

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

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Title:

Making Sense of the Information Needs for Acquisition of Information Literacy skills of
English-speaking New African Immigrants: A Case Study of Ethiopian Women at Eloise
May Library, Denver, Colorado, USA

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Using Dervin's (1983) Sense-making methodology related to communication-as-procedure including situation defining strategies, communication tactics, and addressing differences as the theoretical framework, this case study explores the processes of information need, seeking, and use through which English speaking Ethiopian women immigrants to the United States after the year 2000 become informed and acquire information literacy skills. Participants in the study are Ethiopian women immigrants who come to the Eloise May Library in Denver, Colorado. Through a series of open-ended, neutral questions and prompts, semi-structured interviews were conducted using a narrative inquiry strategy that enabled the participants to tell in conversational style their own stories. Findings in the study are related to American Library Association research findings published in *Serving Non-English Speakers: 2007 Analysis of Library Demographics, Services and Programs*. A new information behavior theory, *library hesitancy*, is introduced as well as a new definition of cultural competence that includes

abilities to understand and respect language and cultural differences and to address disparities including varying language acquisition abilities; varying educational and cultural backgrounds; and varying economic stability and instability among diverse populations competently. A series of recommends for public library resources and/or services to meet information literacy needs of new immigrants is outlined.

Keywords: African immigrants, communication-as-procedure, English speaking Ethiopian women, immigrants, information need, information seeking, information use, information literacy, library hesitancy, new immigrants, new African immigrants, public library, Sense-making.

INFORMATION NEEDS OF NEW AFRICAN IMMIGRANTS

MAKING SENSE OF THE INFORMATION NEEDS FOR ACQUISITION OF
INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING NEW AFRICAN
IMMIGRANTS: A CASE STUDY OF ETHIOPIAN WOMEN AT ELOISE MAY
LIBRARY, DENVER, COLORADO, USA

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Chapter One

Introduction

Libraries in the United States (U.S.) and their missions have evolved and changed in response to the needs of people in society. For example, public library services have changed over time to address the needs of people in communities who come to the U.S. from other countries with hopes to discover opportunities for education and employment. Today, the number of people coming to the U.S. from other countries who can benefit from new and innovative public library services appears to be at an all-time high with 41.3 million immigrants in the U.S. According to Zeigler and Camarota (2014), “the nation’s immigrant population (legal and illegal) hit a record 41.3 million in July 2013” (para. 2).

Public library service to immigrants can be traced to the beginning of the modern public library of the late 19th century and its mission of serving the public, and to Carnegie who is credited with the 1889 opening of the first public library in Pennsylvania (Rubin, 2010). The opening of the first public library was part of his large-scale philanthropy that focused on building local libraries, education, scientific research, and promotion of world peace. Born in Scotland in 1835, Carnegie immigrated with his poor parents to America in the mid-nineteenth century. As a self-educated individual, Carnegie understood the importance of access to resources that foster the ambitions of people seeking to better their lives in a new country. His personal understandings of the importance of the library led to his personal financial investment in libraries. Carnegie said,

It was from my own early experience I decided there was no use to which money could be applied so productive of good to boys and girls who have good within them and ability and ambition to develop it, as the founding of a public library in a community which is willing to support it as a municipal institution. (Carnegie & Dyke, 1920, p. 47)

Carnegie's emphasis of making local public library collections and services available continues today as the library profession is increasingly innovative with many new efforts to emphasize and expand public library services to all people in communities including immigrants.

The Problem to Solve

Today, the question of how to best provide library services and resources to immigrants in the U.S. continues to challenge librarians and others who have an interest not in being the purveyors of the American culture, but who are devoted to meeting the information literacy needs of newcomers to America. There are many ways that professional librarians establish and achieve their mission including through their code of ethics (ALA, 1995) that articulates the value of tolerance and emphasizes respect for multiple points-of-view and universal literacy. The problem is that public librarians do not know enough about the information needs of immigrants who now come to the U.S. with hopes to discover opportunities for education and employment. What is missing in many cases is librarians' clear understandings of the information needs of individuals who grew up in countries where information literacy (AASL, 2007; ACRL, 2011, 2015) is not understood as it is today in the U.S. Without early information literacy instruction in elementary and secondary schools as it now exists in the U.S. and other regions of the

western world, many new immigrants are unprepared for major changes they experience. Immigrants are, therefore, often lost when it comes to participation in American education that occurs in today's schools and libraries as well as in any aspects of life in American society. Many professional librarians want to alleviate this deficit by becoming more effective instructors and facilitators of information use.

Some research has been conducted to investigate public libraries and services to new immigrants. For example, the changing demographics in communities have been studied by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS, 2004) and the American Library Association (ALA, 2008). Reports from these studies establish the need for libraries to respond to changes in demographics in today's local communities. Additionally, research studies that investigate the use of public libraries by immigrants highlight the importance of public library outreach to immigrants (Alire, 1993, 1997, 2007; Burke, 2007, 2008; Caidi & Allard, 2008, 2010; Cuban, 2007; Fisher, 1997, 2004). Public library examples of using research to improve library services through outreach to immigrants are found across the U.S. in locations such as Queens Library, Queens, New York; Hartford Library, Hartford, Connecticut; Hennepin County Library, Minnesota, Minneapolis; King County Library System, Seattle, Washington; Los Angeles Library, Los Angeles, California and, Arapahoe Library District, Denver, Colorado. However, there remains the need to better understand specific, large groups of immigrants who are now living in U.S. communities. For example, there is a recent influx of African immigrants who have come to the U.S. to establish residence, to be educated, and to have a presence in U.S. communities as professionals and business owners. This need to better

understand recent African immigrants must be considered in the context of the current, rapid increase in the number of immigrants in the U.S.

Given the complexity of circumstances surrounding African immigrants as they are making homes in this country, this study responds to the need for new research and focuses only on one segment of the African immigrant population, English-speaking Ethiopian women, living in Denver, Colorado. The purpose of this study is to answer the central research question, "What are the processes of information need, seeking, and use through which English-speaking Ethiopian immigrant women to the U.S. after the year 2000 become informed and acquire information?" This question about processes of information need, seeking, and use is a different question than is typically asked by librarians who frame research questions from the library world and not from the world of immigrants. This central research question provides the opportunity to learn from the new African immigrants about their experiences and perspectives of opportunities, challenges, and change they experience as immigrants.

Increase in African Immigrants in the U.S.

African immigrant settlement in the U.S. is significant in many regions of the nation due to recent increases in numbers of immigrants. According to the United States Census Bureau in the American Community Survey data, the number of African immigrants in the U.S. nearly doubled from 881,300 in 2000 to 1.6 million in 2010 (Gambino, Trevelyan, & Fitzwater, 2014). In Colorado, the region for this study, the number of African immigrants in Colorado more than tripled from 9,763 in 2000 to 29,094 in 2013 (MPI, 2001 – 2015). In addition, the African immigrant influx is widespread and is present in states such as New York, California, Texas, Maryland and

Minnesota (Gambino, Trevelyan, & Fitzwater, 2014). This increase in the number of African immigrants in the U.S. explains why libraries, such as the Eloise May Public Library in Denver, Colorado, the location for this study, have urgent needs to be prepared and proactive in responding to major changes in community demographics.

Immigrant Terminology

A large increase in the number of recent immigrants in the U.S. has resulted in many new opportunities for public libraries to serve the information needs of diverse, local communities. The significant increase in number of immigrants from the year 2000 onwards prompts library groups to observe the immigrant rise and to differentiate between longer established immigrants and recent immigrants. Unless librarians understand the differences between longer established immigrants and recent immigrants, they are not likely to be effective in meeting the information needs of recent immigrants. Recent publications clarify the use of terminology for describing immigrants. For example, Caidi, Allard, and Quirke (2010) defined the term “immigrant” to indicate “any individual who is foreign-born and has arrived to the U.S. with the desire to set up permanent residence in the U.S.” (p. 493). The term “new immigrants” (pp. 4-5) was defined by Caidi, Allard, and Dechief (2008) to only refer to recent immigrants. This use of the term new immigrant is used throughout this study to refer to immigrants who arrived in the U.S. after the year 2000.

Characteristics of New African Immigrants

Characteristics of new African immigrants to the U.S. are unique in contrast to some other recent immigrant groups providing new and different opportunities for public libraries and librarians. The American Immigration Council reports in *African*

Immigrants in America: A Demographic Overview (AIC, 2012) that several of the African immigrants who arrived in the year 2000 had some amount of college education and held professional jobs. This information about African immigrants' raises questions about whether or not existing outreach, including English language classes and basic skills computer classes, by most public libraries is appropriately designed to meet the information needs of these new immigrants. The characteristics of new African immigrants were further described by Takougang (2003):

The "new" immigrants are mainly refugees and asylum seekers escaping the ravages of civil wars and political persecution in their homelands, or highly skilled professionals disappointed by the worsening economic situation in many African states. Also unlike their early counterparts, these "new" immigrants come with every intention of establishing permanent residency and acquiring United States citizenship. (conclusion section, para. 1)

Takougang's (2003) depiction of the new African immigrants is significant as it was used as a set of descriptive criteria for selection of study participants. Takougang identifies important factors regarding English-speaking abilities; factors about African immigrants and their interest to pursue education; and factors regarding African immigrants' ambitions and their desires to succeed in the U.S. Takougang's characteristics and factors suggest that it is highly likely that the information needs of English-speaking immigrants have been overlooked in the design of library services.

This is a strong possibility since public libraries have primarily been in the role of providing services, resources, and outreach to non-English speaking immigrants through

standard tools such as English language-learning classes, computer classes, materials and resource support.

A combination of the unique characteristics of African immigrants from more than fifty countries in Africa now residing in Colorado, and the outreach role of the public libraries serving African immigrants in Colorado public libraries, presented a unique opportunity to investigate and better understand this large and growing new immigrant population in the U.S. An example of an investigation of this type is the research by Otiso (2006) who used U.S. census data from the year 2000 in a comparative analysis of African immigrants in the U.S. to examine how African immigrants compared with each other and their U.S. counterparts in terms of education and employment. Otiso's purpose in doing his study was to provide useful information to policy makers to tailor services to specific communities. He observed that the success rate of African immigrants establishing themselves in U.S. was not uniform across all African communities. Ethiopians were among some of the African groups that immigrated to U.S. as refugees who do not do as well as their other African counterparts from English-speaking countries in Africa. This suggested low success rate of Ethiopian immigrants needs further investigation.

Characteristics of Ethiopian Women

While low success rates of Ethiopian immigrants, both men and women, are not well understood, there is evidence that suggests that women have fewer opportunities than men. According to Yohannis (1991) Ethiopian women have fewer opportunities than men in all areas of growth and development. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2012) fact sheets on Ethiopia shows that 82% of

Ethiopian women are illiterate. Deyessa et al. (2010) published a report that indicates that Ethiopian women are exposed to highest risks of violence when women are more literate than their spouses. The definition of literacy in the Deyessa et al. study refers to one year of modern education. The authors of this study indicate that modern education in Ethiopia has been available only in the last two decades. In light of these facts, it is highly significant when Ethiopian women are able to immigrate to the U.S. to pursue their intellectual and/or professional desires to succeed given the odds that are against them. Despite the challenges that Ethiopian women may have faced in their country of origin, Ethiopian women's desire to succeed is reflected in the documentation of the various accomplishments of prominent Ethiopian women in the book, *Flowers of Today, Seeds of Tomorrow* (Wondimu, 2012). This book showcases success stories of female Ethiopians in the U.S. where triumph and success against several odds and hardships is a reverberating theme.

New African immigrants' unique characteristics are captured in the writing of a white paper by Tetteh (2011), a University of Denver library school graduate of African origin. Tetteh reported her observed evidence that most of the new African immigrants living in Colorado are educated, speak English, and have the ambition and the desire to succeed. Tetteh noted, based on her interactions with new African immigrants, a significant lack of understanding among new African immigrants of how information is organized in the libraries. Tetteh suggested that these new African immigrants living in Colorado may experience anxiety. This anxiety pointed out by Tetteh may be what Mellon (1986) describes as library anxiety, and information behavior related to not knowing how to use the library and not asking for help.

ALA's Approach to Diversity Outreach Research

The new African immigrant group in the U.S. has not as yet been the focus of significant diversity outreach research such as that done by the American Library Association (ALA, 2008). Instead, the ALA has focused its research on non-English speakers, which resulted in details about the Spanish language populations. In the 2008 ALA report focused on success of diversity outreach, *Serving Non-English Speakers: 2007 Analysis of Library Demographics, Services and Programs*, it was reported that “78% of surveyed libraries considered Spanish language speakers and their information needs while designing library services, programs, and collections for non-English speakers” (p. 4). The study also revealed that 82% of librarians agreed that they served a “linguistically isolated market” (ALA, 2008, p. 20). The study further indicates that this focus on services to Spanish speakers could be related to the statistics published by U.S. Census in 2000 indicating that “Spanish speaking groups are one of the largest and fastest growing groups” (ALA, 2008, p. 28). The report states that this type of a focus on serving users from major language groups ushers in the risk of isolating other linguistic or cultural groups. Another important aspect of this ALA report is that “the survey was distributed to 672 libraries” (ALA, 2008, p. 19) and for the very first time ALA asked librarians to take notice of their linguistically isolated populations and recommended using any relevant demographics data that might be useful to identify various populations so libraries can develop better services that cater to local community demographics. This recommendation by the ALA to take notice of linguistically isolated populations influenced the design of this study.

Present Study

It is important to point out that when moving beyond the ALA (2008) report, my experiential knowledge and observations at the Eloise May Public Library indicates there are, in fact, other significant immigrant groups to be served by public libraries such as the English-speaking African immigrant population that is continuing to increase in numbers in Denver, Colorado. This study fills a gap indicated by the ALA (2008) report by investigating the information seeking behavior and information needs of the fast growing, English-speaking immigrant population group, the foreign-born population from Africa, specifically women from Ethiopia now located in the Denver, Colorado area.

New African immigrants in the U.S., specifically Ethiopian women who use the Eloise May Public Library in Denver, Colorado, were selected as the study population.

This population group was selected because of its unique circumstances: new immigrants; African women; speakers of English; self-identified as educated; and come to the public library building. These women, some raising children, are typically studying in an academic content area such as nursing, or are women with entrepreneurial goals such as starting a new business. While these women make use of the free, public library's space, they rarely, if ever, use available library collections, programs, or the services of professional librarians or library staff.

This study enabled Ethiopian women to tell their own stories beginning with childhood through adult learning experiences. The lens of narrative inquiry methodology was used where lived experiences generate new relations and are honored as a source of knowledge. Questions that draw out meaning, social relevance, and intention to make sense of information were asked to identify unique themes told in stories by the

participants. Through the individual stories, I gained insight into the choices new Ethiopian women made related to use, or non-use, of public library resources. The individual stories gathered identified cross-cultural communication (Wang & Frank, 2002) barriers that may affect the public librarians' work with these international library users.

Chapter Summary

U.S. librarians need to know how to better serve individuals from Africa who have recently immigrated to the U.S., particularly African women from Ethiopia who come to public libraries to use the library space but make little, if any, use of the library collections, available programming, and/or services by professional librarians. Some unanswered issues are: How do women from Ethiopia make sense of their new world? What is their view of learning? How can women from Ethiopia become information literate as it is understood in the U.S.? This study fills holes in the literature in the area of public library services to immigrants by addressing through asking research questions about information seeking, information use, information needs, and information literacy of English-speaking African immigrants in public libraries. This study provides a new definition of cultural competency. Based on the findings in this study, this new definition will be used to improve the abilities of professional public librarians to understand and respect cultural differences and to address disparities among diverse populations competently. This new description of cultural competency addresses disparities including: 1) varying language acquisition abilities; 2) varying educational and cultural backgrounds; and, 3) economic stability and instability. Chapter two is a review of literature on human knowledge construction; theories of information behavior; public

library diversity outreach including U.S. libraries receiving national awards for outreach; previous research on public libraries and immigrants; and information literacy as a learning outcome valued in the U.S.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

A study of public library diversity outreach to immigrant populations such as this study requires the researcher to have current knowledge and clear understandings of best diversity outreach practices in libraries that strive to meet the needs of new immigrant groups. The study also benefits from theoretical understandings of human information behavior, particularly how people access and use information with the goal of becoming information literate. It also depends on research-based understandings of knowledge construction and sense-making, the information behavior theories that provide explanation of the relationship between communication, information, and meaning. To answer philosophical and theoretical issues relevant to library diversity outreach to immigrant populations identified in this study, I rely on the points-of-view of scholars and researchers whose work is based in constructivist metatheory and is used to explain how humans construct knowledge and understanding. To answer questions pertaining to best diversity outreach practices, it is important to include authentic, evidence-based examples from various locations in the United States (U.S.). This chapter outlines and presents scholarly and professional publications and examples I used to conceptualize and address the study topic, public library diversity outreach to immigrant populations.

