

**Figure 2: Sample Tutor In-text Comments**

**Email Comment:**

Hi Gabi,

I've attached your paper to this email. In the document I added notes in the margin. I focused these notes on the issues you pointed out in the email. As far as connectors and organization are concerned, I felt as though the paper read smoothly. Other concerns are noted in the document.

One broader concern I would point out, though, is that you spend considerably more time pointing out and explaining the differences between Western and ACC cultures than you do offering ways of how to work with them. You do briefly mention for each how the differences might affect the social worker or the immigrant, but the last requirement in the assignment asks that you discuss strategies for working with this community. I didn't see you really addressing any strategies.

I hope these notes are helpful. We look forward to working with you again.

Best,

Alice

Application Paper II  
Gabi  
University of X, School of Social Work

The Americana Community Center (ACC) serves a diverse population of refugees, immigrants and U.S. born residents. Most of the refugee families come from war torn countries around the world. Some of these families are Bhutanese, Burundians, Somalis Bantu and Burmese, among others. The program participants represent eighty countries and more than 28 languages are spoken. There is no geographic limitation; the participants come from 33 zip codes. Also, no restrictions are made on the cultural and religious values, socio economic and education levels, marital status, sex or family structure.

These diverse populations of refugees have unique characteristics such as religious values, family ties and roles that may differ from the new culture. The way the gender roles, meaning of age and practice of religion are structured in these ethnic groups play a significant part in the manner they interact among them and in the family decision-making. When these groups face a completely different society like United States, aspects such as gender, age and religion can be impacted and destabilized.

The gender roles of several of the groups served at ACC are based on traditional patriarchal society. It means they are different and visibly defined. Ethnic groups such as Bhutanese, Burundians, and Somalis Bantu present the father as the main provider of the family and the mother as the general manager of the household duties. In some culture like Burundian and Burma the women have more duties than rights and are expected to subordinate themselves to male family members. Males, father and sons exercise bigger authority, they have priority in the family. Also, refugees consider extended family members, such as aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews as part of the immediate family. In some cultures for example Bhutanese and Somalis Bantu as a trait of traditional culture practices they perform polygamy and early marriages arranged by families.

On the other hand, as discussed in class, the gender roles in United States have been influenced by feminist theories, among other historic events. Despite the woman is responsible for taking care of the children and domestic duties yet, the role of the man related to these aspects have been changed. Currently, there is a sense of balance in the distribution of the work within the family. It is acceptable and practiced by men to take care of some house duties and children. Generally man and woman have the same rights and voice in making decisions about family issues.

Once, different culture groups, such as mentioned above, are resettled to United States, as an alternative to give them a better life, their traditional practices, values and belief about gender roles might conflict with U.S customs, for example polygamy, which is not allowed in the United States. In order to help these families to understand and to familiarize with a new culture some programs are designed. For example, ACC offered among its programs Family Education and Family Coaching services. These are programs designed to connect all members of the family through education, language development and skills building to help them to make positive changes in their life supporting their education and integration to their new home.

It is important as phase in the acculturation process that the social work explores and understands the cultural background of the family, their belief about power relationships and rules. The social work working with these client systems needs to be receptive to recognize the

**Commented [AB1]:** When you add in an example like this, you should set it aside in commas to show that it's explanatory information.

**Commented [AB2]:** This seems a little repetitive. Does "father and sons" explain what you mean by "Males"? Or, is "Males" the beginning of the list?

**Commented [AB3]:** In this sentence you offer an explanatory example just as you did above; you should add commas to set apart that explanatory information.

**Commented [AB4]:** It seems like there are some missing words here.

**Commented [AB5]:** "as those mentioned above"?

**Commented [AB6]:** This sentence seems very long because you add in multiple explanatory clauses: "such as those mentioned above", "as an alternative to give them a better life", and the last section that begins "for example...".

You might consider breaking this sentence into multiple sentences if you want to keep all this information. Or, you might consider taking our some of these explanatory phrases which repeat main ideas in your paper.

**Commented [AB7]:** Do you mean the social worker? Social work would be the label for the field as a whole, while the social worker would designate the individual doing the work of the field. If you mean "worker" you should double check that it's correct throughout your paper.

negative effects of the impact of the new culture. For example in a dispute between husband and wife the woman might not tell the truth about domestic violence to the social worker due to the patriarchal family structure.

