

**THE INTERCULTURAL EXPERIENCES OF SAUDIS IN THE UK:
GENDER SEGREGATION AND MEDIA ISLAMOPHOBIA**

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The Name of Allah



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Dedicated to

Dedicated to

The memory of my youngest brother

Mustafa Walid Salamah

May God have mercy on him

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Abstract

Segregation by gender in Saudi Arabia has had an enormous effect on the development of that society and Saudi citizens. The impact of gender segregation on the way that Saudi citizens interact with each other and the outside world should not be underestimated. As a cultural and social practice, gender segregation is inextricably linked to religious and political ideologies. Unlike countries in the West, where sectarian religious practices are separated from secular political systems, Saudi Arabia does not differentiate between religious and political ideologies. For citizens from Saudi Arabia that live in countries such as the United Kingdom, the experience of moving from their traditional social and cultural environment to another, entirely different environment can be particularly difficult and challenging. In order to develop an understanding of the challenges faced by migrants to the UK from Saudi Arabia, a research study was carried out with Saudi citizens currently working and studying in the UK. The study highlighted the problems experienced by the participants, specifically fears of increased Islamophobia following the 11 September 2001 attack on the World Trade Centre, negative media bias towards Muslims and Islam, as well as social, cultural and religious differences that in some cases prevented the participants from fully engaging in UK society. These differences included attitudes towards other religions, , gender integration, and more open moral attitudes.

Abstract

The goal of this study is to examine the intercultural experience of Saudis in the United Kingdom in the context of mix gender and western media islamophobia regarding cultural differences. Moreover, to also examine the impacts that intercultural experience have on the Saudis' cultural identity while living in the UK in a mix gender setting and their perceive of the western media islamophobia. That will help to find the answers to following questions: How the process of intercultural experience of Saudi migrants in the UK might be shaped by cultural differences in the context of free gender mix setting and western media Islamophobia ? What are the impacts of intercultural experience may have on Saudi's cultural identity in regards to blended genders setting and Western media Islamophobia? The study, will discuss the intercultural experience of Saudis in the UK and what they faced, providing basic information on substantial problems such as discrimination, segregation, marginalization, social and political exclusion.

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Terminology

Saudis: People from Saudi Arabia either living in Saudi Arabia or other part of the world.

Muslims: the people who follow Islam and practicing it in the right way.

Islam: the religion of peace, which believe that there are only one God and Mohammed is the messenger of God.

UK: the United Kingdom of Great Britain.

Intercultural Communication: This term has been applied to any communication between cultures. It has occurred whenever people from diverse cultures have encountered each other.

Intercultural Competence: refers to the level at which people effectively adopt a form of verbal and non-verbal communication that is suitable for the particular cultural context.

Gender: consider the two sexes, male or female.

Gender segregation: the physical, legal and cultural separation of male and female according to their biological sex.

Islamophobia: it is an irrational and a powerful fear and dislike of the Muslims and the Islam religion.

Media: it is the tools of communication that provide information and data to the public this is including traditional media such as TV, newspaper, Video games and movies; and social media such as internet blogs, Twitter and YouTube.

Hijab: it refers to the headscarves that most Muslim's woman worn to cover their hair in public area.

DMIS: the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity by Bennett.

1. Introduction: Culture of Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom

Introduction

This chapter consists of several sections. Section One discusses the reasons that persuaded the researcher to embark on the topic discussed. The following section presents a statement of the main purposes and the objective of the thesis and sets out the underlying research questions. Then, the next section illustrates the scope of the study. This is followed by detailed parts on the Saudi culture, the UK culture, and the political and economic relationship between both countries. Later, the value of the study is addressed along with the methodology and the research sample. After that, the data analysis techniques were pointed out. Finally, a lay out of the study is included to outline its main parts.

Rationale behind the Study

Certain motivations led the researcher to approach this topic. Firstly, after my MA degree I kept investigating the same subject area which is how Saudis who are living in the UK coping with the cultural challenges they might be facing. One of the main factors behind this particular research was the increasing number of individuals who are from Saudi Arabia in the United Kingdom. While some have come to the United Kingdom looking for jobs and employment chances, a significant proportion came to the United Kingdom for education purposes. It should be noted that the number of students from Saudi Arabia have rapidly increased as a result of the decree which was issued by the

custodian of the two holy mosques in Saudi Arabia for the establishment and implantation of a national scholarship program for students to pursue postgraduate or undergraduate degrees overseas. According to the ministry of education (2011) the main objectives of the program included meeting the needs of Saudi Arabia in the development of a professional and academic workforce with the qualifications to be internationally competitive. Additionally, another objective behind designing such as program was to contribute to the international exchange of scientific, educational, as well as cultural experiences. As can be derived from the discussion on the two forms of culture in the above discussion, a numerous differences exist. As a result of these differences, individuals moving from one culture to another have various experiences and challenges adapting to the new culture of the destination country.

Aim of the Study

The primary aim of this project is to analyse data about the intercultural experience of Saudi Arabian migrants living and studying in the UK. The objective is to obtain evidence and data from Saudi Arabian migrants in the UK and evaluate if their exposure to different religious, cultural, social and political systems has had an effect on their Saudi identity, and what type of impact, if any, this exposure has had on them.

The Research Questions

In order to conduct this study the following questions should be answered:

- 1) how the process of intercultural experiences of Saudi Arabian migrants in the UK might be shaped by cultural differences in living in a non-gender segregated social and cultural environment,
- 2) what kinds of challenges have Saudis faced during their stay in the UK?, and
- 3) what are the effects of this intercultural experiences and challenges on Saudi Arabians cultural identity?

Scope of the Study

In order to form an insight of the experience of this particular group, Saudis living in the UK, it is necessary to highlight what the literature have pointed out with regard to the following points:

- the intercultural setting,
- the relation between the two countries,
- media portray of the Saudi community in the UK,
- Saudis accessing the local services and fitting in the British lifestyle in the context of cultural differences,
- Islamophobia, and
- gender segregation.

Therefore, for covering the above-mentioned points a theoretical framework that includes the literature reviews of the Saudi and the British culture has been produced. Moreover, this section highlights some of the differences between these cultures such as segregated gender setting in Saudi and mix gender setting in the UK. The Intercultural theories were identified and applied in relation of the adaption in the new setting like Kim theory of adaption,

intercultural development model of sensitivity by Bennet, and cultural shock theory by Oberg. Furthermore, the literature reviews regarding the two issues related to Saudis' experience, which are facing mix gender setting and islamophobia while living in the UK is also included in this section.

The difference between Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom is clearly identified through an analysis of their cultural and religious systems. Saudi Arabia enforces the segregation of women from men within public spaces, and women have limited role in political and government activities. On the other hand, in the United Kingdom equality between the sexes is encouraged, and although the representation and treatment of women in some areas of the British society has continued to highlight areas of disparity, such as the gender gap in pay and promotion (Allen, 2016) the British legislative process is intended to encourage male and female equality. In Saudi Arabia, the segregation of genders is a cultural practice that is accepted and supported by the Saudi Arabian government. Consequently, segregation has shaped the way of living for Saudi. In addition, this type of gender segregation is driven by cultural and religious discourses, and it is supported by government regulations and policies. As a result of these policies, the Saudi people have developed a cultural identity that is distinctive and different from other cultures in the rest of the world.

The effect of globalisation should also be addressed as it has led to significant changes in the way people live and interact with each other throughout the industrialised West, and as a result, the influence of globalised economic systems is beginning to have an impact on other, traditionally closed cultures such as Saudi Arabia. Globalisation has made it possible for people to

communicate, travel and interact with other people from around the world without needing to worry about time or distance. As a result, people from Saudi Arabia have increased their interactions with other people who are sometimes have very different cultures. Western countries, such as the United States and the United Kingdom, promote gender equality and allow men and women to mix in public situations. The question of how these differences might have an impact on people coming from Saudi Arabia to study and work in the West is one of the main concerns of this research project.

The following section will establish a comprehensive and detailed review of the culture of Saudi Arabia and the differences between Saudi culture and the UK. This chapter is intend to offer a historical background to the development of Saudi Arabia and the country's political and economic relationship with the UK in order to provide a context for the findings of the research study. In this respect, the analysis of the two countries can give an indication of the differences on how these two countries interact on a global level and how individuals interact on a personal, domestic, and local level.

The Culture of Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is a country in the Middle East that occupies a land space of approximately 2.24 million square kilometres. The country shares a border with seven other Arab countries, which include the Arabian Gulf and States of Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman, Kuwait, Iraq and Jordan, and to the South of the country, Yemen. In addition, as Alhazmi and Nyland (2015) have pointed out, Saudi Arabia is one of the few Arab countries that did not experience Western colonialism. Therefore, as Saudi Arabia began to develop the country did not experience the cultural and political upheaval or

disruption experienced former Western dominated Arab colonies. As a result, Saudi Arabia was free to evolve into a state dominated by a strict adherence to religious Islamic and a political system controlled by a monarchy.

Saudi Arabia is internally divided into 13 administrative provinces including Riyadh and Qasim in the middle region. The largest concentration of people is found in the middle of the country. The western region, which is considered the birthplace of the Prophet Muhammad, consists of two provinces that are considered holy places by the Arab people – Makkah and Madinah. The eastern region was mainly desert and mostly unpopulated until they discovery of the Oil on it. The north region comprises of four provinces, these are Tabouk, Hail, Al-Jawf and the Northern Borders. The south region also consists of four provinces these are Jazan, Najran, Baha, and Asir.

The population of the country has changed over the last two decades. According to a census of population and housing in 2010, the total population of people in the country was approximately 28,400,000, and approximately 19,400,000 of these were Saudi citizens. This means that 31.7 per cent of the population of Saudi Arabia were not born in the country. According to the Central Department of Statistics and Information (2011) the growth rate of the population is approximately 2.9 per cent, with a population density of 14 individuals per square kilometre. The population of the country is also relatively young, and a significant percentage are under the age of 19 (Ministry of Economy and Planning of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2010).

The discovery of oil in the country brought an unprecedented degree of wealth into Saudi Arabia. Before the discovery of oil, Saudi Arabia was a poor country and its citizens were divided into traditional tribal societies. Bedouin

tribes occupied the largest space in the middle region of the country, and the further from the centre the different tribes moved the more they stable they became (Alhazmi, et al., 2015). In the west the population consists of a mixture of tribal and non-tribal communities because of the high levels of migration within the country and from migrants from other countries travelling to Saudi Arabia for religious purposes. As a consequence, Saudi Arabia does not comprise of a single ethnic community, and the name of the country actually applies to the relatively new state that hosts most of the Arabian Peninsula (Alhazmi, et al., 2015).

Saudi Arabia is a conservative country, both socially and by religion (Metz, 1992) and because of the homogeneity of the tribal and the religious background of its population the country has a unique and complex culture. Most of the indigenous population are Arabs and conservative Muslims. Therefore, it is difficult to differentiate between the values of Islam and Arabic culture (Lily, 2011). For example, customs such as prohibiting women from driving, practicing law or becoming engineers are not prescribed in Islam; however, these form a deeply entrenched system of belief in Saudi culture (Hamdan, 2005). The position of women in Saudi Arabian society has meant that the country has the lowest participation of women in public life; although the presence of women in positions of power is generally greater in larger cities because these regions are normally less conservative than rural areas (Cordesman, 2003).

Different ethnic groups exhibit gender inequality throughout Saudi Arabian society (Vo and Park, 2008) and domestic hardships is disproportionately represented in the female population, irrespective of their social class (Climo,

2000). The culture of Saudi Arabia is also collectivist in nature and the values and needs, objectives and goals of Saudi citizens are predicated on satisfying the group rather than the individual (Heyn, 2013).

Over the past two decades, Saudi Arabia has experienced significant challenges to their culture and society as a result of modernisation brought about globalisation. As an Islamic country, Saudi Arabia has managed to maintain a state of balance between the conservative values of the Islamic religion and cultural beliefs of its people and changes occurring throughout the rest of the world (Long and Maisel, 2010).

Saudi Arabia has a population of approximately 27 million which is growing at an approximate rate of 3.7 per cent a year (Blanchard, 2009). Saudi Arabia consists of both a huge and vast landmass with a small population of people, and a barren desert terrain that is situated over huge reservoirs of oil (Long, et al., 2010). The country is also a traditional Islamic society that has recently experienced high levels and degrees of modernisation and a closed society that often attracts the attention of the world media (Long, et al., 2010).

The influence of religion on the culture and society of Saudi Arabia should not be underestimated. Saudi Arabia is an Islamic country that is led and governed on the basis of a strictly interpreted Islamic law. Saudi Arabia is the birthplace of Islam which was introduced in the country in the seventh century (Long, 2005). The Prophet Muhammad was born in Mecca in the sixth century and brought Islam to Saudi Arabia in AD 610 (Ali, et al., 2005) Therefore, the culture of Saudi Arabia can only be examined by understanding the importance place Islam has within the country's culture (Long, 2005). The majority of the Saudi Arabian population are Arab Muslims (Keating, 2004).

Islam is now the second largest and fastest growing religion in the world behind Christianity, and has approximately 1.3 billion followers globally (Ali, et al., 2004). The religion is divided into two major sects, Sunni and Shia, although there are other smaller offshoots from the main religion (Blanchard, 2009). Islam believes in the superior and omnipotent position of Allah, the Qur'an as the divine message of Allah, and Muhammad as the messenger of Allah (Armstrong, 2002). The difference between Sunni and Shia faiths is that they disagree on who should have succeeded Prophet Muhammad after his death. Sunnis believe that Abu Bakr, who married into the prophet's family, should have been his successor. Shias believe that Ali, a cousin of Prophet Muhammad should have succeeded the prophet. In Saudi Arabia, Sunni Muslims make up the majority and consist of approximately 85 to 95 per cent of the population. Shia Muslims constitute the remaining 5 to 15 per cent of the population (Blanchard, 2009).