This study is conceptualized through a constructivist view of learning and several prominent theories of human information behavior. The concepts and theories included in this literature review are used today by educators and librarians who develop programs and plan instruction that involves library users in dynamic, active processes. In particular, Dervin's Sense-Making methodology (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet &

Lauterback, 2003) forms the basis for asking interview questions and analyzing the experiences described by participants in this study. Dervin's theory is one human information behavior theory influenced by constructivist philosophy. This literature review begins by addressing constructivism as a worldview as relevant to this study of Ethiopian women who use the library space at Eloise May Public Library in Denver, Colorado.

Human Knowledge Construction

Constructivist philosophy explains the thinking, or world views, of educational researchers cited in this study. Constructivism is one of several worldviews. Constructivism (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Bruner, 1968; Dewey, 1933, 1938; Kelly, 1963; Piaget, 1954; Vygotsky, 1978) is a metatheory, or philosophy, explaining a process of social construction of knowledge. It is the view that individuals are heavily influenced by their social world for their understanding and learning. Human information behavior theory is broadly defined by Pettigrew, Fidel, and Bruce (2001) as "how people need, seek, give, and use information in different contexts" (p. 44). Growing largely out of education and sociology, the central idea underpinning constructivism is that humans actively construct meaning and understanding of their world through social experiences. Constructivism describes how the learner constructs knowledge from experience that makes it unique to each individual. Constructivists such as Schutz (1932/1967), Berger and Luckmann (1966), and Garfinkel (1967/1991) believed that individuals use various social constructs to understand and make sense of their environment.

Dewey's (1938) constructivist theory of learning emphasized experiential learning. He focused on the learning process and how it is experienced by the individual.

He recommended that for teaching to be effective, learning must be grounded in the learner's real life experience. Dewey advocated for individualized, interactive element of experience to be included in instruction, moving away from the traditional learning environments in schools of his era. Piaget (1954), a constructivist theorist, advanced the concept that individuals have cognitive abilities that influence their learning and knowledge built through experience. Piaget saw the individual as an active participant in learning. Kelly (1963), also using constructivist philosophy, pointed out that personal constructs vary from person-to-person as each individual has different experiences. Kelly asserted that it is important for every individual to understand, or analyze, her/his own experiences so it can provide insights for predicting actions. In this way, analyzing experience can help the individual engaged in the learning process to anticipate the results of actions or even the next steps. As individuals learn constantly, it is Kelly's view that the personal constructs of the individual changes based on changes in experiences. This does not mean that previous experiences are discarded. Constant understanding of the changing world is possible due to individuals using the existing constructs, as well as by the construction of new experiences.

Based in constructivist philosophy, Berger and Luckmann (1966) presented the theory that individual's knowledge of everyday reality results from social interactions. They emphasized that the individual is a social product and that society is a product of human interaction and human relationships. They asserted that face-to-face interaction with people is the most important kind of social interaction and social structure is an essential element of the everyday reality of life. As individuals live and interact with social groups, their individual thought processes over a period of time is a reflection of

the group's thought processes due to the influences of social interactions and realities that are socially constructed. Berger and Luckmann assert that individual habits are influenced by institutions. The environment created by the individual is often a social environment.

Bruner (1968), another constructivist philosopher and cognitive psychologist, asserted the idea that learners construct new ideas, or concepts, based on their current or past knowledge. He placed emphasis on the mind of the individual as being capable of interpreting and using experience. He emphasized that the mind of the individual is capable of driving the process of selecting, interpreting, and constructing meaning of encounters with information and experiences. Vygotsky (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978), a psychologist, called attention to the social and cultural aspects in the process of social construction of knowledge. He asserted that individuals are heavily influenced by their social world for their understanding. Vygotsky identified the Zone of Proximal Development (1978) as the distance between the actual independent development level and the potential development level under the guidance of, or in collaboration with, peers. He focused on what individuals can do on their own and what individuals can do with the assistance of others. For all the constructivist philosophers mentioned in this literature review, understanding human thinking depends on one's awareness and understanding of social mechanism in the life of an individual.

Theories of Information Behavior

In this study, the focus is on women who are new immigrants from Ethiopia to the U.S. These women use library space and avoid use of library resources and services. Therefore, it is necessary for the researcher to acknowledge that the study must employ

theory and methodology that allows the researcher to focus on the individual who has a presence in the library without assuming that the behaviors involving locating or using information sources are relevant. This is particularly challenging given that much of library and information science (LIS) research is concerned with how library users make use of existing library sources and services, and/or what sources can satisfy information needs. This study presents a new challenge and opportunity for using and extending the broad application of Dervin's Sense-Making methodology (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003) beyond what is already understood and published about the relationship of communication, information, and meaning. This study presents the unique opportunity to understand what people need to do to communicatively make sense of and participate in society that is new to them, a society built on democratic principles wherein education including schools and libraries play a central role. A social science theoretical framework from library and information science (LIS), Dervin's Sense-Making Methodology, has been selected to bind the study together and to frame the researcher's view of the topic.

Dervin's Sense-Making methodology. Dervin's Sense-Making methodology (Dervin et al., 2003) first articulated in 1983 is both a theory and conceptual tool that enables the researcher to move away from the traditional LIS research focus on how individuals locate, retrieve, and use library sources. According to Tidline (2005), Dervin's methodology has been used to study information seeking associated with numerous settings and services including "libraries; information systems; media systems; web sites; public information campaigns; classrooms; and counseling services" (p. 113). Tidline further asserts that Dervin's Sense-Making methodology "has also served to help

understand intrapersonal, interpersonal, small group, organizational, national, and global communication practices, and has been used in tandem with constructivist, critical, cultural, feminist, postmodern, and communitarian research viewpoints” (p. 113).

Sense-Making methodology requires a research focus on information behavior in a specific context and through the lens of what Dervin and Clark (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003) call “communication as procedure” (p. 173). It makes possible the opportunity for users of library space such as the individuals who comprise the study population in this study to express in their own words the situation that brought them to the library space and to reflect on their individual constructing of meaning. Using Dervin’s methodology (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003), the researcher focuses “on behavior at specific moments in time-space, but at the same time . . . fundamental dimensions of these behaviors that are applicable across time-space” (p. 173). Using neutral questioning, the researcher listens to the individual who has the opportunity to reveal to the researcher variants for thinking about human sense making and sense unmaking, in this case, variants relevant to the individual who has a presence in the library but who does not use the library resources or services.

Situation-defining strategies. Dervin and Clark (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003) point out that “in a world where sense is not given, every relationship involves daily acts of constructing via communicating” (p. 174). They propose six different situation-defining strategies and assert that these different situations be understood as procedures for defining a situation.

INDIVIDUAL RELATING TO SELF: Here the individual is thinking, creating, observing, arriving at personal sense and understandings of self.

INDIVIDUAL RELATING TO OTHER INDIVIDUALS: Here the individual is relating to other individuals, learning about others, comparing self to other, connecting or disconnecting with others.

INDIVIDUAL RELATING TO COLLECTIVITY: Here individual communicating focuses on participating in a collectivity which can move as one.

COLLECTIVITY RELATING TO SELF: Here collectivity is focusing on itself.

COLLECTIVITY RELATING TO INDIVIDUAL: Here a defined collectivity is focusing on individual.

COLLECTIVITY RELATING TO OTHER COLLECTIVITY: Here one defined collectivity is relating to another defined collectivity. (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet, Lauterback, 2003, pp. 173-176).

Communication tactics. The second dimension of Dervin and Clark's (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003) communication-as-procedure is nine tactics for accomplishing communication tasks necessary in a democratic communication situation. While Dervin and Clark (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003) do not suggest that these are the only communication tactics necessary in a democratic communication situation, they indicate that these are "one set of necessary tactics" (p. 177) and useful in thinking about the "communicating mandate of the human condition" (p. 177). They outline a chart that can be used as a guide to describe how humans are engaged in communication and to discover ways in which attending is done when individuals are relating to themselves; consequences that relate to ways of communicating; and ways of attending as done when individuals are attempting to operate in collectives (in this case the public library). Communication tactics include attending; creating ideas; finding

direction; expressing; finding connectedness; confronting opposing; mediating; recalling; and undoing rigidities (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003, pp. 176-177).

Addressing differences. In addressing communication gaps and inequities, Dervin (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003) asserted that “difference is now being conceptualized as both across time (e.g., one entity differing across time) as well as across space (two entities being different at the same time)” (p. 107). This conceptualization allows for the view that difference, for example the differences that Ethiopian women bring to the library space, as “fundamental, not as a noun but as a verb, as differencing” (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003, p. 107). Influenced by Dervin, this philosophical shift from thinking about communication as a noun to thinking about communicating as a verb has the potential to enable the LIS field, and the researcher in this study in particular, to “theorize communication as practice, as the *verbings* that humans, collectively and individually, use to construct bridges across gaps—self and others, self and community, structure and individual, self at time 1 and self at time 2, one aspect of self at time 1 to another aspect of self at time 1, chaos to order, order to chaos, homogeneity to difference, difference to homogeneity” (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003, p. 108). The questions incorporated by Sense-Making research such as what is the information seeking situation, what are the gaps faced by the user, and how is the user making sense of information is used to formulate approaches to understand the research subjects in the context of their interactions with the information systems.

The Sense-Making triangle developed by Dervin (1992), consisting of situation-gap-help, presents situation as any kind of circumstance where the individual is trying to

make sense of the circumstance; gap is when the individual is unable to bridge a prior experience with a new experience; and help is when the individual decides to seek help so to make sense of the situation. The outcome of this Sense-Making triangle is that the user walks away from this process with a new sense of information. By applying Dervin's Sense-Making triangle to the current research study, it will help identify potential inadequacies and provide greater understanding of the relationship of the research subjects in their information seeking and information retrieval process. Here methodology is important as it established that "information is not a thing that exists independent of and external to human being but rather is a product of human observing" (Dervin & Nilan, 1986, p. 16).

Kuhlthau's information search process. Kuhlthau's (1997) Information Search Process (ISP) theory based on personal construct theory of Kelly (1963) outlines information seeking as a process of construction. Kuhlthau's (1997) theory is relevant to this study because it is one prominent explanation widely used by LIS scholars in the U.S., the current location of the Ethiopian women in this study, which is used to explain human information use. Kuhlthau, through her writing and models, illustrates that the ISP occurs for individuals in six stages: initiation, when a person becomes aware of lack of knowledge. In this first stage, there is the awareness of the lack of knowledge regarding topic choice, subject area, bringing up feelings of uncertainty; selection—where the task is to identify and select the topic. In the second stage, when the topic or research problem is identified, it leads to hope and optimism and the user getting ready to proceed with the next steps of the search process; exploration—where the task is to investigate general information to expand personal understanding. In the third stage,

when encountering various sources of information, the feelings of confusion, uncertainty can resurface plummeting the confidence of the user; formulation—when feelings of uncertainty diminish and confidence increases. In the fourth stage, the user moves to evaluate the sources and the information to formulate his or her topic and confidence building up steadily; collection—where information gathered is related to the focused topic. In the fifth stage, the user is collecting pertinent information and relevant sources, thereby heightening the interest and involvement of the user; presentation—involves completing the search and presenting the results. In the sixth stage, the search process is completed with the user sharing the results of his or her learning. Feelings of relief or disappointment can ensue based on the outcomes of the search process.

Kuhlthau (1983) reported that 26 seniors in advanced placement English classes were studied in her initial research. She asserted that uncertainty was a dominant feeling experienced by the teens when involved in a complex process of putting together a research project assignment. Her research demonstrates how and why inter-relationship between “affective” and “constructive” (Kuhlthau, 2004, p. 38) stages matter, and how the stages of emotion influence the construction of thought and the search process. Kuhlthau (2009) acknowledged that “information seeking involves construction in that the person actively pursues understanding and seeks meaning from the information encountered over a period of time” (p. 8). Kuhlthau’s (2009) work is important for this research study as it provides a basis for understanding the affective and cognitive realms of an individual’s experience particularly relevant to an individual such as the women in this study who may experience some awareness of lack of knowledge. The ISP model also provides an outline that can be used to overcome uncertainty and enable individuals

to move forward into information use experiences. Today Kuhlthau's research and teaching (Kuhlthau & Maniotes, 2012) have progressed to communicating advanced skills for the information-inquiry process.

Savolainen's everyday life information seeking. Savolainen (1995) focused on how people acquire information in daily life to solve their daily problems through his everyday life information seeking (ELIS) approach. He investigated how people perceived information around them and what criteria they used to accept, or reject, information. He also theorized that social and cultural factors impact how people seek and use information and serves to determine how people use, or reject, information. Factors like the gender of the person, their socio-economic status, their educational background, availability, and access to information all play a role in everyday life information seeking.

Public Library Diversity Outreach

Understandings of best diversity outreach practices in libraries are necessary in this study as evidence of current, best practices, and to make clear that public libraries can effectively reach out to immigrants who are new in the U.S. and bring with them many dreams and goals. Current public library outreach practices for immigrants have been investigated in a recent national study. The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) department in collaboration with the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) published a report, *Library Services for Immigrants: A Report on Current Practices* (USCIS, 2004). This report presents examples of public libraries successfully meeting the needs of the immigrant groups in their communities, provides recommendations for libraries regarding partnerships and collaborations with

community agencies, and presents models for effective planning and outreach to diverse communities. The examples presented show the initiatives taken by public libraries including those in Queens Borough library in New York partnering with Queens Health Care to provide health workshops to the new immigrants in the public library. Another example is the enterprising nature of librarians in Boulder public library in Colorado where librarians present family and intergenerational programs to their newer immigrants.

The report not only provides examples of programs for immigrants, it also emphasizes the importance of planning that determines the success or failure of diversity outreach. This report appears as a quick, handy manual for libraries looking to replicate some successful programs and collaborations. The drawback of this report is that the scope of the study is limited to an investigation of very few libraries and does not take into account small or rural libraries that have limited resources to handle changing demographics of their communities. It does not discuss barriers to library services for new immigrants or provide examples of any barriers encountered when planning outreach to diverse communities. While the services in the example programs are in many ways impressive, the examples presented in the report are at the level of basic service. While the report mentions collaboration between public libraries and other community agencies, it does not discuss the problems that result when community agencies are not willing to collaborate with public libraries. Additional research is needed to plan public library programming and services that will reach difficult to serve populations such as the Ethiopian women in this study.

U.S. Libraries Receiving National Awards for Outreach

What are realistic expectations and strategies for serving new immigrants? My research on public libraries serving communities with large, diverse populations revealed that there are some exemplary public libraries involved in providing outreach services to recent immigrants across the U.S. For example, the Queens library in Queens, New York's outreach to immigrants includes English language learning classes, computer classes, citizenship preparation classes, partnerships with government agencies to help immigrants in preparing visa applications, health literacy help to immigrants, and collections available in approximately twenty international languages. Gitner and Rosenthal (2008) highlight the importance and value of the ongoing commitment of public libraries to making use of community demographics and to the immediate incorporation of demographic knowledge into programming and outreach efforts. They describe factors such as community analysis, innovative use of technology, strategic partnerships, and good customer service that has enabled Queens library to reach out effectively to immigrant communities and to become the highest circulating U.S. library.

What stands out as exemplary in the diversity outreach by Queens library is the commitment to community demographics and incorporating that knowledge immediately into programming and community outreach efforts. Programs and outreach activities are designed specifically to match the changing demographics. For example, in my personal communication with Gitner (F. Gitner, October, 2012), I learned that if librarians notice that a new Bangladeshi grocery store has opened in the neighborhood, they gather data on refugees arriving from Bangladesh and present cultural programs catering to that

nationality in the library so the refugees can see the library as a place that is welcoming them into the community.

Another example of exemplary public library service to immigrants is at the Hartford public library in Hartford, Connecticut. Hartford library received national recognition through the Library Aware award by *Library Journal* (Hartford Public Library Wins, 2013) for services that empower diverse populations. Naficy, who coordinates diversity outreach at Hartford Library, has received honors from the White House for her tireless championship to helping immigrants and refugees (Hartford's Homa Naficy, 2013). The importance of understanding the digital needs of diverse populations and using the library to satisfy digital needs is what stands out in the outreach efforts by Hartford Library. Library partnership with other community agencies interested in helping immigrants assimilate into the society is another significant factor in assisting immigrants.

The Hennepin County Library in Minnesota has collections in 40 world languages (Hennepin County Library, 2014) and offers immigration assistance through English language learning classes, computer classes and provides assistance in locating community resources for the Somali, Hispanic, Hmong and African communities (Lynch, 2015). The King County Library System (2015) in Seattle, Washington is exemplary because they have incorporated diversity outreach into their strategic goals and mission statement. Unique to the practices of serving immigrants is the library diversity outreach by contracting with businesses owned by minorities and women and underutilized businesses (King County Library System, 2010). As of the 2011, the library system's World Languages collection is comprised of resources in 25 languages distributed in

various branches of the King county library system (King County Library System, 2015). The library system used circulation and demographic data to help determine which branches would be most accessible to patrons using these language collections.

