Many, but not all, Muslim women are known to wear a head covering (hijab), generally draping the head, neck and bosom, such that only the face, hands and feet are visible, and loose fitting clothing (Haddad et al., 2006; ISSA,2003). Muslim women wearing hijab are thought to be pious by some, oppressed, or liberated by others (Bartowski & Read, 2003; Haddad et al., 2006). Assuming an overt

or covert religious identity is an individual and collective choice guided by submission to Taqwa (G'd Consciousness) and Tawheed (Oneness of G'd) recognizing G'd as The Single Ultimate Authority (Holy Quran 1: 2).

Muslim Religiosity and Identity

Religious expression of Islam in the United States is becoming increasingly more visible with an American twist. One of the first actions initiated by an able Muslim community is the establishment of a place for communal prayer and Islamic socialization. Bagby, Perl, and Froehle's (2001) report replicated a 1994 study and identified over 1,200 Mosques in the United States, an increase of 25% since 1994 (*n*= 962). There was a 94% increase in the number of Jummah prayer attendees and a general total of 1,625 vs. 485 associated per Mosque. Dr. Nyang (2007) observed that the concept of Islamic centers serving the masajid function is an American adaptation of the Mosque concept (Madonna Lecture).

The most visible individual representation of Islam in America is reflected in the Muslim women's style of dress (Haddad et al., 2006; ISSA, 2003). A 2007 television documentary aired a panel discussion of multiethnic Muslim women residing in Metro-Detroit (WDIV Television Broadcast, July 22, 2007). All agreed that the goal, for Muslim men and women's dress, is modesty, however the individual interprets it. Three of four wore the hijab head covering and remarked that it was their choice to stand out in the crowd. Haddad et al. (2006) opined that some Muslim women choose not to wear Islamic dress, not wishing to draw attention. One panelist noted that she felt challenged in her homeland (United States), not by Islam, but because her American nationality is

constantly being questioned secondary to her decision to visibly portray her Islamic spirituality (Nadia Bazzy, July 22, 2007).

Dr. Nyang (2007) noted an ongoing debate among Muslims in America regarding the nature of their national religious identity (Lecture, July 24, 2007). Whether one is identified as Muslim-American or American-Muslim has a hierarchical significance reflecting the dominant aasibiyah. It may be even more complicated for the African American Muslim/ Muslim African American/ "Blackamerican" Muslim (Jackson, 2005). A traveler possessing an American Passport is considered American overseas, regardless of their ethnicity. The same American traveler over there may be thought of as un-American over here, because of their manner of religious expression.

Discrimination

Muslims in America regularly interface with non-Muslims on some level (i.e., neighborhood, extended family, job, school, and societal). Many of the prohibited practices in Islam would be sanctioned by American society in general, if not by American religious doctrine (Ali et al., 2004). The literature indicated that the American civil religion, traditional or new class, has had a limited tolerance of non-Christian others, particularly Muslims (Huntington, 2004, Panagopoulos, 2006).

CAIR reported an increased number of discriminatory complaints filed by Muslims in America since 2005 (CAIR. 2007). Civil rights complaints increased from 1,972 to 2,467 (+25%) from 2005 to 2006. Seventy three percent of the violations occurred in government agencies, the workplace, the mosques, schools, or prisons.

Incidences of harassment and hate mail have increased, particularly post 9/11 relative to the level of visibility as Muslims. The triggers most identified with these complaints were related to ethnicity or religion (i.e., identified head covering for Muslim women and men; Arab ethnic appearance or name; praying in public (CAIR, 2007; ISSA, 2003).

Muslims are using the American legal, political, and educational systems to fight discrimination (CAIR, 2007). Surveys of Muslim voters show an increased involvement in the political process to implement change (CAIR, 2006; Pew, 2007). Lawsuits have been initiated within a supportive American judicial system to fight discrimination case by case. The literature observed that the United States Justice Department defended Muslim women and girls' religious right to wear the hijab when taking driver's license pictures and in public school (Falah & Nagel, 2005). Mosques have offered open houses and outreach activities in an effort to support public education about Islam (Bagby, 2004).

Challenges

Outside of religious discrimination, Muslims in America have experienced challenges relative to being Muslim and as a part of American society. The ISSA (2003) identified four strata of Muslims in America. These subdomain groups have experienced difficulties both as Muslims and relative to their particular circumstance.

1. Indigenous Muslims: Muslim converts may have problems negotiating their

religious transition with extended family and non-Muslim friends (Boyd-Franklin, 2006; ISSA, 2003). The chronic racism experienced by African Americans in America adds additional stress and trauma for African American Muslims.

2. Refugees: Post war trauma experienced in war torn countries may plague the psyche of immigrants from Bosnia, Sudan or Iraq (Ali et al., 2004).

3. First and second generation American Muslims: Nadir and Dziegielewski (2001) observed that as Muslims come to identify with American culture (first and second generation Muslim immigrants), they are increasingly challenged to balance their multiple, and likely, conflicting cultural social norms between the American and the traditions of their parent's homeland (p. 152).

4. Economic immigrants: While the average Muslim in America is highly educated and economically stable, there are others living below the poverty level (ISSA, 2003; Pew Research, March 2007). The move to America does not always allow the transfer of educational credentials, forcing some to experience a free life well under their previous economic means (ISSA, 2003). The poverty issue, similar to other American social ills, is experienced by Muslims and non-Muslims.

The ISSA (2003) noted family crises experienced in the outer society are also present in the Muslim community (i.e., divorce, poverty, domestic violence, etc.) (Hassouneh-Phillips, 2003; ISSA, 2003). The divorce rate among Muslims is reported at 31.14%. Battered Muslim women must find their way out the cycle of violence that binds so many other American women. The difference in each case is that they have tried to make sense of their circumstance in terms of Islam (Hassouneh-Phillips, 2003).

Managing conflicting aasibiyah is a test for all Muslims in America. The preceding sections documented challenges related to an Islamic spirituality that coexists within an American civil religious and secular society in an effort to sensitize practitioners who may encounter Muslim clients (Hodge, 2005a; Nadir & Dziegielewski, 2001).

Islamic Social Service Perspectives

The identified challenges would suggest a need for Muslims to seek assistance through the various available social service venues. Research pointed to a lack of empirical data regarding Muslim attitudes and beliefs relative to social services in general (Hassouneh-Phillips, 2003; Hodge, 2005a). Almost all data dealt with the Muslim as client rather than practitioner. The picture painted of the American Muslim client through the social science literature is monolithic and incomplete.

Some authors have been resistant to differentiate between the various groups of Muslims in America, emphasizing the universality of the tenets and practices (Ohm, 2003; Nurrid-Din, 1998). Focusing on the commonalities, the literature has emphasized the difficulties faced by the immigrant Muslim population (Crockatt, 2004; Hall & Livingston, 2006). Acculturation vs. assimilation has been a major topic (Ali et al., 2004; ISSA, 2003). Bartowski and Read (2003) interviewed Muslim and evangelical women regarding gender and societal issues relative to their religious orientations.

The indigenous Muslim perspective has been even more limited in the literature. Although there are estimates that White American converts number approximately 50,000, no social science research was found targeting this sample or other indigenous

converts. Rehman and Dziegielewski (2003) researched female converts to Islam in search of their experience. The authors noted that they could find only one previous study relative to American female converts.

The African American Muslim's narrative was often grounded in a general discussion of the Black Nationalist movement connected with the Nation of Islam (NOI), Malcolm X, and recently Farrakhan (Jackson, 2005; Lumumba, 2003). Conversion to Islam is strongly related to African American social justice and liberation. Choosing Islam allowed African Americans to establish a new egalitarian selfnarrative for themselves and their progeny (Jackson, 2005; Martin & Martin, 2002). But not all African American Muslims are affiliated past or present to Black Nationalist movements (Dannin, 2002). No empirical studies were found that specifically targeted the unique perspectives of the African American Muslim. There were a few exceptions in studies that included African Americans within a diverse sample of Muslim respondents (Carolan, Bagherinia, Juhari, Himelright, & Mouton-Sanders, 2000). These investigations were most often qualitative explorations of Muslim perceptions regarding the use of therapy in family and individual practice.

Kelly and Aridi (1996) explored Muslims' mental health and universal values targeting samples from Chicago and Washington D.C. Most of the respondents were immigrant (83%): Indo-Pakistani, Arab. The ethnicity of the 15.7% remaining respondents included the indigenous and all other ethnicities. The researchers found the sample to be highly religious, 50% held strict observance of the universal tenets. A third of the group was said to be more tolerant of the secularism in the dominant culture and

somewhat "flexible" in their Islamic religiosity (p. 5). The researchers hypothesized that the results may be skewed due to the ethnicity of the sample, which would limit the ability to generalize the findings.

Carolan et al. (2000) interviewed Muslims as couples and in focus groups with the purpose of gaining insight into their family values and attitudes toward professional therapy. The sample was ethnically diverse comprised of immigrants from: Malaysia, India, Pakistan, South Africa, Iran, Indonesia, Egypt, Yemen, and the United States. The themes that emerged from the combined interviews centered on gender respect, the value of extended family, and the centrality of Islamic spirituality. Regarding help seeking, professional therapy with a non-Muslim was ranked as the least acceptable choice after first consulting "trusted family or friends" (p. 76). A Muslim therapist would be consulted first in seeking a professional help.

The limited data on client views suggests that Muslim clients are hesitant to seek professional help in general, particularly from non-Muslims (Ali et al., 2004; Carolan et al., 2000). The researcher recalled audience comments at an Islamic conference held September 2002. Some Muslims in the audience expressed concern regarding the manner and degree of Islamic vs. Western therapeutic approach. Although it has not been a major issue, some clients questioned this researcher's Islamic worldviews before agreeing to utilize social work services.

As a solution, researchers have attempted to deconstruct the myths and misunderstandings about Muslims and Islam; providing information about the basic tenets of Islam and the worldviews Muslims living in the United States (Ali, et al., 2004;

Hodge, 2005a). Ali et al. (2004) provided an overview of the Islam and therapy implications. A case vignette of a 21 year old Muslim woman highlighted the successful efforts of a non-Muslim therapist to learn about Islam and provide sensitive competent treatment. The literature concurred that Muslim practitioners are often preferred to address issues particular to Islam (Carolyn et al., 2000; Hague, 2004).

American Muslim Social Workers

The literature noted the general compatibility of Islam with social services and the NASW's stated values and ethics (Canda & Furman, 1999; Van Hook et al., 2001). The Pillar of Zakat (Charity) in particular was emphasized because of its direct applicability to social welfare (Holy Quran, Chapter 107). Quranic references are cited in support of social action, equal rights, care of women, children, and the aged (Nadir & Dziegielewski, 2001). One text referenced "the Muslim Social Worker" in particular (Nadir & Dziegielewski, 2001, p. 160). Muslim American social workers' role was presented as an advocate for the Muslim client (Nadir & Dziegielewski, 2001). The aforementioned challenges for the Muslim community affect Muslim practitioners but are not documented.

The challenges identified with being Muslim in America are likely to intensify as the progeny of immigrants and converts inflate and diversify the indigenous American Muslim population. Newly converted African American and other ethnicities of Muslims have additional concerns in relation to their non-Muslim extended family and immigrant Muslims (Jackson, 2005; Nadir & Dziegielewski, 2001).

Muslims have the task of synthesizing their Islamic, ethnic, American, and professional aasibiyah. Nadir (2001) noted in her autobiographical sketch, "I found myself trying to make sense of who I was as an African American, a Muslim, a wife and mother, and a social worker" (p. 148). This study explores the nature of the conscience collective within the professional and dominant cultures in the minds of Muslim social workers. In the past, researchers have sought answers to exploratory/descriptive questions through direct data elicitation from the source (Worthington & Sandage, 2001).

Methodological Review

The purpose and goal of previous research was to clarify the meanings of spirituality and religion and the nature and propriety of spiritual/religious interventions for practitioners (Hodge, 2002a; 2005; Sheridan, 2004). Although researchers have touted an expansion in the breadth and depth of knowledge in the area of social work's incorporation of the religious and spiritual, much is left to be learned. Minority practitioners' perspectives are unknown.

Opinion Studies

Since this study targets a specific religious group of social workers the details of religious affiliation and ethnicity reported in the previous research were critically reviewed for comparison. Individual studies vary in the level of specificity reported in respondent demographics and the nature of their investigations. Canda and Furman (1999) surveyed NASW members, (bachelor's and master's degrees) regarding their beliefs and experiences in using religious and spirituality in practice. Hodge and McGrew (2006) targeted NASW social work graduate students regarding the differentiation

between religion and spirituality, noting their clinical use of spirituality. Bullis (1996) and Sheridan et al. (1992) surveyed licensed social workers in Virginia. Sheridan (2004) surveyed licensed social workers in a mid-Atlantic state regarding their use of spiritual interventions in practice.

Canda and Furman's (1999) national study (N=2069) was the most comprehensive in reporting the details of their sample (p. 92-95). The Sheridan (2004) sample was much smaller (N=204), but offered insights into the possible growth trends in the diversity of social workers since the Canda and Furman (1999) study. As stated, all studies' respondents were predominantly White, female, and Christian.

Problem—Knowledge Gap

In addition to the dearth of apparent interest in minority practitioners, the literature pointed to a lack of knowledge regarding the general effectiveness of spiritual interventions (Sheridan, 2004). Most have cited concerns about applying spiritual/religious interventions without previous training and standards (Krieglstein, 2006; Praglin, 2004). These issues are multidimensional and complex when ethnic, national, socio-economic, and historical features are factored into the experience (Jackson, 2005; Van Hook et al., 2001).

The literature review evinced a paucity of interest in Muslim social workers' beliefs and attitudes regarding the integration of spirituality and religion in the treatment milieu. Religious clients, particularly Muslims, have reportedly shunned professional help because of concerns regarding practitioner sensitivity (Ali et al., 2004; Hague, 2004). This research addressed American Muslim social workers' perspectives on

incorporating spirituality and religion in social work practice. No known study referenced minority practitioner's use of their unique worldview personally or in practice.

Previous Research Method and Theory

The constructionist philosophy provided the theoretical foundation for past research. This theory assumes that reality is formed in the mind of each individual and may vary from person to person or group to group (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Researchers hypothesized the nature of spirituality and religion in the form of a survey questionnaire and set about gathering data from individual social workers to support or disprove their supposition.

Strategy

Quantitative surveys were the method of choice in previous study. The research asked respondents to choose the most accurate level of agreement to statements formulated through the researchers' interpretation of spirituality, religion, or spiritual and religious interventions (Canda & Furman, 1999; Sheridan, 2004). The respondent's answers were limited to the researchers' construction of terms and an approximation of response.

The reader may recall that previous research surveyed graduate student social workers and licensed social workers nationally and regionally regarding their attitudes and practices regarding the use of religion and spirituality in practice or the differentiation between religion and spirituality (Canda & Furman, 1999; Sheridan et al., 1992). A review of the ProQuest Dissertation Database abstracts, using the keywords

spirituality and *social work* produced practitioner related doctoral survey questionnaires based studies (Quattlebaum, 2002; Streets, 1997).

Generalization to social workers or social work students as a group could be challenged, since most respondents were White/European American (90.3%). There was less than 4% representation of African Americans; less than 2% of all other groups. Many social work attitude and practice studies did not report beyond the two largest groups of respondents that were White and African American respectively (Hodge & McGrew, 2006; Sheridan, 2004). Response rates were between 26%-44%; less than desirable for generalization to the total sample frame (Babbie, 2004). There was a lack of emphasis on generalization although it was noted as limitation in some instances (Bullis, 1996; Sheridan, 2004). The value of the descriptions of the religious and spiritual concepts and the knowledge of practitioners' propriety and experience using religious/spiritual interventions outweighed the limitations then and now.

Over the years, studies have attempted to apply more rigors (Hodge & McGrew, 2002). Hodge and McGrew (2002) actively sought to improve their response rate by using the telephone interview technique (rather than mailing as in previous studies). This resulted in a 61% response rate, well over the 50% benchmark (Babbie, 2004).

Babbie (2004) stated that an exploratory strategy is typical when new insights are sought. Canda and Furman (1999) stated that the goal of their studies conducted in the United Kingdom and the United States were exploratory; "to better understand the extent to which practicing social workers incorporate religion and spirituality in their practice and to explore their views of the appropriateness of religion and spirituality in social

work practice" (Furman & Grimwood, 1999, p. 1). Canda and Furman's (1999) original study employed a mixed methodology.

Mixed method. The literature reported that mixed method strategies are being employed more frequently in social science research (Creswell, 2003). The qualitative inquiry was sequentially added in order to allow practitioner/respondents to provide an explanation of their understanding and experience of religion and spirituality for their clients and themselves (Bullis, 1996; Quattlebaum, 2002). Mixed method, depending on the level of inquiry, allowed the researcher to compare various aspects of both data collection strategies. The 1999 study maximized dissemination of research results; publishing at least three separate articles from the single study (Canda, 2004; Canda & Furman, 1999; Furman, Benson, & Canda, 2004). The mixed method was originally a primary consideration for the current study as addressed in the chapter 3.

The original study, as previously described, emphasized the quantitative data analysis (Canda & Furman, 1999). Furman et al. (2004) compared the data by regions within the United States. They noted a Southern, Midwest social worker preference for religious/spiritual interventions. Canda (2004) reported on practitioners' perspectives on the ethics of incorporating religious or spiritual interventions based analysis of the three qualitative responses within the questionnaire. The qualitative and quantitative data were triangulated in an effort to uncover the most accurate and comprehensive understanding. The current study will also implement a sequential format emphasizing and elaborating on the qualitative strategy.

Phenomenological. Reviewing the methodological literature these questions seemed best addressed through phenomenology. Similar to the Canda & Furman (1999) investigation, the goal of this study is to better understand what spirituality and religion mean and how these concepts have been applied and experienced by Muslim social workers in America. The rationale for adopting the phenomenological framework is detailed in chapter 3. The purpose, as stated for most of the research has been to document practitioner attitude and beliefs. Monographs have emphasized advocating religious and spiritual inclusion or sensitivity toward religious and ethnic minorities. The current study fosters social change in each of these areas.

Social Change

This study broadens the knowledge base regarding minority practitioner views by exploring self-identified Muslim social workers' views and practices using a phenomenological approach. Increased knowledge in this area has political and professional social change implications. Loomis (1963) stated that social change is evinced when a system adapts or adopts new processes of interaction internally or externally. Translated into Khaldunian and Durkheimian terms, social change would affect the content and intensity of individual aasibiyah and conscience collective and presumably behavior.

The Pew (2007) and CAIR (2007) research studies indicated that Muslims are more mainstream in their political thinking than some may suppose. There was little in the literature to counter the dominant media portrayals of the Muslim mindset relative to professional conduct and interaction (Hague, 2004; Panagopoulos, 2006). Knowledge

gained from this type of research provides authenticity; allowing Muslim social workers to define their understandings, beliefs and practices. The new insights may affect how Muslims in general and Muslim social workers in particular, are viewed by colleagues and others, thus affect social change within the society and the social work professional conscience collective.

Summary

In general conversation with two Muslim professionals, (i.e. a professor and a high school teacher) opinions varied. The teacher expressed that certainly, with Islam being a way of life, Muslim social workers will naturally integrate their personal religious spirituality (personal communication, July 2007). The professor assumed that the standards of the social work profession would dictate and dominate the Muslim social worker's practice decisions (personal communication, July 2007). The literature has not offered any insight. This study addresses this issue. A detailed description of the methodological rationale and research design is provided in chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The pluralistic nature of religious and spiritual worldviews in America has generated an expanded interest in the effects of diversity within the therapeutic environment. Client/researcher worldviews are an important consideration regarding the effectiveness of treatment (Aymer, 2002). The literature addressed this issue by providing specific and general monographs regarding culturally specific treatment considerations (Richards & Bergin, 2000; Van Hook et al., 2001).

Empirical study explored practitioner views regarding the attitudes and experiences of integrating spirituality and religion in social work practice (Hodge, 2007; Sheridan, 2004). Few studies have explored minority clients or practitioners' views. Researchers have noted the void (Canda & Furman, 1999). Hague (2004) noted the absence of the Muslim practitioner and clients' perspectives. This study elicited the perspectives of Muslim social workers regarding spirituality, religion, and the incorporation of these concepts in social work practice.

Research Questions

The current research queried:

1. How has spirituality and religion been interpreted within the experience of Muslim social workers?

2. What spiritual or religious interventions might Muslim social workers express and deem appropriate for the practice context?

These questions are essentially the same as those posed by previous researchers in using a self administered survey (Bullis, 1996; Canda & Furman, 1999; Hodge & McGrew, 2006; Sheridan, 2004). The literature review specific to Islam and Muslims suggested that there may be concerns regarding general societal portrayals of Muslims and Islam in the American media. Therefore, the interview portion will also explore:

3. What level of consciousness, relative to any challenges posed by the current media image(s) of Islam might Muslim social workers express?

The question is not directly asked. However, the narrative and interview responses note and categorize reference to this response realm.

Theoretical Framework and Researcher Role

The primary theorists selected for this study were Ibn Khaldun (1381) and Durkheim (1938). In addition to offering general sociological constructs, both espoused research ideologies for rigorous scientific methodology. Ibn Khaldun's approach follows the line of an Islamic worldview arguing that reality of creation is discovered through naturalistic observation (data collection), reflection (interpretation and analysis), and consultation (peer review) (Dhaouadi, 2005). Naturalistic refers to an in context qualitative paradigm, rather than one contrived for an experimental study (Grbich, 1999). Recalling that the respondent in phenomenology functions also as a coresearcher, this investigation called for observation and reflection on both the respondents and the researcher's part (Moustakas, 1994).

The coresearchers recalled (observed) their past experience in social work and religious/spiritual practice and the interplay between the two. Coresearchers reflected on

these experiences and personal worldviews in light of their education as social workers. The researcher, too, observed (through active listening and digital audio recordings) the individual responses and reflected on emerging themes and patterns in response relative to the definitions of spirituality, religion, spiritual/religious interventions, and any reference to Islamophobia. The individual responses are critically analyzed to ascertain the range of response and synthesis of thought in patterns and theme. This analysis is described in chapter 4. Durkheim (1938) also valued the naturalistic comparative approach.

Durkheim (1938) was one of the first to present a method for scientific study in the social sciences. He empirically studied the rudiments of religion by observing and recording religious determinants in what was deemed its most simple societal context (Durkheim, 1915/1960). Phenomena for Durkheim, was evinced through comparative observation of invariant expressional determinants. The researchers' role was and is to observe and determine the most elemental distinguishing feature of the phenomenon's existence, in phenomenology the essence (Moustakas, 1994). This study assumed that the determinants of spirituality and religion, personally and in social work practice, exist within the minds of the researcher and coresearcher/respondent.

The investigation was previously noted to have a constructivist ontology as described by Creswell (1998) in that it is exploratory, concerned with the possibility of multiple realities and meanings of religion and spirituality. The study is based on the understanding that the meaning of spirituality and religion is determined by individuals

through the sum total of their life experience, professional, and social interaction; and those individuals are capable of verbally expressing these thoughts (Creswell, 2003).

Qualitative or Quantitative

The research questions presented a dilemma relative to choice of a qualitative or quantitative strategy. The exploratory, descriptive, and naturalistic paradigms suggested a qualitative methodological approach. The qualitative framework allows for the possibility of multiple realities (understandings) of phenomenon (Grbich, 1999). However, the quantitative survey has been an effective strategy and was the primary method used to address similar research questions posed to social work practitioners (Canda & Furman, 1999; Sheridan, 2004).

Quantitative data from previous study offered a descriptive analysis of social workers and their practices relative to the inclusion of spirituality and religion and noted the correlation between the number of religious and spiritual interventions actually performed by respondents and those deemed appropriate (Canda & Furman, 1999; Furman et al., 2004). High scores on the religious and spirituality scale correlate with the number of religious and spiritual interventions performed. These types of insights were sought in the current study as a supplement to those gleaned from the qualitative data. It was the Canda and Furman (1999) quantitative study that sparked the initial interest for the current investigation. Permission was obtained to expand the Canda and Furman (1999) study prior to the realization that there was no American Muslim social work database from which to draw.

Valid and reliable quantitative study requires that a representative number be drawn from the total sample frame (Babbie, 2004). Previous studies were delineated by a total sample frame within a region or national organization of social workers (Bullis, 1996; Sheridan, 2004). The size of the total sample frame of American Muslim social workers is unknown. Efforts to develop a database of Muslim social workers in the United States began in 2005 in collaboration with the ISSA. By the time of this study, the database had 38 social workers listed. These circumstances strengthened the case for implementing a qualitative design. However, not wanting to completely discard the original plan, the researcher sought to at least try the questionnaire as a pretest and distributed the survey amongst four Muslim social workers.

Pretest

Babbie (2004) noted the advantage of pretesting questionnaires prior to formal study distribution. Heeding this advice, the Muslim Social Worker Survey (a modified version of the Canda and Furman (1999) questionnaire) was distributed via email to four Muslim social workers well known to the researcher, in order gain insight regarding its use with the larger target group.

Participants were slow to return the completed questionnaire. Only one survey was returned within a 60 day period, even with follow up calls and emails. Subsequently, respondents were asked for comments relative to the survey content, format, and venue (i.e., email, hard copy) whether or not the survey had been completed. There were two replies.

One respondent did not comment on the specific content of the survey, but completed and returned the questionnaire (Returned via postal service, March 2007). The respondent answered only one of the three narrative questions. The overall response regarding questions about the survey was positive. The respondent stated that the survey gave "cause to question previous practice interventions" (personal communication, April 2007) regarding practice ethics relative to religion and spirituality.

A second respondent did not complete the survey, but offered detailed feedback on individual question content, noting that the demographic questions were geared to the clinical social worker. It was suggested that respondents be allowed to designate their supervisory, research, or academic role as social workers if the questionnaire was to be used (personal communication, April 2007).

A third respondent did not complete the survey and upon direct query regarding their hesitancy, stated that they were concerned regarding researcher judgment of responses. The researcher attempted to explain the exploratory nature of the survey having no right or wrong answers and encouraged the respondent to do the survey for their own benefit. No further input was requested from this respondent or the fourth respondent who did not respond to follow up inquiries.

Given the expressed concerns, comments, and response rate to the pretest, additional modifications were considered for the use of the questionnaire. Also, although the literature suggested that social desirability had not been a major concern in previous study (Hunsberger & Ennis, 1982). The researcher considered that it may be a concern

for the present study. Ethical considerations regarding respondents and respondent protection are addressed in a latter section of this chapter.