Islam operates under the five main pillars of the shahada, the salah, the zakat, fasting during the month of Ramadan, and the Hajj. The first pillar is proclaimed openly on the national flag of Saudi Arabia which states that, "There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of God" (Keating, 2004). Muslims believe that any individual who wishes to convert to Muslim must proclaim the testimony with conviction. The Salah refers to the obligatory prayers that Muslims make five times a day. The Salah is the direct communication between the worshiper and Allah (Ali, et al., 2004). The official constitution of Saudi Arabia requires everyone to pray and failure to do so is a punishable offense (Yackley-Franken, 2007). The zakat is the belief that all wealth belongs to God and that human beings have been entrusted to hold

that wealth (Blanchard, 2009). However, Muslims believe that their wealth can be purified by offering a percentage of it to any class of people that are regarded as needy. Individual wealth can also be used to facilitate new growth and development. The fourth pillar states that all Muslims must fast and pray during the ninth month of the Muslim Lunar calendar, the Ramadan month. During this season, devout Muslim believers must abstain from food, drink and sex between the hours of sunrise and sundown. Fasting is an important method of spiritual purification (Keating, 2004). The Hajj refers to the annual pilgrimage to the city of Mecca (Ali, et al., 2004). According to the Muslim faith, every male and female individual who are both physically fit and financially capable must travel to Mecca once in their lifetime. The king of Saudi Arabia is the custodian of the two holy mosques in Mecca and Medina. The cities are closed to all the non-Muslims and every visitor is inspected before they can gain entrance to the cities (Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission, 1993).

The most important and significant social institution in Saudi Arabia is the extended family and this constitutes the national identity of the country's citizens (Long and Maisel, 2010). As a collectivist society a great deal of importance is placed on the needs of the family. The family forms the basic social unit and is the centre of loyalty, obligation and status of its members (El-Banyan, 1974). In traditional Saudi Arabian families, the father is the main source of income for the family and the mother is the homemaker. The grandparents are highly respected and they often play a major role in decision making. The father or the grandfather holds the legal power of authority in the family (Long, et al., 2010).

According to Saudi law, an unmarried woman is the ward of his father, a married woman is the ward of her husband and a widowed woman is the ward of her sons. In a male dominated and tribal community, it is not uncommon for the unmarried women to be forced to marry a relative. More than 50 per cent of the marriages in Saudi Arabia are consanguineous (Hessini, 2007). The law contributes significantly to the many challenges faced by women in the country. For example, an MOH (Ministry Of Health) law restricts women from being admitted into government run hospitals unless they are accompanied by their male guardians (Al Hajjaj, 1996). In rural areas, a male guardian might restrict or prevent a woman from being treated by male doctors, even in cases of emergency. In addition, an adult woman cannot sign a consent form for invasive medical procedures even if they are required urgently (Abu Aisha, 1985).

The lack of laws and regulations dictating the minimum age of marriage in Saudi Arabia can result in women forced into marriages before they reach the age of 16 in some areas (Milaat and Florey, 1992). Approximately 27.2 per cent of all Saudi women were married as teenagers, 57.1 per cent of these women were illiterate, 92.4 per cent were housewives and 66.7 per cent are grandparents (Shawky and Milaat, 2000). As a consequence, there is a very high rate of teenage pregnancy which the Ministry of Health of Saudi Arabia has explained may be a major contributory factor to the high rate of child mortality (2009). According to the interpretation of the Islamic law, abortion is a criminal offense and is only allowed in cases where the medical committee agrees that the continuation of the pregnancy may endanger the life of the mother (Hessini, 2007). Female sterilisation is only allowed under highly

restricted conditions and both parents must agree before the operation is performed. The majority of Islamic scholars do not expressly forbid the use of contraceptives, however, the government of Saudi Arabia does not openly support any form of contraception policy.

Male polygamy is another significant issue in the structure of the family in Saudi Arabia. Polygamy is neither mandatory nor encouraged but it is permitted under Islamic law (Mernissi, 1991). However, it is the responsibility and the obligation of the husband to treat his wife in a just manner. This includes the provision of housing, food, clothing and kind treatment. Under polygamous arrangements, all wives are entitled to identical rights and claims over their husband (Hashim, 1999).

Women are not expected to work outside their homes and their roles and responsibilities include taking care of the children and managing all the tasks and chores (Harper, 2007). Unlike other societies where married women assume the surname of their husband, Saudi women retain the name of their father because by law they belong to the families in which they were born into (Long, et al., 2010). According to traditional customs, men are allowed to have up to four wives, although technically a wife must agree to any subsequent marriages (Saudi Arabia in Pictures, 1989). Divorce is highly discouraged within Saudi Arabian culture; however, a man can divorce his wife by stating he wishes to divorce her three times (Ali, et al., 2004).

Saudi Arabian women are always heavily veiled in public. Women are also expected to be fully covered in the presence of men outside their families (Yackley-Franken, 2007). When a woman leaves the house they are expected to put on *Abaya* over their normal clothing to ensure that they do not attract

attention from other men (Harper, 2007). Women are required to wear the Abaya which covers their entire body except the face, which is covered by a Niqab. Men dress in loose fitting ankle length *thob* and a headdress. Men and women are expected to dress in a similar way to ensure that no one is judged in terms of economic or social status, by other people (Yackley-Franken, 2007).

Gender segregation and the roles men and women must fulfil, is very well defined throughout Saudi culture and society. Women are not allowed to drive automobiles in public or use any form of public transportation without a male escort (Long, et al., 2010). In religious institutions, restaurants, shopping malls and other public places all have separate sections for men and women. In other public places working hours are divided into gender-based time-zones. Public institutions are also separated by gender with the exception of pre-school and kindergarten.

Before the foundation of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia the country was primarily a tribal-based society (Branchard, 2009). Following the establishment of the House of Saud, the ruling dynasty of the country, their founder King Abdul-Aziz bin Saud declared that all future rulers would descend from his family. The king of Saudi Arabia acts as the Prime Minister of the country, its Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, and the final court of appeal (Keating, 2004). The king is assisted by a crown prince, who is the immediate heir to the throne. The law dictates that the king must comply and respect Sharia law and the Qur'an which form the legal constitution of Saudi Arabia (Bowen, 2008). The function and role of the government is to enforce Sharia law. Saudi Arabian citizens do not vote for the leaders, and political parties or

elections are not permitted. Legal decisions are made by the king with the assistance of the religious scholars on the basis of the Qur'an and Sharia law.

Gender segregation is evident throughout public and private institutions. Educational sectors, including schools and higher education institutions forbid the mixing of genders (Al Munajjed, 1997). Many restaurants have two sections for men and families. Families are required to sit in a separate and partitioned area. Men have the main responsibility for work and for providing a safe and a secure life for their families. Women are given the main responsibility for managing their homes, and looking after their husbands and children. However, this has nothing to do with the Islamic teachings (Zant, 2002). The Saudi Arabian family structure is based on an historical perception of gender-based roles that originate from older Arabic traditions and customs (Kabasakal and Bodur, 2002). Public spaces are the domain of men and the area of business and political activities (Al Munajjed, 1997).

Thus the economic, political and the religious activities is associated with men. Women on the other hand exclusively belong to the private arena. This world may be thought of as being centred on home affairs, the family members, the family life, intimate relationships and garden work. This is to mean that the Arab people are very sensitive over what belongs to the private as well as the public world. As a result of this sensitivity, there are many restrictions that are made to the women in the Saudi Arabian society. One of these restrictions is keeping a woman away from men who are not members of their family. Islamic scholars have argued that the Muslims encourage gender segregation because their religion encourages chastity and virtue.

Gender segregation in Saudi Arabia is the result of religious nationalism, social expectations, and political ideology (Madawi Al-Rasheed cited in Alsadiq and Hausheer, 2014; Sanauddin, 2013). According to Al-Rasheed, after the establishment of the country, the government of Saudi Arabia faced a population composed of many different tribes with conflicting interests and values. In order to unify the different tribes the Saudi regime established rules, regulations and policies that ensured that men and women did not mix in public; women were also required by law to wear black clothing.

Saudi state institutions require all women to wear the abaya, a loose-fitting, full length black cloak that covers the entire body and they also have to conceal their hair in public (United States Department of State, 2011). The position of women in Saudi culture is a complex and a complicated issue (Fierke and Jørgensen, 2001). The expectation of men to be responsible for women remains a strong social component in the country (Hamdan, 2005). This has affected women from taking powerful positions within education. As a result, many Saudi women study in foreign countries. Women are also forbidden to take part in any political organisations, and cannot act as a candidate or vote in elections (Hamdan, 2005). Regardless of age or the social or economic status, every woman in Saudi Arabia is entitled to a male guardian. However, the last two decades have seen numerous attempts by the king as well as the international community to change this situation, and the king has pledged to allow women candidates to contest seats in the assembly, take part in national and local elections, which also includes voting rights (BBC, 2001).

The imbalances that exist in Saudi Arabia between men and women are not explicitly defined and stated in the national constitutions or in the law, but has

been embedded in the social and the governmental structures and practices (Doumato, 2010). More importantly, women do not have access to the judicial system and thus depend on male guardians to represent them. The independence of women in Saudi Arabia is neglected and lacks both social as well as political support.

Saudi women have also been excluded from participating in most of the activities and events that directly affect their lives. For example, the extent to which women participate in decisions relating to marriage is restricted by men (Doumato, 2010). Moreover, women in Saudi Arabia lack equal opportunities in employment, and the economic opportunities and the scope to which women accumulate and manage their own wealth is restricted and limited by religious factors and beliefs. As a result, in some parts of SA, women are not in a position to take up education and training opportunities except those that have been directed by Sharia law or required by the Qur'an. Sharia law and a highly tribal culture have helped to define the roles of men and women in Saudi society (Leslie, 2011). The cultural aspects, particularly the practices of the tribal culture, have contributed in subjugating women within the society.

The cultural beliefs have been entrenched in Saudi culture and women view these structures as normal and not to be challenged. For example, more than 80 per cent of the Saudi female population are opposed to women driving or working in the same environment as men (Leslie, 2011). This illustrates that many Saudi women are against the reforms and policies that would allow them to participate more freely within society (Saudi Gazette, 2008). This disparity is reflected in the number of women in the Saudi workforce. For example, only 21 per cent of the female population are in fulltime work. In addition, the Saudi

government actively promotes the image of women wearing the abaya, avoiding contact with other men, and abiding by the teachings of their religion (Sanauddin, 2014).

The education system is controlled centrally by the state and Ministry of Education oversees all of the educational institutions. The Ministry manages the construction of teaching institutions, the training of teachers and the development of the national education curriculum (Alarfaj, 2011). The educational policies are set by the national government and implemented by the Ministry of Education and is derived from the beliefs and morals of Islam (Al-Saddan, 2000). The primary focus of the education system is Sharia law, which dictates segregation of students based on their gender. The curriculum also demands education in Islamic and Arabic principles. Islamic and Arabic education continues to play a significant role in the education system, but there have been recent shifts to include classes on mathematics, scientific studies and languages such as English (Rugh, 2002). Nonetheless, the segregation of women has not changed. Male students also receive a more comprehensive education than women (Mobaraki and Söderfeldt, 2010).

Teaching methods are mainly focused on rote learning, and as a consequence, the quality and standard of education is lower than other developed nations (Barber, Mourshed, and Whelan, 2007). Moreover, there is a variation in the cognitive abilities between children from Saudi Arabia and children from other countries such as the United Kingdom (Aljughaiman and Grigorenko, 2013).

As a result of the poor quality of the state education system, the country has seen an increase in private tuition and independently owned educational institutions (Rugh, 2002). However, the figure remains low and private

institutions amount to approximately 13 per cent throughout the country. These institutions were established by the families of business people under the supervision of the government, and are required to follow the curriculum of the national institutions; but they are allowed to teach other lessons (Ministry of Education, 2008). The additions frequently include English language skills, mathematics and science. In addition, most of the funding is obtained from tuition fees paid by parents, with a small amount from the government (Mandelman, et al., 2010).

Other factors and aspects that differentiate private as well as public institutions in Saudi Arabia is the salaries of the teachers that is kept low through hiring foreign primary non-Saudi teachers whose salaries are not under the regulations of the government is not more than 10% of the total requirements of the institutions.

Although the World Factbook (2009) explains that at present there are numerous women graduates in Saudi Arabia, Klass and Goss (2003) reveals that the statistics show that approximately 30 per cent of the women in Saudi Arabia are illiterate. This may significantly be attributed to the fact that in the traditional Saudi Arabia, opening institutions for women was faced with a strong level of opposition in some parts of the country in which non-religious education for women was considered unsuitable. Moreover, coeducation in the institutions is highly prohibited and not allowed by the law. There is no sports education in the country and is prohibited for women or ladies to practice physical activities in the public domain. According to Al-Nozhaet al. (2005), this might be the cause of the high prevalence of obesity among Saudi Arabian

women which were estimated to be approximately 44.0 per cent as compared to the 26.4 per cent for the males.

Furthermore, the law does not allow women to study in engineering fields, law or journalisms. Due to this fact, though 49.9% of the Saudi Arabia population is comprised of women, only an approximated 21% of them contribute to the social development since it is legally and socially unacceptable for women to participate in or work in fields other than medicine and teaching (Vidyasagar and Rea, 2004). The disturbing information is that though women in Saudi Arabia have seen some levels of success in medicine, Al-Tamimi(2004) explains that they are also exposed to a higher level of discrimination. Moreover, due to the contact between the women working in hospitals, the practice is not socially accepted in the families and most family members discourage it. This could also significantly be an inhibitor to future marriage.

The Culture of the United Kingdom

The United Kingdom is a multicultural society with an eclectic mix of different and diverse cultures and religions. As a result of multiculturalism, the potential for interacting with individuals from different cultural and religious backgrounds also increases (McAloney, 2013). Despite a decrease in numbers, Christianity remains the largest religion in the United Kingdom. The response of the participants clearly indicates the internal struggle that occurs when individuals move from one cultural structure to another, entirely different environment.

A growing body of literature and knowledge have continuously demonstrated and established the importance and the significance of culture to a country.

The United Kingdom is a culturally diverse country with people from different ethnic groups and from different countries and regions of origin. Therefore, the culture of the people of the United Kingdom is a mixture of many different ethnic cultures. However, most of the people are British and follow the English speakers' cultural way of life. Contrary to the culture of Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom is a democratic nation whose constitution guides the people in the entire country. In the United Kingdom, government and the constitution advocates and have taken numerous measures towards ensuring equality between men and women. Segregation of any individual based on their gender is a punishable offense as stated by the United Kingdom's national constitution.

The constitution of the United Kingdom provides for the freedom of religion. The state government does not recognize any religion as a state religion as the Saudi Arabia. The country is a mixture of people from different religion with no religion being perceived as being superior to others. The main function of the government in the freedom of religion is to ensure that all the citizens of the country have their rights of religion protected. The government protects the freedom both in the law as well as in practice. Though there are numerous cases and instances of societal abuses of people based on their religious affiliation, beliefs or practices, the number of these cases have significantly reduced over the past two decades.