The Los Angeles Public Library, Los Angeles, California, has been recognized for its service to immigrants from 140 countries who speak close to 244 languages and the library's Immigrant Integration Initiative (Urban Libraries Council recognizes Los Angeles Public Library, 2013). This outreach effort helps immigrants by providing various services such as literacy help, job assistance, citizenship information etc. to succeed. Together these exemplars establish that some public libraries in the U.S. have become a valued public resource to immigrants who look to public libraries as a place where they can find assistance.

Previous Research on Public Libraries and Immigrants

Alire and Ayala (2007) focus on providing effective library services to Spanish speaking populations in, *Serving Latino Communities: A How-To-do-it Manual for Librarians*. Alire is an experienced library practitioner; a library and information science faculty member in the U.S. and China; an international speaker in Mexico, Puerto Rico and Brazil; and past President of Reforma, the national association to provide library and information services to Latino and the Spanish-speaking. The purpose of Alire's co-authored book is to propose a systematic process for service development. This book makes clear that the main elements for providing effective service to Latino populations includes ongoing community needs assessment; knowledge of changing demographics in the community; library staff competency; building knowledge and awareness of cultural differences between western audiences and Latinos; tailoring library resources and

programs to draw in Latino populations; and partnering with community agencies for successful outreach and sharing best and successful practices. The detailed planning and organizing involving several key players, including the Latino populations, emphasizes the importance of dedication and advocacy by library professionals; the importance of resource sharing; and the role of libraries in taking a proactive role in reaching out to underserved groups – all of this makes the book stand out as a useful primer to consult for building services to other immigrant groups. The importance of converting non-library users among Latino populations into library users is an important concept relevant to this study.

Burke (2008a) focuses on public library use by immigrants. Her method was to investigate themes and literature published on immigrants and libraries. Burke describes various studies done to determine library use by immigrants. She shows, by process of analysis and deduction, how the various studies provided useful information but with significant limitations in the studies. Burke indicates that the new immigrant's individual characteristics are what ultimately determines, or influences, his or her use of the public library. She emphasizes that "some individuals will not be likely to become library users because of a variety of contexts in their backgrounds or circumstances, no matter what the library does, it is unlikely to attract these individuals" (Burke, 2008a, p. 167). She used the U.S. Current Population Survey from 2002 to compare households of immigrants and their use of public libraries. She supports her claim that knowing individual characteristics of immigrants is important by drawing attention to the fact that the data gathered was information from immigrant households and not from each individual in the household. Burke points out that the "specific limitation of the data in

this study is that the library questions were asked at a household level” (p. 168) and she shares her viewpoint that “a more in-depth picture of immigrant library use could have been established if the questions had been answered by the individuals in the household” (p. 168).

Burke (2008b) also used the data gathered from 73 public libraries by the Urban Libraries Council reflecting the huge diversity of nationalities of immigrants served by these libraries where the participating libraries responded that “they served patrons from five to two hundred nationalities” (p. 32). Burke brings up important questions such as, “With so much diversity, how are public libraries serving their patrons?” (p. 32), and “What kind of assessment is done by the libraries in regards to the use and usefulness of the services designed to serve immigrants” (p. 32). Burke adopts the method of studying existing immigrant and library use literature spanning a period of fifteen years. She then groups her findings from her investigation of the literature into four overarching themes: 1) public library services for immigrants; 2) what immigrants want and need; 3) improving services to immigrants; and 4) barriers to immigrant library use. Her investigation of the literature on public library services to immigrants is not limited to scholarly articles. It also covers reports published by Queens library in New York and services provided by the bookmobile to immigrant populations. Her conclusion is that immigrant households are less likely to use non-English language materials in the libraries, or to attend library programs geared towards helping immigrants find a job or build on their computer and other literacy skills. She does point out that her conclusions may not apply to all libraries and some libraries must have great success in their outreach to immigrants. Burke shares that the significance of her conclusion is that it contradicted

earlier notions established by previous literature on library services to immigrants. She also differentiates between the new immigrant and the established immigrant as that separation of identity is very important while studying the use of public libraries by immigrants. She addresses nuances such as differentiating between offering a library program useful for immigrants and not getting anyone to attend the programs.

Fisher et al (2004) use a theoretical framework, the theory of information grounds to examine the extensive information needs and practical needs of newer immigrants in the Queens Borough library communities of New York as they attempt to settle into the new community. They acknowledge that due to the fact that very little research has been done on the information behavior of immigrants, and due to the diversity of language, literacy, and cultural backgrounds, it is very difficult to study immigrants' information needs. They draw attention to information use and how information is used by the immigrants. They state that understanding the information behavior of immigrants will be incomplete if there is no examination of the information used by immigrants. The article also highlights strides made in information behavior research and makes several references to the latest research in information behavior that focuses on a value-based approach.

Takougang (2003) published research related to African immigrants in the U.S. Takougang brings focus to the African immigrants coming to the U.S. in search of better opportunities for education, business, economics, and safe living environments for their family members. Takougang's data on the growing numbers of African immigrants is taken from the Immigration and Naturalization Services and Census data. In this report, he uses newspaper articles from various states and several journal articles to chronicle the

profile of African immigrants coming to the U.S. By combining his own personal knowledge of the African community with reports from community instruments like newspapers, he provides insights regarding the needs and aspirations of this growing community. The strength of this report is that it provides a multi-dimensional profile of the African immigrants that supports the fact that the varying backgrounds of the immigrants makes it necessary to closely study the information needs of every immigrant group. What is also unique about this report is the Cuban community example in Miami (Takougang, 2003, para 15) provided by Takougang as, a possible model for the African community to use to create a solid community. The limitation of this report is that it has a large number of secondary sources, newspaper articles. Given that newspaper articles do not have the obligation to conduct refined data gathering that is required for professional journal articles, the validity of the data might be questionable. Takougang's description of the characteristics of the new African immigrants is a critical piece for this study as it ushers in a new focus on English-speaking immigrants who have the same ambitions and aspirations as their Western counterparts that has not been discussed in literature on immigrants using public libraries.

Cuban (2007), recommends transcending from stereotyping immigrant needs by paying close attention to the changing demographics of a community and examining the needs of the changing immigrant groups in the community. It is essential to move away from standard criteria and standard conversation surrounding library services to immigrants. Cuban emphasized the importance of “communicating competently with new immigrant communities” (Cuban, 2007, p. 89). She provided a detailed worksheet of how to accomplish this from involving all the library stakeholders to providing cultural

sensitivity training to staff, to assessing library communication brochures in overcoming barriers and creating genuine relationships. Cuban laid out an action plan including steps for libraries interested in understanding the information needs of new immigrants. Cuban emphasized the advocacy role of libraries and library staff in helping immigrants assimilate into their new environments. She used a combination of research studies, needs assessment reports, and resources and data gathering instruments to show how successful outreach to immigrants can be done while alerting the field and others about the barriers and limitations libraries can face in the process.

Elturk (2008), an outreach librarian at Boulder Public Library, Boulder, Colorado, presents the premise of including immigrants in the decision-making process and going beyond examining culturally diverse groups and acknowledging their importance in the information exchange spectrum. Elturk emphasizes the need to be included in the decision-making process and in the implementation phases of any program or project that affects them. Elturk states that immigrants will achieve more success in reaching their goals if librarians allow these individuals the ownership of what is to be implemented in their own communities. Elturk asserts that this will lead to the development of individual learning as well as to the evolution of institutions.

Agada (1999), focuses on information seeking behaviors of members from underserved groups. Agada investigated the information needs of the African-American gatekeepers in an inner city neighborhood in Milwaukee, Wisconsin because their educational and economic background was observed to be better and higher than the rest of their community. Agada incorporated open-ended questions in data collection and used the lens of Chatman's insider-outsider theory, which focuses on the incapacity and

isolation felt by outsiders while insiders understand each other as they belong to groups and know the culture and the system, to investigate the information use environment. Agada discovered that this group was not aware of the availability of information resources and mostly relied on inter-personal sources to get their information due to factors such as trust issues and credibility. Agada concluded that gatekeepers in any community are highly influential and it would benefit libraries to identify the strategic role of these gatekeepers and use them to penetrate the communities and market library use and library resources.

The literature pertaining to information needs and barriers, information practices of immigrants and their experiences in navigating the complex information environments was examined by Caidi, Allard and Quirke (2010). Caidi and Allard are faculty members at University of Toronto. Quirke is a doctoral student at the same university. They concluded that the information needs and barriers of new immigrant groups who are in the process of settlement do not vary greatly. They identify language proficiency and lack of knowledge of how systems work as structural barriers for new immigrants. They also point out that there are differences in the information practices of established immigrants and new immigrants and not much was found written up on the information practices of new immigrants beyond the settlement process.

Information Literacy

The information literacy as a basic principle relevant to formal education and academic success as valued in the U.S. appears to be missing in the lives of the Ethiopian women in this study. Why does information literacy matter? Dow (2013), a professor of library and information science at Emporia State University, asserts that information

literacy is critical for academic success. She emphasizes the importance of information literacy as having broad implications for life-long learning in the fast-paced Western society. Information literacy, according to Dow, is aimed towards building a set of abilities to recognize when information is needed and to locate, evaluate, and effectively use the needed information. This concurs with the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL, 2011, 2015) recommendations that information literacy helps learners ask informed questions, sharpen their critical thinking skills, become more self-directed, and have greater control over their learning. Dow's (2013) published collection of important school library research, together with professional association recommendations, supports the view that information literacy is essential for new immigrants who are faced with information in all sorts of formats that might not be familiar to them. Although libraries offer a vast variety of useful information, the organization of information, navigation and access to information requires some basic information literacy skills.

The idea that information literacy skills matters for everyone is a basic principle relevant to formal education and academic success as valued in the U.S. is further emphasized by Saunders (2011) who asserts that “[i]nformation literacy abilities are critical in an information rich world” (p. 78). She points out that “researchers and higher-education policymakers have identified certain broad areas of knowledge as essential for all college graduates, regardless of a specific major or field of study” (p. 7). Often called “learning outcomes” (Saunders, 2011, p. 8), or results of formal instruction typically that occurs during formal learning in schools, these abilities include knowledge and

understandings; performance skills; and dispositions also known as habits of mind, attitudes, and values.

While college graduation is not necessarily the goal of all immigrants, it is important to recognize the importance of information literacy skills as necessary to help immigrants to productively live in the U.S. A report by Sum, Kirsch & Yamamoto (2004), entitled, *A Human Capital Concern: The Literacy Proficiency of U.S. Immigrants*, examined the literacy proficiencies of immigrant adults. In addition to valuable findings regarding the disparate literacy proficiencies among immigrants from various countries due to varying educational and cultural backgrounds, the report also highlights other aspects such as the importance to empower immigrants with necessary literacy skills to help them better assimilate into schools, work force and social institutions.

Today's libraries, such as the Eloise May Public Library in this study, are designed as spaces where dynamic learning takes place when people actively engage with products and processes of their culture as they explore and make connections to elements in local society. Many library patrons use reference sources and services to learn to navigate and access information within a myriad of possibilities. Librarians, many who are bi-lingual, teach library users how the library works and point users to materials. They teach individuals who visit the library how to make sense of the organization of print and electronic resources. These librarians encourage individual who visit the library to become self-directed, critical-thinkers, and information literate.

Information literacy was defined approximately 26 years ago by the American Library Association (ALA) as a set of abilities enabling individuals to "recognize when

information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information” (ALA, 1989, para 3). Instruction in skills to locate, evaluate, and use information evolved from bibliographic instruction, which had as its goal to “meet basic needs and at the same time teach skills that users can transfer to new situations, new information tools, and new environments to help them learn how to learn” (Grassian, 2004, p. 52). The shift from traditional bibliographic instruction to a literacy model of instruction required that librarians accept new philosophical understandings of public, academic, or special libraries not as warehouses but as a space for dynamic learning.

In 1989, the ALA created a Presidential Task Force on Information Literacy. This resulted in creation of the National Forum on Information Literacy, an organization of approximately seventy-five national organizations. For the past several decades, libraries of all kinds have focused on not only user orientation to the library, but on user learning outcomes and the needs to development knowledge through curiosity and creativity. A library advocacy program by ALA (2000) articulated understandings of information literacy in the public library by stating, “Librarians will partner with government, education, business, and other organizations to create models for information literate communities” (p. 5). Many libraries, such as those identified in this study, have developed structured programs to teach users to use computers and electronic databases.

Chapter Summary

This literature review begins with the conceptual framework for this study begins with an overview of constructivism as the metatheory, or philosophy, for understanding how humans learn and socially construct knowledge, as well as to provide the theoretical

basis for understanding human information behavior. Included are library and information science theories of human information behavior relevant to understanding sense-making as a relationship between communication, information, and meaning including Dervin's Sense-Making theory (1983), Kuhlthau's (1997) information search process, and Savolainen's (1995) everyday life information seeking behavior theory. These theories are important in this study because they provide a lens to examine needs of individual users of libraries. The concept of public library outreach is explained with examples of exemplary libraries. Information literacy is described as a learning outcome in all types of libraries, particularly public libraries.

The body of literature presented in this literature review provides a position on how people create knowledge and seek information, as well as to describe details from recent studies relevant to understanding the developing nature of public library outreach to immigrants. It provides a framework for investigating English-speaking Ethiopian women as new immigrants in the U.S. who come to the public library but do not use the libraries collections, or ask for, or accept, offered assistance of public librarians.

The literature on exemplary libraries is particularly important because it provides realistic expectations of high quality outreach to immigrant populations, and identifies key features of library outreach activities such as immediate use of current demographic data; benefits of staff competence; offering English language courses; developing and maintaining special language collections; and meeting library users' need with digital collections and their digital needs. This literature also identifies observations by earlier researchers of perceived lack of information literacy skills among immigrants as well as immigrants' perceived lack of abilities to navigate and use libraries. There are gaps in

the literature that do not address issues pertaining to English- speaking immigrants and/college-educated immigrants from the fast growing African immigrant population that will be filled by this study. Research design and methods for conducting this study are outlined in chapter three.

Chapter Three

Methodology

The purpose of this case study (Creswell, 2009; Yin, 2009) is to identify the processes of information need, seeking, and use through which English speaking Ethiopian women immigrants to the United States (U.S.) after the year 2000 become informed and acquire information. Case study methodology (Creswell, 2009) is used to design this qualitative study of a single entity bounded by time and activity and to collect detailed information during a sustained period of time. The single entity is English-speaking Ethiopian women who come to the Eloise May Public Library in Denver, Colorado. The study is bounded in time by the three-month period for collecting data as outlined in the approved study timeline (June – August 2014). The activity under investigation is the activities related to participants being present in the library building. The data collection procedures include interviews that were designed and conducted using a narrative inquiry strategy (Creswell, 2009) where participants had an opportunity to tell in conversational style their own stories. Individual stories were facilitated by the researcher through a series of open-ended, neutral questions and prompts.

At the request of some of the participants, some of the conversations were not recorded, and some conversations with permission of participants were recorded and transcribed. Copious hand-written notes were taken when interviews were not recorded. Transcriptions and hand-written notes were analyzed using Yin's (2009) mode of data analysis wherein the researcher looks for patterns by comparing results with patterns predicted from theory or the literature; explanation building in which the researcher looked for causal links and explored plausible or rival explanations and built an

explanation about the case; and time-series analysis wherein the researcher traced changes in a pattern over time, a procedure similar to time-series analysis conducted in experiments and quasi-experiments. Yin's mode of analysis influenced the 12-step, integrated approach to analysis described in this chapter that was adapted from the work of Krathwohl (1998).

Research Questions

The central question in this study is, "What are the processes of information need, seeking, and use through which English-speaking Ethiopian women immigrants to the U.S. after the year 2000 become informed and acquire information?" The sub-questions are:

1. On the basis of Dervin's Sense-Making Methodology (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003) related to communication-as- procedure including situation defining strategies, communication tactics, and addressing differences, what is the learning situation of new immigrant (arrived in U.S. after 2000), English-speaking Ethiopian women who come to the public library?
2. How do the information seeking skills and needs of new immigrant (arrived in U.S. after 2000), English-speaking Ethiopian women differ from those of new (arrived in U.S. after 2000), non-English speaking immigrants as reported by the American Library Association, *Serving Non-English Speakers: 2007 Analysis of Library Demographics, Services and Programs*?
3. How can public library resources and/or services meet information literacy needs of new immigrants (arrived in U.S. after 2000), English-speaking Ethiopian immigrants?