Other important aspects are family ties and the respect to elder people. Some cultures such as Bhutanese, Burundians, Somalis and Burmese the extended family generally consists of grandparents, children, uncles, aunts, and sometimes other family members living in the same home. The interdependence among family members seems to be a strong trait. At this point, the acculturation process in United States for these groups could take time because the different perspective about family ties and the value of independence. Our society does not incentive being dependent on others. The values of individualism stress each person's responsibility for creating his or her way and success in life. It focuses so much on independence that sometimes forgets the constructive side of interdependence.

In addition, some behaviors performed by these ethnic groups regarding respect for elder people may be understood by the U.S culture as disrespectful or impolite. For example, in Somali Bantu culture children are taught to show respect by not looking elders in the eyes. In Burmese culture young person do not sit at a level higher than that of an elder in the same room and they have to lower their head a little if they have to pass close in front of elders. Due to the importance of eye contact in the western society this conduct must led to false impression when socializing with new people. The awareness of the social work about these aspects is essential in order to work in a culturally competent manner.

Besides, the difference between societies concerning respect for older people and family ties, the meaning of what is to be older for these groups is another aspect that must be understand and work in a sensitive manner by the social worker . For example, among Burundians, old age begins at forty. In United States this age is considered reasonably young. In order to contribute to the acculturation process will be necessary to introduce this different concept about age with the aims of these ethnic groups understand that with this age they are able to play active role in society. They can work and even study up to sixty years.

Another factor refers to religion values and practices. It plays fundamental role in the life of these ethnic groups. For example, among Burundians the great majority of the refugees are Christians. Religion was central to everyday life in the camps. Social life turned around church activities, such as chorus and bible reading groups. Churches provided the structure around which the refugees were able to organize themselves. When resettled to United States this support system is very important because it may help to fill for the lack of extended family for assistance in the country.

However, some beliefs may differ from one group to another even within the same culture. In the case of Somalis Bantu they have two main religions. They are Muslim or Christian. Depending on what religion they follow they might pray five times a day and do not eat pork products or drink alcohol. Also, they retain animist beliefs including use of magic, curse and possession dance. They are highly likely to use native curative methods. Somali Bantu are herbalists and prayer for religious healings is common. Some ritual ceremonies are performed in order to get rid of illness and evil spells.

Regarding the Burmese and the Bhutanese groups they also follow different religions. The Burmese are mostly Buddhists. In their belief Monks are given the highest respect and priority. Their belief includes the credence in karma, the idea that good and bad events can be attributed to actions committed in the past. Also, they believe in reincarnation, the new start of the soul in another body. As the Somalis Bantu, Burmese maintains many animistic beliefs. They

**Commented [AB8]:** Who or what forgets?

**Commented [AB9]:** Here you have a singular noun, "person" but "do" would match a plural noun. As in "he does" versus "we do."

**Commented [AB10]:** Must suggests that it always will lead to misunderstanding. Generally, in academic writing, the writer will offer a more tentative phrase, saying "might lead."

venerated spirits which are believed to inhabit in natural objects such as trees, mountains, lakes and forests. Instead, the main religion of Bhutanese is Hinduism. Because of their Hindu beliefs, they do not eat beef, cows are sacred. However, during festivals and marriage ceremonies animals are sacrificed. Also, as a part of their religious belief they cremate their dead and follow mourning period with special traditions such as daily visits from a religious leader and fasting is common.

When these ethnic groups are relocated into United States they may feel free to practice their personal religion. The constitution of United States, government and other laws and policies contribute to the generally free practice of religion.

However, some practice such as to sacrifice some kind of animals could be against the law in U.S. At this point, these different points of view between cultures should be approached as an issue of education and acculturation to the rules of the new society. Also, some aspects involving health care and religion must be taking into consideration. Social workers must be aware and familiarized with these alternative methods practiced by some cultures which are sometimes completely different from the methods known and accepted in the western medicine society.

Even though people universally share similar essential needs and values, aspects among specific ethnic groups such as gender roles, meaning of age and practice of religion should be completely different. In order to facilitate the acculturation process of these different refugees groups resettled in the United States will be very important for Social workers to be familiar with their background and traditional practices regarding these aspects. Key points to ensure that these cultural differences are understood and respected are the ability to listen and to be open mind. Also, the social work's role preventing misunderstanding will guarantee to deliver an appropriate and effective service to these ethnic groups.

**Commented [AB11]:** Because you're talking about legal concerns in both this paragraph and the one below, you can combine them into one paragraph.