

AN INTRODUCTION TO HOMESCHOOLING FOR MUSLIM PARENTS

Aneela Saghir  
B.S., California State University, Sacramento, 2008

THESIS

Submitted in partial satisfaction of  
the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

EDUCATION  
(Multicultural Education)

at

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO

SPRING  
2011

AN INTRODUCTION TO HOMESCHOOLING FOR MUSLIM PARENTS

A Thesis

by

Aneela Saghir

Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_, Committee Chair  
Maria Mejorado, Ph. D.

\_\_\_\_\_, Second Reader  
Forrest Davis, Ph. D.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Student: Aneela Saghir

I certify that this student has met the requirements for format contained in the University format manual, and that this thesis is suitable for shelving in the Library and credit is to be awarded for the thesis.

\_\_\_\_\_, Department Chair  
Albert Lozano, Ph. D.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Department of Bilingual and Multicultural Education

Abstract  
of  
AN INTRODUCTION TO HOMESCHOOLING FOR MUSLIM PARENTS

by  
Aneela Saghir

Statement of the Problem

This study examines factors that Muslim parents use in choosing to homeschool their children and determines if homeschooling offers a competitive option compared to public or private schooling. Additionally, it explores the effects of home-schooling in the area of academia, social values, and moral and religious world views.

Sources of Data

The study utilizes interview data from ten Muslim homeschooling mothers and from two Muslim homeschooling organizations.

Conclusions Reached

The interview results validated much of the existing research on the reasons why parents choose to homeschool their children. The interview results also identified four major reasons for homeschooling: lack of academic rigor, lack of individualized attention, negative social environment and lack of religious teaching in public and private schools.

\_\_\_\_\_, Committee Chair

Maria Mejorado, Ph. D.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

## DEDICATION

For all those who homeschool their children and for the prospective homeschoolers. To my family, especially my brothers, who encouraged me to further my academic career. To my husband, who encouraged my interest in this thesis topic.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Glory be to God with whose help I was able to complete this task. I would like to thank my husband for all the support, help, and patience, I could not have done it without you. Much Gratitude to my dearest family who encouraged and motivated me throughout this experience. Special acknowledgement to my loving parents-in-law and sisters-in-law who provided much support, prayers, and love throughout this process.

Thanks to my thesis advisors, Dr. Maria Mejorado and Dr. Forrest Davis for their guidance and the continuous help during this project. Thanks to Dr. Albert Lozano and to my entire BMED cohort. Recognition and thanks to my friends and to all those who willingly participated in my survey.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication .....	v
Acknowledgement .....	vi
List of Tables .....	ix
List of Figures .....	x
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
Background.....	1
Introduction.....	2
Islam & Muslims .....	3
Purpose .....	7
Methodology.....	9
Positionality of the Researcher .....	9
Definitions of Terms.....	12
Delimitations.....	14
Organization of Remainder of Study .....	14
2. LITERATURE REVIEW .....	16
History of Home Schooling .....	16
Re-emergence of Homeschooling.....	16
Profile of Home School Students & Family Characteristics.....	22
Reasons Parents Choose Home Schooling .....	26
Different Methods to Homeschool.....	48
Multicultural Education & Homeschooling.....	57
Parental Qualifications to Homeschool .....	68
Father and Mother's Role .....	73
Conclusion .....	76
3. METHODOLOGY .....	78
Research Design .....	78
Participants.....	79
Instrumentation .....	79
Data collection .....	79

Protection of Human Subjects .....	80
Data Analysis Plan.....	81
Summary .....	81
4. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA.....	82
Demographics .....	82
Implications of the findings .....	85
5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	105
Conclusion .....	105
Recommendations.....	108
Appendix A. Questions for Muslim Homeschooling Parents.....	110
Appendix B. Questions for Muslim Homeschooling Organizations .....	112
Appendix C. Consent for Interviewing.....	113
Appendix D. Human Subjects Consent to Interview Organizations.....	114
Appendix E. A Review of Two Muslim Homeschooling Organizations.....	115
References.....	119



## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Number of Children of the Participants .....	82
Table 2	Parents Homeschooled.....	86
Table 3	Benefits of Homeschooling .....	94
Table 4	Duration of Homeschooling.....	96
Table 5	Extra Curricular Activities.....	97
Table 6	Resources Helpful to Parents.....	104

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Number of Years Children are Homeschooled .....	84
Figure 2 Mother's Level of Education .....	86
Figure 3 Reasons for Homeschooling.....	98

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Background**

As one examines the lives of individuals who were major contributors to the development of American society and its values, a large number of them obtained their education via homeschooling. Many of America's founders were educated at home, including George Washington, Thomas Jefferson (Lips & Feinberg, 2008) as well as John Quincy Adams, Abraham Lincoln, Woodrow Wilson, and Franklin D. Roosevelt, authors Agatha Christie and Pearl Buck and inventor Thomas Edison (Knowles, Marlow, & Muchmore, 1992). Many more leaders and educators have also been homeschooled. Most people give great importance to public or private schools over homeschools.

Homeschooling should be considered an equally valid method of teaching children, considering the fact that the nation's most important leaders were homeschooled.

Homeschooling is not a new idea or practice (Lines, 2000). Historically, home education was the primary method for parents to educate their children. Parents, tutors, and families have been involved in homeschooling for years. The idea of homeschooling became common in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; however it really gained popularity in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, the contemporary homeschooling movement began approximately in the mid-century, with a resurgence of interest, in the late fifties and early sixties. "In the mid-1980s, educational researchers estimated that fewer than 50,000 children were being homeschooled in the US. Now, 20 years later, the Department of Education estimates that more than 1.1 million children are being educated at home" (Harper, 2006, p. 1).

Additionally the Department of Education estimated that the number of home-schooled students increased to 1.5 in 2007 (Arthur, 2011). While the practice of homeschooling is not new, what is new is that today, homeschooling has become a choice opposing the societal norms of public and private schooling.

Even though public schools are considered a norm for children's education, they did not come into existence that long ago. "What is often forgotten is that universal, compulsory, and comprehensive schooling is a relatively new invention. It was not until the nineteenth century when state legislatures began requiring local governments to build schools and parents to enroll their children in them" (Lines, 2000, p.77). Thus, in a short time, compulsory schooling became the norm and accepted in the nation while homeschooling became less known.

## **Introduction**

While many people are focused on efforts to improve schools, a growing number of families may choose to forego traditional schooling altogether. One can safely assume that parents who are dissatisfied with the public school system are actively seeking an alternative method of education for their children. One such alternative is homeschooling. According to the literature, the homeschooling movement is experiencing phenomenal growth in every state. Both, the U.S. Department of Education and the National Home Education Research Institute estimate that the "number of children being homeschooled grows 7 percent to 12 percent per year" (Lips & Feinberg, 2008). This may be a result of many families feeling that public schools are lacking in religious/moral instruction, are dissatisfied with the academic instruction and are concerned about the school

environment, thus, fueling the idea of homeschooling as a viable alternative. Parents are losing faith in the American classroom for various reasons, and homeschooling is becoming a serious and a growing alternative (Lines, 2000). In response, there is an increase in the number of people who are starting to homeschool their children.

“Religion in most cases is an extremely influential factor in the decision to homeschool” (Al-Grenaadiyyah, p.1). Romanowski says that when public schools fail to incorporate religious beliefs into the curriculum, it becomes problematic for some families because their religious beliefs and the education of their children were inextricably intertwined” (Marchant & MacDonald 1994). As the case with Muslims, the religion of Islam is not just a religion but a way of life that incorporates a system of education (Gorder, 1987). Thus, in order to understand why Muslims select to homeschool their children, it is imperative to understand the history of the religion of Islam.

### **Islam & Muslims**

The word Islam is an Arabic word which means submission to the will of God (Sarwar, 2006). However, it also means peace, purity, submission and obedience, among other things (Abdalati, 1996). A Muslim is one who submits to the will of God, regardless of race, ethnicity and background. “Islam” and “Muslim” derive from the same word as the Arabic for “peace.” Allah is an Arabic word which means ‘one true God.’ Allah does not mean ‘the God of the Muslims,’ as some people wrongly believe (Sarwar, 2006, p. 13). Rather, according to Islamic theology, Allah is the name that God has chosen for Himself.

Muslims also believe that divine revelations were sent to many prophets including Abraham, Jesus, Noah, Joseph, Aaron, David, Moses, Mohammad and others. However, Muslims differentiate their theology by claiming a strict adherence to monotheism, which includes rejecting any ideas related to the Trinity. Muslims believe in all above mentioned prophets, and additionally a final Prophet, Muhammad.

The Quran, Muslims believe, is God's word and final Revelation to the Prophet Muhammad. Revealed over a period of twenty-five years, the Quran was compiled and distributed to distant lands within twenty-five years of the Prophet's death in 632 A.D. This is the only Quran recognized by Muslims (Abdalati, 1996). Thus, there has been nothing added or omitted from the Quran. Sarwar (2006) states that, the Quran has remained unchanged even to a dot over the last fourteen hundred years. "As such, God's revelation in the Quran focuses on teaching human beings the importance of believing in the Unity of God and framing their lives around the guidance which He has sent. Additionally, the Qur'an contains the stories of the previous prophets, such as Abraham, Noah, Moses and Jesus; as well as many commands and prohibitions from God" (islaam.ca, 2006-2009). Quran is a book of guidance. Furthermore, Quran is a universal scripture and it is addressed to all mankind, not just to a particular tribe or people.

A Muslim believes in all the revealed books that are mentioned in the Quran. They are: the Torah, revealed to Moses; Zabur (Psalms), revealed to David, Injil (Gospil), revealed to Isa (Jesus), and the Quran, revealed to Muhammad (Sarwar, 2006, p. 27).

Some people believe that Islam is just a religion for Arabs; however, Muslims come from different races, ethnicities, and nationalities. The world's largest Muslim

community is in Indonesia; substantial parts of Asia and in most parts of Africa. Significant minorities are also found in the Soviet Union, China, North and South America, and Europe (*Understanding Islam & the Muslims*, 1989). Further, there have been recent reports of large conversions to Islam over the past few decades.

It is interesting to note more than 80% of all Muslims are non-Arabs; there are more Muslims in Indonesia than in the whole Arab World. So even though it is true that most Arabs are Muslims, the large majority of Muslims are not Arabs (islaam.ca, 2006-2009). Muslims were early arrivals in North America. By the eighteenth century, there were many thousands of Muslims, working as slaves on plantations (*Understanding Islam & the Muslims*, 1989). The early Muslims were cut off from their families and heritages, thereby losing their Islamic identity as time went by. Today there are many African-American Muslims and they play an important role in community.

“Although three-quarters of the nation’s estimated 2 million home-schoolers identify themselves as Christians, the number of Muslims is expanding ‘relatively quickly,’ compared with other groups,” said Brian Ray, president of the National Home Education Research Institute (Bahrapour, 2010, p. 1). Similarly, Basham, Merrifield, and Hepburn (2007) state that Muslim Americans are the fastest growing sub-group within the homeschooling movement. A broader range of families are turning to homeschooling. Proponents of homeschooling say that the increase in the size of the American-born population in this country, the rigorous demands of the faith and the difficulty for public schools to accommodate the needs of the religion, all help to explain the rise in home schooling among Muslims (Livni, 2006).

Bahrampour (2010) says that the Muslim parents homeschool their children for the same reasons as non-Muslims: "...stronger academic, more family time, they want to guide social interaction, provide a safe place to learn and teach them [their] values, beliefs, and worldview." (p. 1). Families can have multiple reasons to homeschool their children. Ibrahim Hooper in Livni (2006) states that "There's a growing need to teach moral values and conduct to Muslim school children. That's traditionally what has happened in the Christian community" (p. 1). Thus, religious reasons could possibly be comparable, regardless of which religion it is.

Muslim families prefer religious values to be taught simultaneously with secular education and do not differ between the two. For example, the mother of a Muslim family living in the United States expresses similar reasons for keeping her youngest children at home:

...Like many other families who are schooling their children at home, our main reasons for wanting to make this move was a religious one. In our case, however, the religion is Islam, not Christianity. We are a very committed Muslim family, and it is of the greatest importance to us that our children grow up in an atmosphere which is not destructive to their religious orientation and values. For this reason, we are obviously in total disagreement with many social and moral values (or "unvalues") which are being propagated in schools, as well as with the limited educational approaches. Moreover, in our faith religious and other learning is not to be approached as two separate matters since Islam does not



acknowledge any schism between “sacred” and “secular” aspects of life (Holt, 1981, p. 24-25).

Religion, in most cases, can be an extremely influential factor when deciding to homeschool. For many Muslims, Islam is the key determinant in their lives. Yet schools are not always sensitive to this. Pupils, as they enter through the school doors, are required to leave their religion at home, not through desire but because so often the school as a secular institution, is simply unaware of the centrality of Islam in the life of its Muslim pupils (Coles, no year, p. 43). Many parents would like religion to play a greater role in their child’s life.

Many Americans, regardless of religion, ethnicity, social class or race share Muslim concerns with America’s social and cultural pathologies, as well as the legacy of racism. Thus, criticizing American society and withdrawing from public schools is not unique to Muslims—Protestants, Catholics, Jews, the Amish, and others (Moore, 2009)

As Muslim parents pursue help in establishing and organizing their own home schools, it is imperative that adequate resources are made available to them. There are numerous methods of homeschooling which are readily available and accessible for families. It is no longer a question of identifying a curriculum for homeschoolers but how to differentiate and choose the curriculum to best fit the child’s needs.

### **Purpose**

Home-based education is now arguably the fastest-growing form of education compared to public and private schooling (Ray, 2007) and according to the statistics, almost 1 in every 25 school-aged children in the US is now being taught at home (Harper,

2006). Parents are seeking an alternative because their children are not provided with a high quality education in a number of public schools. Not all schools have the same level of resources which impacts the quality of education.

Olivos, who has done extensive research in low income schools regarding parent involvement has witnessed first-hand the inequalities which are found in the public school system: student academic underachievement, lack of appropriate teaching materials, low teacher expectations, high turnover of staff and students, unattractive physical conditions of the school sites, school violence, etc (2006). Furthermore, schools with large minority populations typically suffer from large class sizes, leading to each student receiving less attention. Parents who recognize these challenges in public schools seek more for their children and realize the advantage of homeschooling. In home schooling, parents can also tailor the curriculum according to their child's needs, which is impossible in public schools.

There are fewer equal opportunities for most children in public schools. Olivos (2006) elaborates that many of the bicultural children attend the poorest performing schools with the lowest expectations, thus there is no equal opportunity for success.” Unfortunately the basic needs of students are not met in public schools, for example, safety is a huge concern. Bullying has become common which unfortunately has led to suicidal deaths. Therefore, many families in the United States are giving serious consideration to homeschooling instead of sending their children to public or private schools. Some Muslim parents also express concerns about the academic and social aspects of homeschooling. Additionally, Muslim parents, like many others, are

overwhelmed with the various methods available with which to homeschool their children.

The aim of this thesis is to examine factors that Muslim parents use in choosing to homeschool their children, history behind homeschooling, multicultural education and homeschooling, father's role, and various methods with which parents homeschool their children. Additionally, this paper will explore the effects of home-schooling in the area of academia, social values and moral and religious world views. In addition, input from directors of two community homeschooling organizations who provide support to families will be included in this study.

### **Methodology**

The methodology of this research will be a qualitative study, incorporating the snowball effect to locate participants. The snowball effect is contacting one family who has homeschooled which will lead to finding other homeschooled parents. Ten Muslim mothers will be interviewed. Two Muslim homeschool organizations will also be interviewed.

### **Positionality of the Researcher**

One may wonder what influenced my interest in homeschooling. While pursuing a Master's in Education, I learned the politics of K-12 education which included what an education should look like versus what it is in public schools, curriculum development through an examination of alternatives to traditional educational models, the disadvantages and harms of standardized testing, and the education of minorities compared the majority in the public school system. Furthermore, I was provided with the

chance to examine and critique the dominant perspectives on curriculum taught in public schools. While obtaining my degree in BMED (Bilingual and Multicultural Education), I also learned how the education system prepares individuals to become effective teachers. Furthermore, BMED equips one with the knowledge and skill set required to serve successfully in schools and classrooms. It teaches one how to serve equally and justly while working with children from many backgrounds. Having learned about the politics of public schools, mentioned above, during my studies led me to write about a complementary topic that provides an alternative to public education.

My interest in writing about homeschooling initiated after I became aware of what a quality education should provide. As I proceeded with my graduate classes, I became intrigued by the equality that students receive in our academic institutions, regardless of their ethnicity and background. Minority and majority were both treated with respect and each individual's uniqueness was appreciated, thus providing them with confidence that everyone can reach high in life. One set of group of people were not better treated than other group of people. In contrast, my high school education was the opposite and it failed to equip me with skills needed to deal with real life.

I was disappointed with my secondary education, not because I did not try hard enough but because it did not provide me with the highest quality of education. Most of the teachers in my high school were not effective. I was not taught how to become a moral and productive citizen of society, instead I was taught how to get good grades and pass my classes. My school was comprised mainly of African Americans and Latinos and it was located in a low-income area. In one concrete example, the history curriculum used

to teach us in the high school was disappointing and distorted. We were taught a history which mainly speaks about the European heroes, neglecting the heroes of people of color. Since my school consisted mainly of people of color, the contributions of the people of color to American society should have been more equally highlighted.

We should all receive a high quality of education regardless of where we reside. This is further explained by Muhammad, author of *Transforming School Culture: How to Overcome Staff Division*, who states that “School funding for the typical urban public school is on average 30% less than suburban schools that serve primarily white middle-class students” (2009, p. 8). For students of color, perhaps more devastating is the lack of access to high-quality education (Kozol, 1991). The quality of education and academic skills of students need improvement and it needs equality among all students. Winfield (1986) found that teachers expect more from Caucasian students than from African-American students, and they expect more from middle class students than from working and lower-class students (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Even though racism and class biases should not be obstacles that interfere with education, unfortunately, they do.

Muhammad states further that, because it is difficult to fire poorly performing teachers, principals often move such employees from school to school. As a result, many urban schools are forced to staff their schools with teachers who are not wanted elsewhere (Muhammad, 2009). Schools located in areas where risk factors for low achievement are highest, are struggling to maintain good and dedicated workforce of teachers (Muhammad, 2009). Because my school existed in a low-income area, it meant

that I automatically learned mostly from a set of teachers who were not necessarily held accountable for low performance.

Prior to beginning graduate school, I looked for incentives on how to reform our educational system so it would be more equal for everyone. However, I came to realize that educational reform is not only difficult, it can be almost impossible in some schools. Muhammad (2009) talks about a watershed book on the history of educational reform in the United States, called *Tinkering Towards Utopia* (1995) in which Larry Cuban and David Tyack clearly establish that “Educational reform is very difficult to establish, and very little has changed in the American education system of the past century” (p. 10). Many years and several billion dollars later, our best educational minds are still diagnosing the problem. Improving public schools is very complex indeed (Muhammad, 2009). In some places, there is too much money being spent on education reform, yet it has not produced any results.

At this point, during my graduate school, I began to ponder about alternative educational methods. Quickly, I discovered homeschooling which was associated with many stereotypes. Like others, I also had numerous stereotypes about homeschooling. Nevertheless, something about homeschooling sparked an interest in me and I decided to research this further by making it my project.

### **Definitions of Terms**

*Allah*: Allah is the Arabic word for God. Muslims prefer to use the word Allah rather than the word God. Although Muslims use the pronoun He for God, Allah is above the concept of masculine and feminine. Unlike humans and animals, God does not belong

to any gender. Theologically, the existence of God as the creator means that God is beyond His creation and not bound by physical or linguistic bounds of masculine and feminine.

*Alternative Education:* Any method of educating schooled-age children other than public schooling. It may include private schools, and homeschooling.

*Home Schooling:* The formal education of school-age children received at home by either certified or non-certified parents or guardians. Tutors can be hired to educate the children in the home, as needed.

*Home Schoolers:* The participants, both parents and children who practice home schooling.

*Islam:* an Arabic word which means submission, obedience, surrender, and peace. Submission is acceptance of Allah's (God) commands. Obedience means putting Allah's commands into practice. Submission and obedience to Allah brings peace, which is why Islam also means peace (Sarwar, 2006). The religion is named Islam because it constitutes a complete way of life which results from one's total surrender to the will of God.

*Muslim:* A person who acts the Islamic way of life and acts upon it (Sarwar, 2006).

*Private Schooling:* A school that is established, conducted, and maintained by a non-government agency, usually charging tuition and often following a particular philosophy, viewpoint, etc., often religious-based.

*Public Schooling:* The formal and compulsory education of school-age children provided and controlled by the state government under the guidance of certified teachers. It commonly includes primary and secondary schools and is maintained at public expense.

*Socialization:* The process of developing acceptable behavior in children in order to adjust to group situations. It is the ability to conform to group standards and customs. Also, defined as a continuous process whereby an individual acquires a personal identity and learns the values, norms, behavior and social skills appropriate to his or her social position.

### **Delimitations**

This study is designed with the Muslim family in mind. However, religious parents of other faiths can also benefit from this research since most religious parents share underlying principles of morality and ethics. This project is organized to help the Muslim parents with an alternative method of education. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to all families involved in homeschooling or the general United States population.

### **Organization of Remainder of Study**

The organization of the remainder of this study will be presented in the following manner:

Chapter two contains a review of the literature on topics such as: History of home schooling, reasons why parents homeschool their children, the academic achievement,



social aspect, and religious concerns of homeschooling. Additionally, it explores the advantages and disadvantages of homeschooling.

Chapter three will present the data and it will also present the findings from the data. Chapter four will be comprised of a handbook presenting useful resources for homeschooling parents.

## Chapter 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **History of Home Schooling**

Home School education has a rich history. It is embedded in America's most early forms of educational practices (Wilhelm & Firmin, 2009). Throughout history, societies have schooled children at home (Gordon & Gordon, 1990; Stevens, 2001). In fact, homeschooling was prevalent throughout North America until the 1870s, taught by parents and tutors (Basham, Merrifield, & Hepburn, 2007). Hiatt-Michael (1994) states that, "A child's education has always been seen by parents, and perhaps by society as a whole, as the purview of the child's parents." Berger (1981) writes, "Parental education included, and still includes, activities related to discipline, basic skills, work skills, ethics, and value inculcation. These educational activities were carried out privately within the family, rather than publicly through the use of public institutions" (as cited in Hiatt-Michael, 1994, p. 247).

#### **Re-emergence of Homeschooling**

Carper (2000) states that "It [homeschooling] was a common place in religiously pluralistic colonial America and virtually disappeared with establishment and expansion of common school systems in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but it has experienced a renaissance since the mid-1970s" (p. 8). Wilhelm and Firmin (2009) state that home education was again viable in the early 1960s and became an alternative response to compulsory public education. Homeschooling has re-emerged in our time as a powerful educational alternative (Gaither, 2008). This movement, at the beginning, traced its

theoretical lineage to the libertarian Left, as promoted by the late teacher and humanist John Holt (Wilhelm & Firmin, 2009). Basham (2001) notes that Holt provided the leadership in advocating a radical movement that stressed educational decentralization and greater parental autonomy. This movement became known as “laissez-faire home schooling” (Hunt & Maxson, 1981, p. 57).

In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the family was the primary unit of social organization and the most important educational agency (Carper, 2000). Although for much of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century, Caucasian parents sent their children to school for short periods of time, much education took place in the household (Carper, 2000). Since settlement schools were not yet established, the first colonists’ home educated their children out of necessity. Yet, even after local schools were formed, the resulting rural one-room schoolhouses were often run by church, religiously based, and typically private, community schools (Loria, 2002). By the 1820s, private and public schools were widely available to Caucasians in most settled parts of the United States, except the south. These educational opportunities were due primarily to the efforts of the churches, parents, local governments, voluntary associations, entrepreneurs and communities, not state mandates (Carper, 2000). It seems that parents viewed schools as extensions of the household which would reinforce the educational efforts of parents. By 1890, about 86% of children aged 5 to 14 years were in public schools, and private schools accounted for another 11% (Wattenberg, 1976).

Schindler (1987) writes that; “The chief goal of schooling, especially among the original Puritan and Separatist Colonists, was to foster religious devotion” (as cited in

Wilhelm & Firmin, 2009, p. 306). During the early years in America, the colonies were granted local control of education (Pulliam, 1987). Hiatt-Michael (1994) states, “The first schools were created by religious leaders and later placed under governance of townships. Under townships, boards were comprised of lay citizens, who were parents in the community. As many immigrants had left Europe in order to openly practice their religious beliefs, these schools represented the religious beliefs of the community. Religion, reading, and writing comprised the curriculum for these schools” (p. 247).

In early American education, the Bible served as the primary textbook for reading and the daily lessons which reinforced a commitment to moral codes of behavior based upon the Scripture (Algera & Sink, 2002 in Wilhelm & Firmin, 2009). However, by the 1980s, rejection of Biblical authority took place in the public education system with three famous Supreme Court decisions. These three rulings effectively removed religious influences from government-run schools. In 1962, the Supreme Court Case *Engle v. Vitale* banned public schools from requiring recited prayers that were done previously in the public schools. The next year, 1963, witnessed the case, *Abington School District v. Schempp*, which forbade voluntary prayer from being uttered in schools. The third case was the famous *Murray v. Curlett*, also in 1963, which effectively removed Bible reading from state schools (Wilhelm & Firmin, 2009). Since many Christian parents disapproved, the removal of religion weakened the public school systems. Wilhelm and Firmin (2009) further state that, in response to these major shifts in public education, many fundamentalist and some evangelical Christians withdrew their children from the public schools. “As the courts pushed to integrate public schools and to rein in the massive

resistance to prayer and Bible-reading injunctions, conservatives created alternative schools” (Gaither, 2008, p. 231). “Evolution, sex education, the somewhat-vague but alarming notion of “secular humanism,” and other factors drove many families away from public education.” (Gaither, 2008, p. 231).

“The middle decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century marked a period of intense educational debate and reform that led to major changes in educational beliefs and practices in the United States – namely, the genesis of the modern concept and practice of public schooling” (Carper, 2000, p 12). State standards eventually were established mainly between the years 1975-1993 (Wilhelm & Firmin, 2009).

“By the 1990s some evangelicals argued that the schools were ‘doing more harm now to the country than any single thing except perhaps the popular media’ and that Christians must get out of public schools immediately; other maintained that Christians needed to stay in the system to serve as “salt and light” to their non-Christian neighbors” (Gaither, 2008, p. 232). As public education developed in America, parent involvement in education changed. To many, it seems parents have lost control over their child’s education (Hiatt-Michael, 1994). “Many conservatives gave up, at least for the time being, on the idea of transforming the public schools and ought instead ‘to restore power to local evangelical communities by creating parallel educational culture’”(Gaither, 2008, p. 231). Thus, they started joining Christian school associations that could provide accreditation, professional training, insurance packages, legal assistance in the event of conflict with state authorities and entry into a network of like-minded schools (Gaither, 2008). Eventually private schools were formed but for some conservative Christians,

private schools did not solve the problem (Gaither, 2008). The reasons for dissatisfaction with private schooling varied: certain number of families could not afford the tuition, a few families had special-needs children and their needs were not being met by private schools, some families had conflicts with principals or teachers, and other parents, especially mothers, simply wanted to spend more time with their children. For the above reasons, some parents began to give homeschooling a try (Gaither, 2008). Many mothers were well-educated and committed to teaching their children. If such women could protest, organize voters, conduct study groups, and lead Bible studies and women's clubs at their churches, could they not teach their own children how to read and write? (Gaither, 2008).

Many turned to Christian schools while others began homeschooling. Some people believed religious duty required them to teach their own children while others wanted to integrate religion, learning, and family life (Lines, 2000). Therefore, some of reasons for homeschooling included the course subjects that some parents found offensive and curricula that undermined home values. Moreover, many parents began to connect changes in school culture with broader changes in American families such as the dramatic increase in divorce, out-of-wedlock births and abortion. Fearing for their children, the parents pulled out their children from traditional schools (Gaither, 2008). Even in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, not all parents agreed to the idea of public schooling. Further disagreements occurred regarding curriculum, structure and belief system, much like it does today (Carper, 2000).

By the mid-1980's homeschooling was increasingly popular among religious conservatives, and thousands of them pulled their children out of schools (Gaither, 2008). Not until the mid-twentieth century was universal high-school graduation a realistic goal. Even at this point, some traditional communities, such as the Seventh Day Adventists, Mormons and Amish-continued to keep their school-aged children at home. Only recently, have we begun to treat schooling as a full-time affair entrusted to professional teachers. (Lines, 2000).

Homeschooling occurred because of changes in both public schooling and in families during the second half of the twentieth century. As public schools grew larger, more bureaucratic and impersonal, less responsive to parents and less adaptable to individual or local cultural variations, many families felt increasingly alienated (Gaither, 2008). After numerous clashes with public school officials and state authorities in the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s, home-schoolers now are tolerated, and even in some cases, accommodated, by the education establishment. Furthermore, they enjoy legal status and considerable freedom in all fifty states (Gaither, 2008). "The legal groups and national organizations such as Home School Legal Defense and Association of Christian School International aided the long battle for the state acceptance, and by 1993 home education was legal in all 50 states" (Wilhelm & Firmin, 2009, p. 309)

Across the nation, homeschooling has grown into a national educational movement and has become a catalyst for change in education, according to Kay (2001):

Homeschooling, initially off the radar screen, has in the last 30 years of its modern revival become a completely mainstream alternative to institutional

schooling of any kind, public or private. No longer monolithic, home schooling is easily accessible, adaptable and responsive to its consumers...home schooling is the still extreme, but it is rapidly assimilating cultural prototype for inevitable reforms to public education in the coming decades, already in vigorous germination in the form of school voucher programs and charter schools (p. 28).

### **Profile of Home School Students & Family Characteristics**

Surprisingly, many of the proponents of home schooling are professional educators (Gorder, 1987). The reason for this could be that they have learned through their teaching careers that it is difficult to meet the needs of all the children from various backgrounds. Another reason could be that their educational experience shows that education can be fulfilled in a better way through non-traditional means. A typical homeschooling family is a Protestant white, two parent family, likely to be somewhat more affluent and of a higher education than other families nationally (Galen & Pitman, 1991). Van Galen and Pitman (1991) also state that both American and Canadian homeschooling generally attracts two types of families: ideologues and pedagogues. The ideologies are usually, although not exclusively, religious conservatives. On the other hand, pedagogues are preoccupied with improving child's academic and social environment (Basham, Merrifield, & Hepburn , 2007). Thus, it is clear that parents concerns vary when they make the decision to homeschool their children.

Furthermore, John Holt, who has written numerous books on homeschooling, expresses that homeschoolers do not come from one particular area; rather they are spread throughout cities, country areas, suburbs and small towns (2004). This shows that



the advantages of homeschooling are experienced by parents in all areas of the country. Lips and Feinberg (2008), state that Caucasian students are more likely to be homeschooled than African-American or Hispanic students. This could be due to having more resources, financial options, educational opportunities and socioeconomic advantage available to them. It must be noted, however, that Lips and Feinberg's view is uncommon, and despite the socioeconomic advantages of Caucasian students, groups from all ethnic backgrounds are choosing to homeschool their children.

Lines (2000) investigated that future growth of homeschooling could occur most rapidly among ethnic minority groups. Although African-American and other non-Caucasian groups are under-represented among homeschoolers, the next generation of minorities is seriously considering it (Lines, 2000). This was a result of a survey taken at Vanderbilt University and Nashville State Tech (respectively, a selective private university and a two-year college) in some selected classes. Almost half (45.3 percent) of the African-American students said 'yes' or 'maybe' when asked if they would homeschool their own children in the future. Among other non-Caucasian groups, two-thirds indicated 'yes' or 'maybe.' In contrast, less than one-fourth of the Caucasian students said 'yes.' One should note that the survey was small (254 students) and nonrandom, representing students enrolled in the classes of the researchers, whose influence was perhaps stronger amongst the non-Caucasian students (Lines, 2001). Nonetheless, the results were staggering.

Likewise, Romanowski (2006) argues that one of the unique aspects of the homeschooling community is that it appeals to "a demographic diversity that includes

virtually all races, religions, socioeconomic groups and political viewpoints” (p. 128). Wilhelm and Firmin (2009) express that homeschool research has expanded to multicultural contexts. Topics people have mentioned on the multicultural context of homeschooling include minority, immigrants, students of low socioeconomic status, students with learning disabilities, and applying international models to American home education. Therefore, one can surmise that homeschooling population is becoming increasingly diverse among ethnic groups. Research shows that homeschooling has also become more diverse in terms of religion. Besides Christianity, it serves many other religions, as Ray asserts, “An increasing proportion of agnostics, atheists, Buddhists, Jews, Mormons, Muslims and New Agers are homeschooling their children” (Ray, 2007, p. 2).

As stated, homeschooling is not limited to one particular group anymore but it may take time for some minority groups to become familiar with the idea of homeschooling, based on their backgrounds. Bahrapour (2010) states that “If Muslims have come to embrace homeschooling later than others; it might in part because so many Muslims in the United States are immigrants who might not be aware of the option” (p. 1). Bahrapour further states that for many Muslim immigrants, the idea of home schooling runs counter to their reasons for coming to America, which frequently includes better educational opportunities. Therefore, immigrant families may tend to oppose the idea of homeschooling. For some recent immigrant groups such as Muslims, and possibly others, they believe the only way to succeed in the U.S. is through a public or private education. However, the next generation is starting to become aware of non-traditional

educational opportunities for their children. Therefore, as they become informed, more and more families may make the vital decision to homeschool their children.

The profile of homeschooled students includes children in two-parent families with one parent working and at least one parent having a college degree (Lips & Feinberg, 2008). Children with only one parent working are more likely to be homeschooled than both parents working. A US report from 1997 found that 87.7 percent of home schooling mothers did not work outside the home (Ray, 1997b in Basham, Merrifield, Hepburn, 2007). However, one must keep in mind that income can be generated from home also. The study may have failed to take into account the mothers who work from home. Ray (2007) articulates that a typical homeschooling parent has attended or graduated from a college or university. About half of home educators have earned a bachelor's degree or higher. Similarly, Basham, Merrifield, and Hepburn (2007) state that home schooling parents have above-average levels of education. Among American parents who home school, 75 percent have studied beyond high school compared with 56 percent of parents nationwide (USDOE, 2005b, Table 3-1; US Census Bureau, 2006, HINC-01). Therefore, a number of home schooling parents not only hold college degrees, they also exceed in receiving a high school diploma, versus other parents. In contrast, the article titled, *Questions and Answers about Homeschooling*, summarizes that all kinds of people homeschool, some are single-parent families, some run family businesses, and some parents combine work outside the home with homeschooling.

Finances may also be a factor when parents make the decision to homeschool. “Children from families with annual household incomes below \$75,000 were more likely to be homeschooled than children with families who earned more than that amount each year” (Lips & Feinberg, 2008, p. 3). This is surprising as one would assume there is a lot of money needed to homeschool a child.

In society, a common expectation is that parents are to provide the kind of education that they believe is best for their children. For the disadvantaged, education is often seen as a step to a better life, yet they may not have the resources to select other options. Speaking from personal experience, recently immigrated Pakistani families can take up to two generations to accept the idea that successful education can be something other than attending a public or private school. Dissatisfied with the current state of public and private education for their children, these parents become actively involved with the alternative of home-schooling (Gorder, 1987).

### **Reasons Parents Choose Home Schooling**

When parents decide to homeschool their children, they are committing to more than just teaching them to read and write. The choice to homeschool involves a commitment to be engaged in the entire development of the child. Each family has their own value system and their own reasons for home schooling (Gorder, 1987). There are a variety of reasons parents decide to teach their children at home. Some are concerned about the environment at schools; others are dissatisfied with the academic instruction, while others prefer religious and moral instruction which is not provided in traditional schools (Lips & Feinberg, 2008). Some parents have specific beliefs, skills and values

that they want their children to embrace and may feel it is missing in public schools. Noddings (1992) states that most schools do not teach anything about religion, mistakenly supposing that the separation of state and church requires silence on religion. Similarly, public schools refuse to incorporate religious beliefs into the curriculum. Thus, they opt for homeschooling in hopes of instilling these values and beliefs in their children.

Some parents have chosen this alternative to be able to spend more time with their children. Saba and Gattis (2002) asserts that many home-schooling families feel that this promotes a healthy, nurturing environment for their children. Studies show that the average school age child spends only about fourteen minutes a week talking with parents (Gorder, 1987). Albeit, this could be due to other reasons such as spending too much time watching TV or hanging out with friends, being homeschooled allows children to spend more time with their parents. Amazed by these statistics, home-schooling families actively seek to increase the level of communication within the family. The increased sense of responsibility towards a child's education is leading many parents to take more active part in the education of their children (Williamson, 1989).

The decision to homeschool is not one that can be defined by one reason; rather it is multi-factoral. Religion, culture, education, and morals all play a role when a parent decides to homeschool his or her children. Whatever the reason for homeschooling, the main concern is that parents desire to play a greater role in deciding their child's education. Parents have the right to choose how their children should be educated by determining what form of education best meets the needs of their children.

### *Educational Freedom*

Some parents desire to be involved in their children's education but feel that they are not being heard in public schools when they attempt to raise issues about their child's education. Olivos states, "The kind of involvement public school personnel are looking for is participation which is 'supportive of school policies and instructional practices' and non-critical." He further states that, "In the public school setting it is clearly understood that if parents are to be involved in school-related matters, than they should always support, not question; follow, not lead; and trust, not doubt" (2006, p. 18). As a result, parents become dissatisfied with the school system and in order to have more influence and become a part of their child's education, they may choose a different alternative to public education.

Other parents may feel that their children are not receiving the education necessary to teach them life skills. Thus they want to be able to teach their children to prepare for life. "Advocates of homeschooling feel that the K-12 public educational institutions are not challenging enough nor up-to-par to provide their children the necessities needed in daily life" (Al Grenaadiyyah, 2010, p. 1). Children have varying learning styles and perform at different academic levels, which may lead some parents to remove their children from a traditional school setting and homeschool in order to teach the children at his or her own pace. This gives parents an opportunity and freedom to teach what they desire. "Parents enjoy the freedom to choose what, when, where, and how their children will learn without any outside influences" (Grenaadiyyah, p. 1).

Parents are willing to teach their children themselves whether for religious reasons or educational reasons.

### *Academic*

A number of families choose homeschooling because they believe that they can provide a better academic foundation for their children compared to a standardized public school system. Homeschooled children generally tend to score significantly higher on nationally standardized achievement tests compared to children in public and private schools. “In study after study, the homeschooled have scored, on average, at the 65<sup>th</sup> to 80<sup>th</sup> percentile on standardized academic achievement tests in the US and Canada, compared to the public school average of the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile” (Ray, 2007, p. 2). Not only do homeschoolers outperform their peers from public schools but also outperform children attending private schools. Amelia states, “What is even more surprising is that they score significantly higher than the most expensive private schools as well” (Harper, 2006, p. 1). In another study of Lips and Feinberg’s (2008), Dr. Lawrence Rudner of the University of Maryland administered academic achievement tests of 20,760 homeschooled students. He reported that the academic tests of these homeschooled students are exceptionally high and the median scores were typically in the 70<sup>th</sup> to 80<sup>th</sup> percentile. This is a compelling reason for homeschooling.

Tizard and Hughes (1984) studied 4-year-olds at home and in preschools and found that the learning environment at home was generally superior to that in the preschools. It appears that when children are at home and not in large groups, it is easier

to respond to their individual needs and talents. Nevertheless, Tizard and Hughes also mentioned that some of the educational needs of children cannot be met within the home; for example, how to get along with other children, how to be a member of a group, how to separate from families, and how to communicate with strange adults (Tizard & Hughes, 1984). However, proponents of homeschooling may argue that these needs can be met while being involved in extracurricular activities.

Ray (2002) asserts that an environment that respects the student's individual needs and traits allows the flexibility in the student's schedule to jump into internships, jobs, colleges, field trips and volunteer services. The flexibility in student's schedules also allow the students to graduate from high school early, giving them a choice to either begin taking college courses, working, joining internship programs, or simply taking time off for leisurely activities. Ray (2002) shares Keely's experience in relation to this:

Keely, 13, decided to serve as a volunteer legislative intern for an Oregon State legislator throughout a four-month session. She did general clerical work, prepared files on specific pieces of legislation, and ran errands for the lawmaker. Intellectually above average, Keely has a penchant for creative writing and social activities. Now, at age 16 and still studying at home, she is completing a detective novel and would like to be a writer and a mother (p. 53).

Homeschooled children usually tend to outperform their peers. This is supported by Rudner (1999) who states, "On average, homeschooled students in grades 1-4 perform one grade level higher than their public and private school counterparts." Furthermore, "By grade 8, the average homeschooled student performs four grade levels above the



national average” (Rudner, 1998). Rudner in another study also found that twenty-five percent of the homeschooled students tested are enrolled one or more grade levels above their age-level peers in traditional public or private schools (Lips & Feinberg, 2008). This assures that when children learn at their own pace and in an individual manner, they tend to perform better.

Learning becomes faster and more flexible for homeschooled students since they are not in a typical classroom. Moore states that a tutored child can learn more in two hours or less than in an entire day of traditional classroom instruction (Shepard, 1990). Similarly, one home-school mom is quoted as saying, “We accomplish the curriculum in two hours a day because we are not lining up, and we are not dealing with troublemakers in the classroom” (Hardy, 2001, p. 18). If behavior issues do arise, parents are also able to choose the appropriate type of discipline for their child (Pearson, 2002). Parents are able to handle their children how they see best according to the situation. By homeschooling, the child does not have to adapt to the classroom and the school’s schedule, rather parents adapt to the child’s learning style. According to Micki and David Colfax, parents of four home-educated sons (three of whom attend Harvard), public schooled children are actually on task only 20% of their yearly 1,100 hours in school. The rest are wasted on organizational concerns (Lamb, 1990). Keeping this in mind, one can surmise that homeschoolers need to spend only two hours daily on basics, which is three times as many ‘on task’ as their public school peers. Ray (2002), shares Holly’s story as an example:

In 1987, when Holly was 6, she wanted to know what school was like, so her parents arranged for her to spend a day as a student in a local public school's 1<sup>st</sup> grade classroom. It was a cheery room, not too crowded with students. Holly had her own desk, and the amiable and talented teacher was an acquaintance of her family. That evening, when her parents asked Holly what she thought of school, she replied that she liked recess. When asked whether she would like to go to school, Holly replied, "No, they're always sitting around doing nothing," She noticed the waiting in lines, waiting for the teacher's help with a math problem, and waiting for a classmate standing at the front of the room struggling through saying the names of the week in Spanish while others giggled and lost attention. Holly noticed that she could not move on to another engaging learning task or adventure when she was ready for it. There was a group for whom to wait. There was a structure to follow. At home, Holly knew that she could move on to new challenges when she was ready (p. 51-52).

Homeschooled students have an advantage of studying on their own pace, unlike the traditional classroom where learning takes place according to the pace of the class. This allows the homeschooled students to cover more material throughout the year, thus they get ahead from other children in traditional schools. Monfils (1991) states that parents teaching on a one-to-one basis can be more effective than the best public school teachers working with 20-30 children. Homeschoolers may be at an advantage because of the individual instruction they receive with their education. Ray (2004) mentions in his article that individualized instructions combined with homeschooled students' experience

in studying and pursuing goals on their own may be showing long-lasting effects. However, Bliss (1989) remarks that the disadvantage of one-to-one instruction are not discussed in most literature. She mentions lack of group verbal instruction, lack of exposure to other's opinions, little opportunity to practice cooperative behaviors, and the loss of objectivity by the teacher-parent as potential weaknesses. Nevertheless, individual instruction can be a key contributor to a child's successful academic life because the advantages seem to be more effective than the disadvantages.

Although Rudner does not claim that homeschooling is superior to public or private schooling, his findings suggest that home schooled students perform quite well. The academic success of homeschoolers continues from school to college.

The SAT and ACT are college admissions tests used for college admittance as success predictors in colleges and universities in the United States. "Recently released statistics show the 2006 average ACT composite score for homeschooled students was 22.4, compared to the national average composite of 21.1!" ("Once again," 2007, p. 1). This rebuts the myth that homeschooled students have a difficult time getting accepted to college. Similarly, to refute the myth that once homeschoolers are accepted into a college or a university, it is a challenge for them to relate to other students and academically perform as well as their peers. Romanowski states: "Every year homeschoolers are admitted to hundreds of colleges and universities in at least five countries." He continues, "The list includes such prestigious schools as Brown, Georgetown, Harvard, MIT, Princeton, the United States Military Academy at West Point, UC at Berkeley, University of Michigan, Notre Dame, and Yale" (2006, p. 127). Because students are homeschooled,

it does not mean that they are at a disadvantage with their post-secondary education. “Jones and Gloeckner (2004) cited three studies (Gray, 1998; Jenkins, 1998; Mexcure, 1993) as showing the home-educated to be performing as well or better than institutional-school graduates at the college level” (as cited in Ray, 2004, p. 7). This indicates that homeschooled graduates are as ready for college as traditional high school graduates and they perform as well as students from traditional high schools. Likewise, Irene Prue’s (1997) nationwide study of college admission personnel revealed that “...homeschoolers are academically, emotionally, and socially prepared to succeed in college” (Ray, 2004, p. 8).

Further, the admission requirements and financial assistance information is available to homeschooled students by the colleges and universities. This shows that colleges and universities actively recruit homeschooled children and are proud to have them as a part of their institutions. Christopher Klicka’s (1998) survey of college admission officers found a Dartmouth College admission officer saying, “The applications [from homeschoolers] I’ve come across are outstanding” (Ray, 2004, p. 8). Likewise, Romanowski further articulates that many college representatives attend homeschool conferences to talk to students and parents in an effort to recruit the students. They also communicate with state-wide homeschooling organizations and conduct workshops to help homeschooled students plan for college. (2006). Colleges and universities all over the nation realize that many homeschooled students are academically competent and well prepared for the rigorous academic college life. Admission officers at Stanford University think they are seeing an unusually high occurrence of a key

ingredient, which they term “intellectual vitality,” in homeschooled graduates (Foster, 2000). They link it to the practice of self-teaching prevalent in these young people, as a result of their homeschooling environment (Ray, 2004).

Even though not all homeschooled students perform extraordinarily well in academia, evidence presented above shows that the failure rate is lower than that of students in public schools.

### *Religious concerns*

Many parents are concerned about their child’s religious development. Gustavsen (1981) found that the number one reason for home schooling was that parents believe public schools are a threat to the moral health of their children. Parents citing this reason explain that religion is a way of life for them as well as a moral obligation, and that the secular humanistic philosophy is pervasive in every school subject, from early grammar to science, social science, and especially in literature courses (Gorder, 1987). Religion in public schools has been a topic of controversy for many years. Despite the fact that the first public schools were locally centered with local ministers in charge of hiring teachers (Ravitch, 2001), public education has evolved into a system that tries to separate itself from its religious beginnings (Fraser, 1999). The first Amendment of the United States Constitution reads, in part, “Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof” (Cambre, 2009, p. 61). Through the Fourteenth Amendment, the rights are applied to the states (Cambre, 2009). Therefore, it is doubtful that any state can require homeschooling families to register within the state

of local school districts as this raises freedom of religion and other constitutional issues. Many parents who are religious desire to combine education with religion and this is best done at home due to the many negative influences and conflicting values that may be present in public and private school systems (Al-Grenaadiyyah, p.1).

Since children spend most of their time in school every day, parents have a little to no chance to teach certain subjects from the historic view point of the family's religion. Religious beliefs can be a source of protection for some students as it is stated in Clark's (1995) article that, "Religious beliefs protect children from involvement in drug abuse, delinquency, and teenage pregnancy" (p. 7). Similarly, Werner (1990) claims that religious beliefs can also teach compassion, which allows children to love despite hate. If religious beliefs are not taught or reinforced in public schools, the children cannot be expected to learn such values. Homeschooling parents can easily and actively preserve ideologies, values and practices by which to live. They want to instill a greater spiritual and moral value into their children than that which may be taught at a secular public school.

### *Socialization*

#### **Negative Influences in Public Schools**

Parents have a natural instinct to protect their children from harm, wanting to provide a safe environment for them. Protection is imperative in the developmental years for the purpose of nurture and growth for children. Similarly, many parents choose to protect their children from the negative social influences in public schools, therefore,

choose to homeschool their children. They believe it provides a safer and a healthier environment for them. John Holt (1981) summarizes that in most schools and the ones he has taught in, visited, or knew anything about, the social life of classrooms is mean-spirited, competitive, status-oriented, and snobbish. In public schools, some children are teased relentlessly for their accent, way of dressing, physical appearance, social class, race, religion or simply for being new in school. Some children are often bullied. People may argue that this is what children are going to deal with in real life so they might as well learn to handle it now. "The younger the adolescents, the less likely they will have the physical, cognitive, and psychosocial maturity to avoid negative consequences (Dryfoos, 1990; Bogenschneider, Small, & Riley, 1992 as cited in Clark, 2005, p. 5). Young children are influenced more by their peers. In contrast, as they grow up, they are better able to make self-decisions and avoid negative influences around them. Additionally, there is a big difference between learning to deal with conflicts and encountering the torment of bullies. Bullies can scar children for life and in some cases lead to suicide.

The socialization that best prepares a child for the real world cannot take place when a child is always with his peer group or in a classroom. Wise and Bauer (1981) state that the classroom places children in a peer-dominated situation which they will probably not experience again. School is a competitive place where the pressure is on children to conform to the way that the group sees fit. Children often take direction from the most popular kid in school or to transform themselves into the most popular kids at school. "Adolescents who associate with peers engaged in the same behavior tend to also

do that behavior” (Bogenschneider, Small, & Riley, 1992 as cited in Clark, 1995, p. 6). It is common that youth are affected by their peers more than adults are. Studies have shown that homeschoolers have a more positive self-concept than their peers in schools. Homeschoolers are more likely to have friends of different ages and to be free of the cliquish and exclusive behavior so common in school. Furthermore, kids meet people from different backgrounds with different kinds of life experiences (“Questions and Answers about Homeschooling,” 2004). In public schools, students tend to create groups and cliques with other students from similar backgrounds. This does not allow them to have meaningful interactions with students outside of their groups. Admittedly, one cannot control each and every environment that their children may encounter but one can attempt to minimize society’s harm on their children. In a homeschool setting, children would be equipped with necessary tools to make a decision based on the values and beliefs taught by the parents.

Home schooling families object to schools teaching values that conflict with the values of their family unit. Bettye Lewis, president of the Michigan Alliance of Families (a pro-family organization) said, “If schools can’t reinforce the values of the home, the schools do not have the right to deliberately destroy them” (Gorder, 1987, p. 59). For example, parents naturally desire for their children to learn respect and respect the family and their surroundings. However, disrespect is very well recognized in public schools and students generally learn disrespect from their peers. It starts to become a ‘cool’ thing and other children wanting to fit in do the same. Thus, this can be classified as negative influence. Brian Ray, the founder of National Home Education Research Institute



(NHERI) determined that positive social skill scores were higher for children who were homeschooled than for those educated in public schools (2007).

Children learn the majority of their social misbehavior in schools. Parents often worry about their children's exposure to illegal drugs, alcohol and teen sex. These parents feel that homeschooling gives them more of an opportunity to guide their teens in making wise decisions about issues that have a major impact on their lives (Saba & Gattis, 2002). Parents spend a lot of time teaching their children good values but get upset when their children come home from school using unacceptable language or experience peer pressure to use drugs. Families would like their children to have a warm and caring environment that provides a variety of rich educational experiences. They do not want their children exposed to drugs, alcohol, or violence. Public schools suffer from a variety of such problems. Naturally, some parents prefer a learning environment based on cooperation instead of competition (Rakestraw, 1988). Gorder states that home is the best place to begin developing social skills. Home schooling creates individuals, not clones (1998). By not being in a place where peer pressure is common, children in home schools will have a stronger chance in developing their own identity. A teen by the name of Christopher DeRoos, who has always been homeschooled, shares his experience:

...The most asked question was about my socialization. Having exchange students in our home helped - because the students from Europe agreed that American schools over-stress the social rather than the academic... I could never understand why all 5-year-olds, etc., were stuck together when we each progress

at different rates... Usually when you get out in the work force, you're with all ages. Home schooling helped prepare me for the REAL world... (Holt, *Growing Without Schooling*, p. 6).

### **Purpose of Socialization**

In referring to older children and peer group pressure, John Holt says, “Children who spend almost all their time in groups of other people their own age, shut out of society’s serious work and concerns, with almost no contact with any adults except child-watchers, are going to feel that what ‘all the other kids’ are doing is the right, the best and the only thing to do” (Williamson, 1989, p. 16). That is a reason homeschooled children can experience a much better social development because they are relieved of the daily peer pressure. This leads to learning how to communicate with adults and children of all ages instead of just one isolated group. Similarly, Gutschow states, “Most employees do not spend their day communicating only with people who are within one year of their own age. Instead, they are in contact with people of various ages, from the newly hired college graduate to the soon-retiring stalwart” (2009, p. 1). If socialization is defined as interaction with people of variety of ages, then homeschool children are properly socialized because home schooled children learn to socialize with people of all ages. Gorder (1987) writes, “It’s not important to teach a kid how to be a kid. It’s important to teach a kid how to be a good person. That is the purpose of social interaction” (p. 45). Although, homeschooled children, perhaps, may be in less contact with peer groups than other children, they spend more time with their family, which is also considered a type of

socialization. Uie Bronfenbrenner, a professor of Child Development warned that if parents, older children, and other adults continued to be absent from the active daily life of younger children, there would be indifference, violence, antagonism, and alienation on the part of the younger generation (Wise & Bauer, 1981). Socialization occurs not only from school but in many other ways such as the religious community, our neighborhood, tutors and mentors, media clubs, and civic and athletic participation. However, extra effort may be put in by some parents to provide their children with social contacts. Therefore, homeschooling engages parents in the lives of their children in a way that, perhaps, no other form of education does because of the effort required from the parents.

Some people are concerned that by homeschooling, children are being deprived of participating in extracurricular activities which may also enhance a child's learning. However, there are a large number of networks for homeschoolers in the United States and around the world. These networks facilitate collaborative instruction and provide opportunities. According to Romanowski, "On the average, homeschooled students are involved in 5.2 activities outside the home, with 98 percent engaged in two or more" (2006, p. 126). These activities include speech and debate tournaments, scouting, dance classes, volunteer work and sports. In addition, "homeschoolers are eligible under NCAA eligibility rules to participate in college athletics" (Lips & Feinberg, 2008, p. 6). All these activities allow opportunities for children to integrate with others. The literature confirms that many successful citizens, educators, business owners, and leaders in all fields who have been homeschooled have attained successful socialization skills. Homeschooling

does not create socially deprived kids. Thus, a child does not need to attend public school to develop social skills to succeed in life.

### **Community involvement**

There is a strong and mutually supportive community of home schooling families out there. Far from being privatized and isolated, home schooling families are typically very well networked and quite civically active (Ray, 2004, p. 8). “Among other things, they found that homeschooled students held significantly more positions of appointed and spiritual leadership, and had more semesters of leadership service than did those from private schools, and were statistically similar to the public school graduates” (Ray, 2004, p. 8). The evidence is, therefore, clear that homeschooled students are more involved in public services even when they are educated differently from the traditional public schools. Ray (2004) further articulates that the challenges, responsibilities, and practices that homeschooling and private schooling normally entail for their participations may actually help reinvigorate America’s civic culture and the participation of its citizens in the public square. Livni (2006) asserts that, like many home schoolers, Muslim home-school children are often very involved in extracurricular activities. Sulaiman, one of the families mentioned in Livni (2006) says that all of their home schooled children take swim classes and Tae Kwan Do. The boys are on the football team and involved in gaming clubs. Thus, homeschoolers are highly involved and are great contributors to the civic and political involvement. In essence, home-educated are actively involved in their local communities, highly civically engaged, and religiously active.

### *Curriculum*

While religious reasons for homeschooling remain important for some families, a plurality of families say they are turning to homeschooling because they are dissatisfied with the quality of the public schools (Lines, 2000). “A media stereotype would have homeschooling children start the day with a prayer and a salute to the flag and then gather around the kitchen table for structured lessons. However, this is not only unusual; it fails to present the full range of practices” (Lines, 2000, p. 79). This is a common stereotype presented about homeschooling families. Not only is this stereotype false, it completely misrepresents the range of activities homeschooling children are exposed to by their parents. Lines (2000) elaborates most homeschooling children spend time at libraries, museums, factories, nursing homes, churches, taking classes at community colleges, a parks department or elsewhere. Homeschooled children are exposed to an array of activities that enhance the quality of their education. “Homeschooling children learn through reading, through conversation, through play, through outside classes, through volunteer work and apprenticeships” (Holt, 2004, p. 3). In addition, homeschooling families have numerous options and rich curriculums that are readily accessible to them for homeschooling purposes (Pearson, 2002). The curriculum options for homeschoolers are numerous.

However, if the curriculum becomes too advanced and difficult to teach, parents can reach out to outside resources such as tutors or other homeschooling parents. Neal (2006) states that, “Homeschool families contract with experts to teach their children

more advanced subjects, sometimes pooling resources to create small classrooms not too different from a traditional school” (p. 55). Normally, parents plan and implement the learning program, although sometimes they find a tutor or have older homeschooled children organize their own independent study. The program may be structured or unstructured; it may be affiliated with a public or private school; and it often involves shared lessons with other homeschooling families (Lines, 2000). Additionally, resourceful parents can provide a well-rounded curriculum and curricular ‘extras’ by taking advantage of community resources, such as art, music, gymnastics, computer instruction, sports activities as well as foreign language. Lips and Feinburg’s study (2008) states that parents can also find and purchase curriculum materials through online and other networks.

Apple (2007) notes that technology is playing a huge role in the homeschooling world and opened entirely new venues for home school education. Traditional home school education was tethered by books, instructions, and sometimes to correspondence work. However, technology has made most of the information easily accessible to parents. With satellite instruction, DVDs, and other media technologies, there is more potential for ensuring that children achieve learning objectives while being homeschooled. The internet, in particular, has become an important aid for homeschooling parents and children. Livni (2006) writes that “Many Muslim moms have turned to the internet for help in deciding exactly how to go about teaching their children. They chat online, exchanging curriculum and activity ideas, as well as their fears and hopes about the responsibility they have taken on. (p. 2) Hundreds of web sites, blogs and

books are devoted to supporting parents who homeschool. In some cases, parents can access free or low-cost instructional products to teach their children (Lips & Feinburg, 2008). With the advent of personal computers and technology, homeschooling in rural areas is less dependent upon community resources. There are a variety of methods such as educational software, CD formats, and electronic sources (Pearson, 2002). Further, Lines (2000) mentions that homeschooling associations provide advice and information, run conferences on legal, pedagogical, philosophical issues and review educational materials at exhibition booths. There are also magazines and newsletters available. As noted above, parents have a large number of technological resources available to them for homeschooling purposes. Parents may also obtain advice, texts, services, and curricula from private and public schools or other institutions (Lines, 2000). After researching the numerous available homeschooling resources, parents can simply filter out what is an important contribution to their method of homeschooling. It is no longer a question of how will homeschoolers find necessary curricula for home study, rather, how to differentiate and select from the incredible amount that is available in electronic, print and non-print formats (Pearson, 2002).

One problem, among many, with public schools is that when children do not read well or are not caught up with their peers, they are labeled. “It is noteworthy that many children who are labeled learning disabled in school turn out not to be disabled once they’ve been homeschooled for a while” (“Questions and Answers,” 2004, p. 5). The article presents an example that a child who is not yet reading at age seven would be labeled LD, but in homeschooled setting, such children learn to read when they are ready

and become fluent readers within a short time. Therefore, the curriculum is tailored to the learning style of the child. Similarly, the mother of Daniel, a homeschooled student, shares her experience:

Daniel was always homeschooled and was never tested for IQ, learning disabilities, or giftedness. If he had been, professionals probably would have labeled him with an attention deficit disorder. We didn't even make him sit down; even until high school, he would pace the floor while reciting spelling words, math facts, scripture, or anything that didn't require sitting at a desk. When working at a desk was necessary, we made him sit down, but we put the activities in time frames that worked. Starting at age 12, Daniel scored in high percentile on annual standardized academic achievement tests. He started college courses at home at age 16, and two year later went to Patrick Henry College in Purcellville, Virginia, for a degree in government. He has done well academically, and with a partner, he will represent their college at a national forensics competition (Ray, 2002, p. 53).

By homeschooling, parents are urged to respond to the differences among learners. Thus, children are given a chance to grow individually. Customization may not always be necessary but there are definitely more options for customization in a homeschool environment as opposed to public school.

Ray (2002) states that one of the advantages of homeschooling is that you do not have to operate precisely as a school does or make your child follow the same timetable. "Differentiating instruction to meet the individual needs of student, family, and



community is the ideal kind of education” (Ray, 2002, p. 50). Even when public schools focus heavily on differentiated instruction to meet all students’ learning needs, it seems impossible that the schools can accomplish what homeschooling parents can achieve on a one to one (1:1) learning ratio. Parents want curriculum to challenge their children, not hold them back and cause disillusion. Homeschooling allows a student’s curriculum to be individualized which is one way to meet all of their educational needs.

Being able to customize the child’s curriculum helps improve the academic life of a child. Parents also believe home education can provide a curriculum that is geared to the interest needs of individual child, rather than the generic curriculum mandated by schools (Monfils, 1991). Dardick (1990) quotes her daughter’s feeling about home school curriculum: “It gave me the opportunity to experience education in a way unavailable in the public school classroom...if something interested me I could study it as long as I wanted-at my own direction, not at someone else’s” (p. 88). Curriculum tailored to the interests of a child can be flexible and can involve more real-world experience.

Opponents of homeschooling may say that parents control what they teach to their children. Some people may see that as a bad thing, while to other it may be good. However, the curriculum of public schools is also controlled, not by parents, but by the government. Muhammad (2009) articulates by saying that curriculum is developed by a central body, usually a state department of education, and teachers are expected to teach students according to predefined learning standards. He further states that some people are convinced that the standardized curriculum is detrimental to students (Muhammad, 2009).

Holt (1981) argues that “What children need is not new and better curricula but access to more and more of the real world; plenty of time and space to think over their experiences, and to use fantasy and play to make meaning out of them” (p. 168). He elaborates that children need advice, guidebooks and roadmaps to make it easier for them to get to where they want to go (not where we think they ought to go), and to find out what they want to find out. He continues by saying, we need to give them more freedom [educationally] and make the world more accessible to them. Similarly, Hart (1983) states that the mind is genetically designed to learn most effectively from real life experiences involved in the natural world. He believes that schools inhibit children’s ability to learn because they oversimplify and restrict the natural complexity of the world, thereby inhibiting the natural workings of the mind. Therefore, one can conclude that flexibility and freedom in the curriculum can provide natural and real life learning experiences.

### **Different Methods to Homeschool**

Besides the curriculum, new homeschooling families often become overwhelmed with how many methods there are to choose from when beginning to homeschool their children. As homeschooling has become more popular, many different methods and philosophies are developed, tailoring to homeschoolers. Here are the most common methods listed with descriptions of each. Parents will have to choose a method that best fits their child’s needs. The method may also change as the child moves on to upper grades. Some parents combine different methods while others select suggestion and ideas that fit their child and the family best, eventually ending up with their own method.

*The Classical approach:*

This approach uses a rigorous style which views education in three phases of childhood development called the Trivium (Ransom, 2001). The first stage, called grammar, ranges from birth to elementary school. In this stage, the children are taught through listening, reading, writing, and observing. They have ability to memorize many facts; therefore, children are given only the basic concrete information based on facts. (Ransom, 2001). Classical approach often includes a heavy focus on memorization during the early years. They also learn basic reading, writing, and arithmetic. This stage focuses on building a solid foundation of factual information.

The second stage is called logic or the science of reasoning, which occurs during the middle school years. It emphasizes on compositions and collections. The children are now able to take the facts that were given in the grammar stage and ask ‘Why?’ Furthermore, it focuses on analysis and discusses the relationship between rules and facts. The third stage, referred to as rhetoric stage, covers the high school years. In this phase, the students are able to formulate and articulate their own opinion, using the connections of facts (Homeschooling approaches, 2011). The children will take the knowledge that they have learned and can effectively communicate it to others through spoken and written word. The goal of this approach is to create individuals with independent thinking.

This method is good for those who:

- Have a child who is academically oriented.

- Like structure.
- Evaluate the child's learning based on academic standards.
- Believe developing good study skills at an early stage in the child's life.

*The Waldorf Approach:*

This method is based on the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner and stresses the importance of educating the whole child, the child's body, mind and spirit (Homeschooling approaches, 2011). Ransom (2001) says that the textbooks are not used in this method, instead the non-fiction book, well-written children's stories and other creative literature is used. Early education is focused on activities and experiences rather than head learning. (Hata, 2008) Students are not told the main concepts in this method, rather guided to self-discover them which stimulate their higher thinking-skills and creativity. "The Waldorf method also discourages the use of television and computers because they believe computers are bad for the child's health and creativity"

*The Charlotte Mason Approach:*

This method was developed by a homeschooled student, who wanted all children to develop a love of learning. Griffith (1999) states that "Charlotte Matson was a nineteenth-century educator who advocated informal learning during the child's early years" (p. 53). Charlotte Mason emphasized the importance of good habits and laying a solid foundation of good moral values (Hata, 2008). In this method, the child learns best from real-life situations. It uses "living books," books of high quality that often includes

stories of real-life characters and books written with a passion by a person instead of dry and lifeless textbooks (Homeschooling approaches, 2011). The purpose of living books was to make the subject become alive by visiting art museum, take nature walks and learn geography and history through that. (Homeschooling approaches, 2011). Lessons are kept short in this method and living and real-life experience is encouraged.

This method is good for those people:

- Whose children are failing in a traditional school.
- Create a learning environment that encourages the children to explore the world around them.
- Who do not like a rigid schedule.
- Who do not mind less formal education and more exploration of nature.

*Eclectic Approach:*

People using this method usually mix and match their methods to suite the family's and the child's needs (Ransom, 2001). Griffith (1999) further states that some subjects are structured while others are left for the children to pick up as they become interested in them. She quotes, "The structured subjects, typically math and writing, are usually those that parents are unwilling to risk having their children learn more informally, either because important concepts could be missed or because the parents feel the topic requires an ordered, sequential approach" (Griffith, 1999, p. 58). Education information comes from diverse materials. Hata (2008) states that, "Most Eclectic homeschooling curriculums are improvised. This means that the basic curriculum is

ready-made. The parents then make changes in the curriculum to accommodate the individual needs and interests of their children" (p.1). In this method, parents feel that the subjects that are most important are covered thoroughly (Homeschooling approaches, 2011). This method is different from others in a ways that parents take what they want and like from as many different sources as they can. It does not follow one or two methods, like others.

This method is for you if you:

- Don't mind spending time to shop for materials that will meet the needs of the child.
- Have a child who likes flexibility in her learning.
- Can assure yourself that material you believe to be important is covered thoroughly.

*Unit Studies:*

According to Ransom (2001) a Unit Study can be as simple as child reading something very interesting, discussing it with the family, and being motivated and inspired to do a project that relates to what one has read. An example could be that a child saw something on TV and wants to learn more about it, a unit study can be created on that particular thing. Similarly, unit studies use the child's interest and then ties that interest into subject areas like math, reading, spelling, science, art, and history" (Homeschooling approaches, 2011). Ransom uses a nice and simple example of a unit study on dog:

- Find three books on dogs: a nonfiction book on the breeds of dogs; a nonfiction book on dog care and training; and a collection of dog stories.
- Collect pictures of dogs and articles about dogs found in magazines.
- Learn to spell the names of several breeds of dogs. Keep lists of your spelling words on notebook paper.
- Make word cards of new vocabulary and meanings encountered while reading.
- Make a graph or chart about dogs.
- Write a short essay about how dogs have been important to humans throughout history.
- Write a short essay about types of dogs typically related to geographic regions of the world.
- Combine your graph, vocabulary words, spelling lists, essays, pictures, and collected articles into a notebook. Include a list with the names of the books that were read. Also include name and the date when the information was compiled.

Basically, the whole idea of unit studies is to use some kind of topic that is interested to the child as a starting point, then going deeper into it. Griffith (1999) states, “Unit studies can be more or less formal, more or less lengthy, and more or less comprehensive” (p. 56-57).

Ransom (2001) further explains the unit studies approach by advising parents that they should not be fearful of learning gaps. Everyone experiences learning gaps which can be caused by numerous things: lack of interest in presented material, absence from school or for no reason. However, teaching the children good research skills, how to learn and how to think is much more important than trying to cover every tiny bit of information that someone else has laid out as important (Ransom, 2001). Studies demonstrate that a child retains up to 50% more using this technique compared with traditional public school methods (Joss, 2011).

The advantage of this method could be that it recognizes the fact that children learn best when they are interested in something and retain more information. The disadvantage is that sometimes parents can be overzealous and make a unit study out of everything; scaring the child off from talking about a new interest they might have (Homeschooling approaches, 2011). Ransom (2001) mentions another disadvantage which is that it may seem difficult to determine a grade for the work the child does while pursuing a unit study. However, he tells the parents, it is not difficult to decide whether learning is happening or not.

This method is good for:

- Families who have children of different ages. All children can work on the same topic but to what extent they can learn the topic may vary.
- Those who like to promote independent learning and thinking in their children.
- Those who tailor the curriculum to the child's learning interests.



- Those who like flexibility in the learning process. For example, the child can spend one day on a topic, a few weeks, or a month. It depends on how fast the child learns and how deeply interested he or she is in the topic.

*Unschooling:*

This is the most unstructured method of all the homeschooling methods. It was developed by John Holt in which children lead the learning process. Holt believed that children learn best when they are free to learn at their own pace, in their unique style, and based on their interest (Hata, 2008). Similarly, Ransom (2001) further articulates that children use the tools of reading, writing, and arithmetic to learn more advanced concepts on their own. The parents only lead and help the children learn how to learn. Furthermore, they serve as the aid in exploring the interests of the children. Unschooling is learning through everyday life and learning through experiences. Through unschooling, children learn and retain much more when allowed to follow interests. Parents believe that the knowledge will be better received because the children initiate the learning on their own. Ransom (2001) mentions that “Sometime parents begin homeschooling in a more structured mode and their children’s interests, styles, and needs or the circumstances of life lead them to unschooling as a more practical approach.”

John Holt describes unschooling in which learning is not separated from living, and children learn mainly by following their own interest (Homeschooling approaches, 2011). He argued, “Children learn best not by being taught but by being a part of the world, free to explore what most interests them, by having their questions answered as

they ask them, and by being treated with respect rather than condescension” (Griffith, 1999, p. 53).

Unschooling children do things that interest them, rather than a schedule with textbooks and formal lessons (Griffith, 1999). Hata (2008) explains that there is no set curriculum, materials or schedules. Besides the numerous advantages, the disadvantage for this approach could be that because unschoolers do not follow the typical school schedule, they may not perform too well on grade-level assessments (Homeschooling approaches, 2011).

This method works for those who:

- Do not mind homeschooling or being homeschooled in an unstructured way.
- Like teaching their children through everyday life experiences.
- Like a lot of flexibility in their schedule
- Do not like to follow a particular curriculum; rather choose something good and relevant from all different methods.

In summary, there are many other methods of which only a few are covered above. The most important thing to do when choosing a method is to use the child’s desire for knowledge to further his or her education. Whatever method one decides to choose, they can individualize it to suit their family and child’s situation and needs. Also, the methods can change along the way to accommodate a growing child. A method that works for one child may not necessarily work for the other child. Nevertheless, many parents like to incorporate what they think is necessary in the methods. For example,

some parents may like to make the methods more diverse and multicultural while other parents may integrate religious teachings in the curriculum.

### **Multicultural Education & Homeschooling**

The number of minorities is increasing rapidly in the United States. Thereby, it is becoming extremely important to embrace the concept of multicultural education in America. Regardless of whether one attended a public school, a private school, or even schooled at home, one needs to learn about the contributions that other cultures and ethnicities made towards the United States.

Multicultural education is at least three entities: an idea or concept, an educational reform movement, and a process. Multicultural education is an idea when it incorporates that all students, regardless of their gender, social class, ethnic, racial or cultural characteristics should have an equal opportunity in society and education (Banks, 2004). “Multicultural education tries to create equal educational opportunities for all students by ensuring that the total school environment reflects the diversity of groups in classrooms, schools, and the society as a whole” (Banks, 1994, p. 4).

Multicultural education becomes an educational process when it cultivates the education of children when implemented in a curriculum while recognizing the diversity of students. The integration of multicultural education into the curriculum and instructional process is advocated to encourage students to learn the basics of math, science and literature in a way that appropriately highlights voices of different peoples.

Development of these abilities, along with the increased appreciation for differences is essential to living in the twenty-first century (Grant, 1994). It also helps students from diverse cultural, social-class, racial and ethnic backgrounds to gain equal opportunity in education.

Banks (1995) articulates that, multicultural knowledge includes key concepts in multicultural education such as culture, immigration, racism, sexism, cultural assimilation, structural assimilation, ethnic groups, stereotypes, prejudice and institutional racism (Banks, 1991, 1994, 1995). Multicultural education recognizes the right of other cultures to exist, while also acknowledging their contribution to society. Students need to be exposed to other cultures in order to appreciate a worldview different from theirs or their families.

Moore (2009) states that for most of American history, public schools – via school board policies, segregation, community pressures, textbooks, curriculum and instructional activities – have ignored, distorted, downplayed or lied about the treatment of many minority and immigrant populations in America. If students are not being taught the real history of America through the lens of diverse groups, then they cannot be expected to learn about the contribution of other cultures. Furthermore, Ladson-Billings indicate that “...textbook images and representations exclude, distort, and marginalize women, people of color and people from lower socioeconomic echelons” (1994, p. 24).

Banks (1994) describes the history of the Montgomery (Alabama) bus boycott, which began on December 5, 1955. In this example, multicultural education is viewed as

a movement. Viewing this event from different perspectives shows how historians construct interpretations, how central figures can be omitted from historical records, and how history can be rewritten (Banks, 1994). Textbooks interpretations of the Montgomery bus boycott generally conclude that when a bus driver asked Rosa Parks to give up her seat to a Caucasian person, she refused because she was tired from working hard all day. On the contrary, Jo Ann Gibson Robinson, who was an English Professor at Alabama State College and the president of the Women's political Council, gives a different view of Rosa Park's situation (Garrow 1987, Banks 1994). Robinson said, after Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat, Parks gives different reason for this compared to the one commonly reported:

People always say that I didn't give up my seat because I was tired, but that isn't true. I was not tired physically, or no more tired than I usually was at the end of a working day. I was not old, although some people have an image of me being old then. I was 42. No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in. The driver of the bus saw me still sitting there, and he asked was I going to stand up. I said, "No." He said, "Well, I'm going to have you arrested." Then I said, "You may do that." These were the only words we said to each other (Banks, 1994, p. 7).

Robinson's and Park's account of the Montgomery bus boycott reveals that important information is either omitted or misrepresented by historians. As Robert Merton (1972) observed, "insiders" and "outsiders" often have different perspectives on the same events, and both perspectives are needed to give the total picture of social and

historical reality (Banks, 1994). Because a lot of the information is eliminated from the history textbooks, parents may become dissatisfied with the curriculum of public schools. When events are studied from many points of view, the results can be strikingly different and more accurate.

Rosa Park's event is one of several; there are many more events in the history which are distorted, misleading students to believe in something other than the truth. "If realistic images of ethnic and racial groups are included in teaching materials in a consistent, natural, and integrated fashion," Banks (1993) concludes, all children "can be helped to develop more positive racial attitudes." (as cited in Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 24). If the images of the people of diverse groups are portrayed incorrectly and unrealistically in the textbooks, then students are likely to maintain and develop the distorted images of people.

Another example can be of Columbus written in Howard Zinn's book, *A People's History of the United States* (2003), in which he mentions, "The treatment of heroes (Columbus) and their victims (the Arawaks) – quiet acceptance of conquest and murder in the name of progress – is only one aspect of a certain approach to history, in which the past is told from the point of view of governments, conquerors, diplomats and leaders (p. 9)." Zinn expresses that his point of view in telling the history of the United States is different; that memory of states must not be accepted as our own. He further expresses that he prefers to tell the story of the discovery of America from the viewpoint of Arawaks, of the Constitution from the standpoint of the slaves, of Andrew Jackson as

seen by the New York Irish, of the Mexican war as seen by the deserting soldiers of Scott's army, and so on.

Henry Kissinger in his first book, *A World Restored*, wrote, "History is the memory of states." In his book, he proceeded to tell the history of nineteenth century Europe from the viewpoint of the leaders of Austria and England, ignoring the millions who suffered from those statesmen's policies. From his standpoint, the "peace" that Europe had before the French Revolution was "restored" by the diplomacy of a few national leaders. But for factory workers in England, farmers in France, colored people in Asia and Africa, women and children everywhere except in the upper classes, it was a world of conquest, violence, hunger, exploitation, a world not restored but disintegrated (Zinn, 2003, p. 9-10). Similarly, the accomplishments of Columbus are taught in the history books but not the genocide committed by him.

"When we read the history books given to children in the United States, it all starts with heroic adventure, there is no bloodshed" (Zinn, 2003, p. 7). Moreover, Zinn states, "To emphasize the heroism of Columbus and his successors as navigators and discoverers, and to deemphasize their genocide, is not a technical necessity but an ideological choice. It serves, unwittingly, to justify what was done" (p. 9)

This is why there is a need for a multicultural education and multicultural curriculum so the history can be understood from the views of many, giving it more accuracy. "One of the multicultural education's important goals is to help students acquire the knowledge and commitment needed to think, decide, and take personal, social, and civic action" (Banks, 1994, p. 8). A multicultural education curriculum or

literature can help one understand themselves, one's culture, and the culture of others.

Furthermore, it helps one become more tolerant towards different groups. When students start to learn about heroes from diverse groups, it will help them to take an active role in their personal lives as well as society at large.

“Multicultural theory, however, reveals that equity may not always mean treating different groups the same” (Gay, 1993). “It may sometimes be necessary to treat groups differently in order to create equal-status situations for marginalized students” (Banks, 1995, p. 156). This means for teachers to be able to recognize and respond to multiple student characteristics including gender, race and social class (Banks, 1995). For example, research summarized by Shade (1982) indicates that African-American and Latino students often prefer a learning environment that is more relative, contextual, and personalized than that preferred by many middle-class, Caucasian students (Banks, 1995). Every child learns differently and has his or her own style of learning. It may be difficult for some teachers to accommodate the different learning styles of all students. Therefore, some parents may choose to educate their own child in order to provide them with an equal opportunity and accommodate their learning style. They feel that they are more qualified to teach their own children.

Ladson-Billings (1994) argues that many teachers celebrate holidays and heroes from different ethnic groups. However, this is not something to be recognized and celebrated for one day only. She continues, multicultural education is not a separate, isolated, once-a-year activity. Instead, a range of cultural perspectives should be included in the curriculum. She gives an example of the African slave trade which students study



in their intermediate classes, and articulates that it should not be solely taught from the perspective of the European traders. Rather, a range of other primary documents should be taught to them which can include the slave narrative called *The Interesting Life of Olaudah Equiano* (which compares slavery in Africa with slavery in the Americas). Furthermore, the students can be introduced about the idea of enslaved people in Africa, Americas, and medieval Europe and do a comparison (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Multicultural education is important to integrate because America is becoming more diverse day by day; therefore, it is imperative for Americans to embrace the concept of multicultural education and the role it plays in American education. In order to portray the correct image of diverse groups, students need to be taught from a multicultural perspective. As we become more globally connected, some people may prefer to move away from a curriculum that is mainly Eurocentric in nature. They desire diversity and cultural integration into the curriculum while recognizing heroes from various ethnic backgrounds. Furthermore, parents seek a curriculum that includes culture and history of underrepresented groups in the American experience.

Similarly, for most Americans, Islam remains a misunderstood religion, and Muslims are often stereotyped as religious fanatics, terrorists and as mysterious “Others” that represents a direct threat to Western civilization (Findley, 2001). The reason is because the vast majority of Americans receive their information on Islam from the popular media, which often misrepresents Islamic beliefs and practices and perpetuates myths, distortions and misconceptions (Feldman, 2003 & Findley, 2001). A growing proportion of textbooks do include diversity, but their images and representations tend to

be superficial and incorrect (Swartz 1992). If the images of diverse groups are missing or are stated incorrectly in the textbooks of schools, then students are likely to develop and maintain negative and misleading stereotypes about the ethnic groups.

Many Americans feel threatened by Islam and are suspicious of American Muslims, which is why there is a need to understand the Muslims and their great contributions. It is important for students to possess a basic knowledge of the many significant contributions of Islamic civilizations to the world; this knowledge can serve as a foundation for understanding the cyclical nature of human history, the interdependence among human civilizations and the vital process of cultural diffusion as a major agent in history (Moore, 2009). Various interest groups—characterized by ideological differences and opposing goals—attempt to influence the teaching of Islam by controlling the curriculum and the treatment of Muslims in public schools (Haddad, 1999). Many educators assume “that religion is irrelevant to virtually everything that is taken to be true and important” (Nord, 1995, p.1), and the vast majority of students are exposed to only secular ways of viewing history and reality (Nord & Haynes, 1998). Therefore, the scarcity of knowledge and understanding about Islam is symptomatic of a greater problem: the failure of American educational institutions to take religion seriously as a viable worldview to understand human existence (Nord, 1995).

Generally, the teaching of Islam in the United States has been characterized by numerous stereotypes, distortions, omissions, textbook inaccuracies, and within the boundaries of Western Civilization’s politically motivated narrative (Brockopp, 2003;

Douglass & Dunn, 2003; Esposito, 1998; Findley, 2001; Hasan, 2000; Hermansen, 2003; Kassam, 2003; Reinhart, 2003; & Wheeler, 2003). The stereotypes, such as, all Muslims are terrorists, most Muslims are rich Arabs, all Muslim men have harems, all Muslims are virulently anti-American and anti-Semitic have resulted in Muslims being victims of discrimination in the United States (Bennett, 2007). Many Americans are greatly uninformed about Islam and often conflate Islam—a complex religion characterized by specific theologies, laws, and practices—with terrorism and political regimes that unjustly conscript Islam to justify their oppressive policies and practices (Brockopp, 2003; Douglass & Dunn, 2003; Findley, 2001; Haddad, 1999; Hasan, 2000; Kassam, 2003; & Reinhart, 2003.).

To learn about Islam, one needs to understand the basics of the religion. Islam prescribes five essential duties for all. They are central to the Islamic teachings and way of life, known as the five pillars of Islam (Sarwari, 2006). They are as follows:

- 1) Shahadah (declaration of faith)

The verbal declaration and commitment is that there is only one God and that Muhammad (pbuh = peace be upon him) is considered to be the creed of Islam (Maududi, 1993). This means that Muslims surrender themselves completely to the will of their Creator and put their trust in God (Masri, 1994).

It is understood that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was the recipient of Allah's Divine message for humanity, and the one who explained, interpreted and lived the teachings of the Quran, the book of Allah's revelation to him

(Deedat, 1993). Therefore, a Muslim must obey and follow the teachings of the Prophet in order to earn the ultimate blessings of Allah (God).

Muslims believe that Muhammad (pbuh) was the last prophet and the messenger for all mankind.

## 2) Salah (five compulsory daily prayers)

Islam requires Muslims to pray five times daily at specific times. The five obligatory prayers and specific times are: Fajr (dawn), Dhuhr (noon), Asr (afternoon), Maghrib (sunset), and Isha (late night). While these remain the obligatory prayers, there are many optional prayers the Muslims may perform (Sarwar, 2006).

In Islam, prayer is a direct link between the worshipper and God. There are no intermediaries between God and the worshipper. A Muslim may pray almost anywhere, such as in offices, houses, universities, or fields (Ibrahim, 1997). However, it is strongly recommended for Muslims to pray in congregation in mosques (Raof, 1985).

## 3) Zakah (welfare contribution)

An annual payment of a Muslim's savings, at a rate of two-and-a-half percent, which is distributed among the poor or other rightful beneficiaries in the society, is called Zakah (Almsgiving) as explained by Irfan Haq in his book, *Economic Doctrines of Islam* (1996). The original meaning of the word zakah is 'purification' and 'growth.' This meaning lends itself to clarify that giving a part of your saved wealth is a way to purify oneself. Giving zakah means

‘giving a specified percentage on certain properties to certain classes of needy people. “A person may also give as much as he or she pleases as voluntary alms or charity” (Ibrahim, 1997, p. 66).

4) Sawm (fasting during Ramadan)

Every year in the month of Ramadan (the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar), Muslims fast from dawn until sundown, abstaining from eating, drinking, smoking, and intimate relations (Sarwar, 2006). However, Muslims can still enjoy all of the above during the night time from sunset to dawn. Ibrahim (1997) states that, “Although the fast is beneficial to health, it is regarded principally as a method of spiritual self-purification. By cutting oneself off from worldly comforts, even for a short time, a fasting person gains true sympathy with those who go hungry, as well as growth in his or her spiritual life” (p. 67). Therefore, a person is able to feel the pangs of hunger and suffering experienced by the less fortunate.

5) Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah)

“The annual pilgrimage (Hajj) to Makkah is an obligation once in a lifetime for those who are physically and financially able to perform it” (Ibrahim, 1997, p. 67). Each year, two million or more people go from every corner of the world, to perform Hajj. It occurs in the twelfth month of the Islamic calendar.

The purpose of the Hajj is to remember the trials and tribulations experienced by the Prophet Abraham, his wife Hagar, and his eldest son, Prophet Ishmael.

There are particular rules and regulations on dress codes during the time of hajj, which strip away many distinctions of class and culture so that all people stand equal before God (Ibrahim, 1997). The benefits of hajj are spiritual, social, economic, cultural, and political (Haneef, 1982; Sarwar, 2006).

The five pillars, mentioned above, are the main pillars of Islam. These are the minimum requirement and for all Muslims and for anyone who wishes to become a Muslim. Besides the minimum, a devout Muslim also tries the practice additional teachings of Islam. These include guidelines for a social, educational and political system. When students are able to view the world from the perspective of different groups, they gain insights into the lives of others and their views of the world are broadened. Multicultural education can lead to new experiences and new choices that can have a positive impact on our societies. Further, we will be able to gain more knowledge about ourselves and other human beings.

### **Parental Qualifications to Homeschool**

Many policy makers, school administrators, educators and parents wonder whether ordinary parents, who are not government certified teachers, are capable of teaching their children from ages five and up (Ray, 2004). Similarly, Michael Smith, the president of Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) expresses, “From the beginning of the re-emergence of homeschooling in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the strongest criticism of homeschooling was that untrained, non-credentialed parents could not provide the quality of instruction needed to match the education provided in public and private schools” (Smith, 2008, p. 1). To address this criticism, Smith further states

that, “The Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) commissioned several studies to compare how homeschoolers score on standardized achievement tests compared to their public and private school counterparts” (Smith, 2008, p. 1). The result of these tests demonstrated that on average, homeschooled students regularly outperformed their peers. Homeschooling grew because of the significant impact of these results. State legislators became convinced that homeschooling parents could provide a high level of education and they passed laws that recognized the right to homeschool. In addition, many parents who were contemplating homeschooling were encouraged to take this step to educate their children at home (Smith, 2008). Many homeschooling parents may not have college degrees, but are well-informed, well-rounded and self-educated individuals who are confident in their ability to facilitate their children's education.

Research shows that the parents’ teacher-certification has little to no relationship with their children’s academic achievement (Ray, 2004). James Bryant Conant, a retired Harvard University president, studied teacher evaluation and the issue of certification over a two year period. His book, *The Education of America*, questions whether state certification policies “provide well-trained and competent teachers for the public schools” (p. 304). Conant’s study asserts the following:

...None of the present methods of teacher certification assures the public of competent and adequately prepared teachers....In view of the great diversity of opinions and practices to be found in the leading institution, I conclude neither a state authority nor a voluntary accrediting agency is in a position to specify the

amount of time to be devoted to either academics or educational courses (Moore & Moore, 1988, pp. 304 - 305).

Holt further states that, one indication is that our most selective, demanding and successful private schools have among their teachers hardly any, if any at all, who went to teacher training schools and obtained their degrees in education (Holt, 1981).

Therefore, not all teachers who teach in schools, colleges and universities are trained teachers. Yet, the UCLA Professor Donald Erickson, considered an authority on teacher certification, asserts that studies have shown student achievement tends to be higher in private schools rather than public schools (Moore & Moore, 1988). It is, therefore, amazing that students are performing so well in private schools while being taught by “untrained” teachers.

Wade (1986) cites that there is no research indicating that students acquire superior education from certified teachers as compared to uncertified teachers. In relation to this, Amy, a certified teacher who joins the homeschooling world, shares her experience:

In 2006, I took the leap from public school teacher to home-school mom for my kindergarten daughter. I did what most home-school mothers do and joined a home-school group for support. To be honest, I thought I would be lending most of the support. I had the elementary education degree and many successful years of teaching under my belt. They should be so lucky to have me in the group. Ego check! They didn't need my advice on materials. There is a whole world of home-school materials that is every bit as good as public school curriculum. At first I



found my refuge in the small overlap of curriculums used both by home-schoolers and the public school systems. I was overwhelmed by all the information, materials, activities and co-ops that these families were using. As I made my way into this world, I was amazed at all the new options and ideas I had never seen or heard of as a public school teacher. These parents had a right to snub me and my ego. They may not have had an elementary education degree or even stepped a foot in a classroom, but these parents had nothing to learn from me, and I had much to learn from them. Four years later, when I'm in home-school circles I don't even mention I was once a teacher in the public schools. It means nothing in the home-school world, and from what I have witnessed, it shouldn't.

My home-school teaching (which now includes my son as well as my daughter) has taken place in the states of Arizona and Washington, where I have met hundreds of home-school families. I can't recall a single family from either of these states that is doing a disservice to their children or their state (Travis, 2010, p. 1).

This example supports the fact that parents who have a desire to teach their children can do an excellent job without a teaching credential.

Moore and Moore (1984) state that parents' success as teachers is not related to the amount of education they receive, rather to their warmth and responsiveness. Holt (1981) summarizes that parents have to like their children, enjoy their company as well as their discussions and questions. Along with being a parent, they have to treat the children as friends and trust them as people. And the parents must have enough confidence in

themselves, skepticism about experts, and willingness to be different from most people to take on the responsibility for their children's learning (Holt, 1981). He further states, perhaps only a minority of parents have these qualities, and certainly some have more than others (Holt, 1981). However, it is possible for parents who are not professionally trained or credentialed to have a difficult time adjusting to homeschooling their children. It may often require a change of direction in order to realize the child's true potential in particular subjects. Taylor (1997) explains that many homeschooling parents emulate the institutional classroom practices that they experienced as school children. They stick strictly to a planned curriculum and follow subject periods. Additionally, they use a lot of tests and do not give much thought to integrating disciplines. Nonetheless, homeschool teaching can be very informal which creates natural opportunities for teaching and learning to become more thoughtful, individualized and personal. Van Galen and Pitman (1991) state that, some families strongly believe in allowing the children to set the pace and direction of home learning and seek a very informal setting.

Homeschooling does not have to mean sitting with your children six hours a day and giving them lessons ("Questions and Answers," 2004). Some parents combine part-time work with homeschooling, and some even manage to work full-time and still allow their children to learn at home. In this case, parents may hire tutors and do part-time teaching in the evening. These parents must be truly enthusiastic and motivated to homeschool their children. Thus, homeschooling parents have time for their own pursuits as well. The article further states that "Homeschooling does not mean that the parents are

the only people from whom the child learns. The parents are facilitators, helping their children to seek out information and hook up with people” (p. 4).

### **Father and Mother’s Role**

“Many in the field of education and public policy are convinced that involving parents in their children’s formal education is one of the most beneficial interventions for their academic success” (Olivos, 2006, p. 17). While this is true for homeschooling, it is also true that in most cases, mothers are often more involved in their children’s education compared to fathers. Naturally, questions arise regarding a father’s role in educating a child. In traditional families, mothers stay at home with children while fathers go work outside the home. Ray states that in homeschooling: “Both parents are actively involved in home-based education, with the mother/homemaker usually as the main academic teacher. Fathers do some of the formal academic teaching of the children and are engaged in many other ways in their lives” (Ray, 2007, p. 1). This can also be true for public or private schools. For example, even in public schools, mothers are predominately involved in helping their children with homework and ensure that their children are keeping up with good grades. In homeschooling, where the father and mother are both parents and educators, it is more imperative for the father to take interest in his child’s education. For example, the father can also assign himself certain days where he ensures that the work is done and necessary material is learned and covered. He can ask the children about their progress, check their knowledge and ask questions about what they have learned. This way, children will feel that their work is important to their dad, thus they will sense that their dad is part of their life.

Just as a homeschooling mom is more than just "mom," the "dad" must always be more than a working provider (Hoerrner, 2011, p. 1) Homeschooling should not be left solely to the wife, rather it is a commitment for both parents when raising and teaching their children. "More involvement on the part of fathers is essential for both the well-being of homeschooling families and the entire homeschool movement," says Wyatt, a father whose children are homeschooled (1997, p. 1). Wyatt also provides suggestions on how to get involved with their children's education. He says to talk with your children over dinner, ask about the things they have learned and accomplished. Furthermore, he says develop family habits which can include reading books with them, and working on projects together. Hoerrner (2011) states that "Reading with children, even for as little as 15 minutes a night, provides a strong impact on children's ability to read and comprehend" (p. 1). Reading is something that fathers can do with their children, allotting more time and involvement with their children.

Susan Wise Bauer, co-author of *"The Well-Trained Mind: A Guide to Classical Education at Home,"* said fathers participate in different ways depending on their reasons for homeschooling. Conservative Christian families tend to view the father as the head of the household, so those fathers may serve as homeschool "principals," setting curricula or checking homework, Bauer said. In other families dissatisfied with the quality of public or private schools, fathers may have less traditional jobs that allow them to work from home and share teaching duties, she said (Wise & Bauer, 1981). Regardless of the reason for homeschooling, fathers should contribute to their children's education in hopes that their children will obtain a more wholesome educational experience. Research shows that

very young children who have experienced high father involvement show an increase in curiosity and in problem solving capacity (Riley & Shalala, 2000). A father's support enhances the overall quality of the educational experience of a child.

Fathers can serve many roles in the lives of their children. If fathers have an active religious or spiritual life, they can serve as role models in that area, just as mothers can (Wyatt, 1997). "Children need to see their parents practice what they preach. Parents should set the example by reading good books, discussing interesting ideas, and involving themselves in worthwhile activities. Children need to constantly witness their parents' love of learning" (Wyatt, 1997, p. 2). This may seem challenging or demanding for some fathers, however, it may just be a matter of forming daily habits. Once the habits are established, it may become easier to get actively involve with the children.

Wyatt (1997) states that many fathers will complain that they can't find time for their children; however the proactive fathers make time for their children. "'Making time" requires the will to form new habits, habits that can make a difference for the good in the lives of each member of the homeschooling family (Wyatt, 1997, p. 2)

Musaddique Thange, a father using the Kinza Academy program, a Muslim home-school organization, shares his perspective on the role of fathers in homeschooling. He says, in an age when Muslim women are increasingly pursuing their own careers, the decision to homeschool often entails enormous sacrifice on part of the mothers, nevertheless, this needs to be appreciated by fathers and also by the children (Thange, 2009). A mother needs to know that her effort and determination is appreciated and valued. Although fathers have taken on the financial responsibility, Thange continues

that, “Being the family’s earning member does not entitle the father to disengage from the homeschooling project” (Thange, 2009, p. 1). The fathers can have more insight into the children and what works and what does not for their education. Both parents should be involved and committed to making final decisions.

### **Conclusion**

The expectation that public schools should effectively serve the needs of every child from diverse backgrounds should be reconsidered. Public Schools do not, cannot, and should not be expected to meet the needs of every child from the community (Romansowki, 2006). Whatever form an education takes, it should maximize the potential of all children and serve their individual needs.

Homeschooling is not the only way for the parents to educate their children, but the ample research on homeschooling indicates that homeschooling offers numerous benefits including academic, social, acceptance and success in college and much more. Therefore, this may be the reason why growing numbers of parents choose to homeschool.

A growing number of families are quickly becoming dissatisfied with the status quo. Fewer and fewer schools are producing truly productive members of society. Standardized testing, as a mechanism of quality control, is becoming common. This is, and will continue to, produce people who are nothing but good test takers. Recently, reports have emerged that some schools are beginning to rate the effectiveness of teachers based on standardized test scores. This method of judging a teacher’s ability to educate is causing some teachers to cheat on standardized tests by erasing incorrect

answers for poorly performing students. This is just one indication of a failing public school system. Some parents, out of necessity, will continue to risk the future their children by sending them to public schools. However, a large group of parents will quickly realize the importance of alternative methods of education for their children. Until society realizes the importance of a well-funded and well organized public school system, we will continue to see an increase in the number of families choosing to homeschool. This will fuel the growth of support organizations for these parents, as well as cause an increase in the number of teachers who are no longer willing to put up with a failing public school system.

Homeschooling is a growing phenomena and will continue to increase. There can be an expected high success rate in colleges and universities, in particular, among those individuals who have been educated outside mainstream institutional schools. In respect to socialization, home-schooled children are at less greater risk as compared to their public-school counterparts. The research indicates that they are involved in numerous social activities that can be predictors of leadership roles with peers and adults. It is clearly seen from the literature review that homeschooling families are not isolationists; rather they are active members of society and they also desire to improve the nation. By homeschooling, parents may help to encourage and inspire a great renewal of American education while educating their children.

## Chapter 3

### METHODOLOGY

This research examines why parents, many of whom are Muslims, homeschool their children and to determine if homeschooling offers a competitive option compared to public or private schooling. Additionally, it explores the effects of home-schooling in the area of academia, social values and moral and religious world views. The purpose of interviewing the mothers, who homeschool their children, was to determine the following:

1. How did parent's k-12 education influence their decision to homeschool the children?
2. What was parent's motivation to homeschool their children?
3. Does multicultural play a role in the education of the children?
4. What were the challenges parents faced as they began to homeschool their children?

The purpose of interviewing the two Muslim organizations was to discover:

1. What role does the organization play in serving the homeschooling parents?
2. What services do they offer to the homeschooling parents?

#### **Research Design**

The research is based on qualitative study. The methods used for gathering data included:

- 1) Review of related literature
- 2) Interview questions for homeschooling Muslim mothers



### 3) Interview questions for homeschooling Muslim organizations

#### **Participants**

Individuals considered for participation in this research were ten mothers of the homeschooled children. The snowball effect was utilized by asking the participant to pass the researcher's information to associates who might also be interested in participating in the research. Furthermore, some of the parents' information was also provided to the researcher to find out if they would be willing to participate in the study. In addition, the two Muslim homeschooling organizations that were interviewed were the only two prominent organizations that existed in California. The researcher was already familiar with both organizations.

#### **Instrumentation**

The instruments used in this research were interview questions as well as an audio recorder. Once the interested party was contacted, the interview times and locations were arranged. The consent form was provided to the participants and required their signature.

#### **Data collection**

The researcher designed the survey. The questions were developed based on the topics discussed in the literature. Thus, the researcher used the knowledge gained from previous research to develop the interview questions.

There were two set of questions designed and collected for each of the two different target groups. The interview questions, which were all open ended, were designed for Muslim mothers/caregivers. There were 26 questions total. Questions focused on following categories: Parent's educational Background, children's educational

background, parental preparation, multicultural curriculum, general questions, challenges in homeschooling, and demographic questions (optional). The researcher personally knew five mothers and more participants were introduced to the research through those five mothers. See appendix A for questionnaire.

The interview questions for the two Muslim organizations consisted of ten open ended questions. The questions were designed to ask the founders/directors how their organizations work and what services they provide to their members; the members are homeschooling parents. See appendix B for questionnaire.

Half of the participants were interviewed in person, either at their house or at a nearby place. First, they were given the consent form to read and sign, following that was the interview. Other half of the interviews took place on the phone due to the difficulty of meeting in person. The researcher emailed them the consent form to sign and also read the consent form to them on the phone. The interview took place shortly after agreeing to the consent form. See Appendix C and D for the consent form.

In order to establish participant confidentiality, the questionnaires did not contain any personal information.

### **Protection of Human Subjects**

The researcher has complied with the procedures and policies of the protection of human subjects as described in the application reviewed by the human subjects committee of California State University, Sacramento. The researcher attained approval from the committee. The approval considered the research procedures to be of “No Risk”

to human subjects. Both questionnaires were accompanied by a consent to participate form.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

When time for data collection came, the research manually counted the number of responses in the demographic questions and response categories for each closed-ended question. The researcher also identified the most important findings as well as the frequency of recurring themes.

### **Summary**

This study interviewed ten homeschooling Muslim mothers to obtain their perceptions of the why and how they homeschool their children. The interview subjects were mothers with experience between 2-16 years in homeschooling their children. Additionally, the study interviewed two homeschooling Muslim organizations to explore what services they provide to the homeschooling families. This research obtained approval from the human subjects committee. Additionally, the study was considered to be a “No Risk.” The study size was total 12. The interviews were completed either in-person or on the phone. Furthermore, each participant signed the consent form. The data was collected and analyzed manually by the researcher.

## Chapter 4

## ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

**Demographics**

When asked the participants, ‘how many children are they teaching at home,’ following were the answers.

**Table 1: Number of Children of the Participants**

<b>Number of children</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>
<b>One child</b>	1
<b>Two children</b>	4
<b>Three children</b>	2
<b>Four children</b>	3

The grades that the children were in as they were homeschooled, ranged from kindergarten to eleventh grade. Some of the students were ahead of their grade level according to their age. For example, a 10-years old student was currently in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Another child of the same mother, 7 year old was currently in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The participants said the reason behind the accelerated rate of homeschooling is that it allows their children to study at their own pace and they get one-on-one attention which leads them to get ahead in their academics. Similarly, when a Muslim Co-op homeschooling organization was interviewed, it was mentioned that two of the graduates from this organization went to public high schools and were placed in 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades. This organization presents an alternative approach to education that is based on the co-op

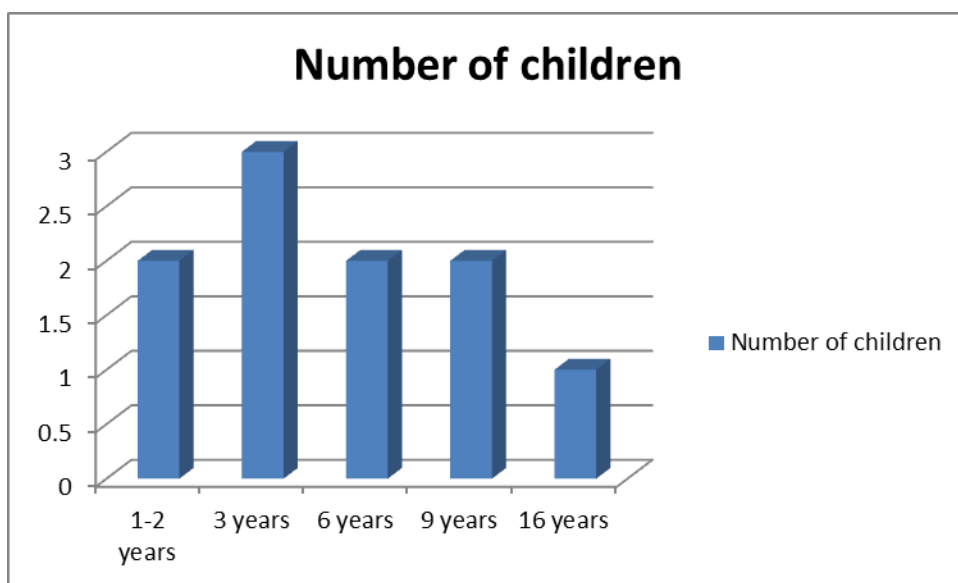
model. Based on this approach, the founders created an environment that they thought positively impacted the learning behavior of their students. This Muslim Co-op homeschooling organization functions more as a facilitator and an agent to ensure quality control of the program. Moreover, students who graduated from this Co-op have strong Muslim identities and some of them have become strong community leaders. Therefore, one can see the positive academic impact homeschooling can have on children.

Among the interview participants, 80% were married and 20% divorced. One of the divorced women had been homeschooling her children for nine years and other participants homeschooled for six years.

All of the participants except the two divorced mothers expressed that the father of the children are involved with the children's education but mostly indirectly and informally. The main involvement occurred in helping the children with homework such as reading to them, taking them to the library, or driving them to classes. Thus, it indicates that fathers are not formally involved in their children's education, which makes mothers the primary teachers of their children in this study.

Below is a list which describes how many years the children have been homeschooled by their parents. All of the participants were experienced at homeschooling their children. Out of ten participants, eight of them had been homeschooling their children for three years or more. One mother had been homeschooling her children for sixteen years, another two homeschooled for nine years and two more mothers had been homeschooling for six years. The following figure shows the results:

**Figure 1: Number of Years Children are Homeschooled**



Muslims are a very diverse population. Among the participants that were interviewed, 50% were Caucasian women who were converts to the religion of Islam. It is interesting to note that more converts had decided to homeschool their children in this study. There were 30% who were Arab-Americans and 20% from Afghanistan. This study also shows that U.S. born individuals were more likely to support of the idea of homeschooling as compared to immigrant families. As mentioned in the literature review, this could be due to the fact that immigrants are not aware of the alternative methods of educating their children.

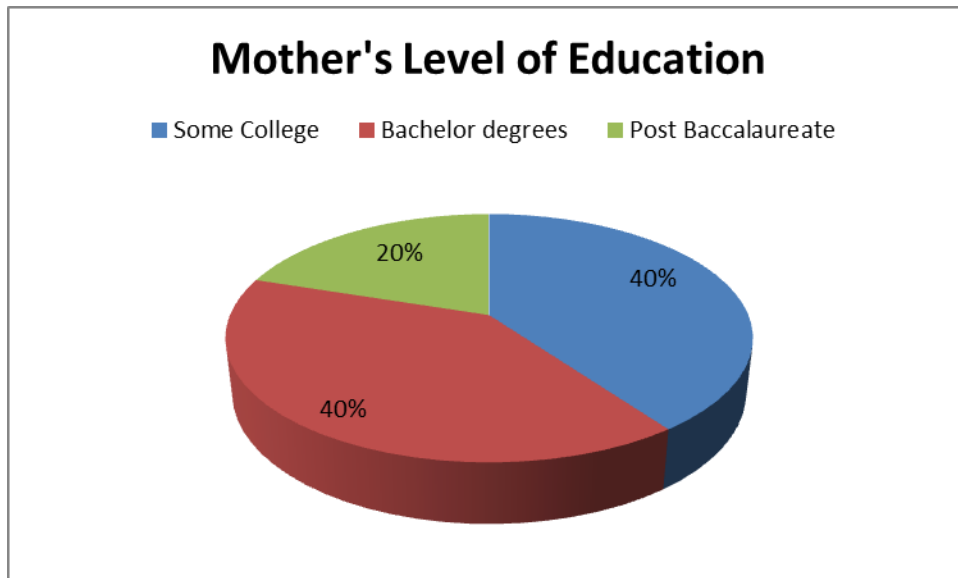
When asked, if children attended a public or private school prior to homeschooling, 80% of the mothers said they did not. However, one mother mentioned

that her oldest child attended private school for two years. She felt that she was not satisfied with the private school academically and socially, and felt that her child had the ability to learn much more than what was taught at the school, and at a faster pace.

Another mother with two children mentioned that both of her children attended public schools prior to homeschooling. However, she felt that her son required individualized attention, rather than being among a number of students in a class. Further she said that, her son could not handle the whole day of school and could not sit in a class all day. After reading the book called the *The well-trained mind*, she figured out that his learning style was different. She said “that book explained my son’s situation and then I began to homeschool.” After she started homeschooling her son, she saw the academic improvement in her son as well as the love of learning. She also began to homeschool her daughter. This is a strong testament to the power of homeschooling.

### **Implications of the findings**

The implications of these findings are significant for numerous reasons. The study was conducted to discover parent’s experiences as they homeschooled their children. The most significant finding is that women are generally the primary source of social learning for the children starting from birth. Therefore, the education of women hints at the foundational bases of success for the homeschooled children. As shown in the table below, out of ten mothers who were interviewed, six of them hold college degrees. The rest completed some level of college. All the participants in the study were educated beyond high school.

**Figure 2: Mother's Level of Education**

Women in the above finding lead active roles in educating their children. They are active participants in finding and making key decisions about utilizing the resources that are available to the children.

Another finding of the data derived from the interview was that only 20% of the women were homeschooled and 80% were not homeschooled, which may seem counter intuitive.

**Table 2: Parents Homeschooled**

	<b>Mother</b>	<b>Father</b>
<b>Somewhat homeschooled</b>	20%	0%
<b>Not homeschooled</b>	80%	100%



Since two of the mothers had prior knowledge of the homeschooling process and the fathers did not experience homeschooling themselves, this enabled the mothers to participate in strategic planning and making decisions that benefit and meet these specific academic needs of the children. For example, the mothers of these children maintain a high level of academic and experiential knowledge about the educational competencies of the child which are associated with the specific child's zone of proximal development.

The zone of proximal development is related to Vygotskian theory as an indicator of success in academic performance. The zone of proximal development is the area where the child demonstrates the highest level of academic proficiency and future capabilities. Most of the participants felt that they themselves did not have a love of learning in schools. A few parents said the reason for that was because everyone was more worried about passing the tests and getting good grades. Other reasons of dissatisfaction with schools included:

- Lack of study of logic
- Lack of study of religion
- Lack of tools on how to construct and deconstruct arguments
- Lacked of college preparation

While the mothers may not have been aware of Vygotsky's theoretical construct, they stated that by homeschooling, "they have instilled a love of learning in their children." They love learning, said many of the parents, happy that they are able to provide their children with a component they lacked in their lives. They also noted differences in their children that they did not possess at their age.

The participants believed that children are much more mature compared to their public school counterparts. They also believed that they can provide a higher level of education for their children since they can tailor the curriculum according to their children's personalities, unlike public and private schools.

Choosing a curriculum can be a difficult choice since there are many options. In order to address some of the limitations in the educational process, the founder of a Muslim homeschooling support organization in San Francisco Bay Area, which provides a curriculum for k-6, felt the passion for compiling a curriculum for the Muslim community. The founder made the process of finding a curriculum easier by having a curriculum package for each grade. This method of packaging curricular provides an organized method of curriculum distribution for homeschooling parents.

This organization has been an "alternative education movement" since 2001. "It was established with the sole purpose of providing an alternative to public school for Muslim families. The focus of the Academy is to provide an excellent western curriculum that has been carefully developed with Muslim children in mind and that meets the legal educational requirements for each state" (Hanson, 2011, p. 1). This organization was designed to use a traditional education model and recommends the private school option. This option gives the family greater control over their child's education with a minimal degree of state intervention. As a result, the parents have more freedom to choose the curriculum, schedule, and the freedom to purchase religious materials. However, some parents may rely on the financial support provided by a charter or public schools for homeschooling their children, and therefore opt out of the private school option.

Similarly, some of the parents interviewed stated that they are affiliated with charter school because it covers the cost of homeschooling expenses. In opposition, the founder expressed that though there are families who choose to go through state-funded charter schools or independent study programs for the financial benefits they receive from the state, these programs share common features that are contrary to home-education principles. Furthermore, once your child is enrolled in a charter school, they are by state and home-education standards considered a public school student. This contradicts the belief of the Muslim Co-op homeschooling organization which is funded by the state. However, it is different from a public school in a sense that parents have control over their children's education. The top-down decisions are made among the parents in the co-op organization. Also as teachers, they ensure a certain amount of equity, negotiate conflicts, envision solutions, and plan for the future. Together, parents and teachers decide the curriculum which does not occur in public schools.

The founder of the Muslim homeschooling support organization's goal is to make people, especially in the Muslim community, aware of the alternative approaches to education. This is particularly useful for recently immigrated Muslim families who may not be aware of alternatives to public education. Some of the parents interviewed preferred a structured curriculum, while others preferred an unstructured curriculum. This organization provides a curriculum that can be structured or unstructured. The curriculum is researched based and derived from different books that are of high quality, high content, well presented, but traditional, and oriented to the child's zone of proximal development. Furthermore, the books used by this organization are challenging with

more demanding stories. Children learn to use their imagination with lengthier books, this supports the goals of parents interviewed who want their children's curriculum to be more challenging. According to the founder, if the children's imagination is not stimulated when they are young, they are going to be less cognitively stimulated as they grow up.

Lastly, this organization's curriculum is not representative of the curriculums available in public schools – whereas other homeschooling curriculum providers tend to be similar to the public school curriculum. There are many success stories of people who have used the curriculum of the Muslim homeschooling organization listed in Appendix E.

The organization originally developed as a Muslim Co-op homeschool, appears less traditional and the instructional pedagogy is directly tied to the learning styles of the children. The actual style varies and is different among different grade levels and different subjects. It was articulated that curriculum does not teach children; rather the curriculum is used to guide the children. Although parents are given the freedom to teach the way they feel best; however, they do not have as much control over their children's education in a co-op as they do in traditional homeschooling model described above.

The Muslim Co-op homeschool organization was designed to provide parents with a much more extensive say in what takes place in the daily education of their children. In this sense, the Muslim Co-op model supports what Olivos (2006) argues in this book that parents have very little say in what takes place in public schools. For example, parents do not have authority over the curriculum nor can they select any

textbooks or books that they think is best for their child in public schools. Furthermore, the most a parent can do is observe the child's classroom or volunteer. Therefore, public schools are very isolating. More information on the Muslim Co-op homeschool organization can be found in Appendix E.

Although the participants that were interviewed utilize different methods and approaches of homeschooling, they said that "they choose the method according to their children's personalities and way of learning." Furthermore, they do not only stick to one method of teaching or using a certain approach all throughout the homeschooling process. They said "the method varies." For example, one mother said, she's using the Waldorf method with her six and seven year old children because it uses a lot of classics, is very engaging and taught very creatively and holistically. However another mother expresses that she felt the Waldorf method is mainly suitable for young children but not for the children beyond elementary school level. Another parent has used the Classical approach in the past and is currently using the Eclectic approach with her 12 year old twins. She further stated that one method that works for one child may not work for another. So, parents can be using different approaches with each child in the family. Another example is of a participant who uses a mixture of Classical and Waldorf, tweaking it at the same time to fit her children's personalities. According to her, "You may start with a certain method but end up with you own version." The other methods used by the participants were the project-based-learning and the Unschooling approach.

In contract, the Muslim homeschooling support organization believes that the homeschooling process should consist of a traditional and a holistic approach that fosters

and focuses on a greater degree of emotional development for a child. The founder of the organization indicated that this objective could be accomplished through one-on-one teaching. From her point of view, the homeschooling education should be more of a nurturing process that is based on the needs of each child. This is in accordance to what most of the interviewed parents said that they desire to homeschool their children so they can fulfill the educational needs of their children, much better than what public schools can do.

Thus, parents considering homeschooling should not feel concerned that they have to select one method for the entire duration. There is clear flexibility and the schooling process is organic in nature.

Another finding is related to the incorporation of multicultural aspects in the curriculum. All of the participants felt strongly about integrating the history and contributions of diverse groups in the curriculum. All of them made an extra effort to teach their children about diversity. Below were some of the responses from the parents on this topic:

“It is important for the children to know the history of other countries and know what’s happening all over the world instead of the U.S. only.”

“It is important to teach the children about different groups and cultures. The more diverse they are, the better they are able to communicate.”

“It is very important to the concept of truthful and accurate education.”

“We have to expose the children to other ways of thinking and living out there.”

While parents were not explicit in how they did this, they felt that they can provide better academic opportunities to their children than what schools can provide. Seventy-percent of the participants indicated the following negative experiences with public schools and wanted to “protect” their children from them. The specific reasons given for this negative view of schools included academic and social reasons. Academic reasons included: a lot of time wasted in schools, schools did not instill a love for learning and reading; therefore children are not excited about the learning process, grades did not reflect the knowledge gained, found schools to be “mean,” heavy academic load, introduced to immoral ideas and behaviors, philosophy of school was contrary to the religious teachings, and trying to have all the students engaged in class is difficult. Among the social reasons were peer pressure, learning bad manners, did not like how students treated each other and how they treated their teachers with disrespect, and bullying.

Regardless of the strong negative feelings about schools, a couple of parents described positive experiences in their k-12 education. It is interesting to note that although most participants said they themselves had negative experiences in their k-12 education, it did not lead to homeschooling their children. They said they came to know about homeschooling in other ways, some through friends and others through other venues. The realization of how beneficial homeschooling is came to them after they began homeschooling their children. One of the participants said, “I noticed that the things my children were learning in elementary school, I had not even learned about

those in high school.” As primary teachers, participants mentioned the following benefits of their children being homeschooled:

**Table 3: Benefits of Homeschooling**

<b>Academic Benefits</b>	<b>Social Benefits</b>	<b>Religious Benefits</b>
<b>They are academically very strong, advanced, and are excelling in academics.</b>	They have less negative peer pressure.	They have confidence in religion because religious studies are incorporated into the curriculum.
<b>Their interest in education is high; they love learning and are very curious.</b>	They are able to communicate and converse with all types of people in different age groups.	They are practicing their religious & moral beliefs.
<b>They are able to graduate from high school early.</b>	They are much more confident in speaking with others and can relate to them in different ways.	The children were able to study Arabic language extensively over many years, which is important to the Islamic religious practice.
<b>The children are strong readers.</b>	It allows children to stay close to parents.	
<b>The children earn good grades.</b>	Children are not affected by bullying.	



---

**They received academic scholarships.** The children do not exhibit slouching, slacking, and sleazy behaviors which are the norm picked up in public schools.

The children have good manners, are respectful, courteous and attentive.

Some of the other reasons for homeschooling from a broader perspective included:

- Students have more flexibility in their schedule.
- Students have more analytic skills
- The way students think and approach problems is different. They are able to think more outside the box
- Students gain an independent spirit
- Students are more creative and imaginative
- If students are good at something or with a certain subject, they are able to move up easily
- Students have a love of learning and are self-motivated and do not complain of boredom

- Students are exposed to a wide variety of experiences
- Students have a strong sense of self and community identity
- Students are able to travel to see relatives because they are not tied to a school schedule
- Students are able to spend more time with their fathers because their schedule is flexible

These findings hold true to what is found in the literature, “Positive social skill scores were higher for homeschooled children than for those educated in the public school system” (Ray, 2010, p. 2).

All participants said they will continue to homeschool their children; however, the duration of how long they homeschool varies. The chart below shows how long the participants plan to homeschool their children.

**Table 4: Duration of Homeschooling**

<b>How long they will homeschool</b>	<b>Percent of Participants</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	10%	1
<b>Until junior high</b>	30%	3
<b>Until high school</b>	40%	4
<b>One year at a time</b>	20%	2

This can be an indication that parents are seeing the love of learning in their children, thus they want to continue to homeschool them.

Since the mothers are directly involved in school related activities, they know which activities coincide with the academic needs of the child. The research of Romanowski indicates that “On the average, homeschooled students are involved in 5.2 activities outside the home, with 98 percent engaged in two or more” (2006, p. 126). These activities include speech and debate tournaments, scouting, dance classes, volunteer work and sports. In addition, “homeschoolers are eligible under NCAA eligibility rules to participate in college athletics” (Lips & Feinberg, 2008, p. 6).

All participants were happy to share that their children are involved in some kind of an extra-curricular activities, which are stated below:

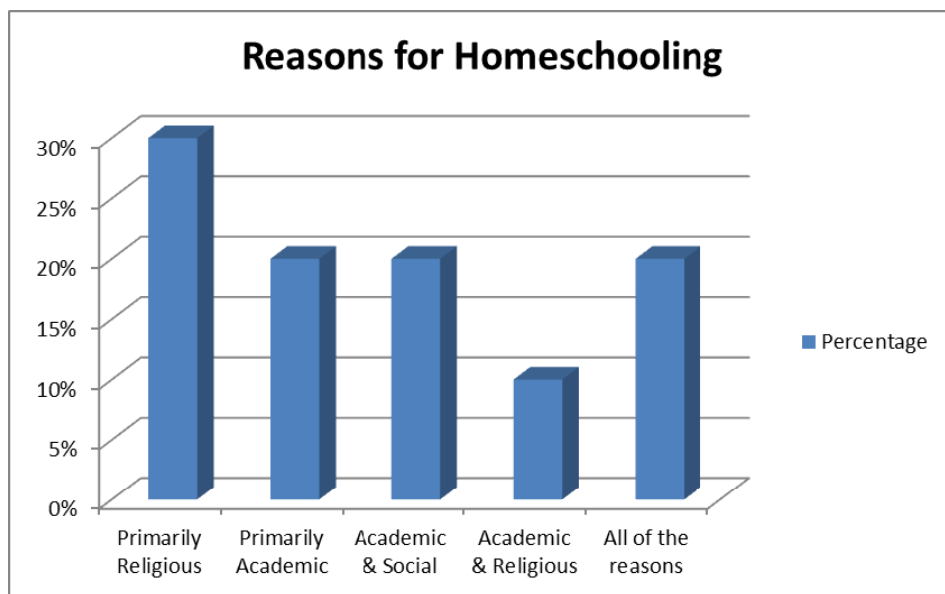
**Table 5: Extra Curricular Activities**

<b>Sports</b>	<b>Foreign Language</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Activities &amp; Volunteer</b>
<b>Martial Arts including Kung Fu &amp; Tae Kwan do</b>	French	Sewing	Boy scouts
<b>Gymnastics</b>	Latin	Art & Crafts	Volunteering at a local nature center
<b>Tennis</b>			
<b>Bicycle riding</b>	Arabic	Writing books	Speaking at events
<b>Swimming</b>		Making videos	
<b>Archery</b>		Working on content for website	
Ballet		Poetry recital &	
Physical Education		performance	

Homeschoolers are part of a vast amount of activities; these activities also provide social networks for many homeschoolers.

Another significant finding occurred when 90% of the respondents indicated that as a direct result of homeschooling, negative peer pressure is alleviated in homeschooling. This finding points to the efficacy of homeschooling because the values of high academic achievement maintained by the parents are internalized by the children without the interference of the peer group. These findings are also related to the reports of the respondents that 30% of the reasons for homeschooling are primarily religious. This finding supports the previous assertion that the values of the families that are religious are internalized by the students, which positively impacts their academic success.

**Figure 3: Reasons for Homeschooling**



Religious and academic reasons of homeschooling are intricately connected.

These results represent an anticipated outcome because the relationship of religious

values to academic performance is an indication of cultural and cross generational continuity. The values that are being transmitted primarily through the mothers to their children are very important in these families.

For the 20% of respondents who indicated their reason for homeschooling is primarily academic is an anticipated outcome due to the fact that religion and academics are not dichotomized in the Islamic religion. Literature supports this finding "...in our faith religious and other learning is not to be approached as two separate matters since Islam does not acknowledge any schism between "sacred" and "secular" aspects of life" (Holt, 1981, p 24-25).

The segment of the population who want their children to be homeschooled must possess the cultural capital to actualize this process because to a great extent, they are pre-adapted to ensure the success of homeschooling. Consequently, some parents would select a private school to provide these opportunities but at the same time this option may not provide them with the fusion of the best religious and the best academic component. However, they may choose homeschooling as a better option because they could achieve both religious congruency and academic success through the homeschooling process.

Among the greatest challenges that the participants faced while homeschooling, 50% of them articulated that "trying to find the balance and the time to do everything" was the greatest challenge for them. Another challenge mentioned was trying to find homeschooling families who have children of same age group and use the same approach of homeschooling. Following were the other challenges expressed by parents:

"Homeschooling while being self-employed"

“Homeschooling while trying to reach your own goals”

“Keeping the house clean”

“Trying to make sure the children are caught up with academics”

“Being a single parent”

One of the challenges described by the Muslim homeschooling support organization raise the concern that among some of the Muslim population being a Muslim is not harmonious with the west. For example, some Muslim families are looking for a curriculum which has nothing to do with the western literature. Rather, they desire a curriculum which is Muslim oriented and contains only Muslim names of the characters and teachings etc. The founder believes that Muslim families need to broaden our horizons. The quality of the literature is what makes the curriculum unique.

There was a level of caution shared by one of the directors interviewed. Director of the Muslim Co-op model said,

It [homeschooling] is an everyday job. Evaluate whether you are up for the challenge. It requires one to be both parents and teachers. Keep your children on track, keep them motivated to learn, and maintain a well-rounded education for them. Furthermore, help them develop their identity and teach them good characters. As a parent and a teacher, it's your job to fulfill these responsibilities. In addition, make sure to provide the children with the same resources that they would get in another institution. That is a huge challenge.

She further said that public and private schools have ample resources, money for sports teams, books, and extracurricular activities. What a school offers is very rich. A

homeschooling parent needs to replicate that, which means they need to be ready to think about their whole day and how they are going to meet all the various needs. Moreover, current and prospective homeschooling families need to think about their motivations. They need to know why they can be better teachers than those in other institutions. While homeschooling the children, families need to connect with other like-minded people and join groups. This provides a balance view of homeschooling and helps parents evaluate the challenges that they may face as they homeschool their children. Many of the participants in the study state similar challenges; nevertheless, they enjoy the homeschooling process and the freedom and flexibility it provides them.

Regardless of the major challenges, parents are not discouraged to homeschool their children. This should help prospective parents to understand that challenges may occur in the process of homeschooling but it should not prevent and deter anyone from continuing the homeschooling process. In such situations, parents should seek help from support groups or other parents.

When asked, “What would you do differently if you had the chance to homeschool your children over again,” 30% said they would not do anything differently. The changes that most participants mentioned were geared towards the academics of the children. They are as follows.

“I would homeschool them without a co-op [cooperative learning] which was creating bullying and peer pressure.”

“I would do less fill in blanks and multiple choices and more essay type and open ended questions. It’s more time consuming to do essay and open ended questions on part of the teacher and student but it’s definitely worth it.”

“I wish I was more hands-on with them.”

“I would not go with the charter school program, would stick to homeschooling my children independently.”

“I would do things more regularly, more consistently with a daily routine. I could not be regular because of my infant.”

“I may have involved my children in more sport teams; however, I may not be able to do it as it requires a lot of time and transportation.”

“I would be more patient.”

Participants also gave advice to those parents who are considering homeschooling. One of the pieces of advice that stood out was that parents should research a lot and learn about homeschooling. They should know why they want to homeschool because when they feel down or feel like giving up, it will become their motivation to continue. Another major point the participants articulated was that parents should try it out and not think that they are committed to homeschooling for twelve years, rather take it year by year. Similarly, the founder of the Muslim homeschooling support organization offered that many people get frightened about the idea of homeschooling. She suggestion to try it for at least the first two years. If parents need support, the organization provides support for both parents and children. Furthermore, she advised that when deciding about education for the children, people should research. There are



many books about education and different philosophies and styles. People should educate themselves on how they want to educate their child. A final point was that parents should know homeschooling is not like public schools. The parents need to let the kids learn on their own. They have to make it individualized and not think that the parents have to do it the way other people are doing it. Basically, you decide how you want to homeschool your children. One of the mothers recommended mini co-ops either weekly or bi-weekly. Some of the other advice includes:

- Do not feel that you are alone in this
- Talk to people who have homeschooled and use all the resources
- Set realistic goals

The last significant finding was among the resources that parents found helpful during their homeschooling process as well as prior to homeschooling their children. The common resource found among almost half of the parents was *“The Well-trained Mind: A Guide to Classical Education at Home”* by Susan & Jessie Wise. This book is highly recommended for prospective parents who may be looking to homeschool their child. Additionally, the founder of Muslim support organization made reference to a publication by John Taylor Gatto. The publication represented a critical analysis of the public education system and identified specific limitations associated with it. This book may be useful for those who are interested in learning about the criticism of public schools.

Since a majority of the participants utilized books to help and guide them through the process of homeschooling, prospective homeschooling parents may want to benefit from the experience of the participants in the study. Talking to families who have

homeschooled their children or joining a support group was another very useful tool for mothers to obtain resources from, as well as to find support. There exists at least one support group in every homeschooling community and there is easy access to it.

Prospective parents may also find like-minded people on the support groups. The table below lists the resources that were helpful to parents as well as the number of parents who found the resources helpful.

**Table 6: Resources Helpful to Parents**

<b>Resources most helpful to parents</b>	<b>Number of parents who found this useful</b>
<b>Support Groups/Other families</b>	4
<b>Books</b>	6
<b>Online resources</b>	5
<b>Magazines &amp; catalogs</b>	1
<b>Conferences</b>	1

Note: Most parents utilized more than one resource

## Chapter 5

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **Conclusion**

As reflected in the literature, there are many reasons that parents decide to homeschool their children. In this study, there were four major reasons for homeschooling: lack of academic rigor, lack of individualized attention, negative social environment and lack of religious teaching in public and private schools. Several parents were not satisfied with the lack of academic challenge provided by public schools and believed that one-on-one instruction provided the children with the opportunity to learn and at a faster pace, while requiring less time as compared to the time spent in public schools. More specifically, there was a general view held by the mothers interviewed that public schools were not academically challenging nor taking their child's learning style into consideration in the method of instruction. This points to the notion that the one-size-fits-all approach taken by many public and private schools does not work for all students. The research and the interviews confirm that the average homeschooled child can perform at a higher academic level than the average public or private schooled student. Parents also have the opportunity to take into consideration their children's style of learning as they homeschool them, while having more flexibility and freedom.

Some of the academic reasons behind homeschooling, as mentioned by interviewees were: 1) there is a lot of time wasted in schools, 2) most children are not excited about learning in schools, 3) there is an unnecessarily heavy academic load, and 4) grades do not reflect children's knowledge in schools.

In addition, the learning style, different approaches and methods of homeschooling are also important to the child's overall success. Most parents tailor the methods to their children's unique needs and personalities, thus providing a modified curriculum to make learning more effective for the children. Methods of homeschooling can vary as children move from grade to grade. Additionally, the literature and the findings in this study support the notion that a method which works for one child may not work for the other, even in the same family. The gender and age factors also need to be considered. Thus, homeschooling provides a tailored curriculum for each child, which effectively works for their personalities and learning styles. By utilizing such techniques, parents instill a love of learning in their children.

Socialization was another major factor in the decision to homeschool the children, as stated in the literature review as well as in this study. Socialization in schools consists mainly of conforming to the peer group standards and norms. The data findings presented in this study indicates that conforming to the group norms was a reason why parents felt strongly about homeschooling their children. Parents want to shape their children's lives and personalities by protecting them at a young age. Additionally, parents expressed many other negative social factors from which they wish to protect their children. Some examples include peer pressure, bullying, disrespect, bad manners and more. The findings in this study support the notion that more positive socialization takes place with the children as they are homeschooled. Parents report that their children are not under the pressure of dressing a certain way, acting a certain way, and attempting to fit into a certain group. Furthermore, children are not effected by bullying or learn bad manners

and disrespect. Additionally, they are able to communicate and converse with all types of people in different age groups as opposed to being only around the people of their own age.

The fourth reason behind homeschooling was a lack of religious education in public schools. The participating Muslim parents desired to incorporate religion in every day curriculum. The homeschooling option offers the flexibility in the curriculum and parents are able to teach their children religious teachings every day.

Finally, a general finding was that mothers continue to play a greater role in their children's education compared to fathers. The reason, as stated both in the literature and in this study by mothers, is that fathers are the breadwinners of homes, thus most of their energy is spent at their work. They, however, do help with children's education. Some take their children to extra-curricular classes and activities while others provide support.

While most of the mothers had negative experience with their own academic education in public schools, they did not become aware of homeschooling until they had their own children. However, it was not until they connected with individuals who homeschooled or came to know about it in other ways, that they saw homeschooling as a viable option for their children to offer the best educational experience. After they started homeschooling their children, they became more aware of the benefits it provided, which mothers themselves were deprived of in traditional schools. Since most of the participants were not homeschooled themselves, this promotes that parents do not have to have background in homeschooling in order to homeschool their children.

Being involved in extracurricular activities is common for most homeschoolers. In fact, the literature supports that children have more time for activities since academic instruction is one-on-one and much faster for the children. Thus, they can use the remainder of the day to focus on other activities and their interests. This may be attributed to the fact that homeschooled children appear to be very focused.

In summary, homeschooling parents believe that they can provide their children with better academic opportunities at home, compared to what public or private schools can provide. Additionally, the parents love to teach their children themselves.

### **Recommendations**

There are issues in the study that can be researched further. As the interviews took place and the study evolved, some of the issues grew more pertinent to explore further.

First, the study raises questions about some of the disadvantages associated with one-one instruction. It is highly recommended that more research be done in this area. What are the disadvantages associated with one-on-one instruction? How does it affect the child?

Another suggestion would be to take the father's education into consideration and if that plays a role in the decision of homeschooling the children.

It is also recommended that more research be done on how fathers can play a greater role in their children's education. While fathers work full-time, what are some of the ways they can help with their children's education so mothers are not bearing the full burden?

This study could use more research on how the single parents are able to homeschool their children. Do they work part-time and homeschool part-time? Do they work from home? Where does the balance come in between their work and homeschooling?

The sample size of this study was small; therefore, it would be suggested to conduct a much more comprehensive study using a large sample size.

Homeschooling is a viable alternative to traditional education taking place in schools. Parents who homeschool their children feel that they can provide their children with the best foundation for their future. Albeit parents' reasons vary for their decision to homeschool, their only desire is to provide their children with the best education for a better future.

## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONS FOR MUSLIM HOMESCHOOLING PARENTS

#### Parent's Education Background

- 1) What is your educational background?
- 2) Were you or your spouse homeschooled and for how long?
- 3) Please describe how you feel about your early educational experience?
- 4) How has your educational experience influenced your children's education?

#### Children's Education Background

- 1) How many children are you teaching at home?
- 2) What age group are your children? In what grades?
- 3) How many years have you home schooled your children?
- 4) Did your children attend a public or private school prior to homeschooling?

#### Parental Preparation

- 1) What was your motivation to homeschool your child/children? i.e. religious reasons, academic reasons, socialization purpose, etc.
- 2) How did you prepare to teach your own child?
- 3) What resources have you found most helpful in homeschooling and how often do you use them? i.e. books, magazine, support groups
- 4) What approach method of homeschooling do you use and why? Has it been effective? Yes or no?
- 1) How has homeschooling benefited/impacted your child?

#### Multicultural Curriculum

- 1) Does the method you currently use regularly incorporate multicultural aspects? For example, does it integrate histories, cultures, and contributions of diverse groups rather than just one group?
- 2) How important do you think it is to teach multicultural concepts in the core curriculum?
- 3) If available, would you be interested in incorporating multicultural education into the core curriculum?

#### General Questions

- 1) How many hours of academic instruction do you provide daily while homeschooling your child?



- 2) What kinds of extra-curricular activities is your child involved in?
- 3) Does your spouse/father of the children have any involvement in the child's education?
- 4) Will you continue to homeschool your children? If so, up to what grade?

### **Challenges in homeschooling**

- 1) What is the greatest challenge you have faced while homeschooling and at what stage, beginning, middle, or end? For example, in terms of academics or socialization.
- 2) How have you been able to overcome your challenge?
- 3) What would you do differently if you had the chance to homeschool your child over again?
- 4) What advice would you give to a parent who is considering homeschooling?

### **Demographic Questions (Optional)**

- 1) What is your marital status?
- 2) What is your ethnicity? (This question is to provide the readers with how diverse Muslims are)

Should I have any additional questions, would you be interested in sharing your contact information? If yes please provide your name, phone number and/or email.

**APPENDIX B****QUESTIONS FOR MUSLIM HOMESCHOOLING ORGANIZATIONS**

- 1) When did you start this organization and what prompted you to start it? How long have you been an organization?
- 2) Which method of homeschooling does your organization use and why?
- 3) What role do you play in serving the families that homeschool their children?
- 4) What advice would you give to parents who desire to homeschool their children?
- 5) What costs are associated with homeschooling through your organization?
- 6) Do you provide training for parents on how to homeschool their children?
- 7) What type of consultation services do you provide for parents and children?
- 8) What are the challenges you have faced in serving parents?
- 9) What success stories can you share with me?
- 10) Any other comments, suggestions, or advice?

## APPENDIX C

**CONSENT FOR INTERVIEWING**

My name is Aneela Saghir. I am a graduate student studying in the Bilingual and Multicultural Education at California State University, Sacramento. I am currently conducting research on the topic of homeschooling for my Master's project. The purpose of this study is to examine factors that Muslim parents use in choosing to homeschool their children. The result of this project is the development of a handbook to guide Muslim parents and provide them resources needed in order to pursue the goal of homeschooling their children.

This information is important because it will serve as a guide for prospective parents who seek to homeschool their children. You will be asked to be interviewed regarding your experience of homeschooling your children. The interview will take somewhere between 30 to 60 minutes. Interview will be based on your experience. There are low risks or harm involved in the process. The interview questions include one question about your own personal feelings. Most questions in the interview focus on the process of homeschooling; that is what you do. Therefore, this is low risk involved in the process.

You may gain additional insight into factors that have affected your personal experiences or other experiences with your children and family. On the other hand, you may not personally benefit from participating in this research. It is hoped that the results of the study will be beneficial for parents seeking to homeschool their children in the future.

Before any data can be collected, or research conducted, California State University, Sacramento requires the consent of all participants. Your responses will be kept confidential. All interview data will be recorded and transcribed on my computer which is password protected. The interview protocols and recording device will be locked away in drawer at home and destroyed within one year of completing this project.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntarily. There will be no compensation. If you have any questions about this research, you may contact Aneela Saghir at (916) 622-7118 or by e-mail at [aneelasaghir@gmail.com](mailto:aneelasaghir@gmail.com). You may decline to participate in this study without any consequences. Also, you may decline to answer any questions. Your signature below indicates that you have read this page and agree to participate in the research.

---

Signature of Participant

---

Date

## APPENDIX D

### HUMAN SUBJECTS CONSENT TO INTERVIEW ORGANIZATIONS

My name is Aneela Saghir. I am a graduate student studying in the Bilingual and Multicultural Education Department at California State University, Sacramento. I am currently conducting research on the topic of homeschooling for my Master's project. The purpose of this study is to examine factors that Muslim parents use in choosing to homeschool their children. The result of this project is the development of a handbook to guide Muslim parents and provide them resources needed to pursue the goal of homeschooling their children.

This information is important because it will serve as a guide for prospective parents who seek to homeschool their children. As an organization, you will be interviewed regarding how your organization serves the homeschooling community. The interview may require up to an hour of your time. There are low risks or harm involved in the process. Some of the questions may seem personal when talking about how you serve the parents. However, most questions are about how the organizations work and what services they provide to their members. Therefore, this is low risk involved in the process.

As a result of participating in this interview, you may gain additional insight into factors that affected your experiences or other experiences with the families you serve. On the other hand, you may not personally benefit from participating in this research. It is ultimately hoped that the results of the interview will be beneficial for parents seeking to homeschool their children in the future.

Before any data can be collected, or research conducted, California State University, Sacramento requires the consent of all participants. Your responses will be kept confidential. All interview data will be recorded and transcribed on my computer which is password protected. The interview protocols and recording device will be locked away in drawer at home and destroyed within one year of completing this project.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntarily. There will be no compensation. If you have any questions about this research, you may contact Aneela Saghir at (916) 622-7118 or by e-mail at [aneelasaghir@gmail.com](mailto:aneelasaghir@gmail.com). You may decline to participate in this study without any consequences. Also, you may decline to answer any questions. Your signature below indicates that you have read this page and agree to participate in the research.

---

Signature of Participant

---

Date

## APPENDIX E

### A REVIEW OF TWO MUSLIM HOMESCHOOLING ORGANIZATIONS

#### Kinza Academy

The Muslim homeschooling support organization whose founder is Nabila Hanson.

Following are the testimonials of Kinza Academy:

After years of trial and error with other programs, I stumbled across the Kinza Academy. What can I say! I was genuinely impressed. The books were of excellent quality and the service efficient. I received the books within a few weeks. In addition to this, the Academy's personal support gave me the confidence to take on the challenge of homeschooling. The program is extremely easy and straight forward to use. My son loves learning and I actually enjoy teaching again. Thank you for everything (Testimonials, 2011).

Kinza Academy relieves my stress in buying a curriculum. I know that the curriculum they provide is the best in terms of fulfilling the educational goals laid forth by the Classical philosophy. The curriculum is user friendly, providing teacher editions as well as a full curriculum guide. Kinza Academy has made my life as a homeschooling mom easier. Thank you Kinza! (Testimonials, 2011).

I love using the Kinza Academy program because they give you the entire curriculum, so I don't have to worry about missing anything. I'm impressed with the members of their Advisory Board, and the curriculum itself is extremely well tailored. For example, in Grade One, they are covering much more than I ever covered in Grade One (I completed my entire education in Ontario, Canada). And

the material is such that I can work with all three of my children in various “levels” using the same books. (Testimonials, 2011).

Homeschooling with Kinza academy was a phenomenal experience. Seeing our child make such remarkable progress within a year brought great joy and gratification. Kinza academy has designed a comprehensive curriculum with all the necessary tools to help the teacher as well as the student. Although hard work and dedication are needed, this curriculum is much superior to the curriculum of public schools. Needless to say, we are continuing the journey with Kinza this year. (Testimonials, 2011).

Thank you very much for putting this collection together. I've been searching for a homeschooling curriculum for a couple of years now that fits my goals and interests. It has always been my intention to educate my child with a classical education similar to what my parents provided. As a Muslim convert, enrolling my son at a non-Muslim private school was not the best option. I am very happy to learn about Kinza Academy. (Testimonials, 2011).

I'm really grateful for all your efforts. Kinza Academy provides so many children with a viable alternative to our society's current declining educational system. The curriculum exceeded my expectations. I only wish I had the same quality of educational experience that my son is receiving when I was young. Knowledge is priceless & Kinza Academy provides it at a bargain. (Testimonials, 2011).

## Ilm Tree

The initiation of this model starts with “Lafayette Co-op.” This model was initially developed in the spring of 2003 where a group of families voluntarily met and planned to implement this approach of homeschooling. The Ilm tree founders purchased a 22-acre site in Lafayette, California.

The founding mothers originally started Ilm Tree as classical but overtime it has changed. The terminology “founding mothers” identified the mothers as important participants in this process.

Teachers work off their tuition in the morning by teaching. In the afternoon, they pay for extra-curricular activities and for the material fees. In addition, members pay a co-op fee. There is also a drop off program where parents just drop their kids off, pay the school, and do not teach which is like a private school approach.

At Ilm Tree, The top-down decisions are made among the parents. Also as teachers, they ensure a certain amount of equity, negotiate conflicts, envision solutions, and plan for the future. They also represent the organization. Parents decide everything: how the money is spent, who is hired, who is not, who is accepted and who is not, it’s all regulated by parents. Together, parents and teachers decide the curriculum, decide the structure, decide how many kids will be in a classroom and the logistics of the classrooms and the school as whole. Policies are negotiated by the members.

The director of Ilm Tree said what kids are exposed to in a classroom is access to opportunities for socializing around the material, interacting with their peers and sharing ideas. In her opinion, if children are traditionally homeschooled by the parents, without a

co-op, they miss out on all this. Additionally, they become significantly behind in their children's education. Only exceptional families can homeschool without a co-op or any other help, but majority cannot.

At Ilm Tree, appointments are always available when someone feels the need for consultation. However, Ilm Tree does not provide consultation services for outside members.

While the two organizations do not provide training for the parents it is something they both are considering in the near future since they feel it can serve as an imperative component within their organization. Their vision is to develop programs where parents are taught about the curriculum. At Ilm Tree, parents will get trained for a year or two and after that they can decide if they want to homeschool their children them themselves or homeschool with a co-op. If the parents desire to take the responsibility on themselves, they will be equipped to do so.

In conclusion, the models are somewhat different and in ways they are the same. They have overlapping efficacies. There are certain dimensions to Kinza Academy that may be more effective like having a more unique and developed curriculum that is based on a philosophy and a research under the history of education. The Ilm Tree model is based on the curriculum built around the child and the parents having more input decision making authority and providing the classroom style instructional pedagogy. One last thing both organizations have in common is that they have utilized the book called *The Well-Trained Mind* and suggest it to other parents too.



## REFERENCES

- Al Grenaadiyyah, U. A. (2010). Today's Tomorrow Homeschool Magazine - The Decision to Homeschool. *Today's Tomorrow Homeschool Magazine - Resilience*. Retrieved November 9, 2010, from <http://www.todaystomorrow.net/1-Premier-Issue/The-Decision-to-Homeschool.html>
- Apple, M. W. (2007). Who needs teacher education? Gender, technology, and the work of homeschooling. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 34, 111-130.
- Arthur, D. (2011, January 9). Home-schooling: 'It depends on effort': Record Searchlight. *Redding Record Searchlight: Local Redding, California News Delivered Throughout the Day*.. Retrieved February 26, 2011, from <http://www.redding.com/news/2011/jan/09/it-depends-on-effort/?print=1>
- Bahrampour, T. (2010, February 21). Muslims turning to home schooling in increasing numbers. *The Washington Post*, pp. 1-2. Retrieved December 15, 2010, from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2010/02/20/AR2010022001235.html>
- Bachmeier, M. (2010, February 1). Homeschooling in American today: A growing trend. *IslamOnline.net*, Retrieved May 26, 2010, from [http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?c=Article\\_C&pagename=Zone-EnglishFamily/FYELayout&cid=1264249940416&utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=rss&utm\\_source=twitterfeed&utm\\_medium=twitter&utm\\_campaign=Family+Feed](http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?c=Article_C&pagename=Zone-EnglishFamily/FYELayout&cid=1264249940416&utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=rss&utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=twitter&utm_campaign=Family+Feed)
- Banks, J. A. (1991). *Teaching strategies for ethnic studies* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Banks, J. A. (1994). Transforming the mainstream curriculum. *Educational leadership*, 51(8), 4-8. Retrieved January 2, 2011, from the EBSCO database.
- Banks, C. A. M. & Banks, J. A. (1995). Equity Pedagogy: An Essential Component of Multicultural Education. *Theory into Practice*, 34(3), 151-158.

- Banks, C. M., & Banks, J. A. (2001). Equity pedagogy: An essential component of multicultural education. *Theory into practice*, 34, 152-158. Retrieved February 1, 2010, from the EBSCO database.
- Banks, J. A., & Banks, C. A. M. (Eds.). (2004). *The handbook of research of multicultural education*. New York: Macmillan.
- Basham, P., Merrifield, J., & Hepburn, C. (2007). Home schooling: from the extreme to the mainstream. *Studies in Educational Policy*, 1-24. Retrieved February 1, 2010, from [www.netzwerkbildungsfreiheit.de/pdf/From\\_the\\_extreme\\_to\\_the\\_mainstream.pdf](http://www.netzwerkbildungsfreiheit.de/pdf/From_the_extreme_to_the_mainstream.pdf)
- Basham, P. (2001). *Home Schooling: From the extreme to the mainstream*. Vancouver, BC: The Fraser Institute.
- Bennett, C. I. (2007). *Comprehensive multicultural education: Theory and practice*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Bielick, S., K. Chandler, and S.P. Broughman (2001). *Homeschooling in the United States*. Washington, DC: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.
- Bliss, B. (1989). *Home education: A look at current practices*. Michigan State University. Retrieved February 1, 2010, from the ERIC database.
- Brockopp, J. E. (2003). The essential Shari'ah: Teaching Islamic law in the religious studies classroom. In B. M. Wheeler (Ed.), *Teaching Islam* (pp. 77-93). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cambre, B. M. (2009). Tearing Down the Walls: Cyber Charter Schools and the Public Endorsement of Religion. *TechTrends*, 53, 1-4. Retrieved February 1, 2010, from [http://www.netzwerkbildungsfreiheit.de/pdf/From\\_the\\_extreme\\_to\\_the\\_mainstream.pdf](http://www.netzwerkbildungsfreiheit.de/pdf/From_the_extreme_to_the_mainstream.pdf)
- Carper, J. C. (2000). Pluralism to establishment to dissent: The religious and educational Context of home schooling. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 75(1&2), 8-19.

- Clark, P. (1995). Risk and resiliency in adolescence: The current status of research on Gender differences. *Equity Issues*, 1, 2-12. Retrieved November 25, 2010, from the ERIC database.
- Clements, A. D. (2004). *Homeschooling: A research-based how-to-manual*. Lanham, Md: ScarecrowEducation.
- Coles, M. I. (2004). Education and Islam: A new strategic approach. *Race equality teaching*, 22, 41-46. Retrieved February 1, 2010, from <http://www.ttrb.ac.uk/attachments/47ec42b6-e362-4512-9bd3-889c6096eaa3.pdf>
- Colfax, D. J., & Colfax, M. (1988). *Home schooling for excellence*. New York: Warner Books.
- Dardick, G. (1990). Home study and the public schools. *Schooling at home: Parents, kids, and leaning* (pp. 86-91). Sante Fe, New Mexica: John Muir Publication.
- Deedat, A. (1993). *Is the Bible God's Word?* New Delhi, India: Islamic Book Service.
- Douglass, S. L., & Dunn, R. E. (2003). Interpreting Islam in American schools. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, 558(1), 52-72.
- Esposito, J. L. (1998). *Islam: The straight path*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Feldman, N. (2003). *After jihad: America and the struggle for Islamic democracy*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.
- Findley, P. (2001). *Silent no more: Confronting America's false images of Islam*. Beltsville, MD: Amana Press.
- Foster, C. (2000, November/December). In a class by themselves. *Stanford magazine*. Retrieved December, 2010, from [http://www.stanfordalumni.org/jg/mig/news\\_magazine/magazine/novdec00/articles/homeschooling.html](http://www.stanfordalumni.org/jg/mig/news_magazine/magazine/novdec00/articles/homeschooling.html)
- Fraser, J. W. (1999). *Between church and state: Religion and public education in a Multicultural America*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Gaither, M. (2008). Why homeschooling happened. *Educational Horizons*, 86, 226-237.

- Galen, J & Pitman, M. (1991). *HomeSchooling: Political, Historical, and Pedagogical Perspective*. New Jersey: Alex Publishing Corporation.
- Garrow, D. J. (1987). *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It: The Memoir of Jo Ann Gibson Robinson*. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press.
- Gay, G. (1993). Ethnic minorities and educational equality. In J.A. Banks & C.A.M. Banks (Eds.), *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives* (pp. 171-194). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Gordon, Edward E. and Gordon, Elaine H. (1990). *Centuries of Tutoring: A History of Alternative Education in America and Western Europe*. New York: University Press of America.
- Gorder, C. (1987). *Home Schools: An Alternative*. United States: Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data.
- Grant, C. (1994). Challenging the myths about multicultural education. *Multicultural Education*, 2 (2), 4-8.
- Griffith, M. (1999). (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) *Homeschooling handbook*. USA: Prima.
- Gutschow, R. (2009). Homeschool Corner: Online resources. *Creation Ministries International*. Retrieved August 30, 2010, from <http://www.creation.com/socialization>.
- Haddad, Y. Y. (1999). The globalization of Islam: The return of Muslims to the west. In J. L. Esposito (Ed.), *The Oxford history of Islam* (pp. 601–641). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Haneef, S. (1996). *What everyone should know about Islam and Muslims* (14<sup>th</sup> ed.). Chicago, IL: Library of Islam.
- Hanson, N. (2011, January 10). Kinza Academy | Homeschooling with Tradition. *Kinza Academy*. Retrieved April 27, 2011, from <http://kinzaacademy.com/info.html>

- Hardy, L. (2001, August). Learning without school: Who home-schools and why? A growing movement raises questions for your district. *American School Board Journal*, 14-19.
- Harper, A. (2006). The Old Schoolhouse Magazine - How-to-Homeschool Article:. *The Old Schoolhouse Magazine - Homeschooling - Welcome*. Retrieved August 30, 2010, from [http://thehomeschoolmagazine.com/How\\_To\\_Homeschool/articles/great\\_homeschooling\\_debate.php](http://thehomeschoolmagazine.com/How_To_Homeschool/articles/great_homeschooling_debate.php)
- Hart, L. (1983). *Human Brain and Human Learning*. Arizona: Books for Educators.
- Haq, I. (1996). *Economic doctrines of Islam*. Herndon, VA: International Institute of Islamic thought.
- Hasan, A. G. (2000). *American Muslims: A new generation*. New York: Continuum.
- Hata, P. (2008, July 8). The Best Homeschooling Methods. *Articles / Free Articles Directory/ Submit articles*. Retrieved April 19, 2011, from <http://www.articleslide.com/Art/62499>
- Hermansen, M. K. (2003). Teaching about Muslims in America. In B. M. Wheeler (Ed.), *Teaching Islam* (pp.168–180). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hiatt-Michael, D. (1994). Parent Involvement in American Public Schools: An Historical Perspective 1642-1994. *School Community Journal*, 4, 247-258. Retrieved October 10, 2010, from the ERIC database.
- Hoerrner, M. (2011). The Role of the Homeschooling Father. *Buzzle Web Portal: Intelligent Life on the Web*. Retrieved March 26, 2010, from <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/role-homeschooling-father-involvement-academic-success.html>
- Holt, J. (1981). *Teach your own*. New York: Delacorte Press/Seymour Lawrence.
- Homeschooling Approaches . (n.d.). *The #1 Homeschooling Community* . Retrieved November 10, 2010, from [www.homeschool.com/Approaches](http://www.homeschool.com/Approaches)
- Hunt, T. C., & Maxson, M. M. (1981). *Religion and morality in American schooling*. Washington: University Press of America.

- Ibrahim, I. A. (1997). *A brief illustrated guide to understanding Islam* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Houston: Darussalam.
- Isenberg, E. (2007). What have we learned about homeschooling?. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 82(2-3), 387-409.
- Jessie W., & Bauer, S. W. (1999). *The Well-trained mind*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Joss, C. (2011). Different Ways To Homeschool Your Children. *Knowledge Net*. Retrieved April 19, 2011, from <http://wledge.net/reference-education/different-ways-to-homeschool-your-children.htm>
- Kassam, T. R. (2003). Teaching religion in the 21st century. In B. M. Wheeler (Ed.), *Teaching Islam* (pp. 191–215). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kay, B. (2001, August 15). School's out forever. *National Post*. Retrieved January 8, 2011, from <http://www.barbarakay.ca/archives.php>
- Knowles, J. G., Marlow, S.E., & Muchmore, J.A. (1992, February). From Pedagogy to ideology: Origins and phases of home education in the United States, 1970-1990. *American Journal of Education*, 100(2), 195-235.
- Kozol, J. (1991). *Savage Inequalities*. New York: crown Publishers.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). What we can learn from multicultural education research. *Educational leadership*, 51(8), 22-26. Retrieved February 1, 2010, from the EBSCO database.
- Lamb, L. (1990, March/April). Do-it-yourself-schools. *Utne Reader*, pp. 32-34.
- Lines, P. (2000). Homeschooling comes of age. *Public Interest*, 74-85
- Lips & Feinberg. (2008). *Backgrounder*. Washington DC: The Heritage Foundation. Palo Alto, CA: Hoover Press.
- Livni, E. (2006, August ). Keeping the Faith. ABC NEWS. *Muslim Home Education Network*. Retrieved January 26, 2011, from <http://www.muslimhomeschool.net/hsa/americaHsgrowing.html>
- Loria, O. (2002, June 27). ON the front lines of home education nationally and internationally.

- Retrieved February 30, 2010, from [http://www.educationrevolution.org/home\\_dbyollor.html](http://www.educationrevolution.org/home_dbyollor.html)
- Macfarquhar, N. (2008, March 26). Many Muslims turn to home schooling . *New York Times*, pp. 1-3. Retrieved December 3, 2010, from [http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/26/us/26muslim.html?pagewanted=1&\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/26/us/26muslim.html?pagewanted=1&_r=1)
- Masri, Ghalib. (1994). *A Glimpse of Islamic Faith*. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Islamic Research Foundation.
- Maududi, Sayyid Abdul A'la. (1993). *Finality of Prophethood*. Delhi, India: Hindustan Litho.
- McReynolds, K. (2007). Homeschooling. *ENCOUNTER: Education for Meaning and Social Justice*, 20(2), 36-41.
- Monfils, G. (1991, March). On home schooling. *US Air Magazine*, 13-17.
- Moore, J. R. (2009). Why religious education matters: The role of Islam in multicultural education. *Multicultural Perspectives*. 11(3), 139-145. doi: 10.1080/15210960903116563.
- Moore, R. S. (1987). The compulsory all day kindergarten: when freedom isn't there. *Lincoln Review*, 7, 44-51.
- Moore, R., & Moore, D. (1988). *Home school burnout*. Brentwood, Tennessee: Wolgemuth & Hyatt.
- Moore, R., & Moore, D. (1984). *Home style-teaching*. Waco, Texas: Word Books.
- Muhammad, A. (2009). *Transforming school culture: How to overcome staff division*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.
- Neal, A. (2006 September/October). Homeschooler: into the mainstream. *The Saturday Evening Post*, 54-55, 102-104.
- Noddings, N. (1992). *The challenge to care in schools: an alternative approach to education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Nord, W. A. (1995). *Religion and American education: Rethinking a national dilemma*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

- Nord, W. A., & Haynes, C. G. (1998). *Taking religion seriously across the curriculum*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Olivos, E. M. (2006). *The power of parents: a critical perspective of bicultural parent involvement in public schools*. New York: Peter Lang.
- “Once again homeschoolers score high on the ACT exam” (2007). HSLDA, Retrieved December 1, 2010, from <http://www.hslda.org/docs/news/hslda/200707310.asp>
- Pearson, R. (2002). *The Worth of a Child: Rural Homeschooling/Public School Partnerships Are Leading the way*. 1-13. Retrieved February 1, 2010, from the ERIC database.
- Pulliam, J. D. (1987). *History of Education in America* (4 ed.). Columbus: Merrill Publishing Company.
- “Questions and Answers About Homeschooling.” (2004, March 26). FAQ About Homeschooling. *Home*. Retrieved December 26, 2010, from <http://holtgws.com/faqabouthomescho.html>
- Raooof, Abdul. (1985). *Quran for Children*. Delhi, India: Taj Company.
- Rakestraw, J.F. (1988). Home schooling in Alabama. *Homeschooling Researcher*, 4, 1-6.
- Ransom, M. (2001). *The complete idiot's guide to homeschooling*. Indianapolis, IN: A Pearson Education.
- Ravitch, D. (2001). American traditions of education. *A primer on America's schools* (pp. 1-15). Hoover Institution Press.
- Ray, B. (2007). The evidence is so positive, what current research tells us about homeschooling. *Christianbook.com*. Retrieved August 30, 2010, from [http://www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/cms\\_content?page=1812612&sp=102656&event=1016TOS%7C1806673%7C102656](http://www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/cms_content?page=1812612&sp=102656&event=1016TOS%7C1806673%7C102656)
- Ray, B. (2002). Customization through homeschooling. *Educational Leadership*, 59, 50-54. Retrieved September 5, 2010, from the ERIC database.
- Ray, B. (2004). Homeschoolers on to College: What Research Shows Us. *Journal of College Admission* no, 5-11.



- Reinhart, A. K. (2003). On the "Introduction to Islam." In B. M. Wheeler (Ed.), *Teaching Islam* (pp. 22–45). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Riley, R., & Shalala, D. (2000). A call to commitment: Father's involvement in children's learning. Retrieved February 2, 2011, from <http://www2.ed.gov/pubs/parents/calltocommit/index.html>
- Romanowski, M. (2006). Revisiting the common myths about home schooling. *Clearing House*, 79 (3), 125-129.
- Rudner, L. (1999). Scholastic Achievement and Demographic Characteristics. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 7. Retrieved August 30, 2010, from <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v7n8/>
- Sarwar, G. (2008). *Islam: beliefs and teachings* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). London: The Muslim Educational Trust.
- Saba, L. & Gattis, J. (2002). *The McGraw-Hill Homeschooling Companion*. New York: R.R. Donnelley & Sons.
- Shepard, M. (1990). Home schooling, a legal view. *Schooling at home: Parents, kids, and learning* (pp. 57-66). Santa Fe, New Mexico: John Muir Publication
- Smith, J. M. (2008, December 3). Washington Times Op-ed—Testing Proves Success of Graduates. *Homeschool: HSLDA-Home School Legal Defense Association*. Retrieved July 27, 2010, from <http://www.hslda.org/docs/news/washingtontimes>
- Spears, D. (n.d.). The Old Schoolhouse Magazine - How To Homeschool Article - Welcome. *The Old Schoolhouse Magazine - Homeschooling - Welcome*. Retrieved August 30, 2010, from <http://thehomeschoolmagazine.com/>
- Stevens, Mitchell (2001). *Kingdom of Children*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Swartz, E. (1992). Multicultural Education: from a Compensatory to a Scholarly Foundation *In Research and Multicultural Education: From the Margins to the Mainstream* (pp. 26-38). London: Falmer Press.
- Taylor, L. (1997). Home in School: Insights on education through the lens of homeschoolers. *The theory into practice journal*, 36(2), 110-116.

- Thange, M. (2009). The Role of Fathers in Homeschooling. *Muslim Home Education Network Australia*. Retrieved July 27, 2010, from <http://www.muslimhomeschool.net/hsa/rolefather.html>
- Travis, A. (2010, February 26). Certified teacher joins home-school world. *The Journal Gazette*. Retrieved July 26, 2010, from <http://www.journalgazette.net/article>
- Understanding Islam and the Muslims*. (1989). Washington, D.C: Embassy of Saudi Arabia.
- Wade, T. E., Jr. (1986). *The home school manual*. Auburn, California: Gazelle.
- Wattenberg, B. J. (1976). *The statistical history of the United States from Colonial times to the present*. New York: Basic Books.
- Werner, E. E., & Smith, R. S. (1990). Protective factors and individual resilience. In S. J. Meisels & J. P. Shonkoff (Eds.) *Handbook of early childhood intervention* (pp. 97-116). New York : Cambridge University Press.
- Wheeler, B. M. (2003). What can't be left out: The essentials of teaching Islam as a religion. In B. M. Wheeler (Ed.), *Teaching Islam* (pp. 3–21). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Wilhelm, G., & Firmin, M. (2009). Historical and Contemporary Developments in Home School Education. *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 18, 303-315. doi: 10.1080/10656210903333442.
- Williamson, K. (1989). *Home Schooling: Answering Questions*, Illinois: Charles C
- Thomas Wyatt, G. (1997, January). Homeschooling fathers. *Home Education Magazine*. Retrieved January 2, 2011, from [http://www.homeedmag.com/HEM/141/141.97\\_art\\_fthrs.html](http://www.homeedmag.com/HEM/141/141.97_art_fthrs.html)
- Testimonials. (2011, January 10). *Kinza Academy: Homeschooling, Traditional Education*. Retrieved April 27, 2011, from <http://kinzaacademy.com/testimonials1.html>
- Tizard, B., & Hughes, M. (1984). *Young children learning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Van Galen, Jane., & Pitman, M. A. (editors)(1991) *Home schooling: political, historical, and pedagogical perspectives*. New Jersey: Ablex.

Zinn, H. (2003). *A People's History of America*. New York, New York, USA: HarperCollins.