Case Study

Case study design is selected for this study. Case study “entails the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case” (Bryman, 2012, p. 66) and is usually used to study a single community or a single organization or a single person. Yin (2009) attributes the use of case study as a preferred research method in social science disciplines as well as in other professional areas like business and education to the scope potentially covered by case study methodology. Yin notes that case studies can be exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory and allows for “investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events – such as individual life cycles, small group behavior” (p. 4). Creswell (2009) asserts that case study method provides the researcher an opportunity to explore “in depth a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals” (p. 13). According to Case (2008), the case study approach places emphasis on single entities, context, and collects “varied type of evidence” (p. 194). Case outlines the strengths of case study research design due to “the purposeful selection of participants (which) has the advantage of matching for characteristics useful to the study” (p. 196) thereby “reinforcing validity” (p. 196) to case studies.

A significant number of research studies on immigrants and information needs have used case study research design to investigate immigrant experiences with information and in using libraries (Burke, 2008; Caidi, Allard & Dechief, 2008; Cuban, 2007; Fisher, Durrance & Hinton, 2004). The case study approach to research has been instrumental in contributing to theory-based understanding of information needs of immigrants and also helped identify gaps in research related to this topic. Burke (2008) compiled information from case studies about immigrant use of public libraries. These

case studies involved Latino immigrants and were specific to certain geographic regions. The case study approach helped libraries understand specific needs and barriers experienced by the Spanish speakers using the libraries that include language, mistrust of authority, and feeling like an outsider. Caidi, Allard, and Dechief (2008) share findings from research studies done on the settlement stages of immigrants in Canada. The case study methodology was useful in extracting details regarding the barriers faced by immigrants during the settlement process and helped identify strategies that might be successful to empower immigrants with the information. The outreach efforts by the Queens Public Library in New York through services, resources and staff on immigrants and the effective results is described in detail by Fisher, Durrance, and Hinton (2004) with examples and narratives provided by the immigrants who were interviewed for the study. Kuhlthau (1991) used longitudinal (repeated observations) case studies for her Information Search Process (ISP) research that examined information seeking from the users' perspective.

The effectiveness of case study research design as an investigative research tool is also evidenced through examples of health literacy studies of immigrants. One such example is the comprehension, or non-comprehension, of health related information available in the U. S. by the Hmong population (Allen, Matthew & Boland, 2004, p. 312, para 2). Another example is the case studies of Ethiopian women in the rural parts of Ethiopia in relation to the outreach efforts by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO 2012, para 4) in promoting health literacy.

According to Yin (2009), the how and why questions are addressed through case study method by explaining an event, or an experience, through a combination of

interviews of persons involved as well as direct observations of events. Creswell (2009) asserts that case study allows the researcher to explore in depth an activity, or process, or a group of individuals. The purpose of this case study is not as much to generalize the information seeking behavior of English-speaking immigrants to other immigrant groups, but to identify behaviors, or patterns of behavior, that will expand understanding and knowledge of how this particular group of English-speaking immigrants use, or do not use, the library, and to contribute to a new framework for responding to their needs.

Some of the narratives from these female participants revealed that their economic status and their role in the family prevented them from pursuing their educational and career aspirations in Ethiopia. UNESCO 2012 fact sheets on Ethiopia, attests to the fact that poverty has been identified as one of the main barriers in women's education in Ethiopia in addition to the social norms and traditional practices about the role of women in Ethiopia. The fact sheets highlighted the number of dropouts of females during the transition from primary schooling to secondary schooling is very high and this was evident from the narratives of some of the participants. As Ethiopia is largely a patriarchal society, it becomes challenging for Ethiopian women who migrate to the U.S. to adapt to the freedom enjoyed by many women in the U.S.

The participants in this study as is the case in the current population of Ethiopia were of Muslim and Christian backgrounds. The 2007 census numbers in Ethiopia reveal that about 44 percent of the population is Ethiopian Orthodox (Protestants and Catholics) followers and about 35 percent are Muslims (Shinn, 2014). The narratives by participants in this study of Christian background revealed that they had different educational experiences than the Muslim participants. It should be noted that most of the

participants of Christian background attended school in Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia.

Sample Participants

The participants for the research study are nine English-speaking Ethiopian women. Some of the study participants use the Eloise May Public Library. Some of these women are pursuing academic programs in colleges and use the public library space to study and prepare for academic courses and requirements. Some are of Christian faith and some are of Islam faith. The potential participants were of different economic backgrounds and of various ages ranging from 20 to 50 when coming to the U.S. To select the nine participants interviewed in this study, a combination of purposive sampling and snowball sampling (Bryman, 2012) was used to identify the participants. As the “goal of purposive sampling is to sample cases or participants in a strategic way so that those sampled are relevant to research questions that are being posed” (Bryman, 2012, p. 418), participants were strategically selected and invited to participate in this study. The sample identification process also benefitted from snowball sampling technique as the initial group of participants in the research study proposed other participants who contributed to the data by sharing their experiences and characteristics relevant to the study. This was done as Bryman (2012) characterizes snowball sampling as a sampling technique where a small group of people are sampled and these “sampled participants propose other participants who have had experience or characteristics relevant to the research” (p.424). Connaway & Powell (2010) observe that the snowball sampling technique “identifies participants who are linked through shared experiences” (p. 216), which can add content and depth to the study, which was the case in this study.

Location

Eloise May Public Library branch of the Arapahoe Libraries in Denver, Colorado (Arapahoe Library District, 2013), was selected for this research study because it is unique in the extent to which it has collected and makes available resources and designed services to meet needs of immigrant populations. No other public library branch in the Denver metro area has such high concentration of immigrant populations who use the public library spaces. Immigrants from as many as 60 different countries use this library branch (C. Shannon, personal communication, October 27, 2012). The library is located in a very busy part of Arapahoe County in Denver, Colorado. The community is composed of a wide diversity of age, literacy levels, and economic status in addition to the ethnic diversity. There are several apartment buildings as well as single-family neighborhoods near the library where new immigrants live. The library is in close proximity to public transportation. The library strives to presents a warm, welcoming, friendly, culturally sensitive environment to the patrons of various ethnic backgrounds. This is evident in the “welcome” signage presented in six languages at the entrance of the library; international signs used for restrooms; public computers with free Internet access; mobile devices for checkout; study and community meeting rooms; regular offerings of English language-learning classes and computer classes; literacy-based storytime programs for families; support for recent immigrants through New American support programs; and New American collections consisting of resources helpful for new immigrants. The majority of Eloise May Library staff is foreign-born, bilingual if not multi-lingual, and is experienced in serving immigrant populations. The facility-use

statistics_for this library branch indicates that an average of 30,000 patrons use this library every month (D. Walker, personal communication, Oct 24, 2011).

Data Collection Procedures

With approval from the Arapahoe Library District and the Emporia State University Institutional review board, individual patrons using the public library space at the Eloise May public library were invited to participate in the study. Each individual participant was interviewed following the approved structured interview protocol (Appendix A) comprised of open-ended, questions. Interviews lasted in a range from 30 to 70 minutes (maximum). In total, the interviews were held over eight hours over a period of three months between the months of June through August 2014.

The interviews were designed and conducted using a narrative inquiry strategy (Creswell, 2009) wherein participants had an opportunity to tell in conversational style their own stories. Individual stories were facilitated by the researcher through a series of open-ended, neutral questions and prompts. The benefits of storytelling as a data collection method is outlined by Hayman et al. (2011):

When used deliberately and strategically, richness of the data is augmented.

Carefully chosen stories help participants feel a legitimate sense of safety and promote the telling of deeper, more detailed experiences and value is conveyed for their stories and life experiences by the researcher reciprocating a relevant story. When stories are shared, the participant/researcher power imbalance is weakened and a safe and trusting environment is created. (Results, para 2)

Narrative inquiry was the technique employed for asking the questions as it can enable the “flow of an overall experience” (Connaway & Powell, 2010, p. 220). This technique

allowed the researcher to understand and find out about the experience of the participants. Clandinin (2007) highlights the importance, “for society really is comprised of human lives, and if we can begin to understand the framework that lends meaning to these lives, then we have taken the important first step to being able to access the wider framework of meaning that is the binding agent of a culture” (p. 491). He also states that “narrative is the best way of representing and understanding experience” (p. 18). The researcher having conversations with the participants encouraged stories of their ongoing experiences. It was important for the researcher to be an empathetic listener and be non-judgmental in order for narrative inquiry to be successful.

Narrative inquiry brings in multiple perspectives thereby giving multiple ways to understand the complexity of a situation or experience. Creswell (2008) indicates that the narrative inquiry techniques helps the participants feel that their stories are important and that they are heard. “Telling stories is a natural part of life and individuals all have stories about their experiences to tell others. In this way, narrative research captures an “everyday, normal form of data that is familiar to individuals” (Creswell, 2008, p. 511). An example of narrative inquiry techniques applicable to this is study is that conducted by Whidden (2008) who used stories of 12 Canadian participants to illustrate the injustice of labels of singer and non-singer by music educators. I followed Whidden's example wherein she initially screened twelve individuals to be part of the study and used criteria such as the participants living in the vicinity where the research was conducted, participants to be eighteen years and older, educated in the Canadian school system with English as their first language. Whidden used further screening based on answers the

participants provided regarding childhood singing experiences and how they perceived themselves as singers.

Validating Accuracy of Information

Creswell (2014) recommends a variety of approaches to validating the findings in a qualitative study. Following his suggestions, the findings in this study are “rich, thick descriptions” (p. 202) that includes detailed descriptions of participants’ life experiences and early learning and provides a variety of perspectives on learning. I address “the bias the researcher brings to this study” (p. 202) by including information about my background and experiences as an immigrant to the U.S. I used “peer debriefing to enhance the accuracy of the account” (p. 202) as I interacted with my dissertation committee members. I also enhanced the accuracy by using an “external auditor” (p. 202) to review the accuracy of the account and the accuracy of the project. The steps with an independent person were taken to enhance the overall validity of the study including determining accuracy in “the relationship between the research questions and the data in the finding, and the level of data analysis from the interview data through interpretation” (p. 203).

In my research process, once the interviews were completed and transcribed, an authentication check was conducted with a volunteer peer reviewer to verify details collected in the study data and the entire project with a knowledgeable person. These steps were taken to make every effort to avoid the recording of misunderstanding that would lead to inaccuracy by me, the researcher, and/or errors in conveying participants’ stories. This approach was taken given that asking the women to read the transcriptions and/or notes of their own stories gathered during the interviews, in what Creswell (2013)

refers to as “member checking” (p. 201), was likely to confuse, or concern, the participants about the research process.

The external reviewer used in my study is Charles Shannon, a volunteer who now provides instruction and programming at English Conversation Circles held in Eloise May Library. Shannon has 12 years’ experience in providing instruction and programming at English Conversation Circles held in Eloise May Library. This volunteer’s area of expertise is in political science and urban planning holding undergraduate and graduate degrees. He is also an experienced researcher who has published various research reports for federal agencies including the National Science Foundation, Ford Foundation, and Casey Foundation. This volunteer has several years of experience teaching English to several immigrant populations including women from Ethiopia. He was invited to read each participant’s story (Chapter Four) and answer the question, “Based on your knowledge of Ethiopia, and Ethiopian people, do these details seem realistic to you?” As a result of this step, there were no changes made to information recorded in the participant section of the findings chapter. The external reviewer also read the study findings (Chapter Four) and conclusions and discussion (Chapter Five). He was favorably impressed expressing high regard for the research questions, findings, and conclusions. His comments (C. Shannon, personal communication, March 28, 2015) addressed the significance of study findings by pointing out that the findings apply beyond the region of Ethiopia in Africa, extending to Sudan and Somalia. He expressed his hope that there would be acknowledgment of potential positive impact factor resulting from this research.

Description of Interview Sessions

Each of the interview sessions conducted face-to-face involved one-on-one sessions between the researcher and individual participants. Interview sessions occurred during different days and different time slots. The majority of the interviews took place in Coffee Canan, a coffee shop owned by one of the study participants. One interview was held at the Eloise May Library, and two interviews took place in the homes of the individual participants. The participants were given copies of the informed consent form and the interview questions at the start of the interview process. Each of the participants signed the form that has been retained in a secure location. Each of the interview sessions began with me introducing myself to the participants as a public library manager, sharing my previous experience as a library supervisor at Eloise May Library and my current role as a doctoral student. Although there were significant time gaps from the time the participants expressed their willingness to be interviewed to the actual day and time of the interview, the participants were mostly cooperative in answering the interview questions. It appeared that this process encouraged the participants to build a new relationship with the researcher. A majority of participants expressed interest in the information of library resources provided by me and some of them also scheduled personalized librarian consultation sessions with me on different days and times following the interview sessions.

Data Analysis Procedures

The interviews were tape recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using directed content analysis in which initial coding starts with a theory or relevant research findings (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). Initial coding began with the constructivist theory of learning and

information behavior relevant findings about immigrants and public library services.

During the data analysis, the researcher was immersed in the data and allowed themes to emerge from the data. The researcher followed a 12-step, integrated approach to analysis adapted from the work of Krathwohl (1998) as follows:

1. Read (scan) all the interview transcriptions (raw data) to get a sense of what all is there. Read and re-read raw data looking for patterns. Look for repetitions and relationships and note them in the margins. This helped to devise codes.
2. Separate the transcripts by research question number.
3. Read only the raw data. This time identify significant parts and make marginal notes. This step enabled the researcher to separate actual responses from unrelated talk by the participant. At this step, I identify emerging and recurring themes and categories of responses while simultaneously establishing categorization rules.
4. Make a list of tentative themes and/or categories that emerge from the raw data. At this step, I gave each category a code number.
5. Sort (and code) each response into its appropriate category. I used the informant's actual words. I did not omit any responses. I counted the number of responses.
6. Review the results looking for overlap and redundancy, especially for whether the codes reflect what is important about the data. Still further, I refined and revised the codes, especially category titles, so that they fit.
7. Organize the codes in a graphic. This step enabled me to see the relationship of one variable to another.

8. Select at least a couple of instances of verbatim narrative from the data for each of the codes. Write a definition of the code; delineate what falls under the code title. This definition shows its generality and helps to define the boundaries of what is included. At this step, constructing definitions helped me to see other relationship among the codes and the necessity for further refinement and revision of the structure.
9. Write statements describing what the researcher believes can best draw from the data generalities, general perceptions or perspectives, typologies of individuals, actions, situations, central actions or events, processes, strategies, interactions, etc.
10. Select from the data (base) at least a couple of the best or model examples of each of the generalities, typologies, and so forth.
 - a. Look for data providing counter examples of this generalization.
 - b. Determine if the generalization leads to certain expectations and see if those expectations are supported by the data.
 - c. If they are not supported, I determined if I could revise the generalization so as to fit both the new implications and the original data from which it was derived.
 - d. Repeat steps *b* and *c* to see if support can be found for the revised generalization.
 - e. Review the case that can be made for the generalization and assemble the data that bears on it, pro and con.

- f. Proceed with a similar set of steps for any other generalizations you can infer from the data.

11. If seeking to construct descriptive typologies, assemble the best examples and describe the common features that characterize the group. Presumably, these two characteristics identify a type. Then,

- a. Look for persons who were not included in the initial set but who are as relevant as those you have chosen.
- b. Determine if additions or modifications in the initial set of characteristics will permit inclusion of the new examples, making sure the set still fits the original group. If the statement could not be modified to cover both new and original data, there was a difficult type in the new data. I determined if there was a set of distinctive features that characterize all or a part of the new group and added it to the set of typologies.
- c. I continued with the process until there are no more groups of sufficient size to be of interest with common characteristics. Then, I reviewed the set of types to determine whether there was redundancy across types or whether similar types could be clustered in to a typology of participants.

The purpose of this is comparable to the purpose of the constant comparative method by Glaser and Strauss (1967), and Lincoln and Guba (1985), the most common method for analyzing qualitative data.

Limitations

Some features of the study worth noting may be considered by some to be limitations, and by others to be strengths of this study. Given possible differences in

determining strengths and/or limitations, it is perhaps relevant to once again note that this study includes a participant sample that includes only new immigrants (to U.S. since 2000), English-speaking, Ethiopian women located in only one community in the U.S. It appears from my interviews with the participants that the time spent in the U.S. before participation in the study varies among participants from approximately four years to eight years. While age of arrival in the U.S. may be a significant factor in predicting successful second language learning in a new country, this variable was not covered in this study. Academic, or professional pursuits of the participants, varied in terms of fields of study, levels of academic achievement, and/or professional areas of expertise. Participants in the study speak English with varying levels of clarity given that English is all participants' second language. Cultural backgrounds of participants vary even though participants were from the same country, Ethiopia.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provides details about the case-study including sample participants, location, data collection procedures, description of interview sessions and data analysis procedures. This qualitative design was selected to identify the processes of information need, seeking, and use through which English-speaking Ethiopian women immigrants to the U.S. after the year 2000 become informed and acquire information. The chapter that follows highlights findings from the interview data.