The Political and Economic Relationship between Saudi Arabia and United Kingdom

The relationship between Saudi Arabia and the UK has been determined by a wide range of mutual commercial and trade interests. Saudi Arabia is the UK's

most significant trade partner in the Middle East, with over 100 joint ventures between UK and Saudi companies. Since the oil boom in the 1960s there have been a growing number of Saudi visitors to Britain, many basing themselves in the more affluent areas of London. A large number of Saudi Arabians make commercially-oriented trips to London or come to the UK to study, creating a community characterised by transience, with a relatively small permanent presence consisting largely of small businesses and middle class professionals. As the 2007 Saudi-British trade relations report states: Saudis visit Britain in increasing numbers predominantly as tourists. As of October 2007, the annual total of UK visas issued to Saudi citizens reached 30,000 which was a 50 per cent increase from 2004. Over the same period, the number of Saudis who are studying in the UK increased by 50 per cent to 3,000. The high level of visas issued to Saudi Arabians also contrasts with the low number of grants of settlement given by the Home Office, which have totalled only 780 since 1991. As well as students, people with work permits and those who left Saudi Arabia because of political opposition to the Government, there are a number of family businesses, merchant families, business entrepreneurs, and a number of royal family members living in England.

Value of the Study

Today many youthful Saudis are living abroad to experience new instructive and social situations in the host nations. For Saudis abroad, the experience can have a significant effect on their perception of gender relations as Saudi Arabia is the most isolated nation when it comes to gender relations. Living in gender blended social orders can possibly change Saudi's views, both socially and instructively, and this will effect on the experience of coming back to their

Saudi group. Notwithstanding an absence of exact measurable data about the quantity of Saudis abroad who are living abroad and the individuals who are going to study, there are a few figures displayed on the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education site (Ministry of Higher Education 2011; Ministry of Higher Education and Deputyship for Planning and Information 2011) and articulations made by the authorities in this service that show that around 1% of Saudi Arabian nationals will be mulling over abroad before the end of 2015 (Alshayban 2011; Al-shutayly 2011).

This study will add to existing research on the migrants' experiences of people moving between the West and the East. There is a relative lack of knowledge that currently addresses the experience of Saudi migrants in the UK, and their engagement with cultural differences, development of their intercultural communication and embracing a British life style. This project has also obtained unique qualitative data from Saudi Arabian citizens living and studying in the UK, which has given an interesting insight into the views of individuals that have experienced a gender segregated society. The information gathered from these participants give a contemporary snapshot of how these individuals view living and studying in the West.

The motivation for this study is threefold. First, in the context of globalisation, the existence of Saudi Arabia in the economic and political world affairs, specifically between the UK and Saudi Arabia, has increased the need for research about Saudi cultural experiences in the West. Second, the number of Saudi citizens coming to the UK is increasing each year which draws attention to the need to investigate how they communicate and interact within different cultures. Finally, the cultural differences between Saudi Arabia and the UK

could make the experience of this group unique in terms of their identity, intercultural communication and cultural differences.

This project has used interviews of Saudi Arabian migrants to understand how these migrants live, works and studies in the UK. As a result of this data, it will help to establish the impact and effect of such social and cultural issues such as Islamophobia, attitudes towards the Western media, problems of discrimination, gender segregation, marginalisation, as well as social and political exclusion in terms of their Muslim identity and the representation of their faith at all levels of society.

Drawing on in-depth interviews of Saudis students and citizens helps give context to help understand the Intercultural knowledge of Saudis in the UK in the context of free mixed gender interactions and Western media Islamophobia.

Methodology and the Sample

The study aims to explore the cultural experiences challenges that Saudis who are living in the UK may face. It is commonly known that the best way to get such a data is conducting interviews. It is reasonable to state that one-to-one interviews for this kind of data is beneficial as it will convey the feeling the body language and that might add a different view for the process of the data analysis.

The chosen sample was 20 Saudis living in the UK for a specific purposes such as studying or working.

Data Analysis

Analysing the data involved reviewing field notes to develop emerging themes in line with the framework. Intercultural understanding of responses and non-

responses was also essential in considerations of the data generated. Plus, (DMIS) Bennet's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (denial, defence, minimization, acceptance, adaptation and integration) has also been used in the analysis and discussion of the data. .In addition, Nvivo data analysis program was used.

Plan of the study

This thesis consists of seven chapters. The first is the introductory chapter, which outlines the reasons that persuaded the researcher to embark on the topic. It presents the main purposes and objectives as well as the actual research questions of the thesis. It also illustrates the scope of the study. This chapter identifies those who should benefit from this study. Also, it provides the reader with the methodology that was used in the study.

The second chapter is the literature review chapter that divided into two parts. The first one is about the theoretical frameworks that include the theories of cross-cultural adaptation such as Kim's (1995) theory of cross culture adaptation; cultural shock theory by Oberg (1960) and Bennett developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS). The second part is focuses on the experience of Saudi Arabians in the UK that identified from the previous studies including the intercultural environment, the media Portray, the government polices and accessing social services.

Chapter Three covers the literature reviews of the issues related to gender segregation in Saudi Arabia and in contrast the free gender setting in the UK. That contains defining gender segregation in Saudi Arabia ; types of segregation between gender; reasons of segregation in gender in Saudi Arabia that includes culture, policy, family, religion ; debating gender segregation in

SA. In addition, the chapter covers also the mix gender setting in the UK and the experiencing mix gender in the UK and debating free mix gender.

Chapter Four is a literature review chapter that tackle issues of Islamophobia by introducing the phenomenon, as well as, when and how islamophobia started. The chapter discussed the effects of 9/11 on Islamophobia and how this attack effected lost of Muslims living in the western countries. In addition, in this part I highlighted the causes and impacts of Islamophobia in general and the causes of Islamophobia in the UK that includes; terrorism, misunderstanding of Islam, fear of Islamic civilisation, negative representation of media about Islam and Muslims. This section is also determined the victims of Islamaophobia: the Muslim community, Muslim women and students. And lastly this chapter reviewed the case of the veil in regards to islamophobia.

Chapter five constitutes the method and methodology chapter that's covers the qualitative methods that I used which is an in-depth interview of 20 Saudis living in the UK. In this chapter it is clarified the criteria of selecting the participants. Applying the methodology of this research has gone through two stages: pilot study and the real study. In-depth interviews were discussed as well as the different types of interviews were conducted depending on the situation of the participant. Data analysis is included in this chapter as data were analysed through two main tools/ techniques : Constant comparison analysis and computerised qualitative data analysis *Nvivo*.

The results of the analysis will be presented in chapter six. Chapter six contain the findings and discussion of the thesis. This part is divided into two parts : the first one is presenting the finding of the application of the intercultural theories such as Kim theory on cross-cultural adaptation , Oberg theory of

cultural shock and Bennett's (DMIS) theory. The second part is the emerging themes from the participant's responses. Discussion of finding and results of findings were discussed at the end of this chapter.

Finally, the conclusion chapter that conclude and summaries the study in general as well as, this part covering the limitation of the research and the future research.

2. Literature Review

As explain in the previous chapter, the objective of the study is to analyze the experiences of the Saudi citizens in their transition from Saudi culture to the culture of people in the United Kingdom. As it was noted, the culture of Saudi Arabia is a culture that values and socially accepts and encourages gender segregation with men dominating the public arena and most of the works of women associated with the private arena. On the other hand, the culture of the United Kingdom values, social accepts and encourages a mixed gender culture with equality of both men and women in both the public as well as the private arena. For the purpose of meeting these objectives, the research choose to develop a framework of research by analysing some of these theories as stipulated and discussed by other researchers. The following discussion explores and critically analyses the cultural adaptation theory, the cultural shock theory and the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity.

2.1 Theories of Cross Cultural Adaptation

One of the primary reasons for international learning is to enable the learners to rise above naïve provincialism and achieve a more worldly and sophisticated cosmopolitanism in order to obtain and achieve a state of tolerance and charity for all people and to widen the view of the individuals towards the world. While considering this objective, researchers have developed an interest in the transition of individuals from one culture to another. The issue of transition from gender segregated cultures to mixed gender cultures is not new, and researchers have documented numerous theories that model how individuals

have developed strategies to deal with moving to different cultural and social environments.

2.1.1 Cross-cultural Adaptation Theory

In 1995, a cross cultural model, based on three main assumptions, was developed (Kim, 1995). The model was based on the open system theory with regard to the notion that humans are highly adaptive. The assumptions conclude that humans have a need to adapt and grow, and that the main factor motivating individuals are new experiences and a sense of curiosity. The second assumption postulates that adaptation to a social environment is significantly dependent on communication. This is explained as an adaptation need that depends on individuals maintaining a continuous communication exchange of messages between the individual and the people in either the original culture or the new culture. Thirdly, adaptation is a complex and active process, and as a result, adaptation must be conceived and perceived as a phenomenon comprising of multiple facets and dimensions (Kim, 1995).

The primary focus of Kim's study was defined as 'strangers'. Strangers begin as cultural outsiders and develop to eventually become cultural insiders. The identification of strangers was determined by three main factors. First, the individual must have socialised in one culture and then moved to another more different and unfamiliar cultural background. The strangers were also expected to be in one way or another dependent on the host culture for personal and social needs and requirements. Thirdly, the strangers must also be involved in a direct communication with the people and the different aspects of the host culture that may be driving them towards a direct and regular interaction.

The strangers in a new culture experienced a stress-adaptation growth dynamic, which is a cycle that includes personal growth and increased adaptation to the new culture (Harvey, 2007). Stress mainly results from the inability of the individual in question to communicate and interact with the host culture, which further and significantly motivates the individuals towards adapting and resolving the problems that arise between them and the new host culture. The strangers respond to each stressful experience with a drawback that activates their internal energy and desire preventing them from moving forward (Kim, 1995). The adaptation and the resolution of the crisis that results from the differences in cultural backgrounds results in learning the acceptable norms of the new host culture, this cycle repeats itself until the stranger has fully adapted to the new culture (Harvey, 2007).

The adaptation cycle does not result in growth and development but results in three main aspects that are primary to intercultural adaptation and transformation (Kim, 1995). The first output is the physical and functional fitness which enables the strangers in the new culture to become increasingly capable to achieve a state of balance between their inner psychological environment and the demands of the host culture. Successful adapted immigrants have accomplished the desired level of proficiency in communication with the members of the new culture and the development of a relationship with the host culture (Kim, 2005). The second output is psychological health and has a direct link to the first output. Individuals who have reached their functional fitness enjoy high and significant levels of psychological health (Kim, 2005). The third output is intercultural identity. This is the phase in which the individual start to lose their rigid and distinct

cultural values and replace it with the different values of the host culture. Strangers possess an intercultural identity but they do not perceive themselves as being completely detached from that culture. In addition, they do not perceive or view themselves as members of one exclusive culture but rather see themselves as members with a different cultural background (Kim, 2005).

Chen (2013:1) clarifies that Kim (1995) study of cross-cultural adaptation can be categorised into two stages. First, the individual stage which emphasises the psychological adjustment of a sojourners in a new setting of unfamiliar culture. In this stage, the coping process of the individuals from different cultural background can be understood through the observation of the individual experience. This can be reached by studying the interpersonal reactions and interactions of the individuals in the new environment. Second, the group stage, this stage is focuses on the acculturation development of groups from different cultural context. This process of development can be determine by studying integration process of the minority groups in the host culture that can results cultural transformations of believes and values (Chen, 2013).

2.1.2 Cultural Shock Theory

Though the issues of cultural shock have been there since migration of people between cultures began, the phrase cultural shock was first used by Oberg in 1960 (Yeu and Le, 2012). According to Oberg (1960) cultural shock refers to the anxiety that results from losing all of the familiar signs and symbols of the social intercourse of an individual. These signs, cues and beliefs are learned in a progressive manner through the course of growing up in a specified culture.

These factors are primarily important to the interactions of the individuals with their environment and familiarise themselves with the daily situations as well as the daily interactions. Movement to a different culture leads to major changes in these factors, most of which may not apply to the new culture and new additions in the host culture. According to Oberg (1960) changes in values and beliefs from one culture to another leads to frustration and stress, and subsequently leads to cultural shock.

The feeling of anxiety and frustration generates a form of reaction that has two phases from the individuals who experience it. Initially, the individuals psychologically and physically reject the new culture because it is their main source of frustration and stress (Oberg, 1960). To these individuals, coming to a new culture is perceived to be the cause of feeling distant from other people, as well as the feeling of frustration and having to cope with a new culture that they have already started to reject. Cultural shock results from three main causes (Oberg, 1960). These include the loss of the familiar cultural cues and values, the breakdown of interpersonal communication as a result of the change in the environment and the people involved, and the change in the social, cultural and personal identity that leads to what is called the identity crisis (Shioshvili, 2012). The second phase is the regression phase. In this phase, the home cultural environment achieves a state of heightened importance and significance to the individuals and they perceive it through a more positive understanding. All the difficulties and problems experienced during the transition are forgotten and only good and positive experiences that happened in the home cultures are remembered (Oberg, 1960).

Some people cannot bear the cultural shock and find themselves incapable of living in the foreign culture. However, other individuals can overcome the cultural shock and achieve the required level of adjustment in order to adapt to the new culture. Those individuals who succeed in overcoming cultural shock follow a four steps procedure to fully adapt to the new culture (Oberg, 1960).

The first phase is called the honeymoon stage. This stage is characterised by individual strangers developing a feeling of fascination with their new environment. The individuals will to socialise and communicate more with the individuals who speak same language as they do or have come from their country of origin. The second phase is characterised by strangers developing hostile and negative attitude towards the host culture. They face problems and significant challenges in adjusting to their daily life in the new culture. Since the stranger may find that native individuals in the host culture are not in a position to fully comprehend their difficulties, they develop the feeling that they do not care for them and a feeling of dislike develops towards the host culture (Oberg, 1960). At this stage the strangers make a decision to continue living in the new culture or return home.

Those who are able to succeed through the second stage, enter into the third stage, a stage of recovery, resolution of the identity crisis and learning the different aspects of the new culture (Yeu and Le, 2012). In this stage, the individuals still face difficulties and challenges in the new culture. However, they have learned how to deal with these challenges and difficulties. Instead of people criticising the people or their new culture, they often joke with the people in the new culture (Oberg, 1960).

The final stage occurs when strangers have achieved full adjustment to the new culture. In spite of the continuing challenges, strangers can operate within the new culture without experiencing feelings of anxiety and discomfort. These challenges gradually reduce as the individual start to learn and understand aspects of the host culture. Individuals in this stage enjoy life in the new culture (Oberg, 1960; Yeu, et al., 2012).