The concern of social desirability became an issue to ponder. The researcher considered that retaining the use of the survey in the research design would allow a degree of psychological distance that could decrease the potential for socially desirable responses. The research design could allow for the return of the questionnaire anonymously, which was the procedure in prior research (Canda & Furman, 1999). Given that the researcher had the names of Muslim social workers who could be solicited through the electronic format, respondents had a choice; to maintain or relinquish their anonymity, since the returned surveys would not necessarily contain any identifying data. However, given the low sample numbers in general; the researcher was hesitant to depend solely on quantitative results from the survey questionnaire.

Mixed Method

It seemed that the best of both worlds would be to use the survey questionnaire and a qualitative interview. The literature noted the benefits of the mixed method model of utilizing quantitative and qualitative strategies as multiple data collection sources that combined would result in a more comprehensive description of phenomena (Babbie, 2004). Given the anticipated low sample frame numbers of the existing database and the phenomenological theoretical basis for the investigation, the researcher could not justify the use of the quantitative strategy within the mixed method framework. In an effort to maintain and take advantage of the permission to replicate the Canda and Furman (1999) study as originally planned, the researcher opted to utilize the survey as a recruiting tool.

The survey results served as an additional data source that augmented and triangulated the interview data (Hanson, Petska, Creswell, & Creswell, 2005). In the end, the interview and survey data combined to broaden the respondents' ability to more fully voice their opinion regarding the phenomenon of American Muslim social workers integration of spirituality and religion in practice.

The researcher was not seeking specific outcomes, as would be the case in experimental or confirmatory investigations, but rather, sought to explore the use of religious and spiritual interventions in social work practice by Muslim social workers. The stated goal in the past and current study was to better understand social workers integration of religion and spirituality in their practice through exploratory investigation (Furman, 2004). This type of study is often conducted within the realm of phenomenology.

Phenomenology

The Islamic and Durkheimian paradigms are embedded in phenomenology as it has been described by Moustakas, (1994) and Moerer-Urdahl and Creswell (2004). Both seek the primary essence of understanding experience as in phenomenology (Dhaouadi, 2005; Durkheim, 1938). Previous research suggested that phenomenology provides both a philosophy and scientific vehicle for knowledge acquisition by going to the source; asking knowledgeable persons to reflect and expound on their conscious experience of the subject (Grbich, 1999).

The literature referenced multiple types of phenomenological method but most often detailed Moustakas's (1994) operational guidelines for employing Husserl's

transcendental phenomenology (Akerlind, 2005; Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell, 2004; Moustakas, 1994). Heuristic and empirical phenomenology were contrasted by Moustakas (1994) who noted that heuristic method is more concerned with the discovery of new meanings or understandings; while empirical asks the respondent to reflect on a specific circumstance, event or subject, describing the what and how of it. The researcher rejected heuristic and empirical phenomenological strategies. Transcendental phenomenology was considered to be the most fitting philosophy for both the current investigation's discipline (social work) and subject (spirituality and religion).

Transcendental Phenomenology

Transcendental phenomenology was another form of qualitative method described by Moustakas (1994). Creswell (1998) stated "phenomenology's approach is to suspend (thus transcend) all judgments about what is real" (p. 52). Part of the researcher's role in this case was to hold prior knowledge or understandings regarding the phenomenon in abeyance during the entire investigation (epoche`), that allows for the sensitivity and openness necessary to receive the worldview of the respondents (Creswell, 2003). This is not unlike the social work value and ethic of assuming a nonjudgmental stance with clients in therapy, allowing for self-determination.

The emphasis on the holistic characterization of the experience is similar to the holistic description of spirituality (Canda & Furman, 1999). The study asked respondents to recall and relate experiences on as many levels of consciousness as they perceived. Extrapolating the meanings of spirituality, religion, and the integration of either into practice was the goal of this investigation. Moerer-Urdahl and Creswell (2004) stated that

an exploration of spirituality was a fitting example of the transcendental phenomenological approach. These were the primary reasons for the selection of this strategy of data collection.

Data Collection

The current inquiry began with the modified Canda and Furman (1999) questionnaire. The survey was distributed to all members listed within the Muslim social workers' database via Survey Monkey, an Internet survey site. Respondents were asked to forward the survey on to any other Muslim social workers they knew (see description within the Sample section). The researcher contacted the respondents from the list gathered through the ISSA and any additionally referred self-identified Muslim Social Workers, advising them of the plan to send a copy of the questionnaire. This contact served as a reminder, since many had provided their initial contact information more than a year prior to the actual implementation of the study. Additionally, an email explaining the purpose and value of the investigation would accompany the survey invitation.

After the initial invitation, second follow up emails were sent if there was no response within a 14 day period, per Babbie's (2004) recommendation. The researcher planned to send a follow up hard copy via the postal service if there was little or no response to the electronic surveys. Babbie recommended that questionnaire survey return dates be tracked in an effort to identify sampling bias. All returned surveys were to be dated and assigned identification numbers for reference. The first 12 respondents (allowing for an attrition of two) who indicated a desire to participate in the interview

were expected to serve as coresearchers for the study sample as is fitting for phenomenological study.

Response Rates

The previous research reported relatively low response rates generally below 45% for the social work practitioner studies. Canda and Furman (1999) reported a 26% rate; Bullis's (1996) rate was 44%; Sheridan's (2004) rate was 43%. These rates were below the 50% that is considered adequate (Babbie, 2004). The 26% for the Canda and Furman (1999) study was approximately 1% of the 150,000 NASW memberships. Given the ease of using the electronic venue, coupled with a desire to contribute to the novel research, the researcher expected to generate a response rate that was at least comparable to that in the Canda and Furman (1999) study. In this case, 26% of the total known sample frame (ISSA database, N=38) would be approximately 10; a number comparable to previous study.

Sampling Design

Phenomenological sampling design is based on the goal and purpose of the research and the primary strategic method (Collins, Onwuegbuzie, & Jiao, 2006). This study targeted American Muslim social workers and was considered purposeful homogeneous sampling (Grbich, 1999; Babbie, 2004). The sample was nonprobable, as there was no known number of Muslim social workers within the United States (Babbie, 2004). Collins et al. (2006) stated that once the sampling scheme has been determined, the next step is to pair the scheme to the proposed methodology, in this case phenomenonology.

Patton (2003) indicated that there is no qualitative sample determination formula. Interviewing to the point of redundancy (saturation); emergent sampling from a small target group; and predetermination were three options presented. Collins et al. (2006) suggested a maximum of 10, no less than 6, for a phenomenological design. Miles and Huberman (1994) noted that multiple case studies with a sample size greater than 15 would likely sacrifice depth for breadth. Moustakas (1994) did not designate an ideal sampling design for transcendental phenomenology. Moerer-Urdahl and Creswell (2004) reported nine respondents in their qualitative example of transcendental phenomenology. The study proposed to solicit participation from the total known sample frame within a newly formed database and, as stated, expected to rely on a volunteer sample population of 12.

Target Population

Self identified Muslim social workers holding a bachelor's or higher degree in social work were approached regarding their willingness to participate in the study via electronic solicitation through email correspondence in collaboration with the ISSA (December 2005) and personal invitation through contact at the National Association of Black Social Workers' (NABSW) Conference held in February 2007. Approximately 30 social workers responded to an email solicitation through the ISSA during 2005/06. Eight additional names were added through contact with the NABSW and snowball sampling from the original database inquiries (NABSW conference, February 2007). The total number listed in the Muslim social workers' database as of December 10, 2007 was 38. There was no other known database of American Muslim social workers. The total

sample frame (all listed within the database) was solicited. Recruitment began with the distribution of the survey. As previously indicated, the target sample consisted of volunteers through self-selection and was limited to the first 12 respondents.

Instrumentation Survey

The original 1999 survey was comprised of 102 fixed choice items including demographic data, religious background (past and present), understandings about G'd, religion, spirituality, and the propriety and use of specific religious and spiritual interventions (Canda & Furman, 1999). Respondents were asked to choose levels of statement agreement on a five point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree" (Canda & Furman, 1999). The survey ended with three optional written narrative qualitative questions, querying specific areas of appropriateness for spiritual/religious intervention; appropriate and inappropriate uses of religion and spirituality; and additional comments (Canda, 2004).

Dr. Furman commented in her permission letter that the British Survey, rather than the original U.S. questionnaire, be used for the current replication; it was more concise (personal communication, October 2007). The British Survey, conducted by Furman, Benson, Canda, and Grimwood (2005) consists of 63 fixed-choice items and one narrative question gleaned from the original 1999 questionnaire. The format is different; but, the British Survey asked essentially the same questions as the U.S. instrument. Some questions were removed due their national specificity for the United States population. Furman et al. reported on a comparative analysis of religion and spirituality in social work referencing results from the British and U. S. surveys as variations of the same

survey. Both surveys were similarly constructed and checked for reliability and validity as reported in separate literary sources (Canda & Furman, 1999; Furman et al., 2005).

Reliability and Validity

The original questionnaire instrument drew from previous survey questionnaires (Bullis (1993); Sheridan et al. (1992 & 1994) and added a scale that distinguished between religion and spiritual aspects in social work practice (Furman, Benson, & Canda, 2004, p. 273). Religion, spirituality, and composite religion/spirituality items were grouped in three separate scales as a means of measuring social workers' attitudes and practice in each respective area. Coefficient alphas were reportedly high (Cronbach alpha= .97 for religion and the combined religion/spirituality scales; .96 for spirituality alone) (Furman et al., 2005). Criterion-referenced/con-current and discriminant validity were examined.

The authors used Principal Components Analysis (PCA) of religious and spirituality items to construct attitude measure scales in both the U.S. and British surveys (Canda & Furman, 1999; Furman et al., 2005). The internal consistently and content validity of the British instrument was reported to be high (religion scale .96 Cronbach alpha; spirituality scale .97 Cronbach alpha; and .97 Cronbach alpha for the combined scales) and consistent with the original United States (1999) study. Furman et al. (2005) reported that internal consistency for both religion and spirituality scales was high. "The questionnaire was also subjected to content validity, criterion-referenced concurrent validity, and discriminant validity" (Furman et al., 2005, p. 820). The content and structure of this study's questionnaire made no major deviation from the British and US

questionnaire's religious/spiritual and religion and spirituality scale items that were previously analyzed for reliability and validity. Dr. Furman indicated that the use of the British Survey in the U.S. posed no problem (personal communication, October 2007).

The British Survey Instrument, as did the U.S. survey, reported results in the areas of: (a) sample characteristics (i.e. gender, ethnicity, areas of practice, work setting, site of practice, full vs. part time employment, and education); (b) spiritual orientations of social workers, (c) propriety of raising religious or spiritual topics by client issue; (d) ethics and practice regarding specific spiritual/religious interventions and; (e) respondent definitions of religion, spirituality, and faith (Furman et al., 2005). The Muslim Social Workers' Perception Study questionnaire followed a similar format.

The Muslim Social Workers' Perception Study

The current investigation used a slightly modified version of the British Survey (Furman et al., 2005). The questionnaire consisted of 62 fixed response items and two open ended questions. Dr. Furman suggested that demographic adaptations may be in order for the Muslim respondent, given the purposeful sample of American Muslims (personal communication, 2005). Religious affiliation choices were multiple in the previous studies (Canda & Furman, 1999; Furman et al., 2004). As reported in the literature review, Muslims are not a monolithic group. Therefore, the spiritual orientation questions allowed room for multiple associations within an Islamic context, (i.e., convert, Nation of Islam, Sunni, Shia, nondenominational, and Sufi affiliations). These questions were unique to this study and were not subject to the PCA applied to the British and U.S. survey items. Two questions, relative to the separation of church and state were added

from the U.S. questionnaire given the specific relevance to a U.S. population. The 65th question is open ended and asked respondents for their viewpoint regarding being a Muslim social worker in the United States. It is new and was not checked for reliability or validity. The complete survey is included in appendix A.

The purpose of the Muslim Social Workers' Perception Survey was to provide comparative data regarding the definitions of religion, spirituality, and the consideration of either in determining the propriety of use under various circumstances common to clinical social work. The survey also provided data relative to American Muslim social workers' experience in using religion or spirituality in practice.

Qualitative Investigation—Semistructured Interview

The written narrative interview text provided data for the qualitative component of the investigation. Questionnaire respondents were asked at the end of the survey to forgo anonymity and provide contact information for further participation in the study through an indepth follow up interview. Although it was possible that as many as 38 could indicate a willingness to participate in the interview, the target sample was limited to first responders (n=12). The goal was to have at least 10 completed interviews by the end of the data collection period. The researcher hoped and anticipated that there would be at least 12 respondents willing to participate in this portion of the study. If a lesser number volunteered, the researcher was prepared to attempt electronic and telephone contact with database members to obtain an adequate sample. Recognizing that the interview could be longer, the researcher asked respondents to set aside at least one to

one and a half hours via telephone or face to face, or e-interview, as convenient. It was anticipated that more involved interviews might require multiple interview sessions.

Resultant differences between telephone and face to face interviews are minimal (Smith, 2005). Hodge and McGrew (2006) stated that the telephone interview was more effective (than face to face) regarding response rate. The current study relied and was based on the volunteerism of the sample respondents, rather than the random call strategy used in the Hodge and McGrew study. Creswell (1998) stated that telephone interviewing may be the strategy of choice, given limited accessibility of respondents.

If the respondents desired, the interviews could have been conducted electronically through instant chat messaging. E-interviews have an advantage of allowing coresearchers to respond at their convenience and encourage self disclosure due to the impersonal setting (Bampton & Cowton, 2002; Meho, 2006). The literature referred to asynchronous e-mail interviews. This strategy allows for the researcher to ask questions sequentially via e-mail and it is thought to be a time and cost effective means of qualitative data collection (Meho, 2006, p. 1265). The interview effectiveness is dependent on the coresearchers' skill and comfort level of using the internet to transmit sometimes personally sensitive information. The interviews, through whichever venue the coresearcher deemed most convenient, were semistructured and centered on the coresearcher's definitions and views of religion and spirituality as applied to social work practice. The coresearcher was queried as to any mitigating influences regarding their responses.

Interview Questions

Open ended questions are the recommended form of data collection for phenomenological research (Moustakas, 1994). Key questions recommended by Moustakas included a description of the respondents' experience(s) with integrating spirituality and religion into social work practice and the context in which these experiences occurred (as cited by Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell, 2004, p. 4). Nastasi and Schensul (2005) noted that "indepth interviewing" (p. 184) often uses the semistructured interview format.

The current investigation proposed the use of semistructured interview questions developed from a previous doctoral course work case study conducted among school social workers and school social work stakeholders (i.e., teachers, administration, parents) by (El-Amin, 2006) in combination with those posed in the Hodge and McGrew (2006) study. The 2006 study questions are denoted with an asterisk.

1. How would you define spirituality?*
2. How would you define religion?*
3. What relationship, if any, do you see between religion and spirituality?
4. What place does spirituality or religion have in the workplace?
5. When and where is the incorporation of spirituality or religion appropriate?
6. When and where is the incorporation of spirituality or religion inappropriate?
7. What spiritual or religious interventions have you used?
8. What evidences competency in the inclusion of spirituality or religion in social work practice?
9. What are the ethical considerations?

10. What factors have influenced your answers to these questions?

11. How have you been effected by your participation in this study?

The last question allowed for the coresearcher to debrief any feelings or concerns that may have been generated during their participation in the study. As in the questionnaire, the respondent could omit any portion or choose not to answer any question. The researcher recorded the interviews, with the respondent's permission. The interview was transcribed verbatim, providing a synopsis for the respondent's review and correction via electronic or hard copy. Once the transcript synopsis was approved, assignment of an identification number or pseudonym was used for reference in the final report. It was expected that the E- interviews would allow printing of the entire written discourse as typed (Bampton & Cowton, 2002). There were no plans to implicitly or explicitly identify respondent/coresearchers in any portion of the narrative. Chapter 4 provides a full description of the actual data collection process.

Correspondence

The majority of Muslim social workers listed in the database submitted their contact information in 2005-2006. At that time, they received an email solicitation asking both for their willingness to participate in the research and to be listed in the database (personal communication, June 2005). Upon approval to proceed, database members were contacted and made aware of the formal study. A letter or email explaining the investigation and a participation agreement accompanied the questionnaire packet as appropriate. The mailed questionnaire (if required) was to include a self-addressed stamped envelope for easy return. Questionnaires were to be mailed to database members

for whom the email contact information proved inaccurate and for whom the mailing address was known. Database members who provided telephone numbers were to be contacted via telephone if the electronic or United States Postal Service solicitations proved unproductive.

The researcher planned to contact willing participants within a week of the receipt of the completed survey. Thank you letter/emails were to follow completion of the survey and interviews. Copies of the proposed correspondence followed the format provided in the literature (Moustakas, 1994). Results are available to coresearchers upon request. Coresearchers were assured of the confidentiality of their private information.

Ethical Considerations

Any investigation, particularly those involving people, has ethical considerations relative to data collection and reporting of results (Babbie, 2004; Creswell, 1998). The study asked American Muslim social workers about their personal and professional experience with spirituality and religion. Questions about personal expression of religiosity and relative challenges could have been sensitive issues for some coresearchers.

Keeping this in mind, the researcher remained sensitive to how the coresearcher might view participation in the research. The 11th question of the semistructured interview allowed the coresearcher the opportunity to debrief any feelings that may have been generated during their participation in the investigation. Moustakas (1994) suggested interview synopses or transcripts should be returned to the coresearchers for review prior to analysis. Akerlind (2005) felt this step unnecessary as the analysis

emphasizes the synthesis of the data rather than individual response. In light of the expressed concerns, Moustakas's (1994) procedure was implemented.

At least one of the pretest respondents indicated concern about being judged by the researcher (personal communication, June 2007). Prior to this comment, the researcher had considered conducting the survey via telephone, as it is thought to improve response rates and accuracy (Babbie, 2004; Hodge, 2005). Upon further reflection, it was decided to maintain the more distant stance of mail and electronic data collection for the quantitative phase of the study.

In reviewing the questionnaire, it was thought that some items' answers might seem more correct relative to Islam, such as, "How frequently do you currently participate in religious services?" A less than weekly response would infer that the person does not attend the Friday Jummah prayer service on a regular basis. Also, some might feel they should have known the answers relative to social work practice, being unaware of the general knowledge per the literature that most social workers are not trained regarding the incorporation of spirituality and religion (Canda & Furman, 1999; Sheridan, 2004).

These kinds of concerns may have been a factor in the relatively low return rates in previous study (Bullis, 1996; Canda & Furman, 1999). The literature noted there are a number of alternate reasons for poor response rates, such as disinterest, inconvenience, literacy level, ambiguity in question items, etc. (Babbie, 2004; Shannon & Bradshaw, 2002). Social desirability factors were of most concern for the present study.

Trustworthiness

The literature on qualitative study used the term "trustworthiness" as a means of establishing the credibility of the research (Lietz et al., 2006). Trustworthiness is accomplished "when findings as closely as possible reflect the meanings described by the participants" (Lietz et al., 2006, p. 444). The literature offered several strategies, most often: prolonged engagement, triangulation, peer debriefing, member checking, negative case analysis, audit trail, and reflexivity (Lietz et al., 2006; Nastasi & Schensul, 2005; Patton, 2003). The current study employed:

1. Prolonged engagement addresses the necessary time needed for adequate and sufficient data collection relative to the number of coresearchers for the interview and sufficient time to conduct thorough interviews and analysis.

2. Triangulation of survey data with narrative interview data expected to note the frequency and type of spiritual and religious interventions utilized and deemed appropriate in social work practice, as well as, definitions of spirituality, religion, and the relationship between the two. Survey and narrative data was compared one to one. That is, the questionnaire for coresearcher Ali was to be compared to the narrative patterns and themes that emerge from the Ali's interview.

3. Peer debriefing planned assistance of a Muslim social worker colleague who volunteered to read through interview narratives separately from the researcher and note apparent themes relative to religious and spiritual interventions and definitions. Identifying data would be removed prior to the debriefing sessions.

4. Member checking, as previously described, allowed coresearchers to

review individual synopses or transcripts of their interviews for approval before final submission.

5. Negative case analysis was welcomed. The research seeks the full range of expressed beliefs and practices of American Muslim social workers' integration of spirituality and religion in practice and the definition and relationship of religion and spirituality.

6. A reflexive journal denoted the researcher's experience(s) (i.e., feelings and challenges to efforts to bracket previous assumptions) throughout the process of data collection and interpretive analysis of findings.

7. An audit trail documenting events relative to the research process was maintained by the researcher throughout the investigation.

The last two strategies reinforced the researcher's integrity through systematic documentation of the data collection process and evolution of the investigation (Nastasi & Schensul, 2005). The triangulation of the data was expected to address the social desirability concerns.

Social Desirability

The literature indicated that most research in the area of spirituality did not control for social desirability respondent effects (Gray, 2006; Slater, Hall, & Edwards, 2001). Given the coresearchers selfidentification as Muslim, there was an anticipated possibility of a negative social desirability effect; particularly if the coresearcher deemed a response as nonconformist relative to social work ethics or Islam. Phenomenology and the social work discipline have emphasized the researchers'/ practitioners' neutrality in

judgment regarding receipt and analysis of data. Conscious effort was employed toward this goal and conveyed to the coresearcher. Part of this effort included ensuring confidentiality, which was reported to have a neutralizing effect for social desirability (Slater et al., 2001).

Confidentiality

Confidentiality was addressed as previously described regarding the data collection process. To reiterate, incoming questionnaires did not identify respondents by name, with the exception of those who indicated a desire to participate as coresearchers in the qualitative phase of the investigation (Moustakas, 1994). Conducting the interviews via instant chat messaging or e-interview was an offered option, expecting that some would prefer to maintain a level of impersonality. All were assured that their individual responses would not be reported with any direct identifiers. The literature provided examples of how this could be achieved in mail and electronic survey methods (Babbie, 2004; Olsen, Wygant, & Brown, 2004). Phenomenological literature suggested that pseudonyms be used to reference quoted narrative examples (Wall et al., 2004).

Coresearchers were assured that the study would maintain and report results in a nonjudgmental manner. That is, all responses carry equal value and results would be reported in a manner that maintained the confidentiality of individual respondents. As previously stated, comparing the interview narratives with the survey results was expected to provide illuminate social desirability through the notation of discrepant responses.

Data Analysis

The original studies, as previously described, were based on quantitative data analysis (Canda & Furman, 1999, Furman et al., 2004). Furman et al. (2005) compared the data by regions within the United States. They noted a Southern and Midwest social worker preference for religious/spiritual interventions. The religion, religion and spirituality, and the combined religion/spirituality scales were correlated to social workers' demographic and personal religious and spiritual practices. Similar comparisons were made between the UK and U.S. study results (Furman et al., 2005).

Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative analysis consisted of a comparative analysis of the coresearcher's individual data sources. There was no plan to analyze the quantitative data in the current investigation, although the survey addressed the first two research questions. The quantitative data responses provided empirical data regarding the descriptors used by Muslim social workers to illustrate and define religion, spirituality, and faith. Results identified which religious or spiritual interventions were deemed appropriate for social work practice in relation to the personal experience and demographics of the coresearcher.

The surveymonkey.com website provided for tracking the electronically collected responses. The number of responses (completed or skipped) per item were tallied. The percentage of responses and raw data for scaled items is also provided but was not utilized for this investigation.

Qualitative Analysis

Canda (2004) reported qualitative results noting practitioners' perspectives on the ethics of incorporating religious or spiritual interventions based analysis of the three qualitative responses within the questionnaire. The Muslim Social Workers' Perception Survey maintained the qualitative aspect of the survey through the open ended narrative questions at the end of the survey. These responses were incorporated into the thematic data analysis of the interview narratives.

Phenomenological data seeks the invariant essence of meaning from the synthesis of the varied range of responses. Akerlind (2005) noted that many doctoral researchers choose the phenomenological approach for data collection and analysis with great success. This comment referenced the single inexperienced researcher's ability to maintain "open-mindedness and awareness of alternative perspectives" (p. 323) during the analysis.

Moerer-Urdahl and Creswell (2004) provided an operational example of transcendental phenomenological analysis using Moustakas (1994) paradigm:

1. Horizonalization: Transcriptions of the interviews are read and reread in order to identify statements of meaning for spirituality, religion, and spiritual or religious interventions. These verbatim statements are considered of equal value for each interview and are listed in entirety. The statements are again reread, deleting those that repeat or overlap. The remaining statements provide a horizon or basis for understanding the concepts' range of characteristics.

2. Themes: The horizon significant statements are sorted into distinctive meaning units.

3. Imaginative Variation: what and how descriptions of the experiences of spirituality, religion, spiritual/religious relationship, and spiritual and religious interventions are to be discerned, noting variation in "perspective, role and function" (Moustakas, 1994).

4. Intuitive Integration: denotes the composite essence of the conscience collective meaning of the identified phenomena provided by the coresearcher American Muslim social workers.

These thematic essences are critically examined and contrasted with the previous research regarding the views and practices of social work practitioners. An additional aspect of the study was whether there was any reference to an influence from American society in general or American civil religious views. This information provided insight into possible effects of Islamophobia. This study was novel in approach as compared to previous research (Hanson et al., 2005). It exemplified an integration of the religious/spiritual framework in scientific investigation. The qualitative and quantitative data were compared and examined to uncover any apparent social desirability and to illustrate the comprehensive meaning of spirituality, religion, and religious/spiritual integration in social work practice as expressed by the American Muslim social worker coresearchers.

Summary

The phenomenological strategy reiterates the philosophies of the selected early theorists. Ibn Khaldun's (1381) Islamic methodology, reflected in Moustakas (1994) investigative process, forces the researcher to maintain a conscious suspension of

personal opinion in lieu of what is observed in creation (Dhaouadi, 2005). Following the phenomenological paradigm, there was an ongoing consultation and comparison of the data in search for the essence of meaning (Moustakas, 1994). Canda (2004) applied a constant comparative analysis to the qualitative data from the 1999 study. Durkheim's (1938) sociological scientific method was evident in the analysis's goal of seeking the invariant essence of phenomenal meaning.

Chapters 4 and 5 provide the results and discussion of the completed investigation. It is hoped that the resultant product extends knowledge omitted in the previous research with social work practitioners. The voice of Muslim social workers adds to what is known about Muslims in America and Muslims in social work practice.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Introduction

The resurgence in research in the area of spirituality and religion in social work practice has primarily focused on the White, female, Christian social worker's perspective, leaving out the minority social workers' voices (Bullis, 1994, Canda & Furman, 1999). The purpose of the current study was to explore American Muslim social workers' personal and professional perspective in the areas of religion and spirituality.

A phenomenological investigation was conducted, asking 15 self identified American Muslim social workers to act as coresearchers, Moustakas's (1994) term for the participant/respondent, by sharing their definitions, views, and experiences of religion and spirituality. This study ascertained whether there was an operant Muslim or social work conscience collective (mutual mindset) or a dominating aasibiyah (group feeling) (Durkheim, 1938; Ibn Khaldun, 1381). It explored the level of influence of the educational, religious, societal, or other cultural domain on professional practice attitudes and behaviors.

Coresearchers were recruited via an online survey: The Muslim Social Workers' Perception survey (Appendix A). This questionnaire gathered demographic and quantitative data regarding the definition, role, experience, and propriety of integrating religion and spirituality in social work practice. The survey results are not included except as a triangulating data source for individual coresearchers. The researcher gathered semistructured interview responses provided by the coresearchers via telephone interviews. Composite transcript excerpts of the interviews are located in Appendix B.

The phenomenological analysis reviewed transcripts in a reiterative fashion until first a horizon (range) and finally, thematic meaning units were discerned. An example of the coresearchers' horizon for the meanings of religion, spirituality, and their relationship is placed in Appendix C. Verbatim illustrations of themes are provided in table format in this narrative following the associated interview question. Themes relative to professional experience and propriety of spiritual/ religious interventions and domains of influence are similarly addressed. Identity references specific to being Muslim are noted under the heading "As a Muslim social worker."

Research Questions

Survey/Interview Question Correlation

This study answers three basic questions (as stated below and as headings for applicable findings) relative to the meaning and applications of religion and spirituality in social work practice for Muslim social workers.

1. How has spirituality and religion been interpreted within the experience of Muslim social workers?

2. What spiritual or religious interventions might Muslim social workers express and deem appropriate for the practice context?

3. What level of consciousness, relative to any challenges posed by the current media image(s) of Islam might Muslim social workers express?

The semistructured interview questions were slightly changed from those in the proposal to more directly address the stated research questions. How would you define spirituality and religion was changed to: *What is the meaning of religion and what is the*

meaning of spirituality as you interpret the term? What place does spirituality or religion have in the workplace and what place does spirituality or religion have in your work were changed to: *What has been your experience with religion in social work practice and what has been your experience with spirituality in social work practice?* The questions on the propriety of religion and spirituality were separated for each concept with a single question asking about nonpropriety resulting in: *What has been your experience with religion in social work practice and what has been your experience with spirituality in social work practice (When is it appropriate to use religion in social work practice or when is it appropriate to use spirituality in social work practice were asked to clarify if needed*). The questions regarding competency and ethics were dropped as the answers would likely be embedded within the propriety responses and because they did not directly address the stated research questions.

The semistructured interview questions are categorized below to show their association to the stated research questions. The associated survey questions are listed numerically under the corresponding research question.

1. How has spirituality and religion been interpreted within the experience of Muslim social workers? The survey asked respondents to differentiate religion and spirituality among 16 attributes listed in Appendix D. The associated interview questions were:

    a. What is the meaning of religion as you interpret the term?

    b. What is the meaning of spirituality as you interpret the term?

    c. What is the relationship, if any between religion and spirituality?

2. What spiritual or religious perspectives might Muslim social workers express and deem appropriate for the practice context? Survey questions 1-38 address the role and propriety of religion and spirituality in social work. The corresponding interview questions were:

d. What has been your experience (or how have you used religion) with religion in social work practice? (Applies to question #1 as well)

e. What has been your experience with spirituality (or how have you used spirituality) in social work practice? (Applies to question #1 as well)

f. When is it appropriate to use religion in social work practice?

g. When is it appropriate to use spirituality in social work practice?

h. When is it NOT appropriate to use religion or spirituality in social work practice?

3. What level of consciousness, relative to any challenges posed by the current media image(s) of Islam, might Muslim social workers express? The survey posed an open ended optional question: "Please use the space below to make any comments about being a Muslim social worker in America." Interview responses were perused for any reference to this topic. The coresearcher's responses will be discussed under the "as a Muslim" heading.

i. What factors have influenced your answers to these questions and those within the survey?

Coresearchers were also asked to describe any effects of their participation in the study and any additional comments in order to directly address social change relative to

the individual coresearchers and discuss any unresolved concerns generated during the study. Response details will be discussed as applicable.

Data Collection

The data collection sources were the Muslim Social Workers' Perception Survey and the semistructured interview transcripts, as previously described. The total data collection period was 100 days (3/19/2008-6/26/2008). All responses were received during the survey recruitment period; 61 days from 3/19/2008 – 5/18/2008. Thirty three individuals (82%) completed the survey. Twenty five of the 33 (76%) consented to participate in the study by providing their contact information.

Coresearcher Recruitment Process

Once the survey respondent consented and participated in the indepth interview, they were thereafter termed coresearcher commensurate with phenomenological terminology (Moustakas, 1994). The final question of the survey asked respondents to provide their contact information and indicate their availability and consent to participate in the Muslim Social Workers' Perception of Religion and Spirituality semistructured interview.

Ten of the 25 potential coresearchers did not participate in the study due to scheduling difficulties or because they did not fit the study requirements for education (i.e., having neither bachelor's nor master's level social work degree). Because of the previous agreement to serve as a corater for the study, coresearcher "T" was not interviewed, leaving a total sample pool of 15 Muslim social worker/ coresearchers.

No compensation was provided for participation and coresearchers were informed that their participation was strictly voluntary throughout the process. All agreed to the recorded telephone as opposed to the electronic venue.

Interview Period

Twelve interviews were completed between 3/27/2008 and 5/22/2008. Three additional potential coresearchers were included in order to expand the breadth and depth of composite results which extended the data collection period to 6/6/08. Interviews lasted from 30 minutes to 2 hours, approximately 45 minutes on average.

Throughout the interview process the researcher maintained a decentered role (as an aspect of epoche`). This stance emphasizes the accurate reflection of sentiment and experience as expressed by the coresearcher Muslim social worker, not the researcher. The researcher listened to and transcribed the interviews, generally within a week of the interview.

Demographic Descriptions

This study focused on personal and professional identity and experience. The survey asked respondents to share information regarding their particular Islamic affiliation(s), their ethnicity/ nationality, age, gender, education, and professional experience in social work. The sample was an ethnically diverse group; all American citizens. The ethnic and religious composition of this study's group of coresearchers was different from any previously reported study known to this researcher, as expected.

Figure 2 displays the ethnic identity markers, using the ethnic terminology from the survey. The highest percentage of the 15 coresearchers was African American 8(53%).

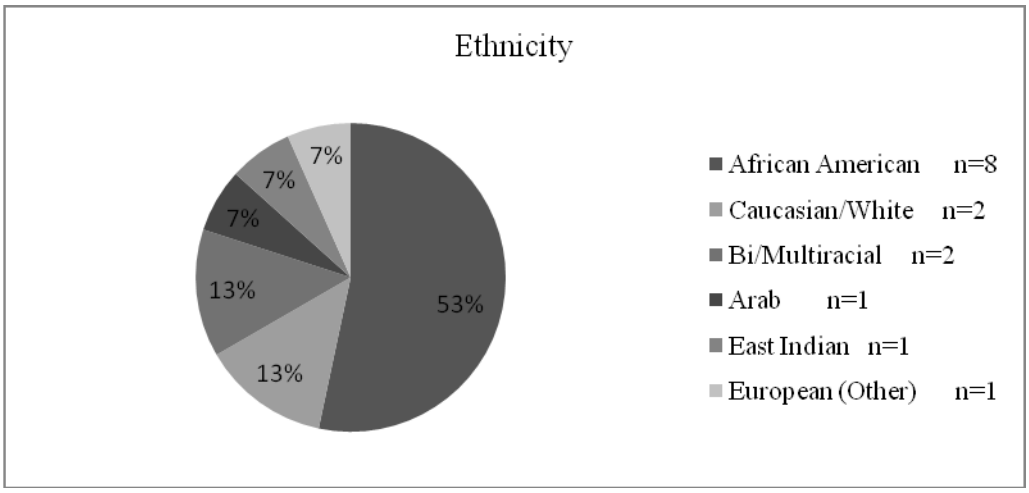

Figure 2. Coresearcher ethnicity.

Figure 3 displays the gender and age range of the coresearchers. The highest percentage was female 12(80%), with an average age of 42 years.

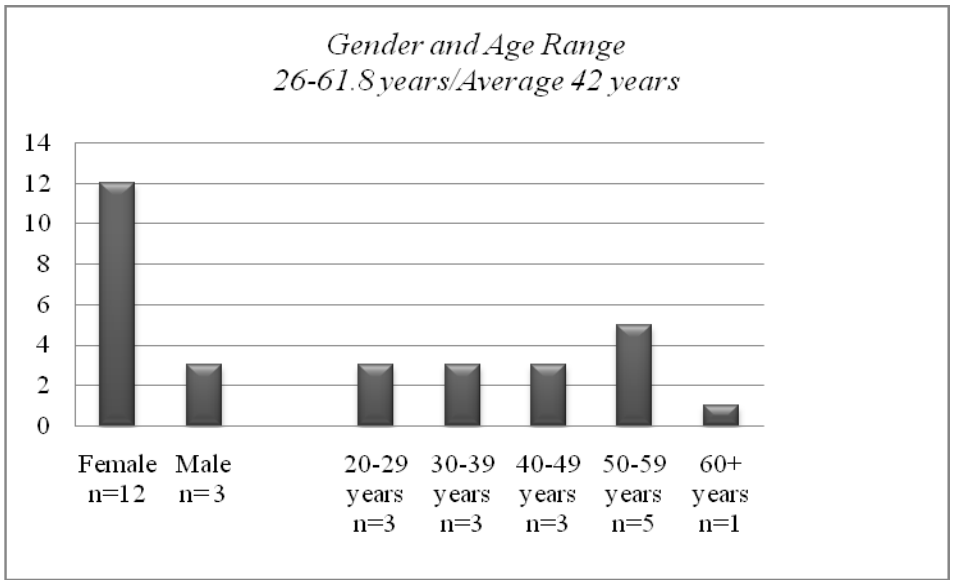

Figure 3. Gender and age range.

The majority of coresearchers self-identified as Sunni Muslim 7(47%). The Sunni percentage 7(47%) is likely even higher, given that only two coresearchers choose multiple affiliations and most converts are part of the Sunni Islamic tradition (Jackson, 2005).

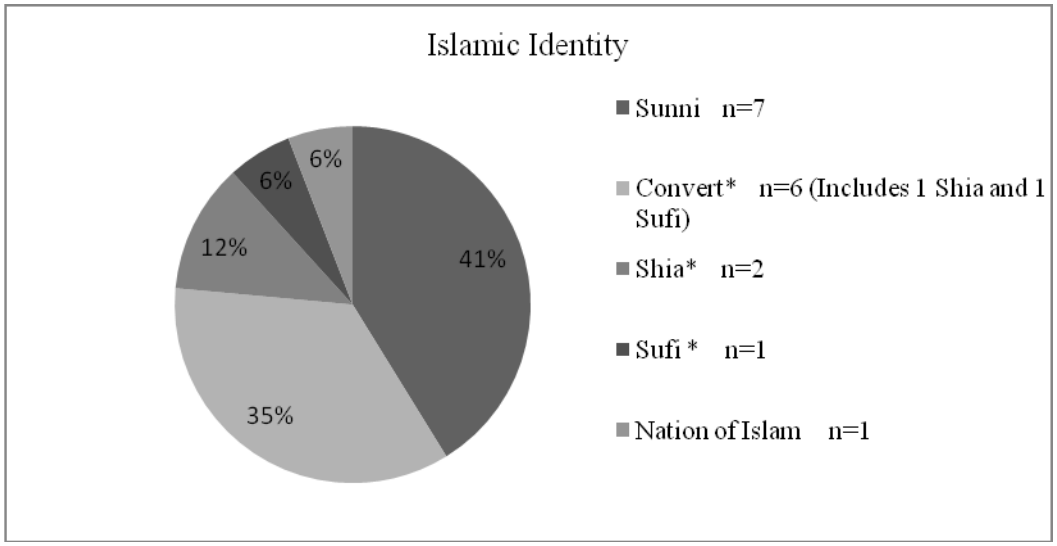

Figure 4. Islamic identity.

Education

Participation eligibility required that all coresearchers be degreed social workers having bachelor's (BSW) or master's (MSW) degree. One coresearcher has a doctorate in social work and another is currently a doctoral candidate. Eight (53%) coresearchers indicated they had no previous training in religious or spiritual issues. Three of the eight mentioned in their interviews that they had done research or supplemental reading on the topic. Combined with the 6 (40%) that indicated previous training, at least 9 (60%) of the 15 coresearchers had been exposed or introduced to religious/spiritual practices in social work.

Professional Background

The range of professional social work experience amongst the coresearchers was 3 months – 36.8 years (*M*= 13.5). Most coresearchers *n*=5 (33%) reported having five years or less professional experience. Areas of practice varied with the highest percentage of coresearchers providing direct, clinical service *n*=5 (33%) or mental health services *n*=3 (20%).

Findings

The findings consisted of the survey and interview transcript responses. Composite survey results for the coresearchers listed attribute selections for religion and spirituality and are in Appendix D. The primary sources of data collection were qualitative--the verbatim transcripts of the semistructured interview responses and the written comments from the open ended questions at the end of the survey. Results are addressed as they relate to their corresponding research question as described at the beginning of this chapter. The researcher did not reword or reinterpret coresearcher's statements. The coresearchers' words, inserted for clarification are in quotes where indicated. The researcher's words are bracketed.

The researcher was nondirective, outside of providing the interview questions as prompts for discussion. The coresearchers were encouraged to expound on the questions according to their understanding, thus, allowing for varied interpretations of terms. Some sought validation from the researcher regarding the exact line of inquiry, "I don't know if that really answers the question." or "I could say more, but I don't know how much more you want me to say." I left question interpretation entirely up to the interviewee.

In leaving question interpretation open to the coresearcher I began to get an idea of the various manners of question interpretation not previously considered. For example, several coresearchers interpreted "What has been your experience with religion in social work?" to "What has been your experience with Muslim clients in social work?" How have you used or experienced spirituality or religion in social work practice, was reinterpreted by some to mean how have you pushed religion in practice? In each case, the question was repeated, correcting the reinterpretation for accurate understanding of the query.

Analysis

The transcripts were reviewed/observed during the initial interview sessions; at the time of transcription; and while formatting individual responses into composite transcript notes under each interview question. They were subsequently read and reread several times.

Horizonalization

The reiterative review of the interview responses allowed the researcher to get a sense of the whole. The literature has defined this process as "Horizonalization" (Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell; 2004; Moustakas, 1994). Horizonalization began with the initiation of the interview in this study.

Some coresearchers stated that their responses represented the first thing that came to mind. This suggested that, given more time, the responses may have differed. I noted however, that the original content of most transcripts was maintained after the member check review. Definitions did concretize during the interview process, as

coresearchers became more comfortable with the researcher and the topic. I too, began to get a better feel for what was being said upon the second listening.

Composite and individual response narratives were read and reread to get a sense of a conscience collective in the meanings offered for religion and spirituality. In operationalizing horizonalization, the phenomenological literature directs the researcher to list the significant transcript statements and remove any duplicate meanings to get a sense of the invariant range of meaning (Durkheim, 1938; Moustakas, 1994). Some duplicate words (i.e., "set of beliefs") were retained because their omission altered the meaning of the statement. An example of the horizon for the meaning of religion based on the first interview question follows:

1. It is *shared beliefs* and *ritual*s that a particular group of people label as one religion as opposed to another. They distinguish one religion or another by their beliefs and practices.
2. *Structured way* to interact with The Creator.
3. An *organized set* of beliefs through *Divine Revelation*.
4. P*ractices*, common belief system, m*anifest* practice.
5. *Values* people choose to go by that govern their spirituality.
6. *Connection* with the universe, collective and it's personal.
7. *Belief in G'd books* that accompany it or *guidelines.*
8. *Congregational,* identified on the outside, but the inside is something different.
9. *Traditions*; way of life. There are all kinds of different beliefs.
10. ---All previously stated.
11. *Rules* we follow to fulfill the requirements of our religion.
12. A process of connecting with something more than what we see and experience in our lives. Foundation of faith in something greater. …ethics...boundaries.
13. *Belief* about G'd; higher spiritual level.
14. *Brand, Label*.
15. A *method* of doing things, a philosophy, the belief system that you live your life around. [Doing things?] *Worship, communicating* with people and also your relationship with G'd.

Because the coresearchers continued to expound on definitions throughout the interview process, a broader horizon emerged when the transcripts of the first three interview questions were reviewed as a composite. An expanded example of horizonalization is placed in Appendix C, entitled "Composite Example of Horizon" which illustrates the breadth of textural (what) and structural (how) understandings of religion, spirituality and their relationship expressed by the coresearchers.

Thematic Categorization

Examining each research question, the next analysis step in was to reduce the horizon of statements into thematic meaning units or clusters (Creswell, 1998; Moustakas, 1994). The tables following the interview questions present the salient themes, representative descriptive statements and frequency of occurrence. Appendix E denotes a complete table of coded themes for the meanings of religion and spirituality.

Interview Question Results

The responses to the research questions related to the meaning of religion, spirituality, the relationship between religion and spirituality, professional experience and opinions regarding the propriety of integrating either religion or spirituality in practice are described in this section. The highest percentage and distinctive responses are highlighted where applicable. The discussion also includes distinctive individual survey results as they related to individual interview responses.

Research Question 1: How has spirituality and religion been interpreted within the experience of Muslim social workers?

Attributes of Religion and Spirituality—Survey Results

The Muslim Social Worker's Perception Survey asked the coresearchers to choose among 16 attributes (see Appendix D table) for the meanings of religion, spirituality. The same list of attributes was presented for each concept. The coresearchers were encouraged to check all applicable.

Since the researcher did not review individual survey responses relative to the meanings of religion or spirituality prior to the interviews, coresearchers were not asked about discrepancies between their individual definitions expressed in the interview versus their survey responses. The comparative results for all survey attributes expressed by coresearcher's (A-O) within their interview responses are also displayed in the Appendix D table as Survey Results. Ten (67%) of the coresearchers, as the horizonalization indicated, expressed alternative attributes outside of those listed for the meanings of religion provided in the survey. Twelve (80%) of coresearchers chose alternative descriptors for spirituality as well.

Interview Responses

What is the meaning of religion as you interpret the term? The five most often expressed themes for the meaning of religion are displayed in Table 3. The most common textural themes for religion were "belief," "collection" or "set of" and, reference to "The Transcendent" (i.e. G'd, Higher Power, Something Greater, etc.). Ali liked the survey definition and restated, "It is shared beliefs and rituals that a particular group of people

label as one religion as opposed to another." Geri stated, "I guess a belief in G'd and whatever book, I guess or books that accompany it." Jasmine offered, "Religion, I would say is the belief that we have to abide by."

Structural themes (indicating how) were most often expressed in non-specific practice/ritual or organization/structural terms. Latifah commented, "Religion, I would have to say, is about structure, its values and ethics, but when I think of religion, I think of structure, boundaries, lifestyle structure." Ben combined the structural component with the connection to G'd, "The contemporary meaning of religion has to do with our private life and provides a structured way to interact with the Creator."

As they pondered the subject, some coresearchers began to clarify previous statements. For example, Chris first defined religion as, "An organized set of beliefs through Divine Revelation." When asked about the meaning of spirituality she said, "For me it's part of religion." When clarifying the relationship between religion and spirituality, she expounded on religion saying, "Religion is an organized belief structure and part of that, a big part of that are spiritual concepts." Chris acknowledged that she did not consider her views absolute and that they might not be shared by others.

Opinions about the effects of religion varied. Coresearchers expressed the how of religion in both negative; "It is institutional structure that puts in place things that can alter a person's life, a person's ability to make choices"; and less often in positive terms; " It's acknowledging some power outside of yourself that's influencing you or giving you

justice." Religion was described as "limiting", "that thing people find themselves fighting over", promoting "fear" as opposed to "love" and the like.

Table 3

Coded Meanings of Religion

Theme	*Descriptive statement-*	*n*	*%*
Belief	"Belief about G'd; higher spiritual level."	14	93
Set/collection	"Set of values and rituals and lifestyle that promote peace, connection with the universe and with G'd."	11	73
Transcendent /G'd	"An organized set of beliefs through Divine Revelation."	8	53
Structured/ Organized	"Religion I would have to say is about structure.	7	47
Practices/Rituals	"I think of something organized, with your set of rituals, your set of practices."	6	40

What is the meaning of spirituality as you interpret the term? Table 4 presents the interview results for "what is the meaning of spirituality as you interpret the term?" Naimah, when asked to define spirituality, stated, "It is difficult to put into words." Elaine offered, "I think it's a combination of thoughts and feelings and, you know, how thoughts and feelings react with each other."

Relational features of spirituality were commonly expressed. Twelve (80%) of coresearchers linked spirituality to a relationship with the Transcendent referenced under eight different names (i.e., Allah, G'd, Creator, Higher Power, Higher Being, Greater

Being, Supreme Forces, and Divine). Chris's evolved definition of the spiritual/religious referenced "Divine Guidance; belief in a Higher Power, we know that as ALLAH."

For Naimah the relationship brings about a peaceful state, "It is harmony with the Supreme Forces." For Elaine and Omera the relationship reflected a state of mind. Omera defined this consciousness as Taqwa, "it is a personal type of relationship with G'd, and I think a lot of it has to do with your Taqwa or your awareness [consciousness] of Allah.

Table 4

Meaning of Spirituality

Theme	*Descriptive Statement- Multiple letters following statements indicate multiple theme association*	*n*	*%*
Transpersonal (Outside of human experience)	"Impulse in human beings to have contact to interact with G'd or something greater than themselves." F/R/CO/Trp	12	80
Connection (Relation)	"I think spirituality takes along the personal effects of religion." CO	10	67
Process/Method	"Finding your place in your faith." P	7	47
Differentiated from religion	"Really different from religion, can be spiritual without being religious." D	7	47
Status (State of being)	"It is well being, it's being at peace." S	5	33
Feeling	"It is kind of your own set of rules about how you feel certain things." N/F	5	33
Role/Purpose (Why)	"It is a long term curiosity which is also fulfilling in a way." S/R	5	33

What is the relationship between religion and spirituality? Almost half (47%) of the coresearchers differentiated between spirituality and religion in the previous interview question (see Table 5). Six (40%) coresearchers emphasized the differences between religion and spirituality when asked about the relationship between religion and spirituality (Table 5). Dichotomous statements (i.e., religious is this___ versus spirituality is that___) for religion and spirituality were noted throughout the descriptions. For Fatimah, "Its collective and personal…like religion can be collective, but spirituality, I think is really more personal…" Hanif commented early on, when defining religion, that "Looking at spirituality being something that's personal, where religion is that outward shared display of effect." Five (33%) coresearchers expressed that spirituality was a more "silent," "private" and "personal" concept, as opposed to religion being "manifest", "outward" and "overt". Naimah expressed her personal views on the difference, "I think religion is just a brand or name of practice, but spirituality to me is something of strength, of outer power, the unknown, and the positive forces that can influence you to be at peace." When distinguishing the relationship, these statements about religion had a negative tone.

The negative aspects of religion in the religious/spiritual relationship were cited by other coresearchers. Hanif expressed, "There are a lot of people, say in our society that would say they would rather have spirituality without religion, because religion tends to be an obstacle for the experience of spirituality." Latifah continued from her previous statement, "I think one's frustration with religion

kind of creates or provides a platform for spirituality to exist." Ali agreed with this rationale, citing a specific example, "Sufism grows out of Muslims feeling like the religious expression of Islam was not fully addressing the need of spirituality and therefore the needs of Muslims."

Religion was less often attributed to a belief in the Transcendent. "Personal connection with the Transcendent" was selected by 7 (47%) in defining religion as opposed to 11 (73%) for spirituality. Coresearchers also distinguished the difference between spirituality and religion in textural (i.e., tone, level) and structural (i.e. process, experience) terms; citing variances in form or association referencing quality, rather content. Maryum stated, "I think spirituality comes with a different level of opening yourself and your own feelings pertaining to various…within religion." Ali offered, "Religion might emphasize the fear of G'd, whereas spirituality might emphasize the love of G'd—Different tones."

Nine (60%) of the 15 coresearchers openly expressed that there was some type of relationship between religion and spirituality but not necessarily so. Most cited that spirituality, unlike religion, is not bound by a set organization affiliation or ritual pattern of behavior. Elaine offered, "I think there is a relationship, but I don't necessarily believe that the two always coincide and I don't believe that they have to coincide." This view is represented in Iman's statement, "Someone can be religious and spiritual. Someone can be involved in a religious tradition and not have, really that inner connection. Someone can be spiritual and not be involved in a faith tradition."

Five coresearchers began their statements with "For me…" acknowledging that their personal views may not be shared by others. Elaine offered, "It depends on where each individual person is at as it regards their religion and their spirituality." Coresearchers suggested that spirituality and religion may have a reciprocal relationship that is personally determined. Jasmine stated, "Being more spiritual, in other words is being more religious." Fatimah stated, "I think the goal of religion is to feed spirituality." Omera held the opposite view, "It seems to me that spirituality keeps your religion going to a certain extent." Latifah lamented that this doesn't always happen, "I think religion can stifle spirituality."

Some descriptions of the relationship between religion and spirituality were unique to the group. Geri did not distinguish between the religious/spiritual saying it, "Encourages people to do better, to do good things in life; an example, just thinking about treating other people in a good way. How you treat the earth in a good way." Ben's negative tone toward spirituality was exceptional to the group, "You know this can sound like a cop out, but my problem with this term is that it has so many definitions now, that I don't use it too much." He had particular concerns about a spirituality that did not include religion, "Spirituality without religion? From my perspective that gets into New Age kind of stuff, where people make up their own ways to express their spirituality. And that can turn into just about anything…" Hanif offered an explanation for a spirituality that doesn't include religion, "There are a lot of people, say in our society that would say they would rather have spirituality without religion because religion tends to be an

obstacle for the experience of spirituality." Latifah and Ali's previous statements exemplified this view as well.

Table 5

Relationship Between religion and spirituality

Theme	*Descriptive Statement*	*n*	*%*
Dichotomy	"Religion is basically the letter of the law, whereas spirituality relates to the spirit of the law…Religion might emphasize the fear of G'd; Spirituality the love of G'd".	5	33
Can be interdependent or independent	"I don't necessarily believe that the two always coincide and I don't believe that they have to coincide."	5	33
Spirituality effects religion	"Spirituality keeps your religion going to a certain extent."	5	33
Religion without spirituality=Problem	"If you have religion without spirituality, you don't have much."	4	27
Islamic Reference	Two Views: (a) All of this is why we have to make it clear that Islam is not a "religion" as that word has come to be used…it is a Deen (Way of Life)"; (b)"With Islam, religion is an organized belief structure and part of that, a big part of that are spiritual concepts."	4	27

More often, religion without spirituality was cited as a problem. This view was held by 5 (33%) of the coresearchers. Omera's statement is an example of this opinion, "If you don't have that spirituality, you might not have that zeal to do things, or to

worship or to be a better person." Ali and Latifah identified the solution to this dissonance. Ali stated:

> The ideal goal is to find a way to integrate the two of them. Unfortunately, what happens a lot, as with most things, people try to over emphasize one direction or the other and as a result, find themselves out of balance in some way.

Latifah expressed a personal example of seeking this ideal:

> So I did get (so) turned off that I turned to spirituality, because I grew up as a person of faith and to just denounce that was not an option. But I had to reconcile in some way to maintain my faith, but in a way that didn't feel like it was oppressing my spirit.

Latifah noted that the quest for balance of the religious and spiritual was a driving motivation for the direction of her community social work practice. "So I tried to work with organizations, creating space that is more in line with the Islam that I feel should be portrayed in terms of social justice and equality for women etc."

Islamic Reference

Islam emerged (as mentioned by 4) in the discussion of the relationship between religion and spirituality, as noted in Table 5. Coresearchers differed on whether or not Islam should be interpreted as a religion. Ben stated emphatically, after his comments About spirituality without religion, "All of this is why we have to make it clear that Islam is not a religion as that word has come to be used…it is a Deen (Way of life)." Hanif cited examples of negative restrictions in religion as an impetus for choosing Islam:

> I grew up Baptist and Catholic and I...My father …a Jehovah's Witness, so I have been exposed to a lot of Jehovah's Witness. I have studied Buddhism, Taoism, Sufism [Separate from Islam I wondered later?] and delved into Judaism a little bit and sort of came full circle…But then I found Islam to be that full completion, the wheel to all those spokes to religion. And there I was able to find the truest expression of individual awakening and awareness.

The negatives cited for Islam as a religion seemed more an issue with Islamic dogmatism as practiced by some Muslims' rather than an issue with Islamic ideology. Latifah stated, "But I felt that so much of the essence of what I believe you do see in Islam, in terms of a religion of reform and empowerment for people is not practiced or its not, it's politicized into other things." Latifah's arguments against religion referenced her personal experience of being part of a marginalized group (Shia) within the dominant Sunni Muslim community. "There never really was a Shia mosque that we could attend. So this has always kind of been a real struggle that I have experienced in my life." The other identified Shia was a convert and made no reference to feelings of marginalization because of this identification.

Professional Experience

What has been your experience with religion in practice? Table 6 presents the prominent areas of religious experience in practice expressed. All coresearchers reported that they had experienced religion in practice, either in the workplace with colleagues, in assessment, treatment of clients (non-Muslim or Muslim), or as part professional development. Religious experiences in social work varied from overt practice with religious clients or communities to an underlying practice approach and mindset toward the religious/ spiritual in practice as presented in Table 7.

Four (27%) coresearchers initially interpreted the question of "what has been your experience with religion in social work practice" to mean "what has been your experience with Muslims in social work practice?" Two mentioned servicing Muslim clients as part

of a diverse clientele, others discussed previous work settings that focused (but were not exclusive) on service to Muslim clients.

Latifah encounters religion as part of her position as a community advocate. She noted the religious challenges she sometimes faces in working in the Muslim community:

> So, it has really been a struggle doing domestic violence work in the Muslim community because sometimes people want to go back to...and a lot of times cultural values are mixed in and taken as religious values and so that separation is often times challenging to make.

Table 6

Religion in Practice

Theme-Code	*Context*	*n*	*%*
General Practice	Intake and assessment	All	
Treatment modalities	Group, individual, couples, community practice	100%	
Presenting Problems	Grief and loss, substance abuse, sexual abuse, domestic violence, death		
Clientele	Non- Muslim		
	Question initially interpreted as meaning experience with Muslim Clients	4	27
Education	Academic (*n*=6) Professional Development (*n*=3)	9	60

Practice experience was in no way limited to a Muslim clientele. Religious experiences were recalled in all practice modalities, most often, but not limited to direct clinical practice with couples, groups, family, and in individual treatment areas with adults or children. Experiences varied from instances of grief and loss,

parental rigidity, substance and sexual abuse, to domestic violence and other distressful circumstances.

Nine (60%) coresearchers indicated that they had previous experience to the spiritual/religious in social work education or as part of their professional development. Hanif draws on his personal upbringing and spiritual/religious exploration and education, "I have been exposed to, or maybe practiced the different faiths. I have a lot that I can reference when it comes to supporting others in their belief system." Chris seeks professional development when working with clients who present an unfamiliar worldview, "I then try to get as informed as I can about their own beliefs, about their religion and how I can help them with things that way."

Only Elaine stated that, "Generally people don't talk about religion as far as I have seen." Geri experienced her treatment interactions differently, "And most people *do* have some type of religious belief that I talk to. It's pretty rare that they say no, they don't go to church or something or 'I don't believe in G'd' or something, very rare." Elaine later stated that the topic did come up in treatment but she avoided discussion, "I have in my practice had occasions where I could have answered in a religious/spiritual way but I chose not to." She cited her Master's of Social Work (MSW) curriculum for her reticence to include religion. Omera, having just recently graduated only two months prior to the interview, also stated that her Bachelor's of Social Work (BSW) training did not encourage integration of the religious/spiritual in practice.

Although, Karima's MSW social work matriculation occurred around the same time as Elaine's, she reported that her curriculum noted the value of the

religious/spiritual and advocated for its inclusion in practice. As a student, Karima stated:

> When I first started practicing, 25 years ago or so, you did not bring it up…When I went back [to school in 2003], we had a class, on faith based social work, and they looked at the process of faith and people and it was…we were encouraged to bring it into our practice, but to be aware that it was a really important and sensitive part of life.

Iman expressed professional experiences that were unique to the group. She has taught classes on the subject and noted that in her experience the religious and nonreligious social work student has benefited. She commented that as a professor of social work, "I endeavored to help people understand the importance of faith and religion to social work professionals who may not understand and often don't understand."

Table 7 outlines the practice approach themes that emerged when discussing experiences of the religious in practice. Chris described her religious experience as more a mindset in approach than a practice behavior, "I just recognize what different religions are. I keep it in the forefront of my mind in how I deal with people." Chris was among the 33% that stated they do not initiate religious discussion, particularly with non-Muslim clients.

A nonsectarian approach was also espoused by 33% of the coresearchers, particularly with non-Muslims. Ben and Fatimah both cited examples of using Hadith (Traditions of Prophet Muhammad) without citing the source. Ben offered:

> As a rule I don't identify the source of any of these religious principles that can be used as therapeutic principles. A quick example might be the Hadith that talks about the Angel of Death going to the Creator. I'm using the language that I use when I'm talking to the patient or a group of

patients. As opposed to identifying or saying even G'd, Allah, or anything, I refer to 'The Creator.' And in this Hadith the Angel of Death goes to The Creator and says to The Creator, "You know people are going to hate me. They are going to say 'He took my son or my mother, he took my child.' And The Creator's response was, 'No, they are not going to hate you, they are going to say, their son died of cancer or their mom died from old age and their dad died from an auto wreck.' I use that Hadith often when people have lost someone…in a way to have them take a look at, not only how somebody might have died…how do they, what do they think about when someone dies.

Table 7

Approach to Using Religion in Practice

Theme-Code	*Descriptive Statement*	*n*	*%*
	Practitioners' Varied Approaches		
Culturally/Spiritually/ religiously sensitive	"I've tried to provide spiritually sensitive and religiously sensitive services to people for whom this is important."	6	40
Client Directed	"I don't introduce it, but if the client is open to a certain belief or a Higher Power outside of them, then I will explore it with them and then we'll discuss it. But I never force them into a particular belief or religion. I let them define it."	5	33
Neutral -Nonsectarian Language	What I have learned to do by the way of the 12 step recovery program is to take concepts and principles that are found in religions and present them in principles that can be used in therapy. As a rule I don't identify the source of any of these religious principles that can be used as therapeutic principles. "A quick example might be the Hadith that talks about the Angel of Death going to The Creator. I'm using the language that I use when I'm talking to the patient or if a group patients."	5	33
Strength Based	"I know that its sometimes comforting in their spiritual, you know religious belief. That makes them feel comfort…so then I would kind of bring it up."	4	27

Ali also has experience integrating religion, "I've found ways in working with some people to use religion and spiritual concepts to illustrate a point or to help somebody understand something." Ben and Ali provided one of the few detailed specific examples of a religious intervention. More often religious experience was expressed in terms of the context in which it emerged as a topic.

Geri, Jasmine, Iman, Maryum, and Omera noted religiosity or religious affiliation as a source of strength for clients. Fatima's experience was a mix of the religious and spiritual:

> Many of my clients come in with a negative. Many have had negative experiences with religion and religious organizations, where they have felt disillusioned or they have gotten their feelings hurt or they have been betrayed by someone who is, calls themselves religious. But, despite that…I would say almost all of my clients are, you know, consider themselves on a search for meaning and trying to be on a spiritual path

The individual survey results noted past experience using religious or spiritual interventions that were often not reflected in the interview responses. For example, Elaine stated that she had minimal experience with religion and spirituality in practice. Yet, she reported experiences of exploring the role of religion with clients, using religious language or concepts, and helping clients develop religious/spiritual rituals as a clinical intervention. Ben cited examples using nonsectarian religious concepts and "things spiritual" in practice, but did not note these interventions in the survey.

What has been your experience with spirituality in practice? The expressions of professional experience with spirituality flowed from coresearchers' descriptions of the term and are depicted in Table 8. Religious examples sometimes blurred into

conversations about the spiritual (related to Islam). Latifah detailed a life defining encounter she had with a woman she presumed to be Muslim:

> I naturally said, 'As Salaamu Alaikum,' and she looked at me and she was kind of pushing an empty stroller; this is weird, it was years ago, but it is so clear in my mind. She looked at me and she clearly felt uncomfortable and she left. And I didn't see her again, and so I feel like what I learned from that experience…to me if I say 'salaams' to her I'm making her feel comfortable, I'm reaching out to her, when in fact, it was clear that she didn't necessarily want that. She didn't ask for that, she didn't want that kind of familiarity; maybe she wanted an anonymous situation.

Hanif offered an example of a client's resistance to work with whom he presumed to be a Muslim therapist and his co-worker's reactions. Both of these examples seemed more related to being a Muslim social worker but were recalled when asked about general experience with spirituality.

All but 2 cited some experience that they deemed spiritual in practice. Table 8 descriptions capture the horizon of variety of spiritual experience expressed. Things spiritual, as noted in Table 9, can mean a number of different types of interventions, most having to do with a G'd, have connection or a search for meaning and purpose in life, or a circumstance that directly reference the meaning previously attributed to spirituality. Given a choice between integrating religion or spirituality, 5 (33%) of the coresearchers' stated preference were spiritually focused interventions, particularly when serving a non-Muslim clientele.

Ben initially stated he didn't use spirituality in practice. Upon further contemplation he stated that he had used spirituality more with groups but also in individual sessions once initiated by the client, "I'll sometimes get into "things

Table 8

Spiritual Experience

Theme-Code	*Descriptive Statement Examples*	*n*	*%*
Variations of "Things spiritual"	-It's people bringing out, you know they say, "Oh I believe in G'd, I believe in, I can forgive this person. -I try to focus them on, just kind of look within them and their own spiritual beliefs about what makes an issue better for them. -It's more inadvertently, just kind of talking about things we don't understand the meanings of . -All of my clients, I encourage them to do something for their spirit (i.e. meditation, deep breathing, soft belly exercises, mindfulness) . -It's common place for people to want to explore these areas in their recovery (substance abuse, post traumatic stress disorder) . -Just talking of spirituality/meaning and purpose and meaning and purpose can come from a lot of things (i.e. volunteering, family, pet, something that grounds you and gives you life, a reason to go on.) -When people are …dead end and don't know what to do, or they want some guidance and they are open—that's when I introduce that [spirituality]. -Having to do with G'd's plan	13	87
Spirituality Preferred over Religious topic in therapy	-If I'm working with non-Muslims, I emphasize spirituality more than religion. -Well I think that most of my clients are really more concerned with their spirituality. -It's safer to talk about spirituality, that doesn't have any labels on it.	5	33

Clients are responsive to spiritual interventions	-In individual work, once initiated by the patient, we really get into it and the response has been very positive. -Well my experience over and over again is that people really find spirituality and a connection to something greater than themselves very healing.	4	27
Outside of the clinical setting (In the agency/Among other social workers/ with colleagues)	-Not permissible in agency-When I asked whether we can incorporate that (sp) in our work, they said no, that there has got to be a separation. -With social work students- more inclined to say they are spiritual than religious; interested in learning about other worldviews. -With co-workers G'd conscious references such "it's in G'd's hands" -- "Leads me be believe that they were more spiritually…kind of putting…taking away judgment and kind of putting it to G'd as the caregiver."	4	27

spiritual" even if the group does not initiate it."

Dalilah commented that she did not explore spirituality as a concept with her clients as part of her intake assessment. She noted that her encounters with spiritually referenced her personal interpretation of the client's situation, particularly as it related to G'd's plan, "I think that's an example of how…we might not be talking about spirituality but I think [we are] really, even though without using key terms or code words."

Dalilah presented an example of personally interpreting a circumstance as spiritual within her professional experience; an interpretation she did not share with the client. Omera noted a similar situation in which she perceived a spiritual

construction to her coworker's mention of G'd's plan. The notion of "G'd's plan" has special emphasis in Islam and will be elaborated in chapter 5.

Research Question 2--What Spiritual or Religious Interventions Might Muslim Social Workers Express and Deem Appropriate for Practice?

Propriety Comparative Survey Results

The survey presented various treatment situations and asked coresearchers to rate their level of agreement regarding the propriety of using the religious, spiritual, or a combination of the religious/spiritual in treatment. It also presented different scenarios and asked whether it was appropriate to use a religious/spiritual intervention in that case and whether the respondent had actually applied such an intervention.

Survey responses did not always coincide with the views expressed during interviews. For example, Ben seemed very familiar and comfortable with the use of nonsectarian religious references and the use of religious texts (Hadith) in group work particularly within a 12 step recovery program. (The reader may recall he was resistant to spirituality as a concept because of its ambiguity.) However, he did not differentiate religion and spirituality in his survey responses. He categorically disagreed with the statement "It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of Spirituality or Religion when dealing with a client."

Ben provided a response (disagree) for every other situation in both instances, skipping substance abuse and several other questions altogether; leaving the researcher to wonder whether there was a problem in question interpretation. I thought in this instance

the operative words may have been raise the topic given the emphasis on client initiation. I could not think of a plausible rationale for the pattern of responses.

Latifah also rated religion and spirituality in the disagree column under all circumstances regarding propriety in practice and did not differentiate between religion and spirituality. They focused almost entirely on her feelings and experience in working with the Muslim community.

Karima and Elaine also disagreed with raising the topic of religion, but tended to agree with raising the topic of spirituality under the same circumstance. Elaine cited little experience using religion or spirituality outside of serving Muslim clients. Her survey responses indicated that she had prayed privately for a client and used religious language or concepts. She also indicated that these activities were not appropriate for social work practice.

The survey did not allow for explanation. Dalilah and Iman noted a need to qualify responses regarding propriety of specific religious or spiritual interventions. Iman wrote, "The answers I chose largely depend on a variety of things. So, in some cases I answered yes and no. Yes if__ and No if___." In reviewing the survey after the interview, I had no way of knowing what the "if" was. Iman's interview responses were generally theoretical (not situation specific), with an emphasis on the need to recognize the value of exploring, asking the client to clarify the role of religion and spirituality in their lives.

Although questions were posed separately for religion and spirituality, interview responses sometimes blurred distinctions. The propriety themes expressed in the

interviews are displayed in Table 9. When asked about spiritual propriety, again religious examples were generated as in Latifah and Hanif's examples. In one instance Latifah spoke of Christian classmates whose faith she felt was inappropriately restrictive:

> There were sometimes when they were not willing or able or felt uncomfortable dealing with folks in the gay/lesbian community…I feel like the whole idea of religion versus spirituality, it can put restrictions on you and can really be dangerous in terms of being a social worker.

Latifah had similar concerns with some Muslim social workers as well. None of the other coresearchers mentioned this area of restriction. The main concern expressed by the highest percentage (67%) was a consciousness of the client's wants and needs and a desire to conduct therapy within that boundary.

Client Worldview

Serving Muslim clients was in some ways easier and more appropriate according to Ali and Chris. Ali stated, "[Its] most appropriate when dealing with Muslims." Chris noted the advantages of having a Muslim therapist for Muslims in her experience with a Muslim couple:

> They were throwing back all these Muslim concepts and we can go there with it; I can go there with it, a Christian can't. ...I can't talk to Christians and give them any advice, really because the belief structure is just so different.

Everyone did not share Chris's opinion. Having been exposed to Christianity and being aware of the common features of doctrines, several expressed no qualms about working with Christians. Per Ali, "I also think there are fundamental beliefs that are shared between Islam and Christianity." Omera stated, "If they are Christian, I can kind of frame what I'm talking about to fit their own belief system, but that is only if they give

Table 9

Propriety of Using Religion and Spirituality

Theme	*Context*	*Descriptive Statement Examples*	*n*	*%*
Appropriate To Integrate Religion or Spirituality	Client initiated	I don't really think it's appropriate unless the client leads you to that…of religion or spirituality	10	67
	Assessment	I would ask them if they define themselves as either religious or spiritual.	4	27
	Rapport	Religion-"After still once you have built that rapport with the client, once you assess where they are when it comes to religion." Spirituality-"It depends on my relationship with them, how long I have known them; what they have shared with me thus far…"	4	27
	Strength Based	Sometimes I will give that as a strategy for aligning the therapeutic relationship. I would talk about spirituality if the patient identifies that as a source of strength for themselves.	3	20
	Similar View	I feel that that would be a situation where it would be appropriate to set up certain goals or even in speaking with her or counseling with her, bringing up topics of religion or ways that may be able to help her in a religious type of framework.	4	27
	Varied Contexts	Guilt Life or death issues Use of religious texts (with caution).		

Never Appropriate	Proselytize	It's not appropriate to tell someone what to believe in any way. It is not appropriate to do that with spirituality or religion.	6	40
	Client adverse	When the client says "That's not important for me."…Because it may be that they had a bad experience with it? …I don't think you press it if people don't want you to.	7	47

the lead."

Work Setting

Interview responses were often unique to the individual and the particular work setting. Elaine noted that she did not think it appropriate to discuss religion or spirituality if a person was going through a particularly traumatic time, as in the death of a child. Geri offered, "Once in a while, if I see someone is really struggling with something that has happened to them or a family member, something tragic, that they are really having a hard time with, that's when I'll ask."

When asked about propriety in general for religion or spirituality, being client directed or client initiated were the qualifiers. Ten (67%) said they look for and require their client to introduce the topic outside of an assessment situation. Six coresearchers (40%) emphasized that they were against and would not push personal biases. In three cases, the question of 'when is it appropriate to use religion in practice' was re-interpreted to mean 'when is it appropriate to *push* religion.' Fatima was asked to clarify how she understood the question, "It's appropriate, I mean to use it; to push

religion; or to discuss religion? (Well, to use…; when you are thinking of use, you are thinking of what?) Pushing…then it would never, ever be appropriate." Seven (47%) expressed that it is inappropriate to pursue religion or spirituality if it is clearly adverse to the client. Karima and Fatimah cited examples in which the clients asked if religion or G'd would be discussed in therapy. Once clear that it would not be pursued against the client's wishes, the clients began to initiate discussion. Fatimah remarked:

> I was working at an interfaith center and he asked, "Oh, you work at an interfaith center, are you going to make me talk about G'd?" I said, No way am I going to make you talk about G'd." Then he proceeded to talk about G'd every session.

Most interviewed commented that, given the opportunity, most clients will bring up religion or spirituality on their own. Iman stated repeatedly, "I think we always *have* to ask and then if people say 'It's very important,' then we go from there." The predominant qualifier expressed by most for the inclusion of religion or spirituality in practice was the client's willingness.

Research Question 3—What Level of Consciousness, Relative to any Challenges Posed by the Current Media image(s) of Islam, might Muslim Social Workers Express?

What Factors have influenced your Answers to These Questions and Those in the Survey?

Coresearchers were asked to identify the factors that informed and influenced their interview and survey responses. The composite of transcript responses for this question is in Appendix B. Past experience in the areas of professional experience was cited by 47%, Islamic and religious study and sensitivity by 34%, educational by 13%,

upbringing by 13%, marginalization by 13% and personal interest in spirituality by 13%, as influencing the opinions expressed by the coresearchers in their interviews. In some cases, more than one area of influence was cited.

Dalilah and Ali expressed opposite views regarding the church and state policy effects noted in one survey question but came to the same conclusion. Ali offered, "I think in that church and state thing, as long as you are not trying to convert your client, or you are not trying to pressure them, I don't think that should be considered personally." Dalilah holds a different view, "I believe in the separation of church and state. I don't believe because there is, we shouldn't talk about religion. There is a fine line in the social work profession."

Omera and Chris emphasized their need to be in line with what was correct and proper as culturally competent, religiously sensitive social workers, respectively. Karima, as previously stated, had concerns that her responses, taken out of context, might be misunderstood or misrepresent. "I want to be an example of a Muslim who is bringing good into the world."

As a Muslim social worker. The third research question asked whether the coresearchers had any level of consciousness relative to group membership or reference being Muslim within a dominant Christian or secular society. Dalilah contemplated this aspect in her additional comments:

> I think you might get…from some of the social workers that are Muslims that are living in a Christian dominated society. Well, some call it Christian, others might say secular society, so you have to be cautious of what you say because some of your deep down beliefs and values, if people thought or knew what your really believe, they might think, 'Maybe I don't want to…really want to eat lunch with her anymore.'

Besides, effecting colleague relations, Dalilah also commented on the need to be cognizant in the field that everyone does not share the dominant worldview.

Latifah and Maryum noted that their membership in marginalized groups (i.e., person of color, female, Muslim) had a sensitizing effect. Maryum shared, "And based on my own feeling, previous feelings in different situations that I have been in; I think it's being more understanding" Latifah's upbringing as a Shia Muslim in a Sunni Muslim environment has already been mentioned, as well as her caution regarding presumptions about Muslim clients.

Ali expressed that being "thoroughly" Muslim; one would naturally utilize religion or spirituality in practice to some degree. Seven (47%) coresearchers mentioned their visibility as Muslims; 6 (50% of the female coresearchers) noted that they wear a scarf or hijab. Reported client and colleague reactions have varied from it being a non-issue, advocacy, curiosity, and wariness, to open hostility. None of the coresearchers cited any major problems in other's reactions to their being Muslim.

Fatimah's listed profile indicates her religious affiliation as Muslim. She notes the advantage, allowing Muslims seeking a Muslim therapist to find her. "I think they are actively seeking me because they are afraid of being judged and it certainly makes things easier, like when they say things to me that I don't need them to explain any further." Having a visible Muslim identity has not been a problem for non-Muslim clients in Fatimah's experience. Omera shared her experience:

> But if it is a non-Muslim client and here I am sitting in hijab and they know that I'm Muslim; I don't really feel like it is appropriate to set up certain goals or even

> in speaking or counseling with her bringing up topics or religion or ways that may be able to help her in a religious type of framework.

This was not a stated concern for Fatimah, who also wears the scarf, "The non-Muslims, they find my profile and they come, and only one has ever asked." Not all clients make the connection between wearing the scarf and an Islamic identification. Karima noted, "I don't bring it up and they wonder, "Why is she wearing a scarf on her head?" "Why is she dressed like that?"

Client and employer reactions to visible Islamic identity have been mixed. Karima stated that she once lost a supervisory position because of her religious identification, but that overall, being recognized as a Muslim has not been a problem. Maryum reported that while it hasn't been an obstacle, there is sometimes a reaction upon learning their therapist is Muslim:

> For some of them [clients], their jaw drops and it takes them a while to warm up to me….In fact, because I wear the hijab, the scarf, it's always good conversation point for kids; especially the ones who are not…the first thing they want to talk about is my scarf. I'm willing to explain that within general terms. Not necessarily the Quran is so… or the Muslim is so… I kind of just say, 'This is for my religion' and try to be very general so as to not make them feel uncomfortable…"

Elaine expressed:

> Most of the time it's, 'why do you wear that thing on your head?' It's not about what religion are you? So I tell them, you know, well I'm Muslim and this is why. The reaction I get is, 'Oh, ok.' It's really not a big deal.

Elaine commented to the contrary in her survey narrative response as noted in the following survey response section. As a social worker serving oncology patients, Maryum attributed curiosity about the scarf to questions about Islamic applications to treatment:

> A patient actually asked me if I had any books about how my religion deals with illness. So I did provide a book called, 'Message for the Sick.' This book is written by an Islamic scholar and I did clear that first with the clergy department.

The male social workers generally did not comment on their visibility as Muslim. Hanif was an exception, stating:

> A lot of times, I don't wear the Kufi (small skull cap many times worn by Muslim men)…and sometimes I do that deliberately, because I want to make the point that my Islam is not something that I wear and take off when I want to.

Neither Ben nor Geri (female) share their religious affiliation unless asked. Both noted their client's surprise upon learning that they are Muslim. Ben cited an instance after he recommended a Christian text to a couple, who later asked if he was Christian, "I said, no I'm a Muslim. And man, they almost fell out of their chairs. But they recovered quickly." Geri stated, "When I tell people I'm Muslim, they are like 'gasp' not in a bad way but as a surprise.…No one has ever been mean to me because I'm Muslim. Probably because they don't think I'm Muslim."

As Muslims, 4 (27%) reported a concerted effort to present a neutral countenance with non-Muslim clients as a precaution. Ali commented, "I know a lot of people are sensitive about that stuff (i.e., separating church and state); especially if they know the social worker is a Muslim." Ali also noted that this really has not been a problem for him. Some coresearchers couched neutrality regarding their propriety responses as Muslim practitioners. Hanif stated:

> Of course from an Islamic perspective, I try not to reinforce any of the 'shirk' (i.e., polytheistic belief).When they talk about 'Jesus is G'd' I'm quiet in therapy.…for the most part I try to allow that, flexibility and comfortability with the client.