Chapter Four

Findings

Findings in this study address the purpose of this study to identify the processes of information need, seeking, and use through which English speaking Ethiopian women immigrants to the U.S. after the year 2000 become informed and acquire information. As a supervising librarian working in Eloise May Public Library in Denver, Colorado from 2009 to 2013, I had many opportunities to observe African immigrants, including Ethiopian women who came to the library. My observations lead to my desire to learn more about the information needs of these women whom I observed during their frequent, recurring hours spent in the library. In addition, I developed connections within a network of individuals including library volunteers and library program coordinators who provide English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction. Through my work as a professional public librarian, library programs such as those at Eloise May Library that benefit immigrants are well known to me. My personal experience as an immigrant influences my professional value of achieving the goal articulated in the *American Library Association Code of Ethics* (1995) of universal literacy for all.

Twenty-five years ago, I came to the United States (U.S.) as an immigrant from India. I was an English-speaking immigrant holding a graduate degree in English from the University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, India. I also speak four Indian languages, Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, and Malyalam in addition to English. My primary, secondary, and undergraduate education was taught to me by English-speaking teachers. I used the public library upon arriving in the U.S. as my primary source for learning about the basics for living in the U.S. community including learning about the education system;

banks and money; real estate; employment opportunities, driver education and licensure, citizenship exams, taxation, and filing of tax forms. My professional library experience together with my personal experiences as an immigrant inform my understandings of situations involving and unique to the information needs of immigrants.

My connections with the volunteers and the program coordinators enabled me to locate participants for this study. For example, some of the participants were known to me as a result of their visits to the Eloise May Library spaces. In addition, the English as a Second Language (ESL) coordinator at Eloise May Library identified a coffee shop owner in Denver, an Ethiopian woman, who became a participant for my study. This participant in turn assisted me in identifying other participants until all known available participants (9) were interviewed. The participants in this study are members of the fast-growing, English-speaking, Ethiopian immigrant community in the Denver, Colorado area.

The structured interviews comprised of five main questions became the basis for a dialog between “two voices in turn” (Clandinin, 2007, p. 150) between the interviewer and the interviewee, which produced narrative data. My role was to facilitate and encourage each interviewee to openly tell her story beginning with reflections on home location, memories of childhood, attending school, and dreams for the future. These women had not likely experienced someone interested as I am in their past experiences or future goals as they relate to seeking and using information. These women likely had not experienced someone to personally and proactively encourage use of the library and its resources as I did during interviews whenever there was an opportunity to do so.

Narrative inquiry was used in this study because telling stories is a natural part of life and a method easily accomplished by participants in this study. According to Creswell (2008), “telling stories is a natural part of life and individuals all have stories about their experiences to tell. In this way narrative research captures an everyday, formal form of data that is familiar to individuals” (p. 511). In my study, the stories of the participants became the object of the study as each story drew focus on each woman and the processes each one uses to make sense of information. The findings include each interviewee’s individual story as they were told to me. The stories reveal details about the learning situations and communication tactics of these new English-speaking Ethiopian women immigrants that have implications for understanding their information seeking skills and needs.

Each of the nine interviews captured some demographic information (Table 1) about each individual including age ranges; religion; length of education; and the use of English in education as a subject area or as medium of instruction. The interviews also captured personal backgrounds of individual participants; learning situations, and individual current information processes. The interviews are presented in this chapter in the order that they were held over a course of three months (June – August 2014).

Participants and Interviews

The selected participants were English-speaking immigrant women from Ethiopia, various ages, and two religious backgrounds, Islam and Christianity. The interviews varied in length from 25 minutes to 90 minutes; the average interview was 32 minutes. All interviews were held in a location favorable to each woman, including their home, and/or public locations (e.g. library, coffee shop). To maintain the initial comfort

level that the Ethiopian women had with me, and to encourage participants to feel a legitimate sense of safety necessary to promote the telling of detailed experiences, I was sensitive in my choice to write by hand or to record the interview electronically. Three of the interviews were recorded using an iPod and six of them were hand-written. The electronically recorded interviews were transcribed and hand-written notes taken during the interviews were completed immediately following each interview. The following is what was learned from each of the nine women. To protect identity, each interviewee is given a pseudo name. Following a brief introduction, each interview is organized around three themes: personal background, learning situation, and current information processes.

Hayala

Hayala was warm, friendly, and comfortable speaking English. I met her on a day when she was observing the fast for Ramadan. She asked me to stay past 7:30 p.m. so that I could have tea with her. Hayala works as a court translator. I met her at her home after she completed her work at 5:00 p.m. as Eloise May Library closed at 5:00 p.m. on the day I met her. Hayala and I exchanged comments about our children and our age. Hayala indicated that she is not yet 40 years old. She talked nostalgically about how everyone knew everyone in the community in the neighborhoods she grew up in Ethiopia and so there was a great sense of confidence and comfort knowing they were always cared for.

Personal background. Hayala is a single mom raising three children in Denver, Colorado. One of her children is in high school and the other two children are under the age of five. Hayala's younger children attend school at the local mosque. She grew up in Ethiopia in a little city called Aharamaya. Hayala, the oldest of five siblings and the only

girl in her first family, described her childhood as “a lot of fun.” Hayala’s father passed away when she was 11. Following her father’s death, the family struggled.

Learning situation. Hayala dropped out of school in the eighth grade when she was 12 to financially and physically support her family. Hayala attended school at night and worked during the day time. Hayala described going to the local village and taking the vegetables from the village to the city to sell them and make money for her family. Hayala said that she was so tired from working during the day that she could not successfully do the school work and she failed the class. When Hayala was in school, she studied five subjects including English. She said that she liked learning geography and mathematics, which were taught in Amharic. Hayala learned some English in the early grades. Some of her school learning involved her doing projects such as, “making cups with soil and we bring it to school.” She described the education system in her country as having tests each year from 5th to 12th grades to determine whether a student could progress to the next grade. In the 12th grade, students were required to earn an ‘A’ grade to be eligible to attend the university. If students were poor, they stopped school and looked for a job after 12th grade. If the family was wealthy, the student went to the university after 12th grade.

Current information processes. Hayala connected learning with being successful. “Success. Success. Success,” she repeated. “Successful. Don’t dream down. You dream for it. You will be success one day. I wish one day I will success and finish my school.” Hayala goes to the Eloise May Library. She takes her younger children to the library to get books for her children and for herself. Her teenage daughter also uses

the Eloise May Library. Hayala also uses the summer reading program for the kids. She said, "I use summer reading for my kids to get some surprise for the kids."

Hayala attends the ESL classes at the library as and when she is able. Hayala gets the books that the ESL teacher recommends and writes on the board. "Teacher told us whatever she wrote is good for us." Hayala describes a preference for learning by hearing. "When people say conversation, I never hear it before, I ask what do you mean and they told me I keep on memorize that word." Hayala said that she looks up the words in the English-Amharic dictionary. When talking about English as a difficult language, she said, "They have sometime noun adjective. They different translation and so I have to learn more." Hayala said, "When the people talk, I listen." Hayala indicated that her most effective learning is by listening to people talk and in conversations with people. She said, "When the people talk, I listen. When I talk, people make me correct the how they pronounce and stuff. I learn from little bit about everything."

When describing her reading process, Hayala said, "I open the books and I read in middle. If I can understand where I read and I take the books. If it is too many words, I don't understand from the book, I not taking it. Little bit from everything, from book if I don't understand, I pick the word I don't understand. I search, I look for it, and then I read it again. I get the meaning. But, for talking, people you hear some word they are using every day. You learn. What easy for me is when you read books; read books easier; when you don't understand because English second language; don't take big books; because big books big pages, too much pages; you repeat it again; so start with small books; counting numbers; maybe, 30-40 pages, and then when you take little bit

what you don't know the vocabularies that you don't know, search it out, the meaning, write it down, read it again, and then you can understand. That's what I do."

Noorza

Noorza is a middle-aged woman, perhaps in her 40s and a mother of four children. Her oldest daughter is a working adult, her second daughter is in middle school and her younger two children are under the age of five. Noorza invited me to interview her at her home in the evening before sunset as she was observing fast for Ramadan. Noorza had to be at home to offer her family dinner after sunset. Her husband is a cab driver. Noorza said that her daughter who works takes the family car and so Noorza does not have transportation and, therefore, she could not meet me at Eloise May Library.

Noorza could converse in English. Her eyes lit up when she shared that she wanted to go back to her country and build a library for her city. She said that she liked the libraries here as they had so many books. Noorza said she wants to give children in her country all the shiny books from the U.S. and so she was going to do that. Noorza was pleased to learn from me about the Friends of the Library groups in all public libraries in the Denver area that accept free book donations and are possible resources for her to pursue her interest in collecting books from the U.S. to take to her country.

Personal background. Noorza grew up in a place on the border of Sudan and Ethiopia. She and her family came to the U.S. as refugees. She could not afford to go to school. She works in a hospital at Denver as a hospital helper and wants to become a nurse. She said that she had four years of schooling before she came to the U.S. Noorza said her focus was to get her children successful in school and college before she thinks of going to college for nursing. Noorza described fond memories of childhood including

playing outside, and her parents having food for their children when they arrived home from school.

Learning situation. Noorza had four years of school before she came to the U.S. She liked learning history when she was in school. “I like stories. Not fic stories. Like real story. Then, I can fix what I did wrong, you know, what can I learn more?” She said that she was afraid of going to school when she was young. “Early memory is I went to school, nobody can help me, I was so afraid you know who think and laugh at me and kids if I was not reading very well. But, my brother was going with me. He told me how to do it, how to read very well. That was very good.” Noorza said she did not continue school as she was a refugee. “At the time was I was a refugee person. At life, did not get life together.”

Current information processes. Noorza described her process of learning of what to do at work. She talked about learning what she needs to do in the hospital for her job by paying attention to conversation exchanges between her co-workers. She uses this approach for learning about rules and regulations about being a hospital helper. “I have to focus on how can I protect myself before because it is very dangerous not to do the right thing in the hospital.” She said she learns best from her husband, her children and the library. “I search, I ask my husband. He’s a successful person. I ask him. I go to the library. Take from here and take from here, read together. That’s how we learn each other. But, the library is most very good for success in life. Some books I don’t find them. I can request them. They call me. I go pick it up.”

Noorza said technology is important. “Right now, the most important reading is technology is very important. Library, I took computer classes. I took the course in the

library. They help me to take course like that, a class. Technology is very helpful. Everything is right now in computer.”

Noorza said that she visits Eloise May Library and the entire family sits with books on history and stories of people. She said, “books we get from the library and the books from the school that children bring home.” Noorza does not allow her children to read picture books available in the children’s area of the library. She said she looks for books with real life stories. “Yes! Real stories. I think that is the main right now we need to focus real stories will bring a lot serious kids, they can grow up better. That’s what I’m working on right now with my kids. Before when I taking my kids to the library, they were learning fic books, stuff like that. Then I keep reading with them and I find out, what this book is not really story. So, I wow! I watching kids. They have read real stories. That is the best. Now we do that.”

Noorza said that she and her husband, her working daughter, and her teenage daughter all help out the younger children with their homework. Noorza described her understanding that library storytimes was a school for children with a teacher. “But, when they sing and make things with paper and scissors and it was not like school and it had so much playing,” she stopped taking her two younger children to story times.

Alma

I conducted the interview with Alma at Eloise May Library while Alma was waiting for her daughter. Alma’s daughter volunteered at the library’s summer reading table to provide summer reading sign up information for parents and children. Alma appeared to be in her 30s. Alma wore a traditional hijab, the same as was worn by

Hayala and Noorza. She was able to converse in English, but with the use of minimal English words.

Personal background. Alma grew up in Gondar in Ethiopia and has been in the U.S. for the last 20 years. She has two daughters and she said she is happy having a family.

Learning situation. Alma did not finish school in Ethiopia as her mother who cared for them died when she was four years old. Alma said that her life was very hard. “I didn’t go to finish high school. I was so young, my Mom died when I was four; it is hard to go by yourself. They give me homework. It is hard to for me because you know I learn not good back home.”

Current information processes. Alma learned to speak English when she worked at a commercial garage in downtown Denver. “I was working. I was work, work, work. I used to work downtown parking.” Alma learns English words from her kids and from the dictionary. “I ask my kids, I have dictionary, study in winter, I’m ok, I read you know, I’m ok.” As the interview took place in the children’s area of the library, Alma pointed to that area and said she takes books from there. “I take books to read I understand. I look country dictionary for meaning of you know.” Alma would like to go back to school and college after her kids get older. She expressed that if more library staff were proactive in helping people from other countries in finding things that might be useful for them and for their children in regards to school work, it would be helpful. “I wish somebody help the people they don’t know English you know around books, specially, in the library. They need, lot of people need help. So when you come here you have to ask question you know and they have to answer questions for you to make

understand. More practice even if we understand. Some people they don't write down. Some people they don't understand, they bring their kids to study to make their life.”

Mesti

Mesti was wearing a Hyatt Hotel uniform. Mesti said she works at the Hyatt hotel. She is a young woman, perhaps in her late 20s. The interview took place in a coffee shop owned and run by another Ethiopian lady, Tanar. This coffee shop was attached to the Martin Luther King Library, which is one of the branches of the Denver Public library and about four miles from Eloise May Library. Mesti could converse in English. Mesti indicated that she had been to the Eloise May Library when she accompanied a friend to the ESL classes.

Personal background. Mesti grew up in Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia. Mesti expressed fond memories of living in Ethiopia where she said that her family and everyone helped each other.

Learning situation. Mesti went to school up to 12th grade. She said that she learned English in school in classes that were large. “There were 60 people in one class. No enough material. Seven subjects. Homework in seven subjects. Tests every week and final exams to pass each class. We only use books in school. I used to like to learn mathematics. They teach Amharic and English.” Mesti said books and friends were the primary tools for her early learning. “We use books only in school. You learn from people, from friends in school.”

Current information processes. Mesti said that here in the U.S., she learns by observing, talking to people and using the computer. “I like to see things and get a lot of information. I get a lot of information from the computer and from friends at work.” She

talked about Indian weddings taking place in the Hyatt hotel where she works. Mesti shared, “so many Indians get married at the Hyatt and so I look on computer and see Indian weddings.” Mesti would like to go to college. “I want to. But, I have no time. I have a job at the hotel. I like to go to college for technology and computers and mathematics.” She wanted information about the ESL classes at Eloise May Library for her and for her sister.

Tanar

Tanar was dressed in traditional Western attire, a shirt and slacks. The friend who provided Tanar’s referral shared that Tanar was a Christian from Ethiopia and could possibly identify other Ethiopian women who could possibly be Christians too. Tanar could converse in English very well. She said she speaks Amharic at home. Tanar grew up in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia. Tanar appears to be middle-aged, perhaps in her 50s.

Personal background. Tanar grew up in a large family in Addis Ababa. All of her family members are in the U.S. now. She went to a private catholic school in Addis Ababa. Tanar said that this was the same school that the King of Menelek of Ethiopia attended. Tanar said that she had a business vision of bringing coffee from Ethiopia to the U.S. She followed through with her idea and opened her coffee shop at the library.

Learning situation. Tanar learned English and Amharic in school. She said that the school had specific textbooks. These textbooks were primarily used for teaching and learning. They had several subjects in school like general science, math, biology and English. She said school was difficult. “There was lots of homework and I had to learn by myself from the textbooks. It was very tough. Tests every other week, final exams during two semesters. Oh my god! Very tough you know. High school is 9-12 grades,

very tough.” Tanar went to college in Addis Ababa and did two years of tourism degree from Addis Ababa University.

Current information processes. Tanar applied for a hotel job when she arrived in the U.S. She said that she learned a lot about doing business during her hotel job. “I then come here and apply for hotel job. They accept my hotel diploma and I got promotions in hotel. I learn a lot from the hotel how they do business and I open my own coffee shop business.” Tanar started her own coffee shop by using books from the local library. “I learn little about business from library books. My brother works in Denver Public Library. So, I talk to Small Business Administration (SBA) and they give me advice. I always check around to see if anyone wants coffee.” Tanar expressed her frustrations regarding lack of support from the library for her business. “The library here, they don’t help me much. They can do book clubs here. They can put my business cards in the library. They don’t do it because of my color. They had program in summer where they give candy to all kids. I have candy in my coffee shop; but, they don’t buy from me because of my color. So, I be here in this side of the library.”

Elisa

Elisa is Tanar’s friend. Tanar arranged for Elise to come to Tanar’s coffee shop and to participate with me in an interview. Elisa was dressed in traditional Western attire, a shirt and slacks. It appears that Elisa is likely to be in her 30s. Elisa had difficulties speaking English.

Personal background. Tanar mentioned that Elisa is the owner of an Ethiopian grocery store. Elisa was raised in Addis Ababa. Elise said that she loved living together

with family in Ethiopia. She stated that she does not like working all the time like she does here in the U.S.

Learning situation. Elisa went to school in Ethiopia until she was 15, and a total of 12 years of schooling. She studied geography, physics, chemistry in Amharic, and she studied English as a subject area after sixth grade. Textbooks were used for teaching and learning when she was in school. “Reading and learning from books in school. Books are in English. We studying on our own. We have homework and exams. Family was very strict and so you study on your own.” Elisa enjoyed hands-on-learning activities in school. “Happy memory of going to school was technology. The technology with electricity, woodwork after ninth grade.”

Current information processes. Elisa said that she was busy raising her kids for the past 17 years and did not know how and where to start when it came to learning and going to college. “I don’t know what to look for and what I need. I like technology and college.” Elisa was very pleased when information was shared regarding the location of community colleges and the availability of student counselors to help her map out the classes for her college.

Senaila

Senaila is also Tanar’s friend. She was fashionably dressed in Western attire and comfortable speaking in English. She very confident, engaged, and enthusiastic. Senaila appeared to be much younger than all the other participants. She could be in her 20s.

Personal background. Senaila came to the U.S. when she was 19. All of her family currently lives in Washington D.C. Senaila went to a private school in Addis Ababa where completed the 12th grade before she came to the U.S. She has an Associate

Degree in Nursing. She said that what she liked most about growing up in Ethiopia was how everyone took care of each other. “What I liked the most is all the neighbors are family and so they take care of each other.”

Learning situation. Senaila went to a private school in Addis Ababa. She completed 12th grade. All subjects were taught in Amharic until third grade and then it was taught in English. Several subjects including math, geography, chemistry, physics, history and English were taught in school. History and English were her favorite subjects. She said learning was tough when she was in school. “You have to help yourself because it is so difficult for everyone. At home, I sit and study and help myself.”

Current information processes. Senaila described her learning practice for the nursing exams. “For the nursing exam, we get the books and study as a group. We get laptop as the exam is online and so we practice. Practice and learn from each other in the group. We meet in the library and study as a group. I study from the books on nursing. It is the easy way. I also use Google and YouTube videos. We use library study rooms.” Her statements regarding the public library were, “libraries don’t have the books you need to study. For nursing exams, you need updated publications and libraries don’t have the updated publications. Libraries can help with giving more study room space.”

Marlan

Marlan, is Tanar’s friend. She speaks English. Marlan was wearing slacks and shirt in the Western style. Marlan appears to be in her 40s.

Personal background. Marlan grew up in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Her first family has nine children. All of her family now lives in the U.S. She and her husband

ran a dry-cleaning business when they first came to Denver and lost \$150,000 when they went bankrupt. Marlan wants to be a business woman and wants to go to college to learn business. But, she said that her focus is on her family now and her desire to make sure her daughter who is in 9th grade is able to pass school. Marlan said that her daughter feels lost and is not able to connect with what is being taught in school. Marta also shared that she personally feels tired all the time and does not like to think of working. She wants to just rest and take it easy.

Learning situation. Marlan went to an all-girls private Catholic school in Addis Ababa until 8th grade and then went to a co-ed school from 9th grade to 12th grade. She confessed that she was very happy when she moved to the co-ed school. “I went to a private school, catholic until 8th grade. It was all girls from preschool to 8th grade. From 8th grade it was public and boys and girls. It made me happy. It was good life then.” She said that all subjects were taught in Amharic until 7th grade. She learned biology, physics and English which was added on to the subjects after 7th grade. She studied up to 12th grade in school, passed the exam to go to college, and did two years of college in vocational courses like tailoring. Marlan studied from textbooks that were given to all students when she was in school. They could not take the textbooks home and had to keep them at school at the end of the day. They studied from what the teacher taught them, from the notes taken in the classroom, and from the blackboard. “They give you the books and you study and they take it from you. They did not give you textbooks to take it home. You learn from the teacher. You collect the tests. You collect the notes. They put questions on blackboard to learn in class and you also write it and learn in home. They put same content on blackboard with different question for the test. 10

questions for class work. 10 questions for homework. You learn everything from the blackboard. They teaching 10 vocabulary words a day and you should tell it back next day or they're going to give punishment.”

Current Information Practices. Marlan said that she is interested in learning about business. She said she does tailoring very well and that is what she did when they owned a dry-cleaning business that went bankrupt. “I have to do business. We lose \$150,000 when we do bankrupt for dry cleaning business. I know tailoring and so I was tailoring in the business. We so simple and don't know anything about business and so we lose money quickly.” When I told Marlan that libraries provide all sorts of help for small business owners, she said that she would now come to the library. Marlan said her main worry was about her daughter who was in 9th grade in school and felt very lost and confused and was not doing well in school. I told her that there were resources in the library to help her daughter with any help she needed for school. Marlan's response was, “Thank you. I must bring my child to the library. She is 9th grade in school here and does not know anything in school.”

Genai

Genai, is Tanar's friend. Genai speaks English. Genai had a strong confident tone. She was dressed in slacks and shirt in Western style. Genai appears to be in her 30s.

Personal background. Genai grew up in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. She lived in a large family and they lived in a large neighborhood. She emphasized her joy of living in a large family, “with large family with love. Liked to go see family in village too. Playing outside is what I liked and the night time. So happy and so nice with family and

neighborhood.” Genai owns an Ethiopian grocery store in Denver. She talked about her Ethiopian grocery store and how she developed a sense for business at an early age in Ethiopia. “I’m doing business. Ethiopian grocery store. I see myself good at business. When I failed 12th, metric system, I don’t have money for college. So, I start selling samosas, you know the Indian samosas. I supply Injira (Ethiopian bread). Yes! I would make all the ingredients. I like to make cash.”

Learning situation. Genai did schooling till 12th grade in a public school. Genai described that it was hard to get the points required in 12th grade in order to go to college and it was expensive to go to college. “Yes. I finished 12th which is public school. Going to college is hard. You have to get points and have money.” Genai described the structure of her school sessions. “Elementary was from 8:30 – 4:30. Middle school was 7th and 8th grade and that is from 8:30 – 1:00. High school is 9th and 10th. Three shifts for 11th grade. Two shifts for 12th grade.” Genai described their method of studying in school and the presence of bullying in school. “Everything from the textbooks. Exam from textbook. So we do group study. I liked studying like that. There was bullying in school. Math was my favorite subject. Science too and all the subjects.”

Current information processes. Genai attended the local community college in Denver and completed one-and-a-half years of school. She discontinued it when she had her child. “Yes! I took general courses and computer science. One-and-a-half years later, I say, OK, I was going to have a baby at the same time I was in school and so I stopped school.” Genai shared that learning could be made easy for her by the library. “Bring more books on business in library. Have volunteers in library giving advice and

information and how to look in computer for business information. To learn more about business.”

Analysis of Narratives

The interviews with nine Ethiopian women were read using the lens of narrative methodology (Bryman, 2008; Clandinin, 2007; Creswell, 2008). Specifically, I used the 12-step integrated approach to content analysis adapted from the work of Krathwohl (1998) to code the interview narratives. Initial coding began with Dervin and Clark's ((Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003) situation-defining strategies as a “springboard” (Bryman, 2008, p. 555) to look for recurring social science themes in individual interview responses to the open-ended interview questions. A “thematic approach” (Bryman, 2008, p. 554) was used taking into account that the transcripts from the interviews include the exact words of the participants. The interviews (5,483 words) yielded 182 response items that resulted in two classifications, five themes, and 15 subthemes (Table 2). The two classifications of responses are: Situation Defining Strategies, Learning Situation; and Situation Defining Strategies, Current Information Processes. Each emerging category and subcategory is then discussed. The categories and sub categories of collectivity in the Dervin and Clark model (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003) are excluded because they are beyond the scope of this case study. Illustrative quotations for each subtheme are provided in Table 3.

Situation Defining Strategies, Learning Situation

The interview narrative revealed three main learning situation categories: economy, family and school.

Individual relating to self, economic. The stories told by the Ethiopian women as they described themselves during early years of growing up and attending school included their perceptions and statements of the financial circumstances (N = 32) that encircled their lives. Sixteen of the statements revealed situations wherein the participants and their families experienced economic instability (N = 16) sometimes resulting from crisis situations such as the death of a parent or lack of opportunity for employment. In contrast, there was equal number of statements that revealed stable financial circumstances (N = 16) where the participants attended private schools and had some college education that was all paid for by the family. Six of the Ethiopian women who lived in Addis Ababa identified themselves as followers of the Christian religion and appeared to be able to take advantage of their local urban environment that included better opportunities such as attending schools where the medium of instruction was in English. It also appeared from the narratives that women of Christian religion in this study had better economic stability indicated by their opportunities to attend school and lack of life hardships in their home country than the women of Islam religion who had fewer opportunities and many life hardships.

Individual relating to other individuals, family. The women when asked about their early growing up with others made repeated references relating to their family members. For example, stories included details about how they gave support and gained support from their siblings, parents, and children (N = 29). The largest number of response items about relating to family were about relating to immediate family (N = 24). For example, one of the women conveyed that when she was young and afraid of school, her brother helped her to minimize her fears. Another woman told about her own efforts

to get information about ESL classes for her sister. The other response items about relating to family were about relating to extended family (N = 5) in their neighborhoods in Ethiopia. For example, two of the women expressed fond memories of living in Ethiopia where their extended families, including aunts, uncles and cousins, and everyone in the neighborhood helped each other by looking after each other's children so children were never left alone. They shared that communication and connection between family members in the neighborhood resulted in a great sense of confidence and comfort knowing that they were always cared for.

Individual relating to collectivity, school. The women when asked to recall their childhood as it occurred outside the family, they talked about their school experiences growing up in Ethiopia (N = 52). Except for one participant, all other eight participants said that they attended school in Ethiopia. Of the Christian women in this study, three attended 12 years of school and three had two years of college beyond 12 years of school. Two of the women in this study of Islam faith had less than five years of school and only one woman of Islam faith had 10 years of school. All participants talked about hardship (N = 17) in school and getting little or no help from teachers and family. All of them talked about having great difficulty in doing daily homework and doing tests in school and college as the teaching techniques (N = 26) in school involved teacher expectations that students learn on their own from textbooks and content written by the teacher on the blackboard. One woman described how the family emphasized teacher expectations that children study on their own from the textbooks for homework and tests. Another participant shared details about the teaching techniques in school that involved students having to memorize 10 vocabulary words written on the blackboard and pressured to

recite them perfectly the next day or face punishment. Several of them had English as one of the subjects in school (N = 7) and just two of the participants had English as the medium of instruction (N = 2) in higher grades in school and later in college. The participants shared that mathematics, physics, chemistry, and geography were all taught in Amharic. English was taught as one of the subjects until 6th grade or 7th grade and not taught at all beyond those grades.

Situation Defining Strategies, Current Information Processes

The interview narrative revealed two main categories of current information processes: awareness of self (N = 50) and awareness of others (N = 19).

Individual relating to self, awareness. The statements made by the Ethiopian women in the category current information processes described their learning now indicating that they were self-reflective and thinking about what would it mean to them to be successful (N = 10). For example, one of the participants described her thoughts about success as “not dreaming down” and “dream for it” so success can be achieved. Another participant described her thoughts about being successful at her job in the hospital and how important it was to protect herself by doing the right things in her job.

Individual relating to self, creating. The statements made by the Ethiopian women in the category current information processes described their learning now when they talked about their awareness of the potential benefits of being creative (N = 2) in certain defining situations. For example, one participant talked about how she benefits now as the sole provider for her children and her mother by using her first-learned survival skills. As a child she had come up with a creative idea of selling a popular snack at the local market in her hometown in Ethiopia to earn a living for her mother and

siblings. Because of her childhood experience, she is now creative in finding a job as a court translator using her Amharic language skills. Another participant described the benefit of being creative by now using her sewing skills when she and her husband opened a dry cleaning business in Denver.

Individual relating to self, observing. The statements made by the Ethiopian women in the category current information processes described their learning now when they talked about their awareness of learning by observing (N = 3). For example, one of the participants talked about learning by observing large scale event planning when she worked in a hotel. This observation gave her ideas of potential career opportunities. Another said that because she observed how business was done when she was working in a hotel, she was then able to know what to do when she opened her own coffee shop.

Individual relating to self, arriving at personal sense or unsense. When talking about learning now and making sense of things, the largest sub-category under current information processes was about the individuals' awareness of their own thinking to make sense of things (N = 35). One of the most profound statements made by one of the women when talking about trying to read in English language was, "I open the books and read in the middle. If I understand where I read and I take the books." Another participant said that she does not allow her children to read picture books that are fiction because they are a waste of her children's time. She said, "Before when I taking my kids to the library, they were learning fic books, stuff like that." Instead she thinks about and looks for books that are with real life stories. "I watching kids. They read real stories. That is the best. Now we do that." In all cases, the women chose the best method for learning now that made sense to them.

Individual relating to other individuals, relating to others. When talking about learning now, the interviews revealed information processes that involved relating to others who are similarly situated (N = 2). For example, one of the participants described her information process strategy when she said, “I search, I ask my husband. He’s a successful person.” Another participant described her information process strategy when she mentioned people who are similarly situated in that they too need to learn English. “I wish somebody help the people who don’t know English you know around books, specially in the library. Lot of people need help.” While relating to others was rarely mentioned directly, it was implied in many stories shared by the women in the study.

Individual relating to other individuals learning from others. The participants talked about their information processes when learning from others (N = 13). One of them described learning from others when she studied in a group for her nursing exam. “For the nursing exam, we get the books and study as a group.” Another participant described learning from others when she picked up basic English words of communication when working in a commercial parking garage.

Individual relating to other individuals, comparing self to others. The participants talked about their information processes when learning from others as they compared themselves to others in various situations (N = 4). One of them described life in Addis Ababa to life in the United States when she said, “I love living together with family. Not working all the time like here.” Another described her information process when she talked about going bankrupt in the dry cleaning business. She said, “we so simple and don’t know anything about business and so we lose money quickly.” Although the direct quotations that included comparisons were few, they are powerful

examples of how their current information processes are influenced by their early life and growing up in Ethiopia, and their need to learn a new language and become successful in a new country.

Communication Tactics

The second dimension of Dervin and Clark's (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003) communication-as-procedure is nine tactics for accomplishing communication tasks necessary in a democratic communication situation. While these are not the only ones necessary, Dervin identified one set of necessary communication tactics. Dervin and Clark's set of communication tactics include attending; creating ideas; finding direction; expressing; finding connectedness; confronting, opposing; mediating; recalling; and undoing rigidities (pp. 176-177). The stories by the women reveal that their English language communication skills (Table 4) are somewhat weak, but nevertheless there is evidence of some of Dervin and Clark's communication tactics in action as the women construct meanings and deal with their new environments. Examples of illustrative quotes of each observed communication tactic are provided in Table 5.

Attending. This tactic at the levels of the self, the environment, each other, and the collective being involves generalized observing. The open-ended interview questions provided every respondent (N = 9) opportunities to convey their generalized observations as they navigated their new environments. Eight (8/9, 89%) of the participants communicated a variety of examples where seeing, and/or watching, people was used to inform their processes of information need, seeking, and use. For example, Mesti talked about the observations she made at the hotel where she worked as she watched Indian

families perform large weddings. Her observations helped to inform her understandings of large event planning in large hotels. Senaila who aspires to be a nurse shared her observations of resources at the library when she described the nursing exam books on the shelves. She described what she saw without knowing if there was more information. Alma describes her reality of living with and overcoming her language barriers when she talked about the failure of the typical reference interview in a library. Alma shared her creative idea of using her children who speak better English better than her to help her to use the library.

Creating ideas. This tactic at the levels of the self, reality, each other, institutions, and collectiveness assumes that when there is no corresponding relationship between reality and individual, it is the human tendency to create new ideas. Seven (7/9, 78%) of the participants talked about creating new ideas. For example, in Hayala's reality, her family was poor and she became the primary financial provider for the family. She moved her thinking beyond what had not worked in the past and imagined the novel idea of buying vegetables from the village and selling them in the city. This was a creative communication activity that improved her family's problem of living in poverty.

Finding direction. This tactic involves determining which way to move, alone or together. Dervin and Clark (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003) point out that the nature of societal homogenous direction requires the individual to reenergize in new directions because the same direction may not be useful any longer. Eight participants (8/9, 89%) talked about taking new directions that could improve their existing circumstances. For example, Hayala talked about changing her demographic status indicating no high school graduation by taking a new route to prepare for and passing the

Graduate Educational Development test. Tanar was reenergized by the information she gleaned by observing the hotel operations and took a new direction to improve her circumstance by starting her own coffee shop business. These two examples of communication activities are in contrast to Elisa's standstill-like circumstance knowing that computer technology exists but not knowing how to chart a direction to learn how to use technology.