Similar to cultural shock, language shock describes the situation in which the identity and the self-worth of an individual is assaulted or placed under test as a result of the differences that exist in terms of the differences in language. According to the research conducted by Schumann (1986), students and learners often get the best deal of narcissistic gratification from the use of their native languages and may in numerous cases use their native language to attract attention and praise towards themselves. The research showed that when the students are required to use the second language, they lose one of their main sources of narcissistic gratification. The level of integration or individual's ability to cope with new environment and culture may be dependent on how well they understand language and the way of life of their host (Berardo, 2006). These theories are beneficial in understanding how the Saudis living in the UK cope with the new culture. The theories will also shed light on how they might deal with issues of identity and any perceived discrimination issues.

The U-curve theory (UCT) was initially proposed by Cora DuBois and Kalervo Oberg in the 1950s (Berardo, 2006). According to this theory, people from other cultures and countries begin their stay in a new culture with a lot of excitement. They may develop attitudes of pride and a feeling of

accomplishment. Berardo (2006) referred to this as the honeymoon stage. As the people continue with their stay and experience of the new cultural values and ways of life, they progressively begin to be less excited and may experience deep sadness and depression. This stage is often referred to as the cultural shock stage. At this point individuals adjust to the new culture.

Black and Mendenhall (1999) have challenged the theory suggesting that it is not as all-encompassing as previously suggested. Black, et al., explained that more nuance is required to understand the transition of the people from one cultural background to another. Schumann (1986) also discussed and challenged the UCT theory based on the discussion of the language shock theory by Stengal (1939).

2.1.3 The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Milton Bennett proposed this theory to situate the reactions of people in a foreign culture, to establish the levels of adaptation to a new culture, and to understand and analyse the interpretations and the responses of the people to cultural differences (Bennett,1993). Bennett theory was standing on the observations of students over the course in classes, workshops for months and sometimes years. It seemed that these students faced cultural difference in some expectable ways because they learned to be competence in intercultural communication (Bennett, 2004a:13). Intercultural sensitivity refers to the capacity of individuals to differentiate, distinguish and relate to cultural differences (Hammera, et al., 2003). Closely related to cultural sensitivity is intercultural competence that describes the ability of foreigners to think and act in ways that are interculturally appropriate. According to this theory, high

levels of intercultural sensitivity are closely related to a greater possibility of the individual to demonstrate intercultural competence.

Intercultural differences are significant and important factors determining how one views the world, in the process eventuating in an expanded understanding the cultural background of an individual and the culture of other individuals and the increased competence in intercultural relations. As a result of this orientation, this model focuses mainly on the changes in the view of the world and the changes on the emotional aspects of the individuals involved in the shift from one culture to another. The theory is progressively segmented into six stages depending on the circumstance and experiences of the individual. According to (Centre of Intercultural Learning) CIL (n.d.), the first three stages are ethnocentric which means that individuals view their culture as the centre of reality. The other three stages are ethno-relativist in which the individuals view the values and the beliefs of their country in the context of other cultures. The six stages are denial, defence, minimisation, acceptance, adaptation and integration.

Bennett stated that “the underlying assumption of the model is that as one’s *experience of cultural difference* becomes more sophisticated, one’s competence in intercultural relations increases. Each stage is indicative of a particular *worldview configuration*, and certain kinds of attitudes and behavior are typically associated with each such configuration. The DMIS is not a model of changes in attitudes and behavior. Rather, it is a model of the development of cognitive structure. The statements about behavior and attitudes at each stage are indicative of a particular condition of the underlying worldview.” (Bennett, 2004a:13-14).

The ethnocentric stages of (DMIS) :

“The more ethnocentric orientations can be seen as ways of *avoiding cultural difference*, either by denying its existence, by raising defences against it, or by minimizing its importance.”(Bennett,2004b:1).

Denial is the first stage that any individual undergoes in a new culture. The stage is characterised by individuals having the view that their culture is the only true and reasonable culture, and either does not acknowledge the existence of cultural differences or views them in a vague or threatening dimension (Bennett, 2004a). They do not understand the existence of different cultural norms and are entangled in a form of crisis and confrontation between the individual’s culture and the new host culture. The individual attempts to avoid and disregard the cultural differences and their culture remains unchallenged and the centre of reality. During denial, individuals are not anxious to complicate their life with cultural differences and do not notice individual cultural differences.

The denial can be shown in disinterest or inability in distinguishing cultural differences. For example, the Americans cannot differentiate between Arabian Gulf states (such as Saudis, Kuwaitis) and Persians (Iranian) .

Bennett suggests that the resolve of Denial stage allows the conception of classifications for certain cultures that sets up the conditions for experiencing Defence stage (Bennett,2004b:2).

The second stage is defence. The individuals view their cultures as superior to other cultures (Bennett, 2004a). The individuals have a strong commitment to their own thoughts and feelings about their culture and the cultural differences that exist between their culture and the host culture. With the awareness of

other cultures around them, but with incomplete information and understanding of the new cultures, they tend to develop a variety of strong negative feelings about other cultures (they become more skilled *at discriminating difference*). The individuals acknowledge the cultural differences more than they did in the denials. To strangers, the world is divided into them and us where the individual's own culture is perceived as more superior to the culture (Bennett, 2004a). They develop positive stereotypes of their own culture and negative stereotypes of other cultures (CIL, n.d.). To the people from the dominant culture, defence is defined as the attack of their values by the minority groups and migrants. Some people from the native culture blaming the migrants of taking their job opportunities, so they view them in a negative way. Other people from the dominant culture makes jokes about the failure of other cultures and they view other cultures as inferior. Both people from the dominant culture and non-dominant cultures when experiencing defence they tend to create positive stereotype of their own culture and negative stereotype of other cultures (Bennett, 2004b: 3).

A Saudi Arabian individual in the United Kingdom would not acknowledge that the culture of the people in the United kingdom follow a different cultural life but have a high likelihood of perceiving the culture of the United Kingdom as being a lesser culture which poses a threat to the way of life of the people of Saudi Arabia.

Resolving the defence issues is involved by the acknowledgment of the common humanity of individuals from other cultures as it is required to establish commonality to pass this stage and move to the next one which is minimisation (Bennett, 2004b: 2).

The third stage in the transition process and the last of the ethnocentric stages is called the minimisation stage. This being the final ethnocentric stage, the individual makes a final attempt towards maintaining their centrality of their view and their culture. This is achieved by the individual tending to give more weight on the cultural similarities between their culture and the host culture (CIL, n.d.). The individuals continue to understand and become aware that the people from the host culture are very like the people from the individual's culture. At this stage, the cultural views of strangers become universal and applicable to different cultures (Benet, 2004a:18). The threats that the individual experienced in the defence stage are neutralised through the assignment of the cultural differences to the familiar categories of cultures and people. There exists increased awareness that other cultures exist all around the individual with some knowledge and understanding about the differences in the customs and way of living. In this stage, individuals expect and seek similarities that are consistent with their world views and expectations of their own culture (Bennett, 2004a: 19). Their expectation is that other people from different cultures have or would prefer to have similar beliefs and values, and they want others to communicate and behave in a similar manner as those similar to themselves (Bennett, 2004a:19). From the perspective of people from Saudi Arabia, they may view the aspect of gender segregation as being practiced in different ways by different cultures. To them, many people in the UK would prefer the separation of gender as opposed to gender mixing if they were given the opportunity to experience it. They probably would not view gender mixing as a difference in culture, but rather as an alternative or another right way of gender separation.

The ethno-relative stages of (DMIS):

Second three developmental models of intercultural sensitivity ordinations are described as ethno-relative stages, which refers to the person's, own culture that experienced in other cultures context. (Bennett, 2004b: 6). "The more ethnorelative worldviews are ways of *seeking cultural difference*, either by accepting its importance, by adapting perspective to take it into account, or by integrating the whole concept into a definition of identity." (Bennett, 2004b:1).

The fourth stage of the theory and the first of the ethno-relative stages is the acceptance stage. The individuals undergo a change in how they view culture, from an inflexible and static to flexible and dynamic, and a change in how they view the cultural differences, which has been described as the perspective of things to the perspective of processes (CIL, n.d.). Individuals that reach this stage have a full realisation of the reality of the cultural differences and that his culture is one of the many cultures that exist in the world, and that they respect and appreciate the members of other cultures, including their own, and understand that the members of other cultures are just similar people with different values, beliefs, interactions and behaviours. In this stage, the negative ideas and stereotypes of people towards other people from other cultures undergo a continuous change towards being replaced with positive mentality and attitude towards them (Bennett, 2004a:20). As a result of these changes in their cultural perspectives, the individuals explore cultural differences rather than avoid them, and welcome the idea and the notion that people from different cultures are different from their own culture (CIL, n.d.). In this stage,

an individual from Saudi Arabia may accept that the culture and people of Saudi Arabia are equal to people and the culture of the United Kingdom and realise that while the culture of Saudi Arabia accepts and promotes gender segregation, other cultures such as the United Kingdom do not.

The fifth stage is the adaptation stage. “*Adaptation* to cultural difference is the state in which the experience of another culture yields perception and behavior appropriate to that culture. One’s worldview is expanded to include relevant constructs from other cultural worldviews.” (Bennett, 2004b:8).

The main characteristic of people in this stage is recognising the values of having more than one cultural perspective available to them. Adaptation to the differences as a stage in the development of intercultural sensitivity translates into the ability of the individual to act and behave in an ethno-relative manner (CIL, n.d.). They place themselves in the position of other cultures when viewing the different situations and employ their view of other cultures as a frame of viewing the particular situations of concern. However, it is worth noting that while adaptation means adjustment, it does not mean that the individuals completely replace their cultural values with the cultural values of the other culture. Instead, the individuals mainly extend their cultural perspectives to include the cultural perspectives and views from the host culture that are acceptable to them. An individual from Saudi Arabia moving to the United Kingdom would accept and adapt to the gender-mixed culture in the United Kingdom in accordance to the accepted cultural values of the country. However, since the individuals accept and recognise themselves as Saudis, they still practice gender separation with other Saudi citizens.

The final stage in the developmental model is the integration stage. People that experience this stage have the ability to construe their personal as well as their cultural identities at the margins of their own culture and the host culture and does not constrain their identities to any of them (Bennett, 2004b:9). Individuals usually experience this stage after living in the host culture over a long and extensive period of time within the new host environment. These individuals have had extensive interactions with the people in the host culture and have learnt enough about the culture to make a decision to accept the values of the host culture or to reject them. In this phase, the individual builds up an identity based on the values of other cultures and their own culture. However, the changes that occur to their cultural identity are not permanent and depend on the cultural context in which they are in. These individuals do not identify themselves by only one culture (CIL, n.d.). At the end of this stage, the individual becomes multicultural with a knowledge and awareness of different cultures. A Saudi Arabian who experiences integration will accept a gender-mixed culture and a gender-segregated culture.

To clarify the connection between the cultural differences and people from the ethnocentric or ethno-relative stages, Bennett states that “All we can say about more ethnorelative people is that they are better at experiencing cultural differences than are more ethnocentric people, and therefore they are probably better at adapting to those differences in interaction. Perhaps you believe, as I do, that the world would be a better place if more people were ethnorelative. I hope that we will continue to act on this commitment, and that we will do so with intercultural sensitivity.” (Bennett, 2004b:9).

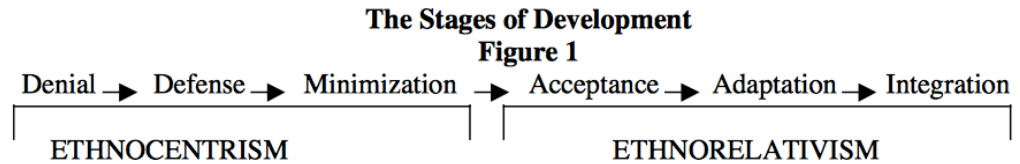


Figure (2-1) Bennett Stages of Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS).
(Bennett,2004b:1).

2.2 The Experience of Saudi Arabians in the United Kingdom

A study conducted by Alhazmi (2010) and Dorres (2007) showed that the difficulties of migrants in the new cultural backgrounds have recently increased. The majority of research agree that living in a new culture or country with a different cultural background can have adverse effects on the individuals and is directly influenced by the level of interaction between migrants and the indigenous population. This occurs during the transition of the individuals from their countries of origin to the new country (Novera, 2004). Research by Kampman (2011) focused on business female students from Saudi Arabia and noted that the presence of the male classmates in classrooms presents a significant hurdle for Saudi students to overcome during class activities. A study by Altamimi (2014) also reinforced these earlier results. In this study Saudi female students unaccustomed to co-educational classes and by male tutors led to the male students forcing most of the female students to remain silent.

(English as Second Language) ESL students also find it challenging and difficult to adapt to a new cultural (Gassama, 2012). According to Gassama's study, differences in the attitudes and the values of the instructors and students proved to be significantly problematical for the majority of Saudi citizens.

According to Buchanan (1990) cultural shock, and the lack of cultural adjustment can be a major reason behind new students failing to achieve their learning objectives. In a study by Lopez Rua (2006) Asian women in the UK are often homemakers and do not have the opportunity to interact with many people in UK society. This happens as a result of the individuals carrying their cultural beliefs from their native country. Al-Otaibi (2004) argued that the Saudi women tend to stay at their homes most of their free time having very little amount of time interacting with people. Insecurity and a lack of confidence also significantly hampers the success of second language learners that are studying in a foreign country (Al-Sibai, 2005). She stated out that second language learners have a tendency of having fear of losing face, to be insecure and to lack confidence. Massive movement of people from Muslim nations to the western countries and UK has made Islam the second largest religion, following Christians in European countries (Sirin& Fine, 2008). Therefore, most of the Muslim communities living in Europe represent a minority religion. In this context, Islam has been internationally politicized, and increase in social anxiety towards the group has subjected Muslims to prejudices, discrimination, deprivations and biased media coverage (Pew Research Centre, 2009). Saudi Arabia Muslims living in UK have therefore to adapt to behavioural and psychological changes in groups and individuals in relation to environmental demands.

2.2.1 Intercultural environment

Muslims are one of the minority communities living in UK and this community faces various challenges. The Muslim community from Saudi Arabia has various deprivations due to social, economic and cultural dimensions. Islamophobia and racism cases dominate the nation, and many people are subject to cultural fears. Politicians and media, that manipulate religion and race issues, promote an oppressive and damaging culture to Saudi citizens living in UK (Versi, 2016).