When asked about the spiritual context, "It's safer [for Muslim therapists] to talk about spirituality, that doesn't have any labels on it." Hanif spoke of maintaining a neutral position with colleagues as well, when they his opinion regarding a client refusing treatment from another therapist assumed to be Muslim.

Latifah, reflecting on her past experience, strongly cautioned that the Muslim social worker should not presume to know their client, just because they (the client) may appear to identify with Islam.

> So I feel a lot of times, if we treat individuals as such and follow their lead and not putting them in a box of Muslims and Muslims being first and what do Muslims look like, but rather treat individuals as an individual and kind of cater our services and our work to what their needs are, I think it's more valuable than taking the approach that 'Oh, he or she is Muslim and so they are like me.'

Three coresearchers commented on the covert application of Islamic ideals in their career choice. Iman and Latifah stated that they recognized and felt a direct connection between Islam and their chosen career in social work. Both were drawn to the connections between Islam and social and economic justice.

Survey response comparisons. The survey responses augmented individual interview results. One of the survey's narrative questions asked for comments relative to on being a Muslim social worker in America. Five coresearchers did not respond. Professional and personal concerns varied from one whose concern noted working solely with a Muslim population might impact competence "Islam is placed higher than that of social justice"; to there weren't enough Muslim social workers to address the need; to the pleasure in being a Muslim social worker, available for Muslim clients who are actively seeking Muslim practitioners. One wrote "the options are limitless," another, "People

seem comforted by my dress." Although several wear the scarf, only one wrote, "Its difficult being a hijab wearing Muslim woman, working with non-Muslims." Dalilah's interview comments were also written in the survey comments, "Professionally, I'm a social worker who happens to be Muslim," which suggests that the concept of a Muslim social worker may be a misnomer for some.

As a Social Worker. The coresearcher's position "as social workers" has already been addressed throughout the descriptions and examples presented regarding propriety of religion and spirituality in social work. Iman, Hanif, and Ben shared their insight and knowledge of the religious and spiritual origins of the profession and the manner in which Islam positively embraces stated social work ethics. Six coresearchers indicated prior education in the area of the religious and spiritual in social work practice, either in course work or professional development. All of the coresearchers indicated either in their survey or interview responses that human spirituality is of value.

Study Effects

Coresearchers were asked about the effects their participation in the study. Only one stated that the study involvement had no effect. Four coresearchers stated that they welcomed the study and noted its value in general. Chris commented, "I think we as Muslim social workers have a lot to share with the non-Muslim social workers." Twelve (80%) commented that it made them "think" on varied aspects regarding religion and spirituality, as noted in Table 10.

Six (40%) noted that it increased their self awareness regarding their personal and professional experience with religion and spirituality. For Naimah it both raised

Table 10

Effects of Participation in the Study R= Religion S=Spirituality

Theme	*Context*	*Descriptive Statement Examples*	*n*	*%*
Raised Consciousness	Awareness	It has affected me in a great way. Like I say, I have been forced to look at my own thinking in this regard; as a professional and as a Muslim.	6	40
	Value	I didn't realize; it didn't occur to me until you asked the question that all of my clients really do think of it as important to them.	3	20
	Ethics	It made me think about different things, like is it really ethical to talk about religion? Is it ethical to talk about spirituality or bring it up.	3	20
Strengthened the regard for the religion and spiritual in practice	Reminder	It just reminded me and it also reminded me to be always mindful and just careful with my working with people.	2	13
	Resurgence	I've gotten the impression that more and more practitioners are becoming more comfortable with the notion that spirituality can be a value, a legitimate part of working with people.	2	13
	Desire to learn	It has reinforced my desire to learn even more about this topic; to continue to learn ways to incorporate these concepts…	1	

awareness and reinforced her present practice. She stated:

> It sort of raised my awareness of how spirituality fits into the whole realm of trying to counsel or direct somebody. It just brought to mind what I already do. That's sort of my format that I use in any situation. I just have to wait until the client is ready or willing to talk about it.

In its broadest sense, combining the categories of the study gave all coresearchers (100%) something to think about that offers implications for social change as will be addressed in chapter 5.

Trustworthiness

Reliability and trustworthiness procedures (i.e., reflective notes and the data audit trail) are documented in Appendix F and G. Triangulating survey results are referenced in the narrative as they relate to the individual coresearcher. Composite results of the survey are located within Appendix E. Data collection processes varied slightly from the original proposal (i.e. number of proposed coresearchers and content of the semistructured interview questions). Variances were described in the corresponding section.

Corating of Transcripts

Corater "T" reviewed the transcripts as composites for each interview question and noted thematic meaning units separate from the researcher (see Appendix H). The researcher and "T" met several times to review and discuss the transcripts and themes. There were few differences between the researcher and corater. The themes presented within the study narrative represent the final outcome and synthesis of ratings between the researcher and co-rater "T".

Member Check & Prolonged Engagement

There were two additional steps to ensuring trustworthiness of the study, member check and prolonged engagement. As part of the member check coresearchers had the opportunity to critique and modify interview transcripts prior to inclusion in the study.

Corrections were few and generally relative to grammar or to fill in ellipsis due to the researcher's inability to clearly hear and transcribe the recording accurately.

The collection period between member check and approval for the group was between 3/29/2008 and 6/26/2008. Although the survey link remains open, no additional survey responses were received after 5/18/2008. Given this fact, it is felt that the requirement for prolonged engagement for the data collection period was met.

Summary

This phenomenological study added to the dearth in research through the exploration of the Muslim social workers' perspective on the religious and spiritual. Fifteen American Muslim social workers of varying ethnicities, ages, and professional backgrounds shared via survey and indepth interview their definitions, experience, and perspectives on the inclusion of the religious/spiritual in practice. The highest percentage (80%) of these social workers was female and held master's degrees in social work. The study explored three areas:

Definitions and Professional Experience of Religion and Spirituality

Religion was noted by the highest percentage (93%) to reflect a belief system who most (53%) said was connected to The Transcendent. The highest percentage (73%) noted that this system was bound by an organized set of ritual practices. Rigidity in religion was espoused as having a negative effect.

Spirituality was described in relational terms by over 80% of the coresearchers most often citing some connection to The Transcendent referenced with eight different

titles. Spirituality was noted to be a state of being or mind, a feeling, a process generally in a positive light.

All coresearchers expressed that the relationship between spirituality and religion is personally determined. A third of the group in each area noted the relationship varies from being clearly distinct and independent to having some level of reciprocity. Another 33% noted that there may or may not be a relationship between religion and spirituality in which one may feed into the other.

All coresearchers acknowledged some degree of religious practice experience within various treatment modalities and circumstances; with both Muslim (noted by 27%), but most often with non-Muslim clients (all). The highest percentage (60%) of coresearchers had participated in academic or personally guided professional development.

While some coresearchers expressed that they had little occasion to use spirituality in practice, 87% expressed that they had incorporated variations of spirituality. One third stated that spirituality was preferred over religion in practice because of its more neutral, nondenominational features. A need for cultural spiritual sensitivity was expressed by 40% citing the importance of the spiritual if not the religious as a potential resource for clients in practice. Nonsectarian terminology and maintenance of a client directed approach was mentioned by 33%.

Perspectives on Propriety of Integrating Religion and Spirituality

Sixty-seven percent indicated that appropriate use of religion or spirituality is predicated on the client's direction or initiation of the topic. Four coresearchers cited the

importance of assessing the role of the religious/spiritual for the client; establishing a rapport for the inclusion in treatment and; having the familiarity with the client's worldview as appropriate contexts for the inclusion of religion or spirituality. Pushing religion or spirituality or pursuing either topic when the client is adverse was deemed never appropriate.

Consciousness of Media or Public Opinion about Muslims

As Muslim social workers, the coresearchers expressed that they are cognizant of how other's particularly non-Muslims might view any efforts to discuss religion in practice. Most tend toward a nonsectarian, neutral position as a standard approach for both religion and spirituality. References to Islamic texts or terms are used without citing the source. While 50% of the female coresearchers stated that they "wear the scarf" and one male sometimes "the Kufi", no one reported any major difficulties or challenges as a Muslim social workers working with a predominantly non-Muslim population. Some noted the surprise of clients once they became aware of their coresearcher's affiliation with Islam.

Past experience, professional or personal, was cited by 47% in each area as having influenced responses. Experience of being part of a marginalized group (female, Muslim, Shia Muslim), religious upbringing, educational preparation, and personal interest were a noted influence by 13%.

The researcher's efforts to ensure trustworthiness and adherence to phenomenological protocol were noted relative to epoche` and documentation of the data collection process and composite examples of survey results, horizonalization of range in

responses, and transcript excerpts in the Appendix (A-E). Chapter 5 will provide an interpretation of the stated findings, noting the limitations and implications for social change and future study.

CHAPTER 5: INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter references the final step in the phenomenological analysis protocol—intuitive integration; providing the conscience collective meaning of the study findings (Durkheim, 1938; Moustakas, 1994). The researcher's reflections on the investigative process and outcome will be delineated. Limitations, indications for future study, as well as applications for social change will be addressed in concluding remarks.

Overview

This phenomenological study addressed the problem of paucity in research relative to Muslim social workers' perspectives regarding the meaning, relationship, and integration of spirituality and religion in the field of social work. Islam is notably the least understood and maligned religion in the United States. Although national studies report that Muslim views are largely mainstream, American public opinion polls indicated that Americans believe Islamic values are very different from their own, though they admitted they know little about Muslims or Islam (Panagopoulos, 2006). No known previous study has provided a venue for Muslim social workers to express in their own words the essence of their experience as Muslims and as social workers in America.

Fifteen American Muslims of varied backgrounds ethnicities and practice experience, holding degrees in social work volunteered via an online survey site to first complete The Muslim Social Workers' Perception Survey and second, accept the invitation to become phenomenological coresearchers through their participation in an indepth telephone interview (Moustakas, 1994). The coresearchers recalled and candidly

shared their views on the propriety and experience of integrating the spiritual or religious into social work practice.

Some of the study's demographics are very different from the national figures presented by the National Association of Social Workers, with similarities only relative to gender with 12 (80%) female for the study, versus 78% female nationally and (NASW, 2003). The average coresearcher was 42 years; 8 years younger than the national average. The gender similarities held true for previously reported studies in the area of religion and spirituality in social work as well. The coresearchers averaged 13.5 years professional experience versus 16 years nationally.

Most participants in previous study had little or no education or professional development in the area of spirituality in social work versus the 6 (40%) coresearchers who cited training either in their social work curricula or in professional development. The difference was likely due to the fact that most of the coresearchers matriculated during the resurgent inclusion of religion and spirituality in the field. This did not necessarily mean that the coresearchers were more likely to integrate the religious or spiritual, as will be addressed under the interpretations of findings heading for propriety.

The study's 8 (53%) African American/Black are part of the 5% national African American social work population reported by the NASW (2003). Nationally, the highest percentage of social workers (88.5%) is White versus the study's 13%. There are no corresponding figures for the Arab, European and East Indian populations of social workers.

Islamic identity affiliation varied, with most claiming Sunni affiliation 7 (47%). It is likely that this percentage is even higher, given that four of the six converts did not designate their affiliation and were likely Sunni. The demographics of this investigation are unique to previous known research relative to ethnicity, educational preparation, and religious affiliation. Previous research suggested that preparation and having a strong religious affiliation would make this group more likely to integrate the religious and spiritual into practice (Hodge & McGrew, 2006). Implications relative to the makeup of the coresearcher group will be explored under the "aasibiyah and collective conscience" heading.

Theoretical Foundation

The study's theoretical foundation drew from early social theory and the phenomenological research design. Islamic scholar and historian, Ibn Khaldun (1381) and social scientist, Durkheim (1938) provided the social theoretical basis for the study. Ibn Khaldun (1381) theorized that societal groups have an aasibiyah or group sentiment causing them as a collective to act as one. Durkheim (1938) coined the term conscience collective, meaning mutual mindset (shared principles) and credited religion with being the conscience collective (p. 172). Durkheim observed phenomena said to influence human behavior outside of conscious directive; he identified such phenomena as "social facts" (p. 13). This study explored whether there was a reference to an aasibiyah, conscience collective, or an operant social fact influence on Muslim social workers' professional practice.

The phenomenological paradigm as described by Moustakas (1994) and applied by Moerer-Urdahl and Creswell (2004) provided the protocol for the current investigation. The phenomenological analysis was methodical the transcripts were typed from the recorded interviews, then read and reread to get a sense of each coresearcher's perspective.

Interpretation of Results

The most pertinent results are reiterated in this section with an accompanying explanation as they relate to the theoretical foundations and previous research. Representative quotes are embedded for clarification.

Interpretations of Findings for Question 1--Part A

Some coresearchers were eager to share and seemed to welcome the opportunity. Others were willing but tentative until they got a feel for what exactly they were being asked. Similar research reports that it is not unusual for persons unfamiliar with discussing the religious and spiritual, particularly as it relates to the workplace, to have difficulty conceptualizing and articulating their views on the subject (Grant, O'Neil & Stephens, 2004).

*Religion.*The first part of Research Question 1 asked for the coresearchers' expressed meanings of religion, spirituality and the relationship between the two. The predominant synthesis was that religion is an organized belief system (expressed by 14 (93%) bound by a set of rules (expressed by 11 (73%) and rituals (expressed by 6 (40%) that is likely to be linked to a Transcendent (G'd, Allah, Something Greater etc.). In

Khaldunian and Durkheimian terms, religion represents a conscience collective and could represent an aasibiyah (group feeling or sentiment).

*Spirituality.*Spirituality was difficult for some coresearchers to concretize for articulation. For 10 (67%) spirituality is a relational concept. As opposed to the 11 (73%) for religion, 14 (93%) stated that spirituality involves a connection to the Transcendent. Spirituality was characterized as personal and private--more of an internalized aasibiyah (group feeling) acting as a social fact. "Religion, as I said is an organized system of beliefs and spirituality is the meaning behind that." Spiritual force was noted to function with or without religious affiliation or a religious conscience collective.

Relationship between religion and spirituality. Although 8 (60%) clearly expressed that religion and spirituality were related, if dichotomy can be considered a relationship as it was in the literature, it can be argued that all coresearchers cited an individual personally determined relationship between religion and spirituality (Hodge & McGrew, 2006). This relationship is depicted as a continuum between dichotomous and being the same as presented in Figure 2 with some coresearchers noting multiple levels of relationship.

5 (33%)	5 (33%)	5 (33%)	1 (1%)
Dichotomous	Independent or Interdependent	S effects R	Same

Figure 5. *Spiritual/religious relationship continuum*

Islamic spirituality. There was no mention of the pillars of Islam in the interview or survey responses outside of general references to prayer. No clear aasibiyah or collective conscience regarding the definition of Islam as a religion or Islamic spirituality emerged in the interview or survey responses. This left the researcher wishing I had gone

back to clarify where Islam stood in the minds of many coresearchers. As previously noted, Islam was not mentioned until the discussion turned to the relationship between religion and spirituality.

I surmised that some coresearchers may have considered that, as a Muslim, I understood how Islam figured in their various interpretations; that they meant Islam when they were talking about religion or spirituality. Again, I wished that I had asked for clarification at the time to be sure. The presumed assumption was accurate relative to the mutual understanding of specific Islamic terminology such as, "Al Hamdu Illah" (All Praise is Due to Allah/G'd); "shirk" (association of other entities with the One G'd/Allah) and; "Umra" (pilgrimage to Mecca, performing ritual rites outside of the Hajj). Islamic references were more frequent and distinct as the discussion turned to experience and propriety of religion in social work practice.

Islamic spirituality was a noted preference to Islamic doctrine. Islamic references more often had to do with the relational aspects of G'd consciousness or a consciousness of Allah in creation. A major factor in Islamic spirituality is that it is, as a religion can be, a way of life. Chapter 4 results quoted one coresearcher and the literature noted Islam as a "way of life" as opposed to a religion per se (ISSA, 2003).

The Islamic aspect of blending the religious and spiritual was notable in many of the interview responses. Although there were no direct references to an Islamic spirituality, the descriptions of spirituality that used Islamic terminology and ideological

references alluded to it. “Deen” or religion as a “way of life”; G’d’s plan as Divine destiny; the attributes of Allah and; emphasis on consciousness of Allah (Taqwa) as The Creator/ Allah; all point to an Islamic spirituality. Omera commented:

> I need to see more of the spirituality in my Deen, as opposed to the Deen in my spirituality, if that makes sense. I think so many times we focus on the no’s that we don’t focus on our relationship with Allah and what that really means.

Three other coresearchers included descriptors of religion as a “way of life” or “lifestyle” but did not distinguish Islam.

Interpretation of Findings for Question 1—Part B

Professional Experience with Religion and Spirituality

The second part of Research Question 1 asked the coresearchers to reflect and recall past professional experience in applying the religious or spiritual. Spirituality, if not religion was cited by all as an important aspect of human being worthy of address in social work practice, 4 (27%) note it as part of a strength based paradigm. The coresearchers 6 (40%) emphasized practice that honored the client’s right to self-determination and a sensitive religious/spiritual approach, 5 (33%) in directing discussion of the religious or spiritual. Another third of the group cited the use of nonsectarian language (i.e. quoting Hadith or religious ideology) without citing the source.

Professional religious experience. While generally social worker/client congruence is preferred, Muslim clients are not always receptive, as pointed out in the recalled experience of the coresearchers. Fatimah observed that Muslim clients seek her services because she is a Muslim therapist, “I think that they are actively seeking me because they are afraid of being judged and it certainly makes things easier, like when

they say things to me that I don't need them to explain any further." Latifah's past encounter in which she said "salaams" (peace) to a woman she assumed to be Muslim at a women's shelter was detailed in chapter 4. It is important to note these examples because, as Latifah pointed out, it should not be presumed that the Muslim client wants to speak the language of Islam:

> I feel like that experience, being that it happened like five or six years ago, really kind of impacted me in kind of the assumptions that I am making. So I feel like in social work, Islam and religion is really important in terms of having cultural competency.

This is another example of how past professional experience can impact future professional practice. Client concerns in practice emerged as *the* primary theme in propriety and will be directly addressed in the interpretation of findings for Question 2.

Professional spiritual experience. A range of professional spiritual experience was reported by 13 (87%). Spirituality was preferred over the religious in therapy as stated by 5 (33%). "If I'm working with non-Muslims, I emphasize spirituality more than religion." Client receptiveness to spirituality was cited by 4 (27%), "In individual work, once initiated by the patient, we really get into it and the response has been very positive." Overall, spirituality was felt to be more neutral a topic than religion. Only one cited an initial negative spiritual experience with a client and this was resolved with clarification.

Islamic perspectives in practice experience. Compatibility with Islam and social work values was noted in the literature particularly related to community service to the disenfranchised and in social justice. This was reflected in the recalled experience of two

coresearchers who stated their Islamic ideology and spirituality led them serve as social workers in the realm of social and economic justice.

Dalilah commented that although she hasn't asked clients about their spirituality, she has experienced what she now terms a spiritual interpretation in therapy, "I might have a client who, a woman who has five kids and she might say 'I wasn't supposed to have five kids' and I might say 'You might not have thought you weren't supposed to have five kids, but apparently it was written in the plan that you were."

References to G'd's Plan have an Islamic significance related to the belief in Divine destiny (Nadir & Dziegielewski, 2001). Elaine commented that, "of course as Muslims, you know we say, in sha Allah, everything happens by G'd's Will.…I wouldn't ever dare say you know to a mother when they are grieving "You know its G'd's Will, you just have to come to terms with it." Put this way, Elaine felt it might destroy therapeutic rapport. Latifah when doing disaster relief overseas declined to comment when the Muslim clients she was servicing referenced G'd's Plan, "people were like, 'you know G'd has a higher plan; this is G'd's work, nobody else could do such a powerful thing such as G'd'.…I wouldn't necessarily engage them on it." Elaine and Latifah, like Dalilah had a spiritual, perhaps Islamic aasibiyah about what was going on, but did not to share their interpretations with the client.

Interpretation of Findings for Question 2

Religious and Spiritual Intervention Propriety

Question 2 asked about previous use of religious or spiritual intervention and propriety some of which was answered within the descriptions of religious and spiritual experience in practice.

Inappropriate. Coresearchers 6 (40%) expressed that they did not feel it appropriate to either push religion or spirituality in general or to pursue such a topic with the client is adverse 7 (47%). The most often repeated phrase expressed by 10 (67%) was "client initiated" or "client directed" when referencing previous experience and propriety in integrating a sensitive religious/spiritual approach. This approach is not inconsistent with previous study, however, the aasibiyah and its resultant rationale is likely different for the coresearchers in this study versus social workers in general.

Survey/Interview Comparison

Chapter 4 noted only a few discrepancies for individual survey and interview responses relative to propriety. One coresearcher's survey response indicated that they had, on occasion, used interventions that included religious language or concepts and private prayer. The same coresearcher also marked these practices as inappropriate. This particular coresearcher also indicated a neutral rating on whether the NASW ethics sanctioned religious or spiritual intervention. This left the researcher to think that this coresearcher's perspective and use of the religious and spiritual may still be evolving. Two other coresearchers noted that their practice behavior in this genre had changed toward more integration since they began in social work.

For those who noted clear disagreement on the survey versus a level of agreement in the interview, I wondered if it was the question's phrasing, given the emphasis on client directed practice. The survey asked if it was appropriate for the social worker to "raise the topic" of religion or spirituality. Furman et al. (2004) indicated that this phrasing was intentional "to test the social worker's comfort level with initiating controversial topics, such as religion and spirituality" (p.281). As alluded to in chapter 4, raising the topic might have sent up a red flag for some. In retrospect, the researcher wished that the surveys had been reviewed in detail prior to the interview in order to clarify and possibly circumvent discrepant findings. For the most part, individual survey results corresponded to individual interview findings.

Propriety

Recognizing the general importance and possible value for clients, the only stated appropriate time to raise the topic per four coresearchers (27%) would be in intake assessment in order to determine the role of the religious or spiritual for the client. Once this role has been established 4 (27%) felt it proper to pursue the topic as appropriate to the treatment context:

1. In issues of guilt, life or death, substance abuse recovery, trauma or when religiosity is impeding well being.
2. When the therapist holds the same worldview as the client or is familiar and understands with the client's religious doctrine.
3. Once therapeutic rapport has been established.

These findings are commensurate with past research reports of social workers' views on the propriety of including the religious or spiritual in practice.

Interpretation of Findings for Question 3

As Muslim Social Workers—Practice Challenges

The last research question asked what level of consciousness, relative to any challenges posed by the current media image(s) of Islam might Muslim social workers express. It was not posed directly, as part of epoche` because I did not want to lead coresearchers to express responses in this vein if they did not consider it salient in their life or practice experience. One of the survey narrative questions did ask respondents to comment on their feelings about being a Muslim social worker in America. In asking for additional comments and factors of influence, it was hoped that the coresearchers would use these opportunities to express feelings about being Muslim social workers or; to use Dalilah's terminology, being Muslims who happen to be social workers.

No direct reference to Islamophobia was noted. Coresearchers alluded to a cognizance of societal and possibly client views of Muslims in their reticence to broach religion in therapy. "I know a lot of people are sensitive about that stuff. Especially if they know the social worker is a Muslim." Almost half, 7 (47%) of the group cited the need to be neutral and cautious in their approach to non-Muslim clients and in the work setting. "I have to be very careful of how I portray my religion to my clients, most of them are non-Muslim and how that affects the

therapeutic relationship." Client/therapist difference may be further enhanced by nonreligious foreign markers such as a language accent or ethnic traditional dress.

Self-Disclosure

The practice of self-disclosure was cited in the literature as being potentially helpful in that it can facilitate the establishment of sensitivity in practice that can increase the client's comfort level with discussing the religious or spiritual (Canda et al., 2004). Reticence to self-disclose can be noted in previous examples of coresearchers' practice experience. Rigidity and denial in practitioner self-disclosure was noted as an area of possible concern in therapy, as it may interfere with the practice ethic of informed consent (i.e., allowing the client to chose a different social worker if uncomfortable with the knowledge of the social worker's worldview or religion).

None of the coresearchers indicated an agreement survey rating relative to the appropriateness of "informing clients of the social worker's religious/spiritual belief as part of establishing a helping relationship." Although, all coresearchers commented that they have acknowledged their religious affiliation to clients when asked, all but one indicated that they make no overt reference to being Muslim. One exception was noted by the coresearcher who stated "they see my profile and they come" implying that the profile indicated a religious affiliation with Islam. She also stated that she wears the scarf; however, wearing the hijab is not always a direct indicator.

Wearing the Religion

In wearing the scarf or Kufi seven coresearchers' visibly identify with Islam. Non-Muslim clients, true to the profile of the average American, do not always make the connection. Questions about the scarf were noted by some to be the beginning of the clients' initiation of discussion about religion in therapy.

Client Sensitivities

The literature suggested that clients in general may have concerns when their social worker holds or is affiliated with a dissimilar worldview. Hanif and Karima cited instances where clients were sensitive to Muslims because of past war trauma. Karima, was confronted while teaching by a woman who stated, "Your people killed my people!" Karima defused the situation:

> No, it's not my people. It's people who have names that may be associated with my religion. But just because someone has a name or something, it doesn't mean that they are close to their faith, so people who celebrate Christmas are not always faithful Christians. I am here to be with you and to support you."

Hanif commented on the need to tell clients that violence and killing is not Islam, "and people on the other side [overseas] have done some way out stuff, including suicide bombing and I want to be able to convey to them that this is not Islam." He and other coresearchers noted that there should be some effort to educate about Islam in general. Iman addressed this need through her university course offering "The Muslim Reality—Living in America," a class she has taught since 1999.

Interpretations Related to Collective Conscience and Aasibiyah

The coresearchers were primarily Sunni (n=7) and if converts are included would equal 11 (73%). Other Muslim groups were represented to a minor degree Shia 2 (13%),

Sufi and Nation of Islam Muslims (1 each <1%). African American representation at 8 (53%) was more than the national figure for social workers (5%) or American Muslims (25-40%). The only reference of being part of a subgroup within the Islamic community was made by coresearchers identified with Shia and Sufi Islam. The difficulties of being Shia in a Sunni Muslim community were noted to strongly influence one coresearcher's attitude toward integrating religion and spirituality in social work. There were no other references except the coresearcher who remarked about being marginalized as a person of color. This person incidentally was not African American. There did not appear to be any clear difference in the African American response patterns versus the other ethnic responses relative to religion and spirituality.

Practice Conscience Collective

The coresearchers emphasized standard social work ethical consideration in integrating the religious/spiritual, such as, positive regard for the client's right to self determination, honoring the client's worldview, and self dignity (NASW, 2004). The practice approach emanating from the coresearcher conversation was a conscious desire to balance their social work conscience collective (practice ethic) with their Islamic spiritual aasibiyah.

As a group, 10 (67%) rated their current religious activity as regular to active regarding participation in a religious organization. The majority 12(80%) reported their private religious participation as "daily to once a week." The literature indicated that religious social workers are more comfortable with religious and spiritual topics and more likely to integrate the religious/spiritual into practice. Given their responses, most

of coresearchers could be considered religious based on the standards purported in the literature. As such, some might think that this would lead to a dominant Islamic aasibiyah that would generate an Islamic conscience collective (Islamic mindset) in social work practice. To the contrary, in this case, the aasibiyah of Islam dominates the social work conscience collective such that the coresearchers report and maintain a consciousness of neutrality and caution relative to their Islamic identification, particularly with religion in practice.

The survey asked coresearchers to rate their level of agreement regarding whether including the religious or spiritual was in conflict with the social work mission or the NASW Code of Ethics. Only one response indicated that integrating religion or spirituality conflicted with the mission of social work and the NASW ethics. Four (27%) were neutral regarding conflict with NASW ethics, only Elaine maintained a neutral rating regarding the mission of social work as well. The majority of coresearchers have a conscience collective of inclusion they feel is supported by the profession but tempered by concern about how being a Muslim practitioner might be perceived.

The hesitancy to include religion expressed by the group had to do with concerns about offending clients. The awareness of a dissimilar conscience collective in the American civil religious view, whether secular or Christian has a covert effect on the coresearchers' integration and the raising of the topic of religion. This is speculation, as only one coresearcher directly referenced American civil religion, but makes sense given the innuendoes that suggest non-Muslims would be offended by religious references. This

may also be the reasoning behind the reticence to initially self-disclose religious affiliation.

The literature findings suggested that the more time in the field the less likely social workers are to integrate religion or spirituality. The reverse was reported by two of the coresearchers who indicated that they employ religious or spiritual practices more now than when they first began social work. The coresearchers' expressed that their personal and professional views were primarily informed by participation and acculturation in the domain of social work education and practice, Islamic knowledge and study, and for the most part past professional experience. Through experience five coresearchers came to learn that they could reference religious and sometimes Islamic texts in a non-sectarian way that was acceptable to their non-Muslim clients. When clients expressed concerns, the issues were resolved by the reframing the topic in a neutral spiritual context that did not imply a specific belief system.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study's design preclude generalization of the findings to all American Muslim social workers. The literature noted that immigrant Muslims are often targeted for Islamophobic public response. The coresearcher sample group did not have a high immigrant Muslim social worker response rate and all coresearchers were American citizens. Since the coresearcher sample representation was predominately American born, African American, female, and Sunni, the results cannot be generalized to the various individual strata of Islamic groups in the United States, such as the Nation of Islam, Pakistani, Shia, or male Muslim social worker populations. The coresearchers were

recruited from a purposeful sampling pool of American Muslim social workers who had internet access and an ability to utilize the internet in order to complete and submit the online survey. The survey did not control for specific variance in ethnicity.

Seven of the 15 coresearchers (of varied ethnicities) were acquainted with the researcher. While it is possible that their answers may have been influenced because of previous interaction, there were no clear distinctions between the previously acquainted and nonacquainted coresearchers' definitions for religion or spirituality, or their use of interventions. The slight advantage to being previously known to the researcher was that the coresearcher may have been more inclined to respond to the invitation to participate in the study.

The literature indicated that respondents who are particularly interested in the topic of religion or spirituality are more likely to respond to research invitations. This may have been the case in this investigation. One coresearcher stated, "There is always this call for some sort of random study…but there was something about your questions and your study that I thought was really important to look at." The stated limitations do not detract from the value and importance of adding these Muslim voices to the field of social work or social science.

Social Desirability

Concerns about social desirability were expressed in Chapters 1 and 3, particularly as some of the responses seemed to have right or preferred answers within the survey. Comparison of the survey and interview responses was expected to elucidate social desirability through discrepancy between the two data sources, particularly in the

area of religious participation. The few discrepant results did not appear to be a function of social desirability concerns. The rationale for the dissonance between reported high levels of religious participation and the low level of integration of the religious in practice was addressed in the previous section. The findings were not considered incongruent given the apparent candor in the interview responses regarding the definitions and professional experiences of the religious/spiritual. Two coresearchers were particularly candid in their discussion about their lack of current involvement, "I have kind of retreated to my own attempts at remembering. But yeah, I don't attend the mosque anymore, regularly." The other stated:

> I haven't really thought that much. I don't think my faith has changed, but I haven't thought, I haven't been to many services or outwardly, or what not…Because it's been kind of on the back burner for me during the past year or so.

Only one coresearcher's remarks suggested that there was an operant level of social desirability. "I don't want to be misunderstood and I don't want someone to take my answers out of context and make me sound odd or bad, because I come from the best place in my heart all the time."

Implications for Social Change

The positive social change affected in this study impacts the researcher, coresearcher and potentially all who read the study. Social change is evidenced in the increased self-awareness and consciousness expressed by the majority of coresearchers and the researcher regarding personal and professional opinion about the value and process of integrating the religious/spiritual in social work. The study made us think and reflect; the first step toward an internal social change.

On the external level, readers of the study can gain new insights into their own perspective on the subject. One coresearcher commented, "The survey, by the way, the mere taking of it can help people kind of get into this or more into this….It kind of gives them permission to do so; legitimized it all." In reading the entire study, introduction, literature review, and results, the reader has an opportunity to vicariously experience the journey of the coresearchers and become a coresearcher of their own worldview.

Lastly, the study informs the public about Muslim practitioners and either confirms or disproves previous ideas about Muslim social workers' and their ability to provide a sensitive, competent and ethical service to Muslim and non-Muslim clients; all expressed by Muslim social worker's, in their own words.

Recommendations

There are four recommendations for immediate application that flow from this investigation that should and could be implemented within the next year.

1. Analysis of survey results --The analysis of the survey results should continue; this time looking at the composite results of the total sample of 40 survey respondents. Dr. Furman, one of the authors of the original 1999 study has already expressed an interest in the findings. Although still a small sample, the current study's interview results offer a triangulating data source that could provide insights into survey findings.

2. Study of clients' perspectives--The coresearchers' noted reticence to include the religious was largely due to concern about client reaction and possible violation of social work ethics, particularly with non-Muslim clients. There is little

known research regarding client perception. This area needs to be addressed to more accurately assess the true impact of client/therapist worldview differences on the therapeutic milieu, particularly when the therapist is Muslim.

Most study regarding Muslims has targeted the treatment issues of immigrant Muslims and their second generation progeny. Reasons for American conversion and its impact for the individual and collective have not been thoroughly explored relative to social work clients or practitioners and is a likely area of interest.

3. Presentation of the topic and findings -The researcher and co-rater "T" presented at a state level NASW conference in 2007 a workshop titled: *Spirituality in Social Work Practice an Islamic Perspective*. This study's results augment presentations of this nature. They actively facilitate continued social change in the social work field by challenging social workers and other health practitioners to think about their own stance regarding the value of the religious and spiritual for clients, integrating the religious and spiritual in practice, and initiating discussion about serving Muslim clients and working with Muslim colleagues.

4. Expand total sample population of Muslim social workers in America – The total sample frame of Muslim social workers in the United States is still unknown. The researcher and ISSA have discussed further effort to recruit more Muslim social workers to become part of the database in order to more accurately access current numbers. This is important relative to the expressed need for more Muslim social workers, particularly in the Muslim community. This action facilitates positive social change by encouraging acknowledgment and networking among Muslim practitioners.

Future Study

As with most research, the new knowledge generated in this study stimulated even more questions. The most glaring area in the researcher's mind is the question regarding Muslim social workers' perspectives and definitions of Islamic spirituality, spirituality in general, and its role or value to the Muslim social worker. Several times I wished I had posed this question as it did not emerge clearly in the interview or survey narrative responses as expected.

The investigation also generated questions about other minority social workers' perspectives in the area of the religious and spiritual in social work. Past research has suggested that African Americans, as a group are the most religious in the United States and currently are the largest group of indigenous Muslims. The immigrant (and American born progeny) Muslim voice was not fully represented in the study. It would be interesting to know how these groups as target populations of study might compare to previous study or this study's findings.

The coresearchers noted that the overall impact of the study was that it increased, and reinforced their awareness or interest in including the religious or spiritual in practice. The question of "How does increased self awareness affect practice behavior" needs to be answered.

Finally, this study provides a template for the exploration of minority practitioners' (i.e. self-identified atheists, agnostics, Jewish, Buddhists, etc.) views on the value and practice regarding the integration of the religious and spiritual in practice. Further exploration of this type would continue to broaden the general knowledge

regarding the views and practices of social work practitioners and overall research in the genre of spirituality.

Researcher's Reflections

The stated researcher's role in phenomenology is that of an objective observer and data collection instrument. I was actually a participant observer in this study. Having been a social worker for over 20 years and an African American Muslim convert for over 30 years, I represented the average coresearcher of this study with a few more years experience. I work in an urban setting providing direct service to an almost exclusively non-Muslim clientele. Like six of the female coresearchers, I too wear the scarf which has sparked questions about my religious affiliation and nationality. Like many of the coresearchers, I have had an interest in spirituality and Islamic study relative to personal and professional development, particularly during matriculation at the doctoral level. I have always been interested in the culturally specific aspect of service.

I had a lot to suspend relative to personal opinion about Muslim perspectives and concerns about the religious and spiritual in general and particularly in social work practice. I thought Muslim social workers would consider a separation of the religious and spiritual to be counter to an Islamic worldview. This was not the case for most. I did not factor in the influence and precedence of working in an environment that does not recognize or have knowledge of an Islamic perspective. The coresearcher's brought this fact and its meaning to my consciousness as they commented and reiterated that their thoughts might not be those of others. I think the intellectual answer to what is religion was often reframed to mean what is religion as others see it. Most of the "For me"

statements had to do with spirituality or the relationship between religion and spirituality. Again, I so wished I had directly asked about Islam as a religion and Islamic spirituality.

As part of the epoche` I didn't read individual survey responses prior to interviews. In retrospect, I feel this was a mistake. Since suspending judgment is a natural approach to information gathering in social work, I don't think my epoche` would have been compromised if I had known, for example, that one researcher had answered some of the survey questions alternately (I would like to know why). Or, why one coresearcher noted that they had used interventions that they marked as inappropriate. Although, as stated, I surmised that this was representative of an evolving practice ethic, I wish I had known to ask.

Suspending judgment sometimes meant stifling the impulse to interject or correct what I thought were errant understandings about religion and social work. For example when it was stated that non-Muslim clients in distress about the death of a family member wouldn't welcome comments about it being "G'd's plan", I resisted offering that it depends on how it's presented—which is what I wanted to say. My thinking was that any comment from me might tend to invalidate the coresearcher's voice, which was, after all what I wanted to elicit and highlight.

Overall the coresearchers voiced many opinions and practice ethics that I have experienced. As a Muslim social worker, I understood why many were hesitant to broadcast their Islamic identification. In my experience, coworkers, administrators and clients have not taken issue with my being Muslim. However, like my coresearcher colleagues, I too do not initially disclose this information without client prompting. I do

feel that the religious and spiritual are important aspects of human being that must be addressed. Like one coresearcher stated, I do think we have to ask what is the role and significance of the religious/spiritual for the client.

Listening to the coresearchers' professional experiences caused me to reflect on my own past experience. I have had clients (children) referred to me because of a possible connection to Islam in the family and there were occasions where the parent did not follow through pursuant to the referral. I wonder now if it was similar to Latifah's case in which the client's parent really did not want service in a Muslim context. I'll never know, because like Latifah's potential client, I never heard from them.

Regarding the study itself, I have noticed that some of my doctoral cohorts did not share my view relative to the importance of this topic. Perhaps being of the American secular worldview, they suggested that there were a number of more pressing social ills. After listening, transcribing and reviewing the interviews and survey results, I have a new respect for the study. Drawing on my multiple aasibiyah, recognizing my African American and Islamic religious heritage and the pioneers in Black social work, I have come to affirm like several of my coresearcher colleagues, that there is no higher calling and service than to create and provide a therapeutic environment for personal and collective enhancement of spirituality as it relates to a strengthened connection to the creation and The Creator.

Conclusion

This study's stated purpose was to explore American Muslim social workers' personal and professional perspectives in the areas of religion and spirituality through a

phenomenological investigation. The participant coresearchers shared through indepth interview their personal and professional experience with the religious and spiritual as they understood the terms.

A concern for maintaining a religiously sensitive and ethical practice while recognizing the value of the religious/spiritual for the client (however expressed) was the dominant aasibiyah (group sentiment) behind the integration of religion or spirituality in practice.

The overarching conscience collective of this study (and in the literature) was that of an accredited social work curriculum, as governed by the Council of Social Work Education within the practice values and ethics espoused by the NASW. I concluded that in this study, the American Muslim social worker (i.e., BSW, MSW, DSW degreed social workers who self-identify as Muslim) has an aasibiyah informed by their Islamic spirituality and tempered by concerns about a dissimilar spirituality in the client. The conscience collective is governed by a balanced synthesis of Islam and social work ethics in practice; best voiced by the study's American Muslim coresearchers, "We as Muslim social workers have a lot to share"

> We are social workers because we believe in the vision of social work and the importance of helping people and improving the quality of life in the people that we serve. We may see it differently, or we may not have all the same values on everything. But the thing that unites us as social workers is the desire to help, to improve peoples' quality of life.

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APPENDIX A: MUSLIM SOCIAL WORKERS' SURVEY

As Salaamu Alaikum/Peace be Unto You:

You are invited to make a significant contribution to the social work profession and to society at large by sharing your expert opinion about the role of religion and spirituality in social work practice and taking part of this doctoral study. Your name was selected either through referral or as a member of the Islamic Social Services Association database of Muslim social workers.

Muslim professionals, Muslim social workers in particular are seriously under-represented in the current literature. The Muslim Social Workers' Perception of Religion and Spirituality Survey is a replication of a Canda and Furman (2000) study that surveyed social workers' perceptions regarding religion and spirituality in practice. Only two Muslim social worker's responses were reported in this study; less than .1% in other similar research (Canda & Furman, 1999; Sheridan, 2004).

Thus, there is a need for the current investigation. The questions are the same as in the 2000 study, with the exception of those modified for the American Muslim participant. Some questions have been expanded for clarity of content. There are 63 multiple choice questions and 2 narrative questions at the end of the survey. The survey takes approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

The PRIMARY phase of the study consists of a semi structured telephone interview or electronic (email or instant message) interview. You will be asked to provide contact information at the end of this questionnaire. It is this portion of the study that will provide the BASE DATA for the study. Should you agree to participate in this PRIMARY phase of the research by submitting your contact information, be assured of complete confidentiality. There will be no specific identifiers within the dissertation narrative.

All levels of participation are strictly voluntary. You may withdraw your participation at any time during the survey.

Thank you in advance for sharing your insight and expertise.

Cheryl El-Amin, PhD. Doctoral Candidate
Human Services; Clinical Social Work
Specialization, Walden University

Please click below if you agree to the terms above and want to continue to the survey. By clicking on the "Next" button, you will be giving your consent to participate in this study and will be directed to begin.
You may also choose to stop your participation at any time ... by clicking out of the survey (your survey data will not be saved).

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this replication of the Canda and Furman (1999) study amongst members of the National Association of Social Workers. Only one Muslim social worker's response was reported in the previous study; thus the need for the current investigation. The questions are the same as in the previous study, with the exception of #85, which has been modified for a more comprehensive representation of the Muslim participant. Some questions have been expanded for clarity of content.

The following questions ask your views about the appropriate role of religion and spirituality in social work practice. To aid you in responding to these questions, definitions are provided below. You will note that, for the purposes of this study, spirituality is more broadly defined than religion. Therefore, some questions address spirituality in both religious and non-religious forms. Some questions distinguish between religion and nonsectarian approaches to spirituality. When all forms of spirituality are intended, both spirituality and religion will be mentioned in the question.

> *Religion* is an organized structured set of beliefs and practices shared by a community related to spirituality.
>
> *Spirituality* involves the search for meaning, purpose, and morally fulfilling relations with self, other people, the encompassing universe, and ultimate reality, however a person understands it. Spirituality may be expressed through religious forms, but is not limited to them.

Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement by circling the one number that best reflects your opinion.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The constitutional principle of separation of church and state prevent social workers from dealing with *religion* in their practice.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The constitutional principle of separation of church and state prevent social workers from dealing with *nonsectarian spiritual matters* in their practice.	1	2	3	4	5
3. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *religion* when dealing with a client who has a *terminal illness*	1	2	3	4	5
4. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *spirituality* when dealing with a client who has a *terminal illness.*	1	2	3	4	5
5. It is appropriate for a social worker to introduce the issue of *religion* when dealing with a client who has a *substance abuse disorder.*	1	2	3	4	5
6. It is appropriate for a social worker to introduce the issue of *spirituality* when dealing with a client who has a *substance abuse disorder.*	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Neutral*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*
7. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *religion* when dealing with a	1	2	3	4	5

client who is preparing to become a *foster parent.*					
8. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *spirituality* when dealing with a client who is preparing to become a *foster parent.*	1	2	3	4	5
9. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *religion* when dealing with a client who is recovering from *sexual abuse*.	1	2	3	4	5
10. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *spirituality* when dealing with a client who is recovering from *sexual abuse*.	1	2	3	4	5
11. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *religion* when dealing with a client who is or has *experienced partner violence.*	1	2	3	4	5
12. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *spirituality* when dealing with a client who is or has *experienced partner violence.*	1	2	3	4	5
13. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *religion* when dealing with a client who is suffering from the effects of a natural disaster (flood, hurricane, tornado, earthquake etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
14. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *spirituality* when dealing with a client who is suffering from the effects of a natural	1	2	3	4	5

disaster (flood, hurricane, tornado, earthquake etc.).

15. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *religion* when dealing with *the bereaved*.	1	2	3	4	5
16. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *spirituality* when dealing with *the bereaved.*	1	2	3	4	5
17. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *religion* when dealing with a client who is suffering from a *chronic mental disorder*	1	2	3	4	5
18. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *spirituality* when dealing with a client who is suffering from a *chronic mental disorder.*	1	2	3	4	5
19. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *religion* when dealing with a client *suffering from a loss of job.*	1	2	3	4	5
20. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *spirituality* when dealing with a a client *suffering from a loss of job.*	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Neutral*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*
21. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *religion* when dealing with a	1	2	3	4	5

client who is experiencing *difficulty in family relations.*					
22. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *spirituality* when dealing with a client who is experiencing *difficulty in family relations.*	1	2	3	4	5
23. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *religion* when dealing with a client who is involved in the *criminal justice system*.	1	2	3	4	5
24. It is appropriate for a social worker to raise the topic of *spirituality* when dealing with a client who is involved in the *criminal justice system.*	1	2	3	4	5
25. The social worker's attempt to alter the belief system of a client, who is involved in a cult is an interference with the client's *right to self determination.*	1	2	3	4	5
26. Informing a client of the social worker's *religious/spiritual belief system* or lack thereof is important when establishing the helping relationship.	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Neutral*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*
27. Taking a *religious history* of the client should be part of intake and assessment.	1	2	3	4	5

28. Taking a *spiritual history* of the client should be part of intake and assessment. 1 2 3 4 5

The following questions deal with religion and spirituality in regards to problem solving.

29. How often do you meet with clients for whom their *religious participation* has been detrimental to solving their problems? (Please check one response).

☐ daily ☐ 2-3 times a month ☐ 5-6 times a year ☐ once a year

☐ once a week ☐ once a month ☐ 2-4 times a year ☐ not at all

30. How often do you meet with clients for whom their *spirituality* has been detrimental to solving their problems? (Please check one response).

☐ daily ☐ 2-3 times a month ☐ 5-6 times a year ☐ once a year

☐ once a week ☐ once a month ☐ 2-4 times a year ☐ not at all

How often do you meet with clients for whom their *spirituality* has been strength in solving their problems? (Please check one response).

☐ daily ☐ 2-3 times a month ☐ 5-6 times a year ☐ once a year

☐ once a week ☐ once a month ☐ 2-4 times a year ☐ not at all

How often do you meet with clients for whom their *religious participation* has been a strength in solving their problems? (Please check one response).

☐ daily ☐ 2-3 times a month ☐ 5-6 times a year ☐ once a year

☐ once a week ☐ once a month ☐ 2-4 times a year ☐ not at all

The following lists various interventions, which could be performed in providing services to clients. Please indicate by circling "yes" or "no" for the behavior listed: (1) the interventions that you yourself have done with clients: and (2) whether or not you believe the interventions to be appropriate for social work practice.

	Have Personally w/ clients		Is Appropriate Social Work Intervention	
31. Use or recommend religious or spiritual books or writings.	Yes	No	Yes	No
34. Pray privately for a client.	Yes	No	Yes	No
35. Pray or meditate with a client.	Yes	No	Yes	No
36. Use religious language or concepts.	Yes	No	Yes	No
37. Use nonsectarian spiritual language or concepts.	Yes	No	Yes	No
38. Recommend participation in a religious or spiritual support system or activity.	Yes	No	Yes	No
39. Touch clients for "healing" purposes.	Yes	No	Yes	No
40. Help clients develop religious/spiritual rituals as a clinical intervention (e.g. house blessings, visiting graves of relatives, celebrating life transitions).	Yes	No	Yes	No
41. Participate in client's religious/spiritual rituals as a practice intervention.	Yes	No	Yes	No
42. Encourage the clients to do regular religious/spiritual self reflective diary keeping or journal keeping.	Yes	No	Yes	No
43. Discuss role or religious or spiritual beliefs in relation to significant others.	Yes	No	Yes	No
44. Assist clients to reflect critically on	Yes	No	Yes	No

religious or spiritual beliefs or practices.				
45. Help clients assess the meaning of spiritual experiences that occur in dreams.	Yes	No	Yes	No
46. Help clients consider the spiritual meaning and purpose of his or her current life situation	Yes	No	Yes	No
47. Help clients reflect on their belief about what happens after death.	Yes	No	Yes	No
48. Help clients consider ways their religious/ spiritual support systems are helpful.	Yes	No	Yes	No
49. Help clients consider ways their religious/ spiritual support systems are harmful.	Yes	No	Yes	No

The following questions deal with the DSM-IV (please circle one response for each question)

50. Do you use the DSM-IV in your practice? ☐ Yes ☐ No

51. If you use the DSM-IV, do you as a social worker consider the religious or spiritual beliefs of clients in determining a proper diagnosis? ☐ Yes ☐ No

The following questions deal with client referral to religious/spiritual leaders.

52.Have you ever referred a client to a clergy person, or other religious/spiritual helper or leaders? (Please check the appropriate blank).

☐ YES (If yes, continue with question 53)

☐ NO (If no, please skip to question 56)

Please circle one response for each of the questions.

	Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Sometimes	Always
53.Do problems concerning differences of beliefs or values between social worker and	1	2	3	4	5

religious/spiritual leaders prevent referrals?

54.Do social workers' lack of trust or confidence in religious/ spiritual leaders prevent referrals? 1 2 3 4 5

55.Do religious/spiritual leaders' lack of trust or confidence in social workers prevent referrals? 1 2 3 4 5

Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement by circling the one number that best reflects your opinion.

	Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Neutral*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*
56. In general, social workers should introduce religion/spirituality according to their professional judgment, even if clients do not first express interest.	1	2	3	4	5
57. In general, social workers should address *religion/spirituality* only if a client first expresses interest.	1	2	3	4	5
58. Helping clients assess whether they wish to work on *forgiveness* is an important part of social work practice.	1	2	3	4	5
59. In my practice, I use techniques that deal with *forgiveness* (e.g. assisting clients to forgive themselves, forgive others and seek forgiveness.	1	2	3	4	5
60. Spirituality is a fundamental aspect of being human.	1	2	3	4	5

61. Social workers should become more sophisticated than they are now about *spiritual* matters.	1	2	3	4	5
62. Social work practice with a *spiritual* component has a better chance to empower clients than practice without such a component..	1	2	3	4	5
63. Integrating religion and spirituality in social work practice conflicts with social work's mission	1	2	3	4	5
64. Integrating religion and spirituality in social work practice conflicts with the NASW Code of Ethics.	1	2	3	4	5
65. Social workers, in general, possess the *knowledge* to assist clients in *religious/ spiritual matters.*	1	2	3	4	5
66. Social workers, in general, do not possess the *skill* to assist clients in *religious/spiritual* matters.	1	2	3	4	5

Social Work Curriculum and Education

The following questions ask your views about the inclusion of content on religion spirituality in the social work curriculum. Please answer these questions by circling the appropriate number or checking the appropriate blank.

67. Religious and spiritual beliefs and practices is part of multicultural diversity. As such, social workers should have knowledge and skills in this area in order to work effectively with diverse client groups.	1	2	3	4	5

68. There is a spiritual aspect of human existence beyond the biopsychosocial framework currently used to understand human behavior. Social work education should expand this framework to include this spiritual aspect. 1 2 3 4 5

69. In your social work education have you received content on religious or spiritual issues? (Please check the appropriate one): ☐ Yes (Please continue with question 70)

☐ No (Please skip to question 71)

---

70. During your social work education, in what specific types of courses was this material included? (Please check as many courses as are appropriate):

☐ Human Behavior in Social Environment ☐ Community Practice (Macro Practice)

☐ Policy ☐ Field Practicum

☐ Research ☐ Religious/spirituality courses

☐ Social Work Administration ☐ Human Diversity Courses

☐ Clinical Practice (Micro Practice) ☐ Field of Practice Courses

☐ Groups (Mezzo Practice) ☐ Other Social Work Courses

Please specify:_____

71. In what courses, if any, do you think material on religious and spiritual issues should be presented in social work education? (Please check as many courses as are appropriate)

☐ Human Behavior in Social Environment ☐ Community Practice (Macro Practice)

☐ Policy ☐ Field Practicum

☐ Research ☐ Religious/spirituality courses

☐ Social Work Administration ☐ Human Diversity Courses

☐ Clinical Practice (Micro Practice) ☐ Field of Practice Courses

☐ Groups (Mezzo Practice) ☐ Other Social Work Courses

Please specify:_____

Religiosity/Spirituality Scale

72. During your *elementary* school years, how often did you participate in religious community services? (Please check one response)

☐ daily ☐ 2-3 times a month ☐ 5-6 times a year ☐ once a year

☐ once a week ☐ once a month ☐ 2-4 times a year ☐ not at all

73. During your adolescent years, how often did you participate in religious community services? (Please check one response).

☐ daily ☐ 2-3 times a month ☐ 5-6 times a year ☐ once a year

☐ once a week ☐ once a month ☐ 2-4 times a year ☐ not at all

74. How frequently do you currently participate in religious services (such as going to mosque, temple, church or other places of religious activity) (Please check one response)

☐ daily ☐ 2-3 times a month ☐ 5-6 times a year ☐ once a year

☐ once a week ☐ once a month ☐ 2-4 times a year ☐ not at all

75. Indicate your present relationship to an organized religion or spiritual support group: (Please check one response)

☐ active participation, high level of involvement

☐ regular participation, some involvement

☐ identification with religion or spiritual group, very limited or no involvement

☐ no identification, participation, or involvement with religious or spiritual group

☐ disdain or negative reaction to religion or spiritual tradition

76. How frequently do you currently participate in private, religious or spiritual practices? (e.g., meditation, prayer, visualization, reading scriptural texts etc.) (Please check one response)

☐ daily ☐2-3 times a month ☐ 5-6 times a year ☐ once a year

☐once a week ☐ once a month ☐ 2-4 times a year ☐ not at all

Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement by circling the one number that best reflects your opinion.

	Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Neutral*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*
77. I feel negative about the *religious* experiences of my childhood.	1	2	3	4	5
78. I feel negative about the *spiritual* experiences of my childhood.	1	2	3	4	5
79. I feel negative about my *religious* experiences in the present.	1	2	3	4	5
80. I feel negative about my *spiritual* experiences in the present.	1	2	3	4	5

Religious or Spiritual Ideological Positions

81. Listed below are six types of ideological positions that people (sometimes) take in relation to religious or spiritual beliefs. After you have read all six, please place an X next to the statement(s) that comes closest to your own ideological position or that is most important to you.

☐ There is a personal God or transcendent existence and power Whose purpose will ultimately be worked out in history.

☐ There is a transcendent aspect of human experience which some persons call God, but Who is not imminently involved in the events of the world and human history.

☐ There is a transcendent or divine aspect, which is unique and specific to the human self.

☐ There is a transcendent or divine aspect found in all manifestations of nature.

☐ Notions of God or the transcendent are products of human imagination; however, they are meaningful aspects of human existence.

☐ Notions of God or the transcendent are products of the human imagination; however,

they are irrelevant to the real world.

Demographic Information

82. What is your present age? ☐ Years

83. What is your gender? ☐ Male ☐ Female

84. What is your race/ethnic group? (Please check one response)

☐ African American/Black ☐ Caucasian/White

☐ Latino/Hispanic American ☐ Bi-racial/Multi-racial

☐ Asian-American/Pacific Islander ☐ Native American/American Indian/Alaskan

☐ East Indian/Pakistani ☐ Lebanese

☐ African (Please specify country: ☐ Other_____

84a. Are you an immigrant to the United States? ☐ Yes (___# of Years in the US) ☐ No

85. What is your current religious affiliation or spiritual orientation? (Select the response that most closely identifies your current religious or spiritual status)

☐ Sunni Muslim ☐ Shi'ite Muslim ☐ Muslim convert/revert

☐ Nation of Islam ☐ Sufi Muslim ☐ Other: (Please specify:_____

☐ Non-Denominational

86. Type of Professional Certification or License (Please check all that apply)

☐ Licensed Certified Social Worker (Independent Level) ☐ Family Therapy Practice

☐ Licensed Social Worker ☐ Pastoral Counseling

☐ BSW ☐ MSW ☐ _ Not licensed/certified

Professional Affiliation(s)

☐ National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

☐ National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW)
☐ National Association of School Social Workers (NASSW)

☐ Other(s) (Please specify):_____

87. Education (Please check the highest level of education attained)

☐ BA/BS ☐ MSW ☐ PHD

☐ BSW ☐ MS/MA ☐ POST DOCTORATE

88. How many hours of religious education have you had in the past 10 years? Your best estimate in fine (In "c" through "e" please specify any other religious education you may have attained).

Type of Religious Education	Hours of Education
a. Religious Studies	_____
b. Theology	_____
c._____	_____
d._____	_____
e._____	_____

89. Have you ever earned a religious degree? ☐ No ☐ Yes (If yes, was a degree awarded?

☐ Yes ☐ No

90. Have you attended any *social work* related workshops or conferences in the past five years dealt with some aspect of religion or spirituality? (Please check the appropriate one)

☐ YES (Please continue with question 91)

☐ NO (Please skip to question 92)

91. If yes, how many? ☐ 0-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16 or more

92. Have you attended any *non-social work* related workshops or conferences in the past five years that dealt with some aspect of religion or spirituality?

☐ YES (Please continue with question 93) ☐ NO (Please skip to question 94)

93. If yes, how many? ☐ 0-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16 or more.

94. What is your current area of practice?

☐ Clinical (direct service) ☐ Administrative/supervisory
☐ Child-Family Welfare ☐ Occupational SW- EAP

☐ Criminal Justice ☐ School Social Work

☐ Medical Health Care ☐ Mental Health

☐ Academic ☐ Other(Please specify)

_____

95. As a social worker do you work? ☐ Full time ☐ Part-time

96. Average number of clients per week in the past three months? _____

97. Number of years you have been in social work practice: _____Years _____Months

98. Is your primary work setting: ☐ Private ☐ Public

99. My practice is for the most part: ☐ Rural ☐ Suburban ☐ Urban

Definitions of Religion, Spirituality, and Faith

For the purpose of this research, we gave you definitions of religion and spirituality to use when completing the questions. Now we would like to know how you personally define these terms. Please check the word(s), if any that you think best define religion, spirituality, and faith.

100. How would you define *religion*?

☐ meaning ☐ organization ☐ values ☐ personal relationship with the divine or higher power

☐ purpose ☐ community ☐ ethics

☐ belief ☐ personal ☐ miracles ☐ sacred texts

☐ ritual ☐ morality ☐ prayer ☐ scripture

☐ meditation

101. How would you define *spirituality*?

☐ meaning ☐ organization ☐ values ☐ personal relationship with the divine or higher power

☐ purpose ☐ community ☐ ethics

☐ belief ☐ personal ☐ miracles ☐ sacred texts

☐ ritual ☐ morality ☐ prayer ☐ scripture

☐ meditation

102. How would you define *faith*?

☐ meaning ☐ organization ☐ values ☐ personal relationship with the divine

☐ purpose	☐ community	☐ethics	or higher power
☐ belief	☐ personal	☐ miracles	☐ sacred texts
☐ ritual	☐ morality	☐ prayer	☐ scripture
☐ meditation			

Optional Section

In order to learn more about your views on the topic of religion and spirituality as it relates to social work practice and your education as a social worker, we have a few open ended questions that we invite you to answer (Please remember this is optional)

103. Please indicate any specific areas for which you think content on religious or spiritual issues is particularly relevant in your education as a social worker? (e.g. special populations, client problems, life stages, service settings etc.

_____

104. Please describe appropriate or inappropriate uses of religion and spirituality in social work practice:

_____

105. Please use the space below to make any additional comments you would like about the topic of religion or spirituality, especially as it relates to social work practice and your education as a social worker.

_____

Thank you for your time and cooperation. If you would like a copy of the results please check here ☐.

We will see that you receive a copy of the results as soon as they are available.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT EXCERPTS

#9 Composite Response- (Location identifiers removed; abridged)

What factor(s) influenced your responses?

a. What factors influenced my answers…I guess my experience in working with people.

b. Experience working with patients. My mentor Dr. Malik Badri, a psychologist from the Sudan. I had just become Muslim and was working in an exclusively psychiatric emergency room in a CMHC in downtown ----- when I ran across some of his writings, including a classic on Islam and alcoholism and an article entitled, "Down the Lizard Hole." I just had to find out what else Islam had to say about human behavior.

c. Just embracing Islam over time. And I study, you know like any religions you need to study, read Quran, Hadith, read the scholars, go to the masjid. You know, get information from a number of sources. Quran and Hadith are the most reliable or course. But you need help in interpreting and understanding. The words can get you so far when they go into your head. You need someone to explain to you …so you understand. So I go to other people, you know, my family, my husband. I go to workshops. I just take it all in... (So that helps you with whatever client you are dealing with? Muslim or non-Muslim?). Well , it's with clients who are non-Muslim. I have a background. I went to Christian schools as a kid. So that was really helpful to understand the whole trinity thing…where they are coming with that. Or, if they are praying to Esau[Jesus] (SAW).
I can understand where they are coming from. That's from schooling. And sometimes the khutbahs explain their misinterpretation of what's real.
It will give more insight….It's just good to know where people are from.
I don't know a lot about Judaism. I know very little, but I can at least be sensitive to those of Judaism by seeking to understand or have a basic awareness of their beliefs. You know I'll ask questions and try to understand what I can.
Just to be mindful of where they are coming from. (So it comes back to that sensitivity again). Yes, I just want to be appropriate, cognizant and professionally appropriate too.

I think, probably more in the survey than this, because these questions are more just a follow up from the survey…I think I kind of thought about specific cases I have worked with in my experience. If a client based on their...There was probably some trial and error some differences based on that first client and what other's have gotten later on as you grow within the field. I think from. I think when I first started I don't think I ever talked about religion or anything . As I

grew and understood that it had an important role probably in my life and based on…opportunities to …about it or…influenced my answers based on my professional experience working with clients.

d. Schooling which taught to be objective when dealing with clients, steer clear of religious if not the spiritual in dealing with clients. I have in my practice had occasions where I could have answered in a religious/spiritual way but I chose not to.

e. I guess my own journey and work that I have done for the past twenty years. The people, the clients that I meet, the other therapists that I respect. And I've been drawn to people that really believe in the spiritual part, so you know, I have no connection with the people who don't so…who don't believe it's important, so you know.

f. Life experience, just knowing people. I know of grownups that say that they are more spiritual than religious. But they are not my clients that I work with. I know people who are like that. I guess from life experience I guess, just from knowing people, talking to people. Asking about things, hearing them talk about things.

g. Well, a lot, just life and turning to Allah, that HE makes me a key instrument in HIS Decree and what the. You know its ALLAH's Plan or nothing at all. Either you are with or you ain't. And I pray that ALLAH use me as a vehicle to establish the Deen. And it either will be and it is or…will be established on the firm footing. Or ask that HE make me caring and professional that I can be used to enlighten the Muslims about the condition of health to help build healing that can flourish.

So then again saying that ALLAH's Mercy on me that has been the influential factor. That HE's been able to hold me up. I want to say, my upbringing, my parents or my mother was Caucasian, my father an American Black and they also carry the representation of this society. One a Catholic and one type of Christian and the Blacks were another type of Christian so I grew up exposed to Baptist, Southern Baptist and Northern Catholic; and everything that goes in between that so. Of course there was concern…who would have thought that 25 years later I would be in the ------ being introduced to Islam and then 5 years after that I would embrace Islam… And I think I have engendered that same kind of mindset that difference is good.
(To be receptive to all kinds of people without passing judgment?) Right, Right. And then all the people that I have met in life; the ones that were open and even the ones that were not; you can benefit from those close minded persons too.

h. I think I've been influenced by my experience as a private practitioner,

my own personal belief system and my own experience as someone who has needed help, needed services and my own research. I think all of those have informed my answers.

i. I'm not sure I understand. (Well, you have answered the questions of when it is appropriate; what the definitions of religion and spirituality are. How did you come to have those views?) Spirituality and religion I am deriving from my own experiences. I'm just looking back on my clients, my patients and thinking back on whether I actually have used it in my interactions with them.

j. Oh, that's a really good question because the thing that always rings true for me is, when I'm doing my work, is I want to be an example of a Muslim who is bringing good in the world. I don't want to be misunderstood and I don't want someone to take my answers out of context and make me sound odd and bad. Because I come from the best place in my heart all the time. I stand before G'd when I do my work. He is my ethical leader. So I just want to be good and do good. I'm always afraid of these types of things. I would not have responded to this, because I'm always fearful of a person and what are they going to do with my answers. Are they going to twist them?

k. I think if I would have to say one thing it would be: "A" being a woman and "B" being a Shia. Both of those kinds of identities put me in a position where I'm greatly feeling the sense of being marginalized.

So the way that it has played out in terms of my religious experience has been at times very painful and really contradictory again to what I believe is the real essence and beauty of Islam. It is about inclusiveness and it is about progression and it is about, empowerment of the individual. And yet as a Shia, I have always felt my experiences were made to be invalid, not Muslim or just not ever mentioned. And as a woman I feel that the truth of Islam, the Islam that was given to us is not one that is practiced. And it is not one that is what we see today, for a lot of different reasons…for political reasons. It is really heartbreaking because I do believe,
Islam was meant to be; it is a religion that is meant to be a peace and equity between men and women and between classes and between races. And it is really painful to see that that is not the reality that we experience.

(Wow, are you talking primarily of your interaction of the world in general or in the Muslim community or both?) Yeah, in the Muslim community because that was such a big part of my childhood and experience. It has greatly shaped a lot of me. You know what I mean. I mean being a woman and being a person of color for example, you know similarly puts me in a position of someone who is being marginalized and underrepresented and stereotyped and blah, blah, blah.

So there is a lot of different, so it is always—I guess the one factor is the sense of being marginalized and the frustration that comes with that. Because of that frustration, leads one to become a social worker; to try and do something about it. You know, it doesn't just kind of happen by happenstance, you know like my being a social worker is very much linked to wanting to, you know being an activist and wanting to kind of dismantle these oppressive experiences that I have had.

l. It would definitely be, I think a part of it is being generally a religious minority and the fact that most people that I have met are not so understanding of my religion and kind of think that for the most part Christianity is *the* religion that everyone should follow or is the *right* religion. So I try to regardless of what I think of my own religion, in terms of being superior or better. I try not to push that on anyone. If a client wants me to work with their own beliefs and their religion—to bring out their own religious…and address those in session then that is what I will do. And based on my own feeling, previous feelings in different situations that I have been in, I think it's just being more understanding in that way kind of waiting on and asking the client what their beliefs are and addressing it from there.

(You mentioned previous incidences? Can you give me an example of one or two?). I think it definitely goes along the line of walking down the street, being harassed different stereotypes of either co-workers or friends at school.
It's ah—if you would want me to list them, it would go all day. Do you need absolute specific examples? (No, just thinking. I take it that most clients, when they see you, recognize you to be a Muslim?) Yes and for some of them, their jaw drops and it takes them a while to warm up to me and that has been.
I can't say it has been a huge obstacle, because…they are able to work with me and open up and sometimes more with me than other clinicians.
But for many of them, that is definitely an issue when they first see me. …

m. Basically it comes from my principle and it comes from openness of what and who G'd is. That's how I direct all of my practice, or how I direct all of my influence or questions or answers. I start out with equality and what's right and what's wrong. Not so much how to fix it, but how to improve on whatever the deficiency is. (So basically it is from your belief system?) yes, of being right or wrong, that is what I start out with all the time; regardless of what the problem is.

n. (How is that determined, in terms of the rightness or wrongness of the situation? I know some things are clear cut, but those things that are more in the gray areas, how do they determine what's the rightness or wrongness of it?) Ok, depending on what the case it, if it is strictly abuse or neglect, well then, that automatically will define itself, the direction I'll go in. Then if a person is a victim or if the person is a perpetrator, that is the focus, once I've identified what the problem is,

then I can take my course of action that way, but then I always try to go back to make it personal (person?) centered focus toward the client.

- My own experiences, my own religious beliefs going through the BSW program at…and learning that you have to be really culturally and competent and aware of other faiths and practices and really be careful not to offend or put your own bias on other people. I may have somewhat of a standoffish approach. That could be because I am fairly new to social work, but I think the experience of not wanting to do anything wrong. That affects my answers and my perspective on the whole thing. (Ok, affected your answers and maybe you behavior in using the religion or spirituality with clients?) Yes.

APPENDIX C: COMPOSITE EXAMPLE OF HORIZON

The following are significant verbatim statements excerpted from the transcripts; arranged in what could have been a hypothetical focus group conversation among coresearchers regarding the meaning of religion and spirituality and the relationship between the two. (Hereafter this conversation will be referenced as the "focus group").

These statements directly correspond with the personal aspect of the research question: "How has spirituality and religion been interpreted within the experience of Muslim social workers?" The combined statements represent the horizon or range of meaning for the first three interview questions expressed by the coresearchers; *what is the meaning of religion; what is the meaning of spirituality; and what is the relationship between religion and spirituality?*

Ali: In the survey you said something like religion is a collection of structured beliefs and practices utilized by a community of people or something like that? I think that's a pretty good definition.

Karima: A process of connecting with something more than what we see and experience in our lives. Religion is built on a foundation of faith in something greater.

Ben: Has to do with private life and provides a structured way to interact with The Creator; collective and individual.

Geri: Belief in G'd and whatever book I guess, or books that accompany it.

Chris: An organized set of beliefs through Divine Revelation.

Dalilah: How they manifest their beliefs, all go into an organized religion.

Hanif: What's identified on the outside, but the inside is something different.

Latifah: I think it can be limiting in terms of being able to move beyond that structure, because it is so all encompassing…

Hanif: Religion is that thing that people often find themselves in arguments and fighting over.

Iman: When I think of religion, there are all kinds of different beliefs that are around a set of beliefs and rituals.

Fatimah: The goal of religion is to feed spirit, but it may not always hit the mark…I think the idea of religion being against other religions severs the connection that we are supposed to have with other human beings. …It should be about your own personal journey. A set of values and rituals and lifestyle that promote peace, connection with the universe and G'd.

Naimah: It's acknowledging some power outside of yourself that's influencing you or giving you justice.

Elaine: It's just a set of values and beliefs people choose to go by that govern their spirituality.

Jasmine: It's a set of rules we follow to fulfill the requirements of our religion.

Iman: A set of traditions, beliefs and values; an organized way of life.

Omera: However, within that way of life, it is a structured idea of religion—meaning a set of rules, a set of beliefs, a method of doing things that fall under that head of whatever religion you follow." I mean worship; I mean the manner in which you communicate with people, as well as your relationship with G'd.

Latifah: Religion is very much about community and organized and structural, whereas, spirituality is on your own in your most quiet silent moments that one can kind of feel this connection.

Karima: Well the connection between them is with something that is greater than ourselves that exists in the world that we can glean from it a greater purpose in life.

Maryum: It is certainly something that is higher level, higher spiritual level, where you believe in something greater.

Expounding on the relationship between religion and spirituality:

Dalilah: I think it's (spirituality) really different from religion, because a person can be spiritual without being religious.

Maryum: Well, I think they are very much connected. Religion and spirituality I think for some people, they may follow a religion but not be completely spiritually there? You know, just follow the words without really thinking about it. Spirituality comes with a different level of opening yourself and your own feelings pertaining (to) various…within religion. How it applies to you and how you choose to follow it.

Iman: Religion, as I said, is an organized system of beliefs and spirituality is the meaning behind that…Someone can be involved in a religious tradition and not have, really that inner connection.

Ben: I guess for me, if you have religion without spirituality you don't have much….From my perspective that gets into New Age kind of stuff, where people make up their own ways to express their spirituality….I keep thinking of religion as the institutionalization

> of spirituality. All of this is why we have to make it clear that Islam is not a "religion" as that word has come to be used…it is a Deen (Way of Life)…..It goes to a different level, where it's kind of like the power of your belief. It is kind of your own set of rules about how you feel about certain things; get you through your day or through your life.

Ali: Religion is basically the letter of the law, whereas spirituality relates to the spirit of the law.

Hanif: Yeah, spirituality is that real powerful stuff.

Latifah: Personally, I think that religion can stifle spirituality. But I think one's frustration with religion kind of creates or provides a platform for spirituality to exist.

Hanif: Often times you will find where religious practice is routinized and it is very automated; people running on auto-pilot, going to church every Sunday; even in Islam.

Latifah: I felt that so much of the essence of what I believe you *do* see in Islam, in terms of a religion of reform and empowerment for people is not practiced or it's not, it's politicized into other things.

Hanif: When culture is the main informant of religion it gets routinized. It doesn't have the same life in it as the spirituality; which a lot of people think they can get when they go into religion.

Ali: Let's say for example, Sufism. Sufism grows out of Muslims feeling like the religious expression of Islam was not fully addressing the need of spirituality and therefore the needs of Muslims.

Chris: For me, with Islam, religion is an organized belief structure and part of that, a big part of that are spiritual concepts. Things that are intangible but things we believe in.

Omera: I believe spirituality is more intangible and it is different for each person. It is difficult to put into words, but it is a personal type of relationship with G'd and I think it has a lot to do with your Taqwa or your awareness of ALLAH. Wherein you can say I'm part of this religion, say, you could be Muslim, but really not have any spirituality.

Hanif: I found Islam to be that full completion, the wheel to all those spokes to religion, and where I was able to find the truest expression of individual awakening and awareness.

Naimah: I would say spirituality is well being, it's being at peace. It is harmony with the Supreme Forces.

Ali: Spirituality is that impulse in human beings to have contact and maybe interact with G'd or something greater than themselves.

Jasmine: Spirituality is doing extra things to be more religious and be closer to G'd.

Fatimah: A journey to be connected to/with other human beings, with creation and with The Creator.

Ali: Spirituality is defined less concretely and more broadly.

Elaine: Spirituality is a concept of religion, but I don't necessarily think that they have to go hand in hand, because I do think that you can be religious and not be spiritual or be spiritual and not be religious.

Chris: For me, it's part of the religion, for me, I know some people see it separate but, it's almost like Divine Guidance. Belief in a Higher Power, we know that as ALLAH.

Latifah: How you would define it on its own is an openness and kind of curiosity for the Divine. And the divine taking shape in a lot of different forms and kind of an openness of the possibilities of the Divine and kind of a quest and searching for it, is how I would define spirituality.

Jasmine: Spirituality is a way of becoming closer to G'd, to advance ourselves in our faith….Being more spiritual, in other words being more religious. I guess they are intertwined.

Ali: Religion might emphasize the fear of G'd, whereas Spirituality might emphasize the love of G'd—Different tones.

Karima: The thing that is different than religion is that spirituality doesn't have to have a connection to a ritual or an organized process of worship. It's more what you feel in your heart.

Elaine: I guess my definition of spirituality would be somebody's consciousness toward their surroundings and their inner self and being, also consciousness towards a Higher Being. It is a combination of thoughts and feelings and you know, how your thoughts and feelings react with each other.

Iman: For me spirituality is really about our personal connection with G'd, and Creation; kind of the way we make meaning about our relationship with G'd and Creation.

Geri: I see it more like…just trying to be a moral person someone with values. They both, that's like wanting people to be better people, I guess; encourages people to do better.

Omera: It seems to me that spirituality keeps your religion going to a certain extent. Your level of spirituality I believe will motivate you to be a better person within your religion or a better worshiper.

Naimah: I think religion is just a brand or name of practice, but spirituality to me is something of strength, of outer power, the unknown, the positive forces that can influence you to be at peace.

APPENDIX D: SURVEY RESULTS—DEFINITIONS

Thematic Attribute *Coresearcher Pseudonym-* *1st Initial*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	% R	%S
Meaning				S				S	S							0	13
Ethics												R				7	0
Ritual	R	R		R		R		R	R	R S	R				R	60	7
Personal Relationship with the Divine or Higher Power	S	RS	S	S	S	R S	R		S	S	R S		R	R S	RS	47	73
Organization		R	R	R				R	R		R	R			R	53	0
Belief	RS		R	R	R		R		R	R S			RS		R	60	20
Morality							S								S	0	13
Values					R	R	S		R			R				27	7
Personal		R		S	S			R S	S		S	R S	S	R S	S	27	60
Prayer																0	0
Purpose	S			S											S	0	20
Miracles																0	0
Scripture			R													7	0
Community	R	R		R	R			R				R				40	0
Sacred Texts							R									1	0
Meditation																0	0
Other descriptors used noted in interviews	RS	S			R S	RS		R S	S	R S	R S	R S	RS	R S	RS	67	80
Coresearcher pseudonym 1st initial	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O		

Key: Over 40%-- Religion=R Spirituality= S

APPENDIX E: COMPLETE TABLE MEANINGS OF RELIGION

CODE	Theme	Descriptive statement-Code associations at end of statements	*n*	**%**
B	BELIEFS	*"Belief* about G'd; higher spiritual level." B/T/Sp	14	93
S	Set/collection	" Set of values and rituals and lifestyle that promote peace, connection with the universe and with G'd." S/R/L/CO/P/T	11	73
T	Transcendent(G'd, Something Greater etc.)	"An organized set of beliefs through Divine Revelation." O/S/B/T	8	53
Or	Structured/ Organized/ RULES	"Religion I would have to say, is about structure. S	7	47
S	Set/collection	" Set of values and rituals and lifestyle that promote peace, connection with the universe and with G'd." S/R/L/CO/P/T	7	47
Pr	PRACTICES/ RITUALS	"I think of something organized, with your set of rituals, your set of practices." R/O/S	6	40
P	Process/Method	"A process of connecting with something more than what we see and experience in our lives." P/CO/T	5	33
E	Ethics/Values	"Its values and ethics; religion (is)boundaries, lifestyle structure." E/O/L	5	33
L	Lifestyle/WAY OF LIFE	"A *method* of doing things, a philosophy, the belief system that you live your life around. " P/B/L	4	27
Ch	Chosen	"It's just a set of values and beliefs people choose to go by that govern their spirituality." B/CH/V/P/Sp	4	27
M	Mutual/Community/ COMMUNAL	"It is *shared beliefs* and *ritual*s that a particular group of people label as one religion as opposed to another. " B/R/M/CH	3	20
Co	Connect/relates	*"Connection* with the universe, collective and it's personal." CO/M/I	3	20
I	Individual	" Has to do with our private life and provides a structured way to interact with The Creator; collective (and) individual." I/CO/M/T/O	3	20
Sp	Spiritual	"It is certainly something that is higher level, higher spiritual level, where you believe in something greater." T/S/N	3	20
NT	Negative Tone	"It is institutional structure that puts in place things that can alter a person's life, a person's ability to make choices." O/L/N	2	13

PT	Positive Tone	" It's acknowledging some power outside of yourself that's influencing you or giving you justice." PT/T	2	13
NON	Non-Classified	l)"…all kinds of different beliefs…"; 2)"…books that accompany it…"	2	13

APPENDIX F: DATA AUDIT TRAIL

Data collection period	*SURVEY--3/19--5/12 (55days)*	*INTERVIEW--3/27--5/29(72days)*	*MEMBER CHECK AND APPROVAL-*	*3/29--6/26 (90days)*
CO RESEARCHER	*Completed SURVEY*	*INTERVIEW*	*MEMBER CHECK-via internet*	*APPROVED-via internet*
001A	27-Mar	27-Mar	29-Mar	2-Apr
002B	21-Mar	28-Mar	4/13--4/17	25-Apr
003C	30-Mar	30-Mar	9-Apr	14-Apr
004D	28-Mar	31-Mar	9-Apr	5/20/2008-Phone conversation
005E	28-Mar	3/31--4/2	6-Apr	9-Apr
006F	9-Apr	17-Apr	19-Apr	20-Apr
007G	2-Apr	3-Apr	9-Apr	10-Apr
008H	11-Apr	4/8--4/15	18-Apr	20-Apr
009I	3/19--4/16	21-Apr	25-Apr	3-May
0010J	17-Apr	22-Apr	24-Apr	22-May
0011K	4/17--4/20	21-Apr	20-May	22-May
0012L	18-Apr	6-May	5/19-5/26	26-May
0013M	12-May	25-May	26-May	28-May
0014N	9-May	29-May	6/8-6/18	19-Jun
0015O	9-May	29-May	8-Jun	26-Jun

DATA AUDIT TRAIL Continued

Data collection period	Total collection and approval--3/19-6/26 (100days)	
CORESEARCHER	CORRECTIONS-9(60%) w/No corrections - 5(33%) sent corrected copy - 1 (7%) minor corrections	COMMENTS
001A	Approved -NONE	Looks good.
002B	Sent corrected copy	2B had to resend got lost in transmission.
003C	Approved -Minor	
004D	Approved -NONE	
005E	Approved-NONE	skipped #7
006F	Approved-NONE	You got me.
007G	Approved-NONE	
008H	Approved-NONE	
009I	Sent corrected copy	
0010J	Sent corrected copy	
0011K	Sent corrected copy	Deleted a portion for fear of misinterpretation.
0012L	Approved-NONE	"I realize I may not have been clear."
0013M	Approved-NONE	
0014N	Approved-NONE	"Spiritual component should be in the (social work) field."
0015O	Sent corrected copy	

APPENDIX G: RESEARCHER'S REFLECTIONS

A reflective diary, as suggested by the literature was used to audit the researcher's presumptions and augment emerging epoche` / bracketing skills (Lietz, Langar & Furman, 2006; Wall et al., 2004, p. 20).

Reflective notes:

Upon IRB approval, I need to prepare to send out the survey. I'm anxious to get responses and set up interviews.

RE: Epoche` I will assume a non-centered, non-directive stance throughout the interview process. I will ask the questions within the semi structured interview and, as needed, additional questions for clarity. I will use prompts to encourage dialogue (i.e. really, hmm). I will try not to imply rightness to any responses. I will not look at the individual survey responses prior to the interview, in order to maintain a uniform approach and naiveté of the coresearcher's position.

March 21- Three contacts received with consent to participate in phase two.

- Two left only their emails. Sent email survey.
- Realized I have to go into the survey to check the MSW/BSW status, some persons who were sent the invite to forward to any known Muslim social workers completed the survey (i.e. Dr. Liwauru). Avoided looking at individual items outside of demographics.
- Asked all interviewees to forward the invitation to any Muslim social workers they might know.

- It's important for the coresearchers to know that they are in control of the interview. I'm just guiding the conversation by asking the questions. What goes into the transcript is up to them (thus the member check).

March 27- Interview #1a- was able to schedule the interview same day as I received the completed survey (Al hamdu Illah). Had to call first to set up interview, then call back due to interview running into prayer time. Nervous- trying to get the recorder to work correctly. Settled on doing the interview on the landline phone using speaker phone and digital recorder. Noted the ease of the conversation. Need to be conscious of the time regarding prayer.

Outside of knowing he was Muslim, no way of knowing what group (turned out to be convert, Sufi). Clue talked about some Muslims choosing Sufism because they needed a more spiritual path of Islam. Made a definite distinction between Religion and spirituality. (No corrections needed). Noted that I need to somehow make people aware that I really need the interview for the study. Went back and changed the terminology slightly to emphasis the phase two part of the study.

Never received any feedback from the (2) internet semistructured interviews. Sent request 3 times, then aborted.

#2b- Called several times to schedule. Finally caught up on a Friday before Jummah. Again, there was an ease in the conversation, very candid and forthcoming. Doesn't like the term spirituality due to its ambiguity. Gathered that many clients aren't aware that the therapist is Muslim, initially. Very comfortable. (Initially

thought the recording was lost, after about a week found it, transcribed and sent out). Reviewed and resent the transcript with minor corrections.

#3c- Short brief answers- references Islam in treatment-very confident in her responses. (Later I checked the survey- I was unsure of whether there was a social work degree- Had to double check via email) Later learned it was ok.

#4d- Initially hard to set up interview time. Very clinical answers, familiar with the topic. Doesn't see self as "Muslim" social worker (I had not thought of this viewpoint or distinction in the terminology). Wonder if other's have the same notion. Doesn't feel like it so far. Fears Islam might be used against her- "Other's won't want to go to lunch" working in a strong Christian dominated area of the country.

#5e- Responded after reminder email invitation. I forgot to ask one question and had to call back the next day. Wanted to provide some information regarding the use of religion and spirituality but held back. Seems very reticent to use religion or spirituality. The client almost has to force the topic. Noted that this was new area to contemplate-"never thought about this before." Didn't want to give my opinion. She didn't give much personal information, kind of closed.

#6f- Uses spirituality in work, so familiar with the idea. Confident in answering. Equates "use religion" with "push religion", I hadn't thought of it that way. Maybe would have been better to use the same terminology as the survey which said "Is it appropriate for the practitioner to introduce the topic?" But that's not

really quite what I want answered. Secondary referral from invite to a mutual psychologist acquaintance.

#7g- Emphasis on religion this time. Doesn't disclose Islam to others until they have a relationship established. Not familiar with NASW guidelines- After the interview- referred to the website under competence. (This is different than with 5e because there is a specific answer to her question, not my opinion). Provided clarity regarding background and how she felt others might view her.

#8h- Long answers. Actually called for the interview, prior to beginning the survey. Began the first three questions but the recording was full and I can't download on Vista computer. Set up time to call back the next week. Again long answers, lots of experience and knowledge, related personal and professional information. Has done academic research in the area. Received copy of VA intake which includes religion and spirituality role assessment.

#9i- Difficult to get, started survey more than 3 weeks ago. Busy schedule. Only person thus far with a PHD. Teaches and encourages social work students to incorporate the religious/spiritual aspect in intake. Knowledgeable of theorists and academic leaders in the field.

#10j- Another hard to set up appointment for interview, several call backs. Somewhat unsure if they are answering the questions "I don't know if that gives you the answer you are looking for" (I'm trying not to indicate a preferred approach or answer). I want them to take it whatever way they do. Another who recognizes

that clients may have different views. Note: the work setting may preclude the use of religion and spirituality. Brief discharge planning.

#11k- secondary referral? Very concerned about how this will be portrayed. Importance of the work seems to override the fears of being misrepresented. Gave an example then asked not to include it (no problem, I want everyone to feel comfortable that they are in control of their input).

#12L- Most different of all, very negative about religion. Painful experience of being within a marginalized Islamic community (Shia). Made references I was unaware of Karbala (I later learned this was the place where Hussein was assassinated. It is commemorated by the Shia. This therapist was largely community practice which was different than the others. Seems to have a lot of contact with the "Muslim community" which reinforces her concerns relative to advocating for domestic violence victims. Notes that she feels an outsider in the Muslim community.

Asked Dr. Connors whether I should continue. I have twelve interviews, already more than I need. She suggested I continue to see if I get a broader scope of response. M and N came in together. I looked at the demographics to see if there might be something new. #14 has NOI background which is new. She has been difficult to reach for an appointment. She is a secondary referral.

#13m- little experience but has a definite idea of how religion and spirituality should be approached. Not much different from the previous coresearchers. Asked that I keep in touch.

**I completed an interview with another coresearcher, only to find she has not finished school yet, no degree. I will not include her responses in the study. I didn't transcribe her interview. Note I really need to look at the surveys to make sure people meet the study qualifications before doing interviews.

#14n- Difficult to follow train of thought at times, even with repeating it back. Uses spirituality as part of treatment anyway. Not really that different from the others. Nothing stands out.

#15o- This one called me back to see if I still needed the interview. I didn't want to turn anyone down who expressed a real interest in participating so we did the interview. Only 3 months experience. Actually if I had transcribed the MSW student I might have had something to compare, although I think the student might have more experience from working at MFS and ACCESS (I believe).

July 18, 2008- Reviewed T's themes which up until now I did not look at because I didn't want to influence my theme development. I see some differences. I need to know how she arrived at her answers.

July 21, 2008-Discussed themes with T. I asked her about her process, she like I read and re-read the material until the themes emerged.

-She noted that what I was saying was an Islamophobic response could be termed protective, in that the coresearchers were concerned with how they represent Islam. Many may have felt safer because I am Muslim and hopefully because I returned the transcripts to them.

-Noted that the coresearchers had a difficult time concretizing the ethics of using spirituality or religion in practice.

-Noted personal experiences with non-Muslims (Christians) who have put down Islam forcing a desire to defend Islam. I noted that that has not been a prominent issue for me.

-Some things I saw she didn't see (details regarding the Shia experience). T noted that she had not had any experience with Shia Muslims and has no knowledge of their particular experience. Therefore, could not say or know whether their discrimination was an issue here.

Additional reflections-

Religion appears to be a closed belief system with semi-impermeable boundaries structured and organized through rules and an outward display of ritual practices shared by a group of people.

It often was expressed in a negative tone: limiting; source of conflict (people find themselves fighting over); missing something if it doesn't include spirituality (rote; without feeling and love).

On the positive note: Promotes peace (1) and a connection to G'd (4) Islam was sometimes spoken of as being outside of religion: "Islam is not a religion" (b); (Hanif went to Islam because it brought the spokes of religion together; Islam is open and accepting of other religious beliefs (ISSA,2003).

7/25/08- Reviewed similar dissertations noting format and structure of the table of contents.

Met with T who reviewed my themes. Noted not much variance between respondents. Did not see any bias in findings, concurred with notes. Stated again that the coresearchers' efforts were to present the ethics of using spirituality based on the client's lead and invitation.

7/26/08- reviewed dissertations- Much of the work has been done. Note description of how to horizonalize data- include only what directly answers the question(s) addressed.

8/3/08- In reviewing my KAM VII case study regarding spirituality in school social work, I began to wonder why I didn't use a case study format. The case could have been Muslim social workers in the US. Too late now. I did see several paragraphs that can be used in the set up of the "researcher's reflections." Particularly my having to revisit my position on whether and how spirituality and religion are related in Islam. I also think if I had emphasized the aspect of the study as an intervention aiming to increase social worker's self awareness; it might have been prudent. However, it can be argued and I think makes a strong case for social change.

I think I'm ready to start writing soon. I want to go over each interview again and look at the corresponding survey to see what I get from the comparison. Listening to the oral presentations has been helpful. I noticed many used a phenomenological format and computer software in analyses of the text.

8/08/08- Going back over the composites and categorizing. It's smoother for religion than

spirituality—so many different ways to look at it. I don't know how specific I want to be in terms of differentiating meaning words (i.e. some use G'd, Higher Power etc). I kind of expected everyone would use Allah. Everyone doesn't use Islamic terminology or phrases.

8/09/08- Reread Moustakas (1994). It is making more sense now that I have actual data. The empirical and transcendental phenomenological approaches really do make sense here.

8/11/08- I am continuing to review composites and re-reading the proposal to see exactly what questions (outside of the basic research questions) I posed; several but they basically fit in as sub-questions . I keep looking at the themes. Started writing the limitations and outline.

8/12/08- beginning to feel pressure to complete at least the theme tables. I go back to work in two weeks. I think it will be easier to write after I have the tables done. Re-reading Moustakas to get a clearer understanding of the "textural" meaning—still elusive.

10/08- Beginning to re-read the proposal and change text. Really would like to revise, but learned the approved version should have only tense changed, no major revisions according to Dr. Connors.

11/1—11/10—writing abstract to try and infuse more energy into the project. After several revisions, I have something that might work. All rubric points addressed. Reviewing tables. Can't find experience table for spirituality, must re-do. Realizing I should have asked specifically about "Islamic Spirituality" since I said

this would emerge in the study. Can't really say whether these responses represent and "Islamic spirituality" for each coresearcher—to be discussed in interpretation—chapter 5.

APPENDIX H: CORATER'S THEMES

Drawn from Composite Interview Transcripts A-O 7-17-08 Researcher comments are in *italics* from consultation- 7/21/08.

Religion (negative tone) imposed, pain

Perceptions in the survey spoke to religion being

Ethics –we aren't clear on (Resolved 7/21/08)

Values

Boundaries

Restriction

Actual *Practice*

The reason for social division and arguments

Rigidity

The outward structures encompassing spirituality or search for meaning

Collective spiritual search as opposed to individual spiritual search

Books of Revelation

Outward search for meaning

Rituals

Systems of beliefs

Concretized ideas, practices, beliefs

Political and cultural and social ties often entwined with this association

Structured way to interact with the Divine

Shared beliefs and

Spirituality was presented as structured collection of beliefs

Outward display

Broken into denominations

Organizational in nature

Institutionalization

Alteration of a person's life and behavior

Protective feature of Islam and the therapist. (Important)

Spirituality (open flowing)

Inner details of the search for life's meaning
The essence of the whole? *search*

Transcendence

Relationship of being with the Unseen and/or Unspoken

Personalized relationship with the Creator

Less concrete

Human impulse to connect with the Creator

A search which defies definition

More broad definition of the religious search for the Creator

Fluid relationship with the Creator- open venues to approach

Consciousness towards a Higher Being

A combination of thoughts and feelings

Possessing great power

An understanding that reaches beyond structures, basic realities

Connection with the Creator rather than with a collective of people?

Or an organized process

Curiosity for the Divine

Openness to the possibilities of the Divine

A quest

A drive toward completeness

An attempt for a *personal relationship to the Divine*

Utilization of Religion in Social Work Practice

Insistence that the discussion be initiated by the client

Rapport must be established with the client before the subject is broached

Certain arenas are not applicable for the engagement – crisis oriented or intervention

Spirituality should be incorporated in the *assessment process*

in order to make the best therapeutic treatment plan

Should *never be imposed* upon a person who does not appear to be amiable

to the discussion.

It was stated that it may be necessary to provide training to make sure that the inclusion of religious and spiritual elements are handled appropriately.

Islam associated with personal walk choice/Spirituality

The twelve step program, has made the discussion more amenable to many people in certain areas such as the substance abuse programs

Spirituality was felt to be most appropriate for the Muslim population but it cannot be assumed to be appreciated because a person is dressed in certain (for religion)

Social Work Context

None of the social workers reported .they had suffered from being identified

as a Muslim or a Muslimah

Some of the clinicians felt that they would fare better with Muslim clients in regard to the subject of religion or spirituality

Many expressed a consciousness of being a Muslim

Necessity of the Survey

It is essential to note that the majority of the person surveyed stated that they appreciated that this survey *engaged them in thought* regarding these concepts in a way that they had not considered in the past. They all stated that this survey allowed them to perform processes which are essential to their work.

APPENDIX I: DATABASE LETTER OF SOLICITATION

8/28/06

Dear Brother and Sister Social Workers,

AsSalaamuAlaikum.

The Islamic Social Services Association-USA (ISSA-USA) is working in cooperation with Sr. Cheryl El Amin, a doctoral student at Walden University, to complete a research study focusing on the attitudes and practices employed in integrating spirituality in social work. We are seeking the participation of degreed Muslim social workers (BSW, MSW, DSW and PhDs.) in order to replicate a 1997 NASW questionnaire (Canda and Furman, 1999). Sister Cheryl plans to have her instrument ready for distribution in December 2006 Insha'Allah. The original study included only one Muslim respondent! We believe that there are Muslim social workers out there that have not been counted.

To accomplish this study a national database of Muslim social workers needs to be compiled. If you are willing to participate in this study and/or to be part of the nationwide database of Muslim social workers please email ISSA your contact information (i.e., email, office/home address and/or phone numbers) at info@issausa.org, Cheryl El-Amin at 313- 532-1724, so that we may contact you to participate in this study. Your information will not be forwarded to other organizations without your permission. While the initial study will be conducted with social workers in the United States it will certainly be important to know who the Muslim social workers are wherever you live.

Insha'Allah it is time we compiled a nationwide list of Muslim social workers and that Muslims are reflected in social work research and literature.

Jazakullah Khairun for your attention and assistance.

WaSalaamuAlaikum,

Aneesah Nadir

Aneesah Nadir, MSW, Ph.D.

Islamic Social Services Association-USA, President

APPENDIX J: RESEARCH STUDY CONSENT

Personal and Professional Spirituality: Muslim Social Workers' Perspectives
Walden University

Dear_____:

You are invited to participate in a research study of Muslim social workers' perceptions and beliefs regarding the integration of spirituality in practice. You were selected as a possible participant because of your knowledge and/or experience related to the topic. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before acting on this invitation to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Cheryl El-Amin a doctoral candidate at Walden University.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is. Explore and present Muslim social workers' beliefs and perceptions regarding spirituality and religion and the integration of spirituality in social work practice through the replication and expansion of a previous study among members of the National Association of Social Workers (Canda & Furman, 1999).

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do the following things: Complete return a written survey within 10 days of receipt; be available for a recorded indepth follow up telephone interview anticipated to last approximately 45 – 60 minutes. You will be provided with a synopsis of the interview for your review and approval prior to its inclusion in the study results. Anonymity will be maintained through the assignment of a numerical code identification process.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Cheryl El-Amin or Walden University. If you initially decide to participate, you are still free to withdraw at any time later without affecting those relationships.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

There are no anticipated physical or psychological risks related the study.

The benefits to participation are in providing a voice to the Muslim social worker in the areas of social work and spirituality in social sciences which will enhance understanding and knowledge in the field.

In the event you experience stress or anxiety during your participation in the study you may terminate your participation at any time. You may refuse to answer any questions you consider invasive or stressful.

Compensation:

There will be no monetary compensation for participation in this study.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any report of this study that might be published, the researcher will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a participant. Research records and audio recordings will be kept in a locked file; only the researcher will have access to the records. Fictitious names will be used in referencing any specific comments in the study narrative.

Contacts and Questions**:**

The researcher conducting this study is Cheryl El-Amin. The researcher's adviser is Dr. Jeanne Connors. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Cheryl El-Amin at 313 – 532-1724; 16500 Ashton, Detroit, MI 48219; cze46@yahoo.com or Dr. Connors at jeanne.connors@waldenu.edu. The Research Participant Advocate at Walden University is Leilani Endicott; you may contact her at 1-800-925-3368, x 1210 if you have questions about your participation in this study.

You may keep a copy of this consent form.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and received answers as necessary. I consent to participate in the study.

Printed Name of

participant_____

_____:_____

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please provide your contact information, should you decide to participate in the interview phase of this study: Phone Number(s): _____

Best time: AM_____ PM_____

Best day(s): M ___ TU___ W___ TH ___ F___ SAT.___ SUN.___

Signature of

Investigator:

_____

DATE_____

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO: C. El-Amin, 16500 Ashton, Det. MI 48219 or cze46@yahoo.com (as applicable).

Consent form CZE 2007

APPENDIX K: EMAIL INVITATION and CONSENT

As Salaamu Alaikum,

My name is Cheryl El-Amin. I am conducting a survey amongst Muslim Social Workers as part of my doctoral dissertation through Walden University. There is little known regarding Muslim social workers views on religion and spirituality in social work practice. If you are a Muslim social worker, please share your experience and expertise. The survey can be accessed through the following link:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=uEp2VxAhhfPhW5m0IxCnkA_3d_3d

Thanks for your participation! May Allah Reward you, Please forward this survey to any Muslim social workers you may know.

Jazakullah,

Sr.Cheryl El-Amin, LMSW, ACSW

Doctoral Candidate, Walden University

Please note: If you do not wish to receive further emails regarding this effort, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx

You may contact Cheryl El-Amin at cze53@hotmail.com for the results of this study. Please click "done" to submit your survey responses. If you know of other Muslim degreed social workers, please forward this survey.

Salaams, Sis. Cheryl El-Amin, LMSW, ACSW

Walden University Doctoral Candidate

APPENDIX l: THANK YOU LETTER & EMAIL

(Adapted from Moustakas, 1994)

Date:

Dear_____:

As Salaamu Alaikum,

Thank you for your participation in my Doctoral Dissertation Study and sharing your personal and professional experience with religion and spirituality. I appreciate your willingness to share your unique and personal thoughts, feelings, events and situations.

I have enclosed a transcript (or synopsis of our interview). Please review the entire document. Ask yourself if this interview fully captured your experience(s). After reviewing the interview, you may realize that an important experience(s) was neglected. Please feel free to add comments, with the enclosed red pen, that would further elaborate your experience(s), or you can call or email any additions or corrections (cze46@yahoo.com). Please do not edit grammatical corrections. The way you told your story is critical.

When you have reviewed the transcript (synopsis) and have had an opportunity to make changes and additions, please return the transcript in the stamped addressed envelope.

I have greatly valued your participation in this research study and your wiliness to share.

If you have any questions please call.

Salaams,

Cheryl El-Amin

E-mail Thank you and Request to Review Transcript

As Salaamu Alaikum (Name),

Thank you again for participating in my Doctoral Study Interview regarding Muslim Social Workers' Perceptions on Religion and Spirituality. I am attaching a draft of our conversation transcript/synopsis for your review. Please let me know whether it is acceptable (one way or the other). Feel free to make any corrections or additional comments as you see fit.

Thanks again for sharing your time and expertise.

Salaams,

Cheryl El-Amin

APPENDIX M: PERMISSION TO USE BRITISH SURVEY

Leola Dyrud Furman, Ph.D. MSW

University of North Dakota
Associate Professor Emeritus

Ms. Cheryl El-Amin
165500 Ashton.
Detroit, MI
48219

October 20, 2007

Dear Ms El-Amin,

It is my pleasure to inform you that you have my full permission to replicate the survey research and use the survey instrument that Dr. Edward Canda, University of Kansas and I designed for the National Survey of Social Workers Regarding Religion and Spirituality in Social Work Practice.

It is my understanding that you will be using the more stream lined survey instrument that was initially designed for use in the United Kingdom and was subsequently used in Norway and in New Zealand.

I look forward to being informed about your findings.

Sincerely,

Leola Furman, MSW, Ph.D.

[illegible] Minneapolis, MN [illegible] • Phone: 612 [illegible] • E-mail: [illegible]

Dear Cheryl,

Our sample such a small number of Muslim respondents, that it is not possible to say much about them in comparison to the others. If you can do a follow up study that would be good. If you wish information about the survey instrument, please contact my coauthor who has primary responsibility for the survey, Dr. Leola Furman (furmanlfurman@aol.com).

There will be a conference on Islam and social work at Arizona State University soon, I believe. You could make many contacts and get good advice there. I don't have the contact information with me. But you can find by internet search.

Also, see the references in the bibliography on spiritual diversity in social work (Pub by CSWE) related to Islam. You can get that via the CSWE website.

Best wishes,
Ed

>===== Original Message From Cheryl El-Amin <celam001@waldenu.edu> =====
>Dear Dr. Canda,
>I am pursuing doctoral studies at Walden University, Human Services, with a
>specialization in clinical social work. I am interested in the data
>regarding the NASW membership views on spirituality and practice. In
>particular I want to know if there are results relative to the Muslim
>social worker. I would like to obtain a copy of the questionnaire (the 105
>questions) if possible. I reviewed the partial list in your 1999
>publication and the article (Ethical considerations) and I am wondering
>about the applicability with this population, significant differences if any.
>Any advice you can offer would be greatly appreciated. I can be contacted
>through email or phone (313) 532-1724 or mail: 16500 Ashton, Detroit,
>MI 48219. Please respond.
>
> Thank you,
>
>Cheryl El-Amin

Edward R. Canda, Ph.D., Professor
Chair, Ph.D. Program in Social Work
University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS USA

home page: http://www.socwel.ku.edu/canda
Ph.D. program home page: http://www.socwel.ku.edu/academics/PhD
* shanti - shalom - salaam - peace *

CURRICULUM VITAE

CHERYL WARE EL-AMIN
celam001@waldenu.edu

EDUCATION

Doctoral Studies	Walden University	Est. Completion 1/09
Masters in Social Work	University of Michigan	August, l988
School Social Work Eligibility	University of Michigan	July, 1992
Bachelor of Arts	University of Michigan	May, 1976 -Double Major-Speech pathology/audiology & Psychology

EXPERIENCE

3-01-94 - Present *School Social Worker***,** Detroit Public Schools,
Earhart Middle School, 1000 Scotten, Detroit, MI 48209
Supervisor: Ruby Washington, (313) 849-3945

Provide l: l, group and/or family therapy to Detroit Public School students experiencing academic underachievement due to emotional, social, physical or other issues. Consult and/or collaborate with relevant persons or agencies in order to facilitate students' achievement both academically and/or socially on school wide and individual levels.

7-ll-88 - 2-25-94 *Psychiatric Social Worker, Harper Hospital Dept. of Psychiatry*
Assessed psychiatric inpatients aged 16 through adult, for group therapy and/or family support in treatment; provided individual and family therapy and psycho education as necessary. Provided educational plans for school aged minors, discharge planning (i.e. placement and referrals) Collaborated with treatment team to develop ongoing individualized treatment planning.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND CERTIFICATION

LMSW - Michigan Licensed Masters of Social Work #060085 Exp. 4/09

NASSW/MASSW-National Association of School Social Workers/
Michigan Association of School Social Workers

NASW- National Association of Social Workers/ ACSW Academy of Certified Social Workers

NABSW- National Association of Black Social Workers

Founding Member of the League of Muslim Women, Inc.

Field Instructor to Wayne State and University of Michigan Social Work Interns

Social Work Consultant- Muslim Family Services

Post Master's Professional Development:

Parent as Mediators; Achenbach System of Empirically Based Assessment; Mediation Training; Functional Behavioral Assessment; Non-aversive behavior management.

Special Interests:

Strength based assessment and treatment. Cultural Competence specializing in the integration of spirituality in practice, African-centered and Islamic perspectives in social work practice.

Ms. El-Amin is currently a school social worker for Detroit Public Schools and has past experience as an inpatient psychiatric social worker. She continues to pursue special interests in the area of strength based assessment, the integration of spirituality in social work practice and cultural competence in African-centered and Islamic perspectives. She is in the final stages of completing a doctorate degree from Walden University.