Expressing. This tactic involves communication activity that gives symbolic meaning to individually, or collectively, created ideas. This tactic indicated by Derwin and Clark (Derwin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003) as necessary to democratic communication situations was rarely found in the stories of the women (3/9, 33%). The three statements where it did appear were in the interviews of Hayala, Noorza and Elisa. In the statements of Hayala and Noorza, it appears that books are symbolic in the communication of these women as books seemed to symbolize the knowledge that they could use to identify with educated people. In each interview as the woman talked about how she learns best, the narrative description included references to books as prestigious and valued objects. In the statements of Elisa, she made reference to computer technology, which for her may be a symbol of prestige and financial accomplishment.

Finding connectedness. This tactic involves communication activities that are directed at becoming connected to allies, interest groups, sympathizers, and sources of ideas. This communication activity was prevalent in the stories of eight participants (8/9, 89%). For example, Senaila found connectedness to a group studying for the nursing exam. Noorza connected to sources of ideas in biographies because they conveyed examples to use as positive patterns her own life. Marlan connected to school groups of

children that included both boys and girls. Genai found allies when communicating with her neighbors about prepared food that Ethiopians might like to purchase from her.

When taking English language classes at the library, Hayala talked about connecting with other people who can sympathize with her language barriers.

Confronting, opposing. This communication tactic involves two or more people with conflicting ideas when one entity contests another. This communication activity was not found in any of the interviews.

Mediating. This tactic involves the communication activity that takes place when compromising, or resolving, a disagreement between two people. This communication activity was not found in any of the interviews.

Recalling. This tactic involves bringing memory to the present based on recall of memory of one's own, others, or the collective past. This communication activity was found in all the interviews (9/9, 100%) as the women responded to the interview question about their childhood. They recalled experiences that came from their own experiences rather than recall of other people telling them about the past. They shared stories about their individual experiences in school, their individual experiences with their families, and about the communities where they lived. Individual stories about schools and families varied in terms of details relating to family composition, family values, socioeconomic status, religion, and other social factors. However, there was a common thread running through their communication activities as they explained the common ways everyone in their neighborhoods looked out for each other.

Undoing rigidities. This tactic involves the conscious process by people when they come to grips with rigidities in their lives caused by their experiences, cultures,

structures, and other rigidities. According to this tactic, people's potential is freed through the conscious process of resolving rigidities and behavior becomes more flexible. The communication activity of coming to grips with rigidity was found in all the interviews (9/9, 100%) as the women responded to the interview question about their education in Ethiopia. However, none of the respondents' communication activities revealed conscious processes to dissolve rigidities or behaviors to become more flexible. The women's communication activities included stories of rigidity in the instruction and methods of teachers; rigidity in rules by teachers and parents for students; rigidity in the view that there should be plenty of school work done at home; and that students should always do their own work without asking for assistance.

Chapter Summary

The narrative data collected in the interviews with the Ethiopian women is organized in this chapter following the structure of Dervin and Clark's (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003) communication-as-procedure model. The model provided a useful framework for determining the interview questions and the analysis of the narrative. The interview narratives revealed three main learning situation categories: economy, family, and school; and two main categories of current information processes: awareness of self, and awareness of others. The stories by the women reveal demographic information; where she grew up in various regions of Ethiopia, in either metropolitan or rural areas, details about childhood and attending school that reflect Ethiopian cultural beliefs and customs; descriptions of their learning now in the U. S. and current information processes involved in making sense based on situation defining strategies.

The analysis of the narratives reveals that each woman in this study has developing English-language skills and each woman continues to have and use a very small vocabulary compared to a competent English speaker. While there is some evidence of all except two of Dervin and Clark's (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003) set of communication tactics, the women in this study do not appear to have the more advanced communication tactics that Dervin and Clark indicate are necessary for communication as a member of a democratic society. Dervin and Clark's communication tactics are only slightly emerging, or are missing in the processes of information need, seeking and use. The findings in this chapter reveal that women in this study became informed and acquired information in very limited ways as they relied on 1) very basic early learning skills; 2) very basic communication tactics; 3) dominant influences from growing up in Ethiopia; and, 4) mostly what appeared to be accomplished intellectually as the result of teaching techniques in Ethiopian schools that only promoted memorization skills rather than developing a combination of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956) widely accepted in the U. S. education system. The cognitive domain that appears undeveloped includes skills for remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, and evaluating. Strengths and weaknesses in the processes of information need, seeking, and use are discussed in the conclusions chapter.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Conclusions

This library and information science (LIS) research, a case study of English-speaking Ethiopian women who use library space at Eloise May Library in Denver, Colorado, was a rare opportunity to learn more about library outreach to the new, fast growing African immigrant population in the United States (U.S.). While there are many excellent examples of public library outreach to new immigrants, there is still more to learn given the variety of individual backgrounds, preferences, priorities, strengths, and needs of new immigrants. This study was designed to reveal more about new immigrants by asking research questions that address the world of the immigrant rather from the world of the library as has been done in the past.

This study is based on constructivist assumptions about learning and theories about how people seek and use information in different contexts. It is influenced by the everyday life information seeking theory by Savolainen (1995), which asserts that social and cultural factors impact how people seek and use information and how they use and reject information. The present study does not test a hypothesis but instead assumes the challenge to explore and discover through talking with Ethiopian women more about the gap that exists between situation defining experiences women have had in their country of origin and their dreams and goals in a new country. To better understand the gap, Dervin's (1992) Sense-Making triangle model consisting of three parts, "situation-gap-help" (p. 69), was used. This model was used to visualize the present situation of the Ethiopian women who come to the library space. The gap portion of the model was when they could only slightly, or could not bridge their Ethiopian experience with the

library space experience. The women had not yet decided to seek help so that they can make sense of the library. Unlike the typical outcome of this Sense-Making triangle, women in this situation did not walk away with a new sense of information.

This study seeks to better understand what women in the study population need to do to communicatively make sense of and participate in a society built on democratic principles that depend on civil discourse among all people where education, including schools and libraries, plays a central role. It also seeks to discover implications for more effectively and efficiently providing library services and resources that promote information literacy to new immigrants in the U.S. Findings in this study that are outlined in chapter four, answer the central and sub questions as presented in chapter three as follows. The following discussion is outlined in the in order of the research questions and addresses each question.

Research Question 1: What are the processes of information need, seeking, and use through which English-speaking Ethiopian women immigrants to the U.S. after the year 2000 become informed and acquire information?

To formulate a response to this question, it is necessary to first address the terms and concepts that are included in the question and that are also relevant to and present in Dervin's (1983) theoretical framework that binds this study together. In the tradition of Dervin, the term, process is used to "reflect the intricacies of information behavior" (Tidline, 2003, p. 114). In this study, the term process is used to mean the action steps people take rather than the mental processing a person does, for example, when reading a book. The act of seeking is an example of process, or action steps. Need, in this case, is an outcome, or product, of the process. Ideally, information need and information use

happen together when the process of information seeking occurs. The information processes of English-speaking Ethiopian women are discussed in this section according to the two dimensions discovered in the data: early learning situations, and current information processes. English-speaking Ethiopian women in this study become informed and acquire information in very limited ways as illustrated in the examples that follow of their first-learned and current information processes. While the women in this study were very alone in their earliest individual quests to become formally educated, the actual individual acquisition of information is tied to intrapersonal relationships.

Early learning. Early learning was very basic and influenced by the women's early learning situations and experiences when growing up in Ethiopia. Responses (Table 2) by participants in the study reveal that their first-learned processes are basic to the learning situations (113/182, 62%) associated with their own economics, family, and school in Ethiopia that were tightly interrelated. These learning situations and related first-learned processes about the individual woman as she relates it to herself and her economic, family, and school situation, was the largest category of situation defining strategies. When a woman was poor, her family suffered, and she had little, or no, access to school. When a woman had economic stability and family support, she had access to education including some college. Regardless of their economic backgrounds, their potential for information seeking and use appeared to be halted, or stopped, at the point where it was initially developed as a child with their first learning habits from their earliest ages.

When participants had to give up attending school due to lack of money, and the need to become a financial provider for the family, their learning situations were

drastically affected. Four of the nine participants were in this low economic situation. For example, Hayala dropped out of school when she was 12 and started to work by purchasing vegetables from the village and selling them in the city. Another example is Noorza who was a refugee due to political instability in her area and she had to drop out of school as a child. Alma's mother died when she was four and it became very hard for Alma to live without her mother or to go to school. It is apparently these survival skills Alma learned as a child that she brought to her adult experiences in the U.S.

Even when participants experienced economic stability that gave them access to private school education as a child, their learning situations remained very basic. For example, Tanar attended a private Catholic school in Addis Ababa where she had to learn by herself from the textbooks. As she reported, it seemed that no one taught the children what to do. Senaila also said that children had to help themselves in the school she attended. Marlan, who also went to private Catholic school in Addis Ababa, talked about learning situations where questions were written on the blackboard and children were told to learn the answers at home. These impressions and learning habits have apparently stayed with the women into their adult years.

Current information processes. The second dimension is the current information processes of the English-speaking Ethiopian female immigrants. This dimension has implications for understanding the women's lack of information seeking skills and abilities to articulate information needs. Responses by participants in the study revealed that their current information processes, or steps taken related to personal Sense-Making, or un-Sense-Making in the tradition of Dervin, appeared when they encountered new information. For example, Hayala described the steps she takes to find information

as opening the books and reading in the middle of the books. If the middle of the book is understandable, she takes the book, but if it has too many words that she does not understand, she does not take it. Noorza does not allow her children to read picture books. She wants them to read books about real-life stories as she believes that she and her family can learn from the biographies in the libraries. Senaila when speaking about nursing exams shared that she practices and learns from members of her group who gather together at the library and study as a group. Senaila's process steps that include being with a group is similar to her expressions of joy of childhood experiences that included being taken care of by family and neighbors in Ethiopia. This may explain why Senaila prefers a familiar small group and why she does not engage with the library staff or resources. It further appears that she prefers working with people in a small, familiar study group over solo reading of print or online library resources.

The current information processes (69/182, 38%) of the Ethiopian women are related to how they think of themselves; how they relate to others; how they learn from others; and how they compare themselves to others. For example, Hayala expressed how she thinks about herself in terms of success in general but did not have specifics as to how to make progress. Genai related her own need as a current grocery store owner for books on business to be successful and expressed her belief that there were no business books in the library. Tanar, the coffee shop owner, related her belief that the library was not supportive of her business, and did not make her business cards available to the patrons, because of the color of her skin. Noorza talked about learning rules and regulations for working in the hospital by observing and listening to conversation exchanges between her co-workers. From these examples, we see for these women

information processes are tied to a people-to-people connection because that is what they were most familiar with in their country. The people with whom they grew up likely had the same environment, the same framework of understanding, so they were able to almost spontaneously connect and understand each other's needs. This is the kind of help they are looking for, but do not find in the library.

Through the interview data, I learned that my offers of providing instruction and guidance with the library on-line resources to Ethiopian women doing group study for nursing at Eloise May Library may have been rejected because my offers did not match their cognitive construct of learning through social interactions. This explains how they appear to be oblivious to the importance of print and digital resources to satisfy their desire to be successful.

In most public libraries in the U.S., individuals who speak English are typically perceived as having the familiarity and knowledge of information environments and how they work. This dominant view may lead to incorrect perceptions of English-speaking immigrants. Just because one particular skill of English conversation is effectively used by the Ethiopian women immigrants when interacting with library staff, it is not necessarily representative of advanced skill development, or language proficiency, necessary for using the library. This study makes clear that English-speaking Ethiopian women immigrants become informed and acquire information in very limited ways in contrast to individuals who speak English proficiently.

Research Question 1.1: On the basis of Dervin's Sense-Making Methodology related to communication-as-procedure including situation defining strategies, communication tactics, and addressing differences, what is the learning situation of

new immigrant (arrived in U.S. after 2000), English-speaking Ethiopian women who come to the public library?

The learning situation of new immigrants in this study was revealed in two categories: situation defining strategies and communication tactics. The women told stories in response to the interview questions that indicate their learning situations are trapped in their primary cultural practices, their first-learned processes, cognitive constructs, and language barriers. These factors make it very difficult for the Ethiopian women in the study to understand the resources and services of the modern U.S. libraries.

Situation defining strategies. The learning situation of the new immigrant English-speaking Ethiopian women who come to the public library was revealed by women in the study as they responded to interview questions structured according to Dervin's communication-as-procedure model. The women told stories relating the learning situation to their self (economic stability or instability); relating the learning situation to other individuals (immediate and extended family); and relating their learning situation to a collectivity (schools). When the women experienced limited financial resources, their learning situation was hampered in contrast to that of the women whose families experienced financial stability. Financial stability was found to be present in the learning situations of women who grew up in metropolitan rather than rural areas of Ethiopia and whose families practiced Christianity rather than Islam. All the women experienced close ties to immediate and extended family that sustained them through their very hard early learning situations. Their school situation involved hardships for the women who as young children were admonished to learn and work on their own and to memorize what the teacher told them to learn. English taught as a subject, and not as the

medium of instruction to teach other subjects like mathematics, geography, history, science, etc., was the most common occurrence. On the rare occasion when the women went to college, and the rare instance where English was used as a medium of instruction at college level, the learning situation was very difficult because there was no help available in or outside the classroom. Just as Dervin and Clark (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003) pointed out, I found these examples that point out that the current learning situation of the new immigrants is connected to the macro level world of Ethiopian culture, structures, and institutions.

Communication tactics. The learning situation and the situation defining strategies of the English-speaking Ethiopian immigrant women became more evident as Dervin and Clark's (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003) second procedural dimension involving communication tactics was used to analyze the narrative. According to Dervin and Clark's theory (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003), typically individuals with fluent English language skills are likely to effectively deal with new environments and democratic communication situations using communication tactics. The women in this study use some of the tactics identified by Dervin and Clark (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003): attending; creating ideas; finding direction; finding connectedness; recalling; and undoing rigidities. However, the communication tactic of expression was not solid, and confronting -opposing, and mediating tactics were missing.

I began this study to explore and understand why the Ethiopian immigrant women use the library spaces, but rejected offers for assistance to use the library services and resources. It initially appeared to me that because they could speak English, they could

accept my offers to show them how to use the library resources. I thought I could use Kuhlthau's (2009) information search process theory to guide me in my outreach to these immigrants in the library spaces. However, the interviews revealed that their learning situations and communication tactics were very basic and do not automatically lead to development of information literacy skills. Even though my first learning processes, information needs and use were first acquired in a culture other than the U.S., I did not until now realize the full impact of culture or language differences on learning situations. Without the use of Dervin and Clark's theory (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003), these deficits, as well as the readiness or non-readiness of immigrants to use the library, are likely to remain hidden from even the most expert library professionals.

Research Question 1.2: How do the information seeking skills and needs of new immigrant (arrived in U.S. after 2000), English-speaking Ethiopian women differ from those of new (arrived in U.S. after 2000), non-English speaking immigrants as reported by the American Library Association, *Serving Non-English Speakers: 2007 Analysis of Library Demographics, Services and Programs*?

My review of the report, *Serving Non-English Speakers: 2007 Analysis of Library Demographics, Services and Programs* (ALA, 2008) reveals that the report does not focus on information seeking skills and needs of immigrants, but rather was designed to address library locations in relation to access; and services, resources, and activities available for non-English speaking immigrants. While it is useful in many respects and highlights a concern for new non-speaking immigrants' need to become literate, it does not focus squarely on library users as learners of communication strategies and tactics necessary for life in a democratic society. My study indicates that for libraries to serve

the needs of new immigrants, some additional barriers must be considered. These are limited language immersion opportunities for immigrants to practice their English language skills; lack of informal library spaces that can foster group gatherings; and librarians' skills to understand the cultural uniqueness of the diverse communities served by the library. My study focuses on English speaking Ethiopian women as information seekers in an environment new to them in contrast to the ALA report's focus on non-English speaking immigrants.

The ALA report (ALA, 2008) focused on the readiness or non-readiness of libraries to serve non-English speakers and my study focuses on the readiness or non-readiness of the immigrant user. The ALA report identified some barriers faced by non-English speakers in using the library and library resources. Distance to libraries was identified as a common barrier. The participants in my study did not experience a distance to the library barrier. The ALA report identified literacy as another barrier for most non-English speakers and information gathered from libraries for this report showed that library programs to support non-English speakers were designed around the literacy barrier. The ALA report addresses literacy as reading skills and library habits without consideration for what is known about information seeking behavior and information literacy aimed at building a set of abilities to recognize when information is needed, and to locate, evaluate and use the needed information.

My study focuses on literacy barriers of the English-speaking Ethiopian women immigrants from the perspective of constructivist philosophy (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Bruner, 1968; Dewey, 1933, 1938; Kelly, 1963; Piaget, 1954; Vygotsky, 1978) indicating that individuals are heavily influenced by their social world for their

understanding and learning. It addresses the relationship of communication, information, and meaning extending Dervin's (1983) earlier Sense-Making methodology theory, used to study a myriad of settings and services, to a new point for understanding situations, gaps and *verbing* (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003, p. 101) related to the immigrant experience in a new country. This allows the library and information science scholar to, as Tidline (2005) suggests, "transcend simple classification and achieve holistic understanding of information activity" (p. 114).

In contrast to the ALA report (ALA, 2008), my study draws attention to the important role of cultural influences in Ethiopia in order to address the literacy gaps faced by the Ethiopian women immigrants in the public library spaces. Public librarians may be making a big leap in their estimation of the abilities of the English speaking Ethiopian immigrants to understand English language and to use it to identify, or convey, an information need. The reality is that the learning abilities of the participants in this study is based on their early learning situations in Ethiopia, which are very ineffective for developing communication tactics necessary for productive participation in jobs or careers in a democratic society. The reality also is that the communication abilities of the participants in this study are at very elementary levels that results in linguistic isolation from those who can assist them in the library.

Research Question 1.3: How can public library resources and/or services meet information literacy needs of new (arrived in U.S. after 2000), English-speaking Ethiopian immigrants?

Public librarians must begin with the recognition that a demonstration of good conversational English language skills by library patrons whose first language is not

English does not imply that they have a deeper knowledge and proficiency of English language. Cummins (1991) when writing about second language acquisition makes clear that there are two different kinds of language proficiency. Basic interpersonal communication skills are the surface skills of listening and speaking. Cognitive academic language proficiency is the basis for the ability to participate in the academic demands of various educational content areas. Cummins asserts that educators should not assume that non-native speakers with a significant degree of fluency and accuracy in everyday spoken English have the corresponding skills necessary for academic work. This assertion can be applied to libraries as well as schools. The findings in my study shed new light on the dangers of misjudging levels of language fluency in new immigrants, particularly in libraries. Unfortunately, too often English as a second language classes are in isolated rooms away from the mainstream of the library. As a result, English language acquisition is separated from the library context for encouraging and promoting information literacy skills and related opportunities for learning. To correct this common occurrence, there is evidence in this study to support designing and advertising libraries as a safe place to talk, interact, build trust, and build relationships useful in acquiring learning strategies and communication tactics. Further, it is important to point out that the immigrant women in this study did not use their children as their interpreters in facilitating literacy interactions. This is in contrast to research by Chu (1999) that examines mediation activities and information needs of immigrant children mediators.

Chapter Summary

Public library services have changed over time to include needs of people who come to the U.S. with hopes to discover opportunities for education and employment. To investigate library services to immigrants, research has typically focused on access to resources and questioned library users about their uses of library collections. The present study poses a different question than is typically asked by researchers who focus on resources and frame their research questions from the library world and not from the world of immigrants. My research focused squarely on communication-as-procedure (Dervin, Foreman-Wernet & Lauterback, 2003) to investigate the women's processes of information need, seeking, and use as they go about their lives in the new environment.

U.S. census data indicates that there continues to be an increase in the number of immigrants in the U.S. Challenges libraries face to serve new immigrant populations continue to mount and get larger each year. My research used the ALA report (2008) to inform my research design, research questions, and selection of my study population, English-speaking, Ethiopian women living in Denver, Colorado. My observations and views of the participants in my study are consistent with the characteristics of the new African immigrants to the U.S. described by Takougang (2003). As Takougang found in his study, the women I studied were also sometimes refugees who escaped political persecution and worsening economic situations in Ethiopia. The new immigrants in my study want to establish permanent residence and acquire citizenship in the U.S. They recognize benefits that result when women become educated and productively employed. Public libraries are essential to this two-fold goal. All the women in this study considered themselves to be literate according to Ethiopian standards as articulated in

Deyessa et al. (2010); but I found that they are not literate even at the beginner levels by U.S. standards as articulated by Saunders (2011) for literacy according to the American Association of School Libraries (AASL, 2007) and the Association for College and Research Libraries (ACRL, 2011, 2015). This finding indicates an explanation for the situation that promoted this study where the Ethiopian immigrant women come to the library but do not accept offers for assistance and therefore are very ineffective in making use of anything other than the space.

They must also recognize that failure to ask for help is not always caused by the information behavior that Mellon termed library anxiety (Katopol, 2005). In this study, the new immigrants' behavior appeared not as anxiety, manifesting itself as powerlessness, but as hesitance. This finding suggests a new information behavior theory, library hesitancy. Individuals who experience library hesitancy exhibit a type of disinclination that manifests itself as a sense of false confidence based in a belief that one has everything they need to be successful. Findings in this study suggest that this type of disinclination is due to a feeling of self-assurance and strength when compared to others with a type of lack of self-confidence who experience library anxiety.

Recommendations

This study did not address new immigrants' experiences in light of their varying ages at the time of their arrival in the U.S. Researchers (Bleakley & Chinn, 2010; Sandford & Seeborg, 2003) indicate that age at time of arrival should be considered when investigating changes in the lives of the new immigrants. In future studies, I recommend that this matter along with the findings in my present study be investigated.

Librarians must begin at the point of understanding immigrants' personal experiences of having very low comprehension levels and not being aware of the deficits she/he experiences that prevent effective conversations, language comprehension, and reading. This study suggests that public librarians must assume the responsibilities of knowing when to stop pushing library resources and programs to new immigrants that are designed for high functioning English speakers. Public librarians must also recognize that the new immigrants experience library hesitancy that can be addressed with the librarians' cultural awareness and competences.

To meet the information literacy needs of the new immigrants, public libraries must develop new protocols for addressing language acquisition that includes cultural competencies that correspond to individual library community demographics. Public librarians need a clear definition of cultural competence to avoid use of it as a catchphrase with little meaning (Montiel-Overall, 2009). The definition of cultural competence based on this study should be the ability of professional public librarians to understand and respect language and cultural differences and to address disparities among diverse populations competently. Public librarians should make use of this study's new description of cultural competency that addresses disparities including: 1) varying language acquisition abilities; 2) varying educational and cultural backgrounds; and, 3) economic stability and instability. Public libraries should strive to meet information literacy needs of new immigrants once library services are re-set to correspond to the findings in this study and to what is ahead for libraries as society becomes more diverse.

Final Thoughts

At this time when public libraries around the world are redefining their purpose in light of declining budgets and state support and many critics who see libraries as irrelevant and unaffordable, it is important as Palfrey (2015) points out that “[L]ibraries provide access to skills and knowledge necessary to fulfill our roles as active citizens. Libraries also function as essential equalizing institutions in our society” (p. 9). Based on everything I have read in relation to my research topic, based on the narrative inquiry process, based on the data gathering which has determined my results, my study confirms my initial assumption that the English-speaking Ethiopian women who come to the Eloise May Library and use the library spaces have realistic hopes and dreams for their new lives in the U.S. These women aspire to become active citizens and to raise their children with educational opportunities that do not exist in Ethiopia. As Hayala said in her interview, “I want to be successful. Don’t dream down. You dream for it and you will be success one day.” The study provides clear indications of how libraries can better serve new immigrants such as the Ethiopian women in this study by focusing on communication-as-procedure and the intricacies of human information behavior and the processes of information need, seeking, and use. The findings in this study should also be considered useful by all institutions and entities devoted to creating opportunities for citizen participation in a democratic society.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A

Interview Question Protocol for Learning about Process of Information Needs, Seeking and Use

1. Tell me about yourself?
Prompts:
Where did you grow up?
Tell me about your first family.
What do you remember most about your childhood?
What did you like most? Least?
2. Tell me about your education?
Prompts:
What is your earliest memory of going to school?
What was school like?
Tell me about what you liked to learn. Did not like about school?
How long did you go to school before coming to the U.S.?
What did you study before coming to U.S.?
What kinds of assignment and tests did you experience?
What were you required to do to earn high grades and to pass?
3. Tell me about what you are learning now?
Prompts:
What are you preparing for now? How long will it take?
What content area are you learning?
What do you like most? Least?
What do you hope to accomplish?
What are you doing while you are here at the library? Or, why do you come to the library? What do you like about the library?
Dislike?
4. How do you know what to read and study?
Prompts:
How do you learn what you need to know?
How do you get (find) what you need to study and learn?
Do you need to look up anything to read or study? What? How do you get (obtain) what you read/study?
Describe how you learn best? (read-report; read-memorize; hear about examples; see examples; listen to other people, etc.)
How do you go about learning?
5. How could what you are reading (or learning) be made easier for you?
Prompts:
What do you need to know to be successful?

If you could have anything to help you achieve your goal, what would it be?

Could someone make it easier? Could more books make it easier? What?

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT

The School of Library and Information Management at Emporia State University supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research and related activities. The following information is provided so that you can decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time, and that if you do withdraw from the study, you will not be subjected to reprimand or any other form of reproach. Likewise, if you choose not to participate, you will not be subjected to reprimand or any other form of reproach.

I, Padma Polepeddi, am a candidate for the degree Doctor of Philosophy, Library and Information Management, at the School of Library and Information Management, Emporia State University. I am a librarian. I hope through this study to contribute to improving existing library programs and resources as well as developing new library programs and services.

All participants in this study are English-speaking, African immigrant women living in the Denver, Colorado area. I am inviting you to participate in my dissertation study by doing an interview with me. I will ask you five (5) questions. I will tape record the interview and transcribe the interview so that I can be accurate. This interview will be completed within 30-90 minutes. Your name will never be used. The transcripts will be kept secure and will be immediately destroyed as soon as my analysis of interview data is completed.

Your story is very important. What you say is likely to greatly benefit new immigrants and others who want to become educated and productively employed in the United States.

"I have read the above statement and have been fully advised of the procedures to be used in this project. I have been given sufficient opportunity to ask any questions I had concerning the procedures and possible risks involved. I understand the potential risks involved and I assume them voluntarily. I likewise understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without being subjected to reproach."

 Subject

 Date

 Parent or Guardian (if subject is a minor)

 Date

List of Tables

Table 1.

Demographic Information Obtained from Study Participants

Name	Estimated Age Range 20-30 Years	Estimated Age Range 30-40 Yeas	Estimated Age Range >40 years	Religion Islam	Religion Christian	School < 5 years	School > 5 years	School > 12 years	English as a subject	English as medium of instruction
Hayala		X		X			X			X
Noorza			X	X		X				X
Alma		X		X		X				X
Mesti	X				X		X			X
Tanar			X		X			X	X	X
Elisa		X			X		X			X
Senaila	X				X			X	X	X
Marlan			X		X			X	X	
Genai		X			X		X			X

Table 2.

Classifications, Categories, Subcategories, and Response Items

Category	Frequency	Total
Situation Defining Strategies, Learning Situation		
individual relating to self, economic economic stability (16) economic instability (16)	32	
individual relating to other individuals, family connection to immediate family (24) connection to extended family (5)	29	
individuals relating to collectivity, school hardships (17) teaching techniques (26) English as subject (7) English as medium of instruction (2)	<u>52</u> 113 (62%)	
Situation Defining Strategies, Current Information Process		
individual relating to self thinking (10) creating (2) observing (3) arriving at personal sense or unsense (35)	50	
individual relating to other individuals relating to others (2) learning from others (13) comparing self to others (4)	<u>19</u> 69 (38%)	
Total Response Items		182

Note: Category descriptions are from Dervin and Clark's (2003) situation defining strategies.

Table 3.
Illustrative Quotes for Classification Subcategories

Classification	Illustrative Quotes
Situation Defining Strategies, Learning Situation	
Individual relating to self, economy	
Economic stability	Tanar – I went to Catholic school, private. I went to the same high school where King Menlek II went to school. Marlan – Good situation in Ethiopia, went to private school, Catholic, until eighth grade.
Economic instability	Hayala – I used to started working when I was 12 for my family. I dropped school and worked my whole family. Noorza – I was a refugee person, at life, did not get life together.
Individuals relating to others, family	
Connection to immediate family	Noorza – I go to school and come back, mother father they waiting for us with good lunch ready. Mesti – Family, everyone helping everyone, very happy.
Connection to extended family	Senaila – What I liked the most is all the neighbors are family and so they take care of each other. Genai – In large neighborhoods with large family with love.
Individual relating to collectivity - school	
Hardship	Hayala – When I was 11 my dad pass away. I dropped school and worked for my whole family. Noorza – I was so afraid you know who think and laugh at me and kids if I was not reading very well. Tanar – There was lots of homework and I had to learn by myself from the textbooks. It was very Tough.
Teaching techniques	Elisa – Reading and learning from books and school. Books are in English. We studying on our own. We have homework and exams.

English as subject	Marlan – You learn from the teacher. They put questions on blackboard to learn in class and you also write it and learn in home. You learn everything from the blackboard. Mesti - Seven subjects, they teach Amharic and English.
English as medium of instruction	Marlan – Everything is in Amharic. After seventh grade there is English. Senaila – We were taught in Amharic until third grade and then it was in English. Tanar –The languages taught be in school were Amharic and English. Subjects taught in English were general science, biology, math. Amharic was taught as a subject. I go to college to do tourism. I then come here and apply for hotel job. They accept my hotel diploma.

Situation Defining Strategies, Current Information Processes

Relating to self	
Thinking	Hayala – Success, success, success, Don't dream down. You dream for it. You will be success one day. I wish one day I will success and finish my school. Noorza – I have to focus on how can I protect myself before because it is very dangerous not to do the right thing in the hospital.
Creating	Marlan – I know tailoring and so I was tailoring in our drycleaning business. Genai – When I failed 12 th , metric system, I don't have money for college so I start selling samosas and I supply Injra.
Arriving at personal sense and un-sense	Alma – I take books to read I understand. I look country dictionary for meaning of you know. Hayala – I open the books and I read in middle. If I can understand where I read and I take the books. If it is too many words I don't understand from the books, I'm not taking the book.
Relating to other individuals	
Relating to other	Alma – I was working. I was work, work, work. Used to work downtown parking. Tanar – I learn a lot from the hotel, how they do business and I open to my own coffee shop business.

Learning from others	Senaila – For the nursing exam, we get the books and study as a group. Practice and learn from each other in the group.
Comparing self to others	Mesti – I get a lot of information from the computer and from friends at work. Mesti – I want information about ESL classes for my sister. I want my sister to learn English. Tanar – The library here, they don't help me much. They can put my business cards in the library. They don't do it because of my color.

Table 4.

Dervin’s Communication Tactics (Activity) Necessary to Democratic Communication Situations by Respondents

Communication Activity	Hayala 90 min	Noorza 40 min	Alma 32 min	Mesti 28 min	Tanar 35 min	Elisa 23 min	Senaila 33 min	Marlan 41 min	Genai 44 min
Attending generalized observing	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Creating Ideas no relationship between reality and individual; create new idea	X	X X	X		X			X	X
Finding Direction societal homogenous direction requires the individual to reenergize in a new direction	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Expressing communicating actively to give symbolic meaning	X	X					X		
Finding Connectedness getting connected to others :allies, groups, organizations, sources of ideas	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Confronting, Opposing one entity contesting against another									
Mediating compromising; resolving disagreement									
Recalling creating memory of past and bring memory to the present	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Undoing Rigidities coming to grips with rigidities they face in life induced by experience, culture and structure	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Note: Communication tactics are from Dervin and Clark’s (2003) defining strategies

Table 5.
Illustrative Quotes for Dervin's Communication Tactics (Activity)

Communication Activity	Illustrative Quotes
Attending	Mesti – I like to see things and get a lot of information. Senaila – Libraries don't have updated publications of nursing exams.
Creating Ideas	Noorza – I go to the library, take from here, and take from there, read together and that's how we learn each other. Hayala – When you take a little bit what you don't know the vocabularies that you don't know, search it out, the meaning, write it down, read it again and then you can understand.
Finding Direction	Tanar – I then come here and apply for a hotel job. Marlan – I have to do business and we did dry cleaning business.
Expressing	Hayala – From the book, if I don't understand, I pick the word, I search, I look for it and then read again; I get the meaning. Noorza – The family sit with books from the library and the books children bring home from school. We read together and learn from each other.
Finding Connectedness	Noorza – I'm a history person. I like stories. Not fic stories like real story. Then, I can fix what I did wrong, you know. Senaila – Practice and learn from each other in the group.
Confronting, Opposing	None
Mediating	None
Recalling	Elisa – Loved living with the family. Not working all the time like here. Living together. Mesti – Family. Everyone helping everyone, very happy. I want my sister to learn English.
Undoing Rigidities	Tanar – There was lots of homework and I had to learn by myself from the textbooks. It was very tough. Elisa – Books are in English. We studying on our own. We have homework. Family was very strict and so you study on your own.

I, Padma Polepeddi, hereby submit this thesis/report to Emporia State University as partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree. I agree that the Library of the University may make it available to use in accordance with its regulations governing materials of this type. I further agree that quoting, photocopying, digitizing or other reproduction of this document is allowed for private study, scholarship (including teaching) and research purposes of a non-profit nature. No copying which involves potential financial gain will be allowed without written permission of the author. I also agree to permit the Graduate School at Emporia State University to digitize and place this thesis in the institutional repository.

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African Immigrants: A Case Study of Ethiopian Women
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