Muslim population in UK are ignored compared to other populations; hence, most Muslims live in places where there are a number of deprivations. According to Gilligan and Akhtar (2005), a child from Asian Muslim community was sexually abused in Bradford and this case were under-reported comparing to other incident of sexual abuse for children who belong to other communities. A study by Khan (2009) on Muslims who live in Bradford found that the most common belief that British Muslim alienation is owing to Islamic religious affiliations. The findings of the investigation suggested that the participants were alienated by the British society due to the cultural traditions and values of their own families. The author was alarmed by the disconnected individualism and described them as libertines. This clearly corroborates the stereotype of Islamists radicalized by a hatred of Western society (Khan, 2009).

Rich and Troudi (2006) conducted a study to investigate the way Arab Muslim students in the UK perceive racial discrimination through their experiences. Five Saudi Arabia male students participating in TESOL education programs took part in the study. Among the difficulties a Saudi student experiences while

studying in the UK include using a different language, undergoing cultural changes, living away from their homes and having no or little contact with friends and family, and an unfamiliar education environment. For the students to achieve academic excellence, they must familiarise themselves with the UK education system, manage cultural changes, and learn to speak a different language to succeed academically. They also experienced financial difficulties, loneliness, depression, prejudice and anxiety.

The culture of Saudi citizens place high emphasis on family. Solidarity within the family is an important traditional value for Saudi citizens. According to Neydell (2006), family obligations and loyalty are important than job demands and friendship obligations. The citizens perceive family unit as an important foundation for economic and social interactions (King-Irani, 2004). Nydell (2006) asserts that Saudis take responsibilities and obligations of close family as serious and members in the family must guard each others welfare. Muslim considers family as important since it is the basis for their existence (Long and Maisel, 2010). Parents have the responsibility to ensure they bring up responsible children by receive appropriate religious teachings, guiding them through education and exposing them to positive influences. The Muslim culture emphasis on family responsibility for raising children. While fathers support the family, mothers offer love and support to the children. Absence of these experiences affects the learning experiences of Saudi students studying in UK. Since they are perceived as visitors in UK, they have to adapt and adjust to the new culture and experiences different from theirs (Housee, 2012). Students who succeed in academics struggle with frustrations, depression and stress.

Cultural shock is a major experience Saudis experience in UK. It is common among students and other citizens. Diversities in unwritten rules and non-verbal communication increased incidences of cultural shock (MacLean, 2010). Lack of familiar characteristics of the Muslim culture in UK environment interferes with some Saudis ability to function properly since there are distressful elements, which interfere with their culture. There are inscrutable, hostile and irrational elements associated with Muslim culture (Housee, 2012). The idealization of the Muslim culture therefore created an environment where the western communities perpetuate negative behaviour and attitudes indefinitely (Long and Maisel, 2010). There are language problems which makes it difficult for Saudis to understand other cultures in UK and adapt rapidly. People cannot avoid cultural shock, and it makes their life experiences undergo dramatic changes. The changes, being of high magnitude, need significant adaptations and adjustments. Social and cultural adaptation consist of cultural fatigue, cultural shock and racial segregation as major problems that people face (Housee, 2012).

Saudis experience cultural shock in various settings (MacLean, 2010). When workers change their jobs, they experience cultural shock in the corporate sector. Workers transferring from organisations with a small number of employees to organisations with large numbers of employees, they experience new changes that require adjustments. The differences in work settings cause cultural shock (Long and Maisel, 2010). In school, foreign students have to adapt to new regulations which can be significantly different from their home country (Baumman and Shelley, 2007). These include mixing with other genders, and working on group projects (Shah, 2015). Saudi students trying to

adapt to these changes may experience cultural shock. Cultural shock acts as a major obstacle to social interaction and learning (MacLean, 2010).

Intercultural competence contributes to the success of adjusting and adapting to different cultures (Rathje, 2007; Bauman and Shelley, 2007). According to Sercu (2004) cultural competence predicts successful living and working in environments with different cultures. Absence of intercultural competence means that individuals are faced with challenges while relating to other cultures (Shah, 2015). This includes migrant and immigrant concerns, interactions among foreign employees, social relationships, the health professions, as well as the merging and acquisition of companies (Rathje, 2007; Flakerud, 2007).

There is lack of intercultural competence among the Saudi citizens living in the UK. They experience many problems while interacting with other cultures in the UK. External outcomes of intercultural competence involve effective communication and behaviour based on the knowledge, attitudes and skills of individuals (Deardorff, 2006). Educated migrants are aware of their culture, have a deeper understanding of the roles, contexts and influences of other cultures, have specific information about other cultures and are aware of social languages (Emert and Pearson, 2007). As a result, they listen carefully, observe, interpret and relate to people from other cultures. Individuals are interculturally competent if their attitudes show value and respect for other cultures, and they are open to learn new cultures and tolerate ambiguities in other cultures (Deardorff, 2006). Unfortunately, in both the western communities living in UK as well as the participants of this study these requirements were not met.

While the western communities interact and communicate with the Saudis, they display negative behaviour, since they are not aware of Islam practices (Housee, 2012; Long and Maisel, 2010). The prejudiced behaviour prevents the western from understanding Muslim culture, hence failure in relating positively. While the Saudis are aware of their own cultural practices and those of the western communities do not understand the roles and contexts of Muslim cultures. Cultural shocks occur, hence challenging the interactions. Most of the west living in UK have negative attitudes towards Muslim communities (Shah, 2015). They do not value and respect the Islam religion, do not tolerate ambiguities surrounding Muslims and lack interest in learning the Muslim cultures, resulting in intercultural incompetence (Noor, 2007; Allen, 2010; Rathje, 2007).

Discrimination by the indigenous population can also have an impact on the ease with which Saudi Arabians settle in the UK. Saudi Arabian students experience racial discrimination due to their culture, gender identity and roles, ethnicity, religion and nationality image (Shah, 2015; Long, et al., 2010). Saudi students are also susceptible to discrimination because of a perception of affiliation to terrorist groups (Awan, 2014; Allen, 2010; Noor, 2007). Most of the indigenous students are misinformed about Islam and are more likely to discriminate against Muslims (Allen, 2010).

Female students are also discriminated against because of their appearance (Shah, 2015). Zine (2001) indicates that wearing hijab is associated with docility and oppression. Misinformation about Islamic religion and culture, can lead to the indigenous students possessing numerous misconceptions, which damage the Muslim culture. Muslim identities and values are undermined and

their culture is considered useless (Housee, 2012; Shah, 2015). The intercultural environment presents Muslims with challenges of accessing infrastructure, such as Muslim schools, halal butchers and mosques (Housee, 2012). For Muslims to adapt easily in multicultural environments, proper infrastructure that supports their religion and way of life is crucial. They have therefore to deal with the major challenge of absence of facilities that promote their culture. Multiculturalism and diversity in UK is an intercultural element that discourages positive adaptation of Saudi citizens. Although it is an important social resource, it does not promote acceptance and openness. Consequently, Muslims do not have peace to practice their culture autonomously (Noor, 2007; Shah, 2015). Fekete (2006) has argued that hatred towards Muslims and their religion is responsible for the marginalisation of Muslims. The discrimination is not based on biological differences, and Islam is portrayed as undemocratic, oppressive and inferior. Furthermore, the West is considered as sophisticated, enlightened, reasonable, civilised and democratic (Housee, 2012).

Therefore, cultural differences create intercultural risks, and increase stress for Muslims trying to live in the UK. Differences in cultural practices also exacerbate existing challenges (Zlobina, Basabe, Paez and Furnham, 2006). According to documentary video about “the Saudi students life in the UK”, comparisons between the Saudi way of life and the life in the West combined with negative media reporting, makes the life in the UK more stressful for Saudi migrants. Some are excluded from social activities, since they are perceived as dangerous to the western community. Many Saudis experience cultural barriers in UK because of the language barrier, plus there is a lack in

terms of understanding Muslim culture while Saudis have different expectations regarding living in the West. It is essential to point out that, negative experiences sometimes make Saudis feel excluded and alienated (Al-Sharidi, 2011).

Saudis in the UK have few opportunities for securing employment opportunities and access to labour markets. In addition, because of poor education many Saudi, Arabian migrants work in underpaid low skilled employment. Even though the UK has undergone several transformations, British Muslims still work in unskilled or semi-skilled industries.

Despite these challenges, there are Muslims, who have managed to further education in Britain and are working in highly paid positions. Some of these Muslims work as doctors and teachers. (Khan,2005).

Saudi Arabian workers living in the UK suffer from religious and ethnic penalties present in the labour market. Even though the UK has high rates of employing immigrants, highly competent Muslims work in low skilled employment and are underpaid (Sirkeci, Acik and Saunders, 2014).

Saudi Arabia citizens experience communal tension. Discriminatory institutional policies have existed in the UK for many years, creating divisions between Muslim and western communities in education sector. In worst cases, some schools have single ethnic group due to hatred towards Muslim. The segregation policies have created increased levels of poverty, lack of social interactions and unemployment rates. Deprivations and alienation of Muslim communities in UK increased frustration and anger among the youths, creating an environment not stable because of increased mistrust. Increase in misunderstanding and mistrust among Muslims and the west aggravate the

tension between them along religious and ethnic affiliations. Ignoring Asians from Saudi Arabia implies ignoring their welfare, properties and wellbeing; unequal allocation of resources.

Hezam (2015) investigated the experiences of Saudi students in communicating with other cultures in UK. The study looked at the communication dynamics in intercultural interactions among Saudi students. Hezam also explored the way Saudi students interact with women in UK, and compared the differences to gender-related interaction in Saudi Arabia, where this type of communication opportunity is limited. The study found that the identifications of both in-group and out-group members by the participants were not in agreement and the borders between the two categories were hard to identify. In contrast to other studies that suggest that Saudi students comprise of homogeneous Muslims coming from a collectivistic culture, the results indicated that the participants had different perceptions and identifications in relation to other cultures. Therefore, they cannot be characterised as a fixed group. The findings also illustrated that regardless of the segregation between men and women in Saudi Arabia, Saudi students do not find that interacting with persons from the opposite gender was very challenging. The experiences that de-motivated the students from taking part in intercultural communication were not essentially negative ones.

Universities religious organisations, which include the Islamic Society, were perceived positively by students. They are likely to contribute to de-motivating their attendees from experiencing intercultural communication.

The general intercultural experiences by the students in UK had affected their perceptions, identifications and cultural practices on a variety of levels.

Consequently, a number of students introduced considerable changes to their perceptions and identifications, while others accepted changes, which do not conflict with their understandings of religion. However, others resisted any changes. In general terms, the study advocates for moving further than essentialist imagery for Saudi international students portraying them as a homogeneous Muslim collection, who come from a collectivistic culture in a nation where men dominate women.

Saudis experience communication challenges while in UK. It is difficult for Muslims to understand complexities in cross-cultures living in UK. It is also difficult to cultivate the awareness of cultures from other communities due to limited interactions between Saudi citizens and people from other communities. Since the country has multicultural communities, there are diversities in cultural styles, forms of communication and communication styles. Hence, it is challenging for Saudis to build intercultural competency, because other communities consider them as an inferior and obsolete culture (Noor, 2007). They have difficulties adjusting to new cultural practices they encounter in UK. Lack of appreciation and understanding of other cultures creates communication barriers. Communication styles, symbols and methods become confusing. The non-verbal forms of communication also become challenging due to differences in cultural aspects emphasised in the communication process.

Language competence is important for promotion of cultures and social power among communities. Lack of language competency implies that communities have little opportunities for interacting socially, sharing cultural values and learning several elements from other cultures. Immigrant Saudi Arabia citizens

experience language barrier in UK. Since they cannot express themselves using native language used in UK, they have problems moving around, interacting with people from other western and non-western communities, and may not get help they require. Lack of knowledge about the culture and language of the host country, makes it difficult for Saudis to interact socially. Some depend on services of the interpreters in UK.

In some circumstances, interpreters lack. This leads to problems with communication, since there is no shared understanding. Lack of interpreters makes it difficult for individuals to express their thoughts and communicate effectively and freely. Communication may also not be effective due to interpretation concerns. Interpreters must be booked in advance for them to render services. If the individuals in need of interpretation services do not access the interpreters in time, they cannot access services they require in various settings, including schools, hospitals, work places and government offices. Such challenges in communication makes Saudi citizens suffer since they cannot access important services if they are unable to communicate effectively.

Communication issues are also present in the provision of healthcare. Healthcare in the UK is provided in English. Saudis who are not fluent in English face several challenges including: compromised patient confidentiality, unwillingness to talk about intimate issues; interpretations may be subjective or there may be omissions during interpretations; translation is time consuming, and superficial consultations; lack of empathy among health professionals because of lack of engagement with patients; children or parents may be

embarrassed during translations; and because interpreters must be paid, individuals incur additional costs (Housee, 2012).

2.2.2 Portrayal in media

The academic discourse and mainstream media is obsessed with intercultural conflicts between the West and the Muslim community (Noor, 2007). Muslims are depicted as terrorists, extremists, bigoted, fanatics and violent in social media and academic publications. Islamophobia increased due to restrictions by Taliban fundamentalists in Afghanistan, the World Trade Centre attack in September 2001 and the emergence of Islamic State Group (ISIS) (Topbas, 2011). The invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq has been used by the media to define the identity of Muslims (Housee, 2012). The media around the globe has portrayed Islam as a religion prone to violence and highly opposed to the West. Several academic conferences in Europe, the United States and other countries have focused on publications and analytical writings concerning Islam and European countries (Noor, 2007).

In addition, the concerns and identity of Muslims is defined by their opposition to other countries in the world (Noor, 2007). Moreover, the Western world considers Muslims as dangerous, militant and encouraging anti-west sentiments (Poole, 2002). For example, video games and computer games like “Muslim Massacre” that encourages to kill all Muslim race in the game (Percival, 2008). Furthermore, movies such as, *The Dictator* (2012), *American Sniper* (2014) and *Delta Force* (1986) frequently depict Muslims as fanatical murderers, and there are seldom reports about Muslims seeking peace, or Islam as a religion that strives for holiness and peaceful relationships between

Muslims and Christians. Such biases are responsible for increased antagonism towards Saudis living in the UK. It cannot be denied that the media in general does not fairly represent Muslims (Housee, 2012). In this respect, the media can be viewed as promoting information that contributes to the negative experiences of Saudis living in the UK (Housee, 2012; Poole, 2002).

In some instances, the negative depiction of the Saudis living in the UK is a result of negative media portrayal. The media is negative in covering Muslim practices, culture and religious traditions. This has led to a high level of misinformation of the Islamic culture among the UK population. Most of the headlines on televisions, newspapers, social media and other press news present distortive information, and racial reports. Most stories covered in the media revolve around killings, hijab, sex grooming gangs and terrorism perpetrated by the Muslim community. Such headlines negatively influence all Muslim communities living in the UK. Some stories pain and disturb some populations, affecting them psychologically. It has been addressed that Islamophobic abuse including physical and verbal abuse, in offices, schools, colleges, online platforms and social events negatively affect Muslim women (Noor, 2007).

Furthermore, some western media promotes gender segregation. Most of the Islamophobic attacks target women compared to men because their hijab identifies their identity as a Muslim. Visible women walking on streets wearing headscarf or hijab are considered terrorists, and suffer from verbal and physical abuse. For Example, Sara Khan is a Muslims female and a victim of islamophobia, who heads up Anti extremist organisation in the UK called (Inspire). Khan gives some examples of the Islamophobic verbal harassment in

the UK targeted Muslim women. She said that she was called “Osama Bin Laden’s wife”. Khan’s friend told her that someone punched her while she was waiting for the bus and left her with a black eye (Sanghani, 2015).

In some cases, women feel scared to report the abuse incidents to local authorities and police. This might be because the authority views them as danger hence instead of helping them they still perpetrate hatred towards them (Noor, 2007).

Perpetrators also consider attacking children and women is easier since they are less defensive compared to men. Women and children who are attacked live in fear, and since they have no alternatives, they have to remain silent. As a result of the attack incidences psychological problems in some cases have been caused (Noor, 2007). According to Sanghani (2015), *Tell Mama* (an organisation that observes islamophobic abuse) noted that 60% of the islamophobic attacks targeted women in the street.

Some reporting of media on Islamic culture in UK indicates an Islamophobic culture. Journalists cover counter-terrorism topics, viewing social conservatism among the Islam community as repulsive. Muslim also confront non-violent extremists using violent extremism. Thus, social conservative citizens from Saudi Arabia, who support views of other Muslim countries against the West in UK, are viewed as potential terrorists or bombers. There are several negative stereotypes concerning Saudi Arabians in the UK. The media frames the Arab world as abusers of human rights, individuals who discriminate against women; they are also corrupt people, dictators and illiterates. The students studying in the UK are aware of these negative attitudes, and they encounter

biased information on television, from Hollywood films, surfing the internet, listening to radios and reading newspapers (Fishwick, 2015; Easton, 2016).

Obeidallah (2015) indicates that a number of newspapers and TV news, such as *The Fox News*, refer to Muslims as terrorists and murderers who attacking the West. For example, one of the strongest statements in the Fox News was “*not all Muslims are terrorists, but all terrorists are Muslims.*” that was stated by Brian Kilmeade.

Several misconceptions towards Muslims living in the UK portray them as malicious individuals. The Prophet Muhammad, Muslims and Islam religion perpetrates the misconception of aggressiveness among Muslims. The culture is depicted as monolithic and unchanging, while individual Muslims are depicted as irrational, backwards and aggressive. Their religion is perceived as demonic, irrational, dangerous, fanatical, and incompatible with Christianity. According to Ali Dawah (2017), Christian do not know much about Islam or Muslims as seen in the video that they call Muslims their enemies with no evidence. The video shows that a Christian lady argue that Islam is encourage killing innocent people while Ali Dawah is denied that and ask her to show him any verse in Quran stated that. The point is Islam misunderstood by many people in the UK and the chances to correct this misunderstanding are limited. Most films, such as *American Sniper* (2014) and *the Dictator* (2012), after the September 11 attack in the US portrayed Muslims as barbaric and violent. From the middle ages, Muslims have always been depicted as villains and the negative representation has been perpetrated for long time, and is considered acceptable.

Allen (2014) cites eight main components from the Runnymede Trust (1997). The categories of Islamophobia include: Islam does not respond to changes; Islam values are not in line with the values of other religions and cultures; Islam is sexist and barbaric; Islam promotes aggression and violence; Islam is a political ideology; Islam must be criticised; the culture of Muslims is responsible for their exclusion and it justifies why they are discriminated; crime towards Muslims is normal.

The May 2013 attack in Woolwich resulted in hatred towards Muslim communities based in the UK (Awan, 2014). After Lee Rigby, the British soldier was killed in 2013 the media, policy makers and politicians expressed their bitterness towards Muslims. Mosques were vandalised and women wearing headscarves were attacked (BBC News, 2013a). There was also a rise in incidences of Islamophobia (Allen, 2010; BBC News, 2013b). Feldman et al., (2013) indicated that several reports of the killing Muslim children and the burning down of mosques increased on social media after the incident. Other comments posted included Muslims killing Jews, incest, terrorism, and rape perpetrated within Muslim communities (Feldman, et al, 2013). Moreover, there were 500 cases of reported abuse recorded as Islamophobic attacks by the Metropolitan police (Saul, 2013).

The Woolwich murder provoked anger and outrage from the public, leading to increase in the perception that Muslims were a violent community (Larson, 2007). Apart from bullying of Muslims on UK streets, social media and the Internet is now used to attack Muslim communities. Twitter is also used to harass Muslims because of anonymity and easy accessibility (Christopherson, 2007).

Cyber harassment towards Muslim communities has continued to increase (Allen, 2014; Awan, 2010). Most of the comments posted on online platforms such as websites, blogs, virtual platforms and chat rooms contain extremist content or sometimes jokes against Muslims, which promote hatred towards Muslims. For example, there are many websites that contain anti- Muslims jokes (see table 2.1 by Weaver (2013). In addition Weaver (2013) gives an example of anti Muslims jokes that represent Muslims as bombers:

“ A man goes into an adult entertainment shop and asks the assistant for an inflatable doll.
“Would you like male or female?”
“Female, please.”
“Would you like Black or White?”
“White, please.”
“Would you like Christian or Muslim?”
This question confused the man, so he asked,
“What has the religion got to do with it? It’s an inflatable doll!” “Well,” explained the assistant, “The Muslim one blows itself up!”
(sciforums.com 2009) ” (Weaver, 2013:491).

Weaver (2013) has asserted that social media platforms promote cyber hatred through the use of offensive stereotypes and discrimination. When the incidents of cyber-attacks are not regulated and checked, they promote physical abuse (Allen, 2014; Awan, 2010). Jihad Watch (2014) indicates that even though websites and blogs are used to express freedom for disseminating anti-Muslim behaviour, some users use them to post comments that promote hatred. Abusive and threatening comments on social media, including YouTube videos, Facebook messages, tweets (see table 2.2 by Awan ,2014) and visual experiences are detrimental to the psychological wellbeing of Saudi Muslims in UK.

Waddington (2010) has argued that the abuse on social media affects individuals. Perpetrators use anonymity to control and manipulate their targets, who suffer psychological damage as a result (Awan and Blakemore, 2012; Hall, 2005). Through their control, the perpetrators attack the faith and culture of the Muslim community (Perry, 2001).

Website	Anti-Muslim jokes
www.angelfire.com/extreme4/annoying0/jokes.html	0
www.facebook.com/pages/Eric-Cartmans-Jew-Jokes/134509576562871	0
forum.ebaumsworld.com/showthread.php?t=290481	0
www.funny-jokes.us/	0
isitnormal.com/story/muslim-jokes-15423/	14
www.landoverbaptist.net/showthread.php?t=14227	13
mohammedbaboor.angelfire.com/	3
maniacmuslim.com/forums/index.php?/topic/2415-racist-jokes/	2
morticom.com/jokesjewish.htm	0
plancksconstant.org/blog1/2008/09/more_offensive_muslim_jokes.html ^a	24
racist-jokes.com ^a	15
www.resist.com ^a	13
www.sciforums.com/showthread.php?t=35969&page=32	6
www.topix.com/forum/topstories/TILCP880-JOUH9N0S4	7
Truthandgrace.com/muslimhateofjokes.htm	4
Total	101

Table (2.1) 15 websites containing racist jokes about Muslims (Weaver,2013:489).

<p>I forgot muslims are the cause of global warming too! #FuckMuslims #AllTerrorists #KillThemAll #beforetheykillus</p> <p>Expand Reply Retweet Favorite More</p>
<p>Sep 7</p> <p>Murdering jihadists. That Quran is evil. Mohammed was evil. Allah is evil. Islam is evil. #islamkills #tcot pic.twitter.com/kWumOlyE5u</p> <p>View photo Reply Retweet Favorite More</p>
<p>May 23</p> <p>I love when the news reports muslims have been killed, one at a time they will all die!!!! #killallmuslims</p> <p>View conversation Reply Retweet Favorite More</p>
<p>Jan 21</p> <p>We must stop this terminal infestation of muzrats. whites will become the minority. pic.twitter.com/HAdkZk1Zd2</p> <p>View photo Reply Retweet Favorite More</p>
<p>Apr 10</p> <p>Paedophile pisslam pamelageller.com/2014/04/iraq-p...</p> <p>Expand Reply Retweet Favorite More</p>
<p>Feb 6</p> <p>Keep your kids safe & away from muslim paedos. carlosthecasual.wordpress.com/2014/02/06/pol...</p> <p>View summary Reply Retweet Favorite More</p>
<p>Jun 13</p> <p>Pisslam is not a religion but a cult #freespeech jdl-uk.org/2013/06/10-rea...</p> <p>Expand Reply Retweet Favorite More</p>
<p>Jan 31</p> <p>It's time for us to destroy islam at last. I see a day when all those who are slaves to islam will thank us for... fb.me/125fgdywc</p> <p>Collapse Reply Retweet Favorite More</p>

Table (2.2) some tweets contain a hatred language about Muslims in Awan article (2014:142)

Islamophobia increased after the September 11 attacks and the North of England experienced violence disturbances. The West and Muslim communities hated each other because of the September attacks. For instance, towns such as Burnley and Oldham experienced clashes between extremists, Muslims and the police. The clashes demonstrated the discontentment of western men towards Muslim men. After the attacks, the anxiety among Muslims living in Britain increased (Thomas & Sanderson, 2011; 2013).

Most resent , following the attacks on London bridge in 2017 , Islamophobia was depicted in different ways. Some of the west targeted some Muslims in the UK. For instance, some people from the western countries attacked and abused Muslim children and adults, both psychologically and physically. According to *The Guardian* newspaper, some people spat on Muslims, hit them with objects in social places or graffiti attack on some Islamic centres in the UK (Dodd & Marsh,2017).

After being referred to as murderers, most Muslims were socially excluded from public gatherings. Women did not wear their hijab to avoid attacks. Muslim men had to shave their beards and hair, and in some cases, change their names. Businesses run by Muslims and mosques in the UK were vandalised, rendering most of the Muslims homeless and without businesses to earn their livelihood. International students from Arab countries also suffered greatly. Many Saudi students reported violence and discrimination, since other western students formed negative attitudes towards them and started mistreating them (Patel, 2007).

Young people of Saudi Arabian origin experienced stress as they try to adapt to the lifestyle in UK. They encounter a lot of pressure while negotiating problems around sexual orientations, gender roles, identity, religious practices and cultural values. Some face several barriers to employment opportunities and education because of communication challenges, cultural shock, intercultural incompetence and discrimination. The defamatory remarks directed towards Muslim communities has resulted in young people finding it difficult to secure employment opportunities, attend schools with same standards as western communities, as well as interact with other youths from

several cultures practiced in UK. Young Muslim men and women do not spend a lot of time socialising with peers from other communities (Patel, 2007). This is because they are perceived as threats to other communities. Young Muslim people without a good knowledge of English also find it difficult to access basic services such as health care, education, and financial help from institutions (Patel, 2007).

2.2.3 Government Policies Promoting Islamophobia

Media reports about Saudi youths also negatively influence their interaction with other UK communities. Young people face a lot of questions and challenges regarding their loyalty to Islam teachings and culture. This is because of popularity in media reports and globalization. They are forced to define their true identities in national and international gatherings and asked to offer explanations for the actions taken by other Muslims participating in terrorist activities. The young people are burdened with questions to prove that Islam is a peaceful religion which teaches people to abide by the rules. The experience is unfair to Saudi youths, being Muslims since sometimes they fail to provide appropriate answers. Such incidences increase the cases of stereotypes and myths concerning Muslim community, being portrayed as threat to other communities living in UK (Patel, 2007).

The Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC) has claimed that government policies and negative media reports are promoting hatred towards Muslim communities in the UK (Ameli and Merali, 2015). The police are allowed to spy on Muslims and harass them without considering their rights. The report indicated that 50 to 82 per cent of people had witnessed hatred directed

towards others. 69 to 93 per cent had experienced negative stereotypes toward Muslim culture and religion, and 34 to 59 per cent reported discrimination promoted by government policies between 2010 and 2014 (Ameli, et al., 2015). Government policies in UK continue to promote hatred towards Saudi citizens. Discrimination, abuse and violent attacks are considered normal. Attacks from the media and political institutions are the main causes of an increase in anti-Muslim racism and a climate of fear. Many government policies are seen by many Muslims as means of promoting hatred. The policies enforced by the government impact many Muslim communities negatively, because they allow negative stereotypes in the media. Politicians also use Islamophobic language. The Prevent Strategy for countering extremists in Britain is considered as instrumental in promoting hatred towards the Muslim community (Ameli and Merali, 2015). The policy, which was promoted as a security measure, is not serving its purpose. Most of the Muslims living in Britain resent the Prevent Strategy, which was established after the 2005 bombings in London to address Muslim extremism. Abbas (2007) reported that the London bombing, in addition to recognising that Muslims were responsible for the bombing, lead to increased hostility towards British Muslims. The strategy subjected most Muslims to harassment and surveillance, and was viewed as a sign that Muslims cannot be trusted to live peacefully in the UK. The Prevent Strategy has been used in hospitals, schools, and physicians, child care providers and teachers are required to report incidents of extremist groups (Ameli, et al., 2015). The move promotes the values of the West, while encouraging hatred towards Saudi citizens.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act in Britain also promotes negative experiences of Saudi citizens living in Britain (Ameli, et al., 2015). The provision of the Act allows UK security agencies and the police to restrict the freedom of movement for individuals considered as Muslim extremists. The act indicates that government policies in the UK are the main causes of Islamophobia. There are incidents where children whose parents have been linked to extremist groups have had their bank accounts closed. However, in 2014, HSBC bank closed a lot of Muslim people accounts under the reason that the service would be outside the bank's "risk appetite"(Siddique, 2014; Laurie, 2014) .

The report by Ameli, et al., (2015) also demonstrated evidence of political philosophies that promote Islamophobia. 21.3 per cent of the participants in the survey reported that political philosophies promoted hatred towards individuals who practice the Muslim religion. This clearly indicates that the political environment targets Islam. The report also indicated that in 2010 political policies which negatively influenced Muslim people and their religion stood at 34.2 per cent (Ameli, et al., 2015). The percentage increased to 59.2 per cent in 2014, with most politicians promoting discriminatory actions towards Muslim communities.

2.2.4 Difficulties in accessing social services

Muslims have negative experiences in accessibility to healthcare. Bhopal, Hayes and White (2002) scrutinised the connection between social economic standing and type 2 diabetes. The results of the study indicated that men were generally the largest number of victims. Social economic status can lead to

marginalisation of a minority group. It may be difficult for people from low economic and social classes to access high quality health services. Hence, their social and economic standing acts as a barrier to accessing quality health care given to Muslim communities (Bhopal, Hayes and White, 2002).

Healthcare professionals with other related organisations can act as barriers to unbiased access to health services Rhodes, Nocon and Wright (2003). This includes waiting for a long time in queues, making inconvenient appointments, offering poor health services, repeated cancellation of appointments and inadequate consultations with healthcare providers. These are major hindrances for Muslims when accessing quality health care services.

Language and cultural divergence among people living in the UK influence the use of health services. Studys on healthcare in the UK have indicated that the main barrier while seeking health services is language (Din, 2014).This interferes with provision of medical care from healthcare professionals (Lee, Wong and Law, 2007). There is also a relationship between low literacy and accessing health services (Easton et al., 2013) and refugees experience poor health because of insufficient access to adequate healthcare services (Riggs, et al., 2012).

Social support is advantageous to the health of citizens both at residence and community levels. For example, individuals can share their personal experiences and problems. They also learn how to cope with stressful circumstances through empowerment. Social support is concerned with the need for community connection and involvement through which members can build trust using societal customs and traditional groupings. People can increase their sense of personal control and compete for scarce resources by

participating in groups that have common shared interests. Unfortunately, Muslim community does not experience social support from other communities living in UK. Due to the negative perceptions and misconceptions towards Muslims and their religion, they work independently without support from other communities.

The majority of Muslims live in cheap, terraced houses, and very few live in public houses due to hatred towards them. The properties owned do not meet average housing standards, do not have basic social services, are overcrowded, in poor condition and disrepair, and many are not fit for human habitation. Saudi Arabia citizens living in the UK also experience institutional discrimination. This includes policies and practices by landlords, estate agents, housing associations and local authority decisions. Housing personnel have stereotypes and prejudices towards Muslims, and create discriminatory policies regarding house accessibility. Other discriminatory experiences include allocation of houses, provision of poor quality houses and location segregation (Fierke and Jørgensen, 2001).

Housing and residence environment present many challenges to Muslim communities. Most of the Muslims who live in UK reside in areas experiencing several deprivations. The residence, for instance, in Britain, can be called unfit for human habitation (Fierke and Jørgensen, 2001). Due to inequality in disability, illnesses and employment opportunities, they cannot afford residential houses with conducive environment. From the number of houses afforded to Muslims, most of them are considered as unfit for habitation by human beings. The residential areas have poor sanitation, insufficient equipment for dealing with accidents and fire and unhygienic environment.

Due to overcrowding and dampness, the areas are full of bedbugs, cockroaches and fleas (Fierke and Jørgensen, 2001).

Taking into account the theoretical frameworks ,as well as, the literature reviews allows the findings from this study to be analysed . Gender segregation issues and Islamophobia will be discussed as part of the literature review for this research in the upcoming chapters (Chapter 3 AND Chapter 4) .

3. Gender segregation

This chapter is dedicated on the exploration of the gender segregation issues as seen heavily in Saudi Arabia and differences in gender experiences in both the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia. The section will begin with a definition of the term gender segregation then will continue to explore the types of segregation, as well as the reasons behind gender segregation in general.

The aim of this chapter is to discuss on the different experience of people in two countries with a different view of gender segregation. Saudi Arabia segregate women in most of its governmental and religious activities while in United Kingdom, women have equal rights as men. The first part will discuss gender segregation in Saudi Arabia and the second part will focus on the free gender setting in the United Kingdom.

The term gender segregation is a combination of two main terms gender and segregation. There exists a major difference between gender and sex. Sex is the state of being either male or female. However, as West and Zimmerman (1987) explains, gender is not something that people are born with or something that people have but something that people do. Butler (1990) supports the definition by West and Zimmerman by defining gender as something that people perform. According to (Esplen and Jolly 2006, p.1-5), gender refers to the collection of roles and relationships, personality traits, behaviours, values, attitudes, the relative power and the influence that are constructed and developed socially and which the society ascribes to the two sexes. Whereas sex is determined by the genes and the anatomical characteristics of an individual, gender is an

identity that is acquired, changes over time, is learned from the society or the environment and varies from one culture to another. The World Health Organization (2001), gender refers to the economic, social and cultural attributes and the opportunities that are associated with the two sexes at a particular point in time. Monro (2005, p. 29-31) explains that gender is not what the culture creates from the sex of people but sex is what the culture creates or makes when it genders the body an individual.

Segregation on the other hand is related with the separation of one group or one aspect from the others especially in the public domain. According to Siltanen, Jarman and Blackburn (1995, p. 4-5), segregation is the tendency for men and women to be differentiated and separated from each other and be given different roles and opportunities. Segregation refers to a system that keeps different groups separately from each other following specified aspects or basis. The basis of segregation may either be a physical divider, through social pressures and measures or through some specified laws.

Gender segregation is defined as the physical, legal and cultural separation of a group of people according to their biological sex. According to Prince (2005, p.1-20), gender segregation refers to the separation of people based on their social construction of gender. Traditionally, gender segregation was a major issue in most parts of the world with most countries and cultures perceiving the female gender as being less superior to the male gender. It is in the last two decades that campaigns on the need for equalizing the rights of both men and women have taken a new turn and fruits have been seen in most parts of the world. In countries and cultures that practice gender segregation, men and women have different right. There are different roles and things that are done

by each gender. There are opportunities that are given to a particular gender and not to the other.

Gender segregation and gender inequality are similar terms and which relate to one group being provided with different roles and opportunities. Gender inequality involves three different aspects. First, men usually have better opportunities, large degrees of freedom, and a higher social regard than their counterpart female. Secondly, the men will usually hold sway in marriages and in other relationships between different genders. Finally, men occupy the main and the preponderance of the social positions that have significant political, cultural or legal powers (Jackson, 1998; Hooks 2003, p. 52-53). Men are the main decision makers and women are only allowed to follow the decisions and policies set aside by the men counterparts.

3.1 Types of gender segregation:

Women are the main group of people who are highly segregated in the Arab world. Gender segregation can occur both in the public as well as in the private. There are very many ways and methods which can be considered when categorizing gender segregation. However, Cohen (2010), a scholar in gender studies, categorizes gender segregation into four main types. These include the mandatory gender segregation, the administrative gender segregation, the permissive gender segregation and lastly the voluntary gender segregation. The following discussion explains each of these types of gender segregation.

3.1.1 Mandatory gender segregation:

The mandatory gender segregation is required through legal means and is mainly enforced on the basis of the biological sex of the people. For instance, it is mandatory that in many countries, men and women occupy different prisons and cells. Some prisons are constructed for women only who are arrested while others are constructed for men only. Mandatory gender segregation is also evident in the military service where the female personnel and the male personnel are mainly given different quarters and rooms. As Cohen (2010) explains, mandatory gender segregation also occurs in the very obvious activities such as when same-sex individuals are body searched by different attendants in the entry or exit of business or organizations. Also there is a requirement in many countries and states that the employees in jails also follow gender segregation as most men employees are employed in jails and prisons which house men while women employees and attendants are mainly employed in prisons and jails that house female convicts.

A closer look at the running and the constitution of the Saudi Arabia shows that constitution is does not promote gender equality and thus places the country into practicing gender segregation against the women. The basic law of the Saudi Arabia that was implemented since the year 1992, does not guarantee gender equality and gives higher priority and opportunities to the men. Article 8 of the basic law requires that the government be run under the sharia law. However, the sharia law considers women as legal minors and gives. They are to be controlled and guided by their mahram. Under this rule, mandatory gender segregation is exhibited by the government of Saudi Arabia as it is the rule and constitution of the country that requires it to be implemented.

3.1.2 Administrative gender segregation:

The administrative segregation is mainly the type of segregation that is undertaken by the government or other people at authority following their administrative powers (Cohen 2010, p. 515-517). However, the government or the leaders may not be required by the law to conduct and ensure the segregation. For instance, most organizations, companies and offices segregate the bathrooms and toilets based on gender. Though the constitution and the law do not require them to do this, they do so based on their operational capacities. Other facilities such as bathrooms and showers are also segregation based on gender. It is also seen in most institutions of high learning, secondary as well as elementary institutions to segregate the students based on their gender without necessarily the law requiring them to do so. Administrative gender segregation may be practiced by organizations and institutions but may be subject to questions and changes as may be required by the court or by the constitution of a country.

3.1.3 Permissive gender segregation:

Permissive gender segregation is the gender segregation that occurs under the explicit permission (Cohen 2010, p.515-517). That is, the constitution gives permission and allows for the government or the head of companies and operations to segregate people based on their gender following specified conditions. As Cohen (2010, p. 515-517) explains, title VII of the united states law prohibits gender segregation but permits or allows these kind of segregation to occur in employment positions which have bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ) which is reasonably necessary for carrying

out the duties required for that particular position. For instance, the government may segregate female personnel from jobs such as the prison guards. However, most laws and policies with exemptions and gender segregation will mainly be attached with limits on how the segregation may be conducted and at which level it will be regarded as unlawful.

3.1.4 Voluntary gender segregation:

Voluntary gender segregation is the final type of segregation according to the categorisation of Cohen (2010, p.515-517). He explains that gender segregation that cannot be classified as permissive, administrative or mandatory is classified or termed as voluntary. This type of segregation is mainly outside the reach of the government and its law. For instance, it is normal for private organizations, groups and institutions to gender segregate in membership, participation and in the distribution of leadership positions. Sports also depicted in large levels this type of segregation where a team cannot consist of both men and women. Men play their own games and women play their own games. Some religious organizations also segregate people based on gender on who to hold the higher positions such as priests. Islam also segregates men and women on the places of worship and in the way worship is to be conducted.

3.2 Reasons of gender segregation:

Saudi Arabia and the Arab world have been to be among the major countries and nations that majorly practice gender inequality. The women have been forced to wear *bulk* and being subjects of men. The people are ruled by laws that actually forbid women from driving and working till recent time. The women are forbidden from leaving the houses without a male member of their

families. The women in Saudi Arabia have been subjects to gender inequality and gender segregation within their own country. While there are many people and individuals might blame the situation in Saudi Arabia on the lack of education of the Saudi Arabia women. There are many reasons behind the segregation and inequality of gender, such as cultural norms, state policy, family issues and religion in some point. Some of these reasons may be true, a question to ask is why other Muslim countries such as Jordan practice gender equality. The following discussion provides a discussion on the main causes of inequality between men and women (Benjamin,2016: Alsaleh,2009).

The Saudi Arabia is based on the sharia law and all aspects of people including the families and the traditions are based on the sharia law. Though, there has been a trial to implement policies that ensure the protection of human rights in the country, most of them have not yet yielded any fruits at all. The sharia law is the main cause to the injustices that women go through in Saudi Arabia (Baki, 2004:2).

Cultural norms

Saudi Arabia is a country whose people are mainly Muslims and who live by the Muslim cultural norms and traditions. As such, most of the people in Saudi Arabia live under the Islamic culture. In Saudi Arabia, gender segregation is highly visible and expressed. In the past years, male doctors were not allowed to treat female patients unless there were no female specialists available for assistance. The female doctors and specialists could also not be allowed to treat male patients unless there were no male doctors and specialists available. The Muslim tradition discourages the women to expose parts of their bodies in the

public and for this reason, they are required to wear the nijab, a long dress that covers most of the women's bodies except the eyes.

Women are not allowed to meet their spouses in the public places such as in public hotels and restaurants. They are also not allowed to meet their spouses unveiled until they are married to each other. In Saudi Arabia, the women are forbidden from eating in the public, as some parts of their faces would be exposed while eating. This is the reason behind the concealment and barriers in most restaurants and hotels concealing women. This kind of segregation moves a step higher into the worship areas and mosques. In most mosques in Saudi Arabia, men and women are separated during prayers.

State policy

In the Saudi Arabia, the government and the constitution of the country are in the frontline towards offering support for many policies and laws that enforce gender segregation. The policies enacted by the government take part in reinforcing gender segregation in Saudi Arabia. However, it is important to note that the country is based on the 1992 basic law and the Quran and its interpretation. For this reason, the country implements all those practices advocated for in the Quran. The state severely restricts the presence of women in the public and their access to public places. Women are only allowed to be in the public only in the company of their guardians (Amnesty International, 2010).

The constitution of the country prohibits the women from driving. However, there has been an increased pressures and protest against this particular law, the country still operates under the law. In order to obtain a passport, a woman is

required to provide the names and the national identity numbers of their guardians and the guardians are also required to sign the passport forms to allow them to acquire the passports. In Saudi Arabia, the national identity cards are optional for women. However, they are compulsory for all men above the age of 15 years.

Apart from these rules and regulations, Saudi Arabia government applies many more strict rules and laws on gender segregation. Women are forbidden from having physical contact with men who are not related to them and in most cases; men and women are separated in many public areas and public ceremonies. Most governmental ministries are reserved for men and some streets have been segregated for men only. According to the human rights council (2009, p.13-15), the commission of the promotion of virtue and the prevention of vice (CPVPV) is responsible for ensuring gender segregation in the public areas. However, the members of the CPVPV are often vindictive in their interpretation of the laws and other aspects of morality. The CPVPV have been accused of often harassing and physically abusing the women who they deem to have committed crimes or done activities against the rules and laws of the country.

