Chapter 6
Researching a Unique CLD Population

ABSTRACT

Chapter 6 informs the reader of the process of conducting valid, unbiased research. This process begins with a research question or theoretical construct related to the study’s purpose and moves the researcher, step by step, through a sequence of activities beginning with the identification of a target population, drawing from that population a representative sample, selecting and applying a research methodology from which relevant data can be drawn, and analyzing those data to arrive at research-based conclusions commensurate with the study’s initial question. The chapter connects this process to the central purpose of this work, as presented in foregoing and subsequent chapters.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CHAPTER

There are numerous issues related to individuals with CLD, which are exacerbated when those individuals have children with disabilities. The identified gap in the literature called for a mixed methods research study to address the lack of data on a particular CLD group, with a confusing race classification – MENASWA (Middle Eastern, North African, Southwest Asian). While there are many issues of cultural competency, inclusivity, and family-school partnerships, in this chapter, a description of a study on a unique CLD population is shared.

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A study on the MENASWA population, as it related to families who have children with disabilities in the United States educational system, will be described. This study utilized a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods sequentially to collect data, determine significant correlations to relevant demographic factors, and identify which strategies for serving students with disabilities are the most helpful as perceived by MENASWA families. The purpose of this study was to identify unique variables and ultimately determine strategies that will be helpful to supporting this unique, and somewhat invisible, population.

Research Questions

The following questions were pursued in this research that generated the data necessary to provide answers for this work relating directly to the impact of certain demographic factors of MENASWA families, including home culture, religion, length of residence in the U.S., immigration experience, level of education, country of origin, socioeconomic status (SES), English language proficiency (ELP), and the nature of the child’s disability:

**Research Question 1:** What impact do various demographic factors of MENASWA families have on the families’ cross-cultural understanding of disability?

**Research Question 2:** What impact do various demographic factors of MENASWA families have on their partnerships with their child’s special education program?

**Research Question 3:** What impact do various demographic factors of MENASWA families have on the families’ perception of the schools’ cultural competency and valuing of their culture by special education personnel?

**Research Question 4:** What impact do various demographic factors of MENASWA families have on their identification of challenges related to their child’s special education program?

**Research Question 5:** What impact do various demographic factors of MENASWA families have on their identification of recommendations related to their child’s special education program?
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