The freedom of expression, association and assembly is also highly restricted in Saudi Arabia. According to the freedom house (2013), the political activists and politicians are frequently detained by the police following their statements and stands. The police have the authority of dispersing people during a protest. It is illegal for any individual to participate in a protest and any meetings or assemblies between people must have a permit from the government. The government actually prohibits the association of people or the formation of

political parties that work against (or as opposition to) the government and the regime of leadership. For example, in October 2013 women in Saudi Arabia launched a campaign called (Women2Drive) and went to the streets in protest and drove. The women who drove were arguing that there is not such a rule in Saudi Arabia that banning them from driving. The campaign started in social media particularly Twitter. The women who drove in this campaign were investigated and arrested. However, September 2017, King Salman announced that women in Saudi Arabia can drive under specific regulation and this will be implemented in July 2018 (Chulov, 2017).

The media is also highly controlled by the government. The media people are banned from publishing articles or writings that the government consider offensive and negative to the religion or the ruling government and authority. Freedom house (2013) explains that any violations to the rules and policies of the government regarding the media can lead to monetary fines, sentences and imprisonments and in some instances forced closure of the media stations. For example regarding to the same topic above in the previous paragraph ,which is women driving in Saudi Arabia; the people who give opinions against the government rules on behave of women driving were blocked from the media (Chappell, 2013).

There is not nationally elected government in Saudi Arabia. Doumato (2010) explains that women did not have the right to vote nor participate in the municipality elections as election candidates. There are no rules and policies that govern and protect the women against discrimination in the employment. The women are also required to have the permission from their guardians regarding their decision to work. Some professions are closed from women

especially those which are unsuitable for the nature of women and those that are dangerous to the health of women.

As Hamdan (2005, p. 44-45) explains, the poor education of women has also played a major role towards gender segregation in Saudi Arabia. The education of women at all educational levels remained under the control of the department of religious guidance until the year 2002 while the education of boys and men was under the ministry of education. The main aim of ensuring a different leadership for the education of women was to ensure that women education remained under the original purpose and objective which was to make them good wives and to give them understanding of how to be good at careers such as teaching and nursing which were considered fit for them. However, things are slowly changing and women are slowly gaining popularity and strength but as Lacey (1981, p. 362-364) explains, reforms in Saudi Arabia has never been and will never be a simple task given the mentality and the beliefs of people regarding religion.

Family issues

According to the sharia law, the husband is the head of the family and in most cases similar to a king in a kingdom. Adult women, regardless of their social or economic status, are required to obtain permission from the male guardians for them to work, to travel, to seek medical care or to marry. The main decisions regarding how the family will be run and how the family will be taken care of must be made by the man. These has been effected mainly through the country's law that allows gender segregation and which prevents the women from meaningful participation in the public life. With the help of the

government and the religious leaders, the men and the husbands in the homes strictly monitor gender segregation in order to promote and ensure the virtue and at the same time preventing the vice.

In Saudi Arabia, the sharia law governs the personal matters of the people (Shehan, 2013). The lack of a written personal status and conduct law or family law has played to enhance gender segregation in the region. According to the human rights council (2009), the interpretation and application of the sharia law to the family and issues relating to individual civilians is done by judges and the senior religious leaders whom the human rights council explain have a discretionary power in deciding the cases. Considering that Islam is the official religion in the Saudi Arabia, the men also take as the head of the homes and families and are the official decision makers in the families. The men are superior to the women in the families.

The human rights council (2009) explains that there is no legal age of marriage in Saudi Arabia. The United States explains that 4% of the girls between 15 and 19 years in Saudi Arabia are either married, divorced or widowed. Though the Saudi Arabia's top religious authority banned the early marriage in the country, most of the decisions regarding marriage and when a girl should be married is the responsibility of the families and is different between families (Doumato 2010, p. 430-434). According to the traditions and the culture, the ladies cannot get married without permission from their guardians. It is the decision of the guardians whether a woman should be married or not and to whom. According to Amnesty International (2010, p.277), the formal marriage contract is decided upon by the guardian of the woman and the husband to be.

Duamato (2010) also explains that marriage to non-citizens of Saudi Arabia must be consented by the ministry of the interior.

The Islamic law legalises polygamy. The men in Saudi Arabia are allowed to marry between 1 to four wives but cannot exceed four wives. However, the law requires that the man only marries the number of wives whom he can treat equally and can support. In contrast, polyandry, the concept of a woman having more than one husband, is legally not allowed and not allowed. The men are allowed to divorce their wives. However, the women may only obtain divorce from their husbands only under some specified circumstances and situation and may not obtain the permission under some other circumstances. It actually becomes difficult for the women to obtain divorce permission from the legal authority as they are required to show proof of the allegations against their men. Shenan (2013) explains that divorce is undesirable and is considered a disgrace if initiated by the wife. However, divorce is considered legal and is allowed if the guardian of the woman consents to the divorce.

Religion

As in most religions in the world, the Muslim religion segregates women and men in most of the religious activities and ceremonies. However, the religion of Saudi Arabia seems to be the main origin and a strong influence in the promotion of gender segregation. For instance, the men and women worship during different days and in different locations. Kissling (2004, n.p) in his post explained that the primary evidence of gender segregation and gender discrimination is seen in the lack of spiritual and congregational leaders of female gender across the spectrum of religious traditions and cultures. The

Islam religion as it is with other religions such as Judaism and Buddhism considers women as not having reached the upper tiers of the holy work. However, Kissling (2004, n.p) explains that the issue of gender segregation and discrimination among the religious structures runs deep into the than the structural hierarchies and the positions of power.

The Quran itself gives men more superiority over women in the society and in the family. According to Arlandson (2015, n.p), the Quran in Sura 2: 228 states clearly that men have a degree above the women in their status and in the society. This has been used by many researchers to explain the causes of women segregation in the Arab countries. Karim (2008) in her book, *American Muslim Women*, explains the challenges of the women who participate South Asian mosques and the African American mosques. She explains that the gender norms and gender lines that are implemented in the mosques have adverse and negative impacts on women. She explains that, the issue becomes even much of a problem in countries where Muslim is the main religion such as Saudi Arabia.

As defined by Karim (2008), gender lines refers to the gender norms and practices that act as the boundaries of women to their full participation in both the public as well as the private places. Gender lines are visible in most traditions and culture. However, the different ways and means in which gender is constructed in the ethnic and traditional communities affects how ethnic identities, ethnic boundaries and gender boundaries are also constricted (Karim 2008, 45). Saudi Arabia remains as one of the countries whose main religion is Islam and most of the people are Muslims. Mosque is the main place of worship and Quran is the main religious book.

The religious practices practiced in Mosques depend on the interpretation of the Quran by scholars and the schools of thoughts in Saudi Arabia. According to scholars, Prophet Muhammad is recorded to have said that it is best for women to pray in the innermost apartments of their houses than to pray in the Mosques (Al-Munajjid, 2013). Some Islam scholars have interpreted the statement as evidence that women should not pray in the Mosques with their husbands and sons. However, there have been many controversies over this statement. Other scholars and researchers have said that Mohammed himself told Muslims not to prevent their wives and daughters not to go to the Mosques when they ask for permission (Paksu, 2008). Moreover, one of the Islam prayer books explains that women should not be prevented from worshiping with their men. However, their best sitting places in the Mosques during prayers is in the last two rows of the mosque while their worst rows are the first rows. Moreover, the first two rows are the best for the men and the last two rows are the last for men (Sahih Muslim book 4).

Religion has highly impacted and influenced the gender segregation issues among the Muslims. It has also been recorded that Mohammed ordered that there be two doors in the mosques, one to be used by men when going out or when coming in the mosque. Men and women are not allowed to go out of the mosque and come into the mosque through the same door. He also commanded that after the evening prayers, women should be allowed to leave the mosque first before the men could move out of the mosques. This was to prevent the men from mixing with women in the mosques or from the mosques.

Women are also not allowed into the Mosques at night because of the fear of them being coerced or sexually harassed by the male members. This was the

main reason why the second Umar asked women to pray in their homes. However, with the growth of Islam, the women praying in the houses became the culture and tradition and thus most of the Mosques and religious leaders forbidden the worship of women from the Mosques. Sometimes, special places could be set aside for the women to worship in instead of inside the Mosques. As if this is not enough, women can only get a passport from the country only under the permission of their guardians.

Religion and the beliefs of people have highly enhanced and promoted gender segregation and discrimination. In some aspects, even what would otherwise be deemed illegal is allowed for the sake of religion. In March 2002, a fire broke out in an elementary school in Mecca and led to the death of 15 young girls. Both the Saudi Arabia as well as the foreign media covered the story and according to the media, the police could not rescue the girls for the reason that they were not wearing the hijab as required by religion. This meant that it would be sinful for the police to approach the young girls. As Prokop (2003, p. 77-79) explains, the result was a public outcry of the religious roles of the religious police in such situations.

According to the Quran and the words of Allah, when the news of the birth of a female child was brought to them, their faces became dark and they were filled with grief and hid themselves from people for the evil that had happened to them (Alhazmi, 2015). Based on this statement, the many experiences of women in the Arab world are as a result of the historical perspectives on women and their roles and responsibilities in the history. Abu-Ali & Reisen (1999), Al Munajjed (1997), Fanjar (1987) and Zant (2002) thus explains that the segregation and the experiences of women in the Arab world are not based

on the Islamic principles but on the historical perspectives of the roles and responsibilities of women in the society.

They explain that the segregation on women resulted from the traditions and cultures of the Arab people that existed many hundred years before the arising of Islam as a religion. Such traditions and world view developed a masculine world in which gender segregation was not just practiced but was prominent; there were very different roles of the different genders (Marcus, 2005), and the power, authority and dominion was mainly vested in men (Kabasakal & Bodur, 2002). Gender segregation in Saudi Arabia can comfortably be seen to follow two main different positions and aspects. These are the private world and the public world. According to AlMunajjed (1997), the public world is the area of business activities and the political activities and forms the dominion of men. The private world on the other hand represents the homes and is where women belong. According to Deaver (1980), the private world is considered as the retreat and the sanctuary where men should keep safe and secure.

3.3 Limitations of Gender segregation in Saudi Arabia

Numerous limitations have followed the segregation of women in Saudi Arabia. The immediate impact of the segregation is the non-recognition and the discrimination of women in the country by their male counterparts. The women are the main group of people highly affected by the issue of gender segregation. (Alhazmi,2010).

3.4 Debates around gender segregation in Saudi Arabia

Numerous debates have emerged on the necessity of gender segregation in Saudi Arabia. 1) Some view gender segregation as being necessary for the

women of Saudi Arabia (Buisson,2013; Almajid,2015). 2) while others raise concerns that gender segregation is not required in the Islam community (Writer, 2014) , as the Quran requires equality for both sexes (Alsaleh,2009).

1) Gender segregation is necessary for women

Some Islam scholars explain that gender segregation is important for the protection of women in the society. According to Buisson (2013), the so called Islamic rules of segregation are necessary to preserve chastity in men and women. They are required to protect the believers from temptations, evil and sin. Gender segregation is depicted as an Islamic prescription based on the hadith and numerous interpretation of the Quran, as a way of protecting the people and ensuring respect and chastity among them. It is a means of protecting the people from the desires and from committing sin. Many Muslim scholars and religious leaders have explained that Quran forbids any intermixing between men and women. According to Sheikh al-Majid (2015), Islam forbids the interaction and intermixing between men and women especially the ones that may lead to any form of temptation.

Traditions insist on the segregation of sexes in particular occasions and particularly in the mosques. The segregation of the sexes in different mosques in the Arab world is seen as the source of the segregation in other public as well as the private areas. The religious people and leaders who support segregation mainly basis their arguments on the Quran verse (Alnour)24: 30-31:

“Tell the believing men to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what they do.(31)And tell the believing women to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts and not expose their adornment except that which

[necessarily] appears thereof and to wrap [a portion of] their headcovers over their chests and not expose their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their women, that which their right hands possess, or those male attendants having no physical desire, or children who are not yet aware of the private aspects of women. And let them not stamp their feet to make known what they conceal of their adornment. And turn to Allah in repentance, all of you, O believers, that you might succeed.”

2) Gender segregation is not required in Islam

Those who support that gender segregation is not required in the Islam world base their arguments on the Quran. According to Alsaleh (2009), the Islamic religion supports and promotes the concept of human brotherhood and equality of all human beings. Jarallah (1996) explains that Islam maintains that both sexes have the same Origin and as such have equal rights. Since the origin, both men and women have played critical and integral roles in all aspects of the society including the military and security docket. According to Writer (2014), a British imam explained that gender segregation and separation has no basis from the Quran. During the history, there was no gender segregation in the Islam religion.

According to the traditions and culture of Prophet Mohammed, there does exist a ruling any ruling that discriminates the women or segregates them from public presence and participation. Yonous (2011) explains that if a government or an individual prohibits women or men to work in the public areas, then the government violates the Islamic law. The Islamic principles give both men and women similar duties and rewards. According to Gazali (1990), the Islamic principles do not require the women to change their names upon marriage and clearly guarantees women their economic independence. Whether married or

unmarried, Muslim women have the right to own property without dependence on any other person. Khateeb (1998) argues that the Islamic law views men and women as being equal and should receive equal punishments for their wrong doings.

3.5 Viewing Gender in the western countries: Free mix gender:

As opposed to the view of gender in Saudi Arabia, the western countries have been on the frontline in promoting and enhancing gender equality between men and women. The United Kingdom has specifically being among the many western countries to advocate for gender equality. Though gender equality has been an issue for all countries and societies in the world, many western countries have implemented policies and programs to ensure gender equality. The women have been recognized as being as important and significant to the society as the men in the same society. While the women in Saudi Arabia have not been given the right to drive in the public roads, driving on the public is a right to everyone who feels like they want to drive regardless of their language, race or even gender. The United Kingdom has embraced gender equality and the free mix gender to a great deal and has understood the role played by women in the society and country in general.

The western countries have been the main countries behind the many groups and parties in the world formed to reinforce and ensure gender equality for both men and women. In 1979, the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) was formed with the main objective of ensuring the end of all discriminatory activities against women. The United Nations has also been on the run towards ensuring gender equality and less discrimination against the women in the society. According to the

definition as provided by CEDAW in 1979, discrimination against women refers to any distinction, exclusion or restriction made to the women on the basis of sex or gender and which has effects or objective of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment of exercise of rights by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of both men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedom on the aspects of political, cultural, civil, economic , social and other fields and aspects of life.

In the above view, the definition of gender equality and the free mix gender interaction between men and women is what supports and ensures gender equality in the United Kingdom. There are no employment opportunities that have been reserved only for men and there are no other employment opportunities that are reserved for women. There are no special roles and responsibilities for either men or women in the society and there are no special positions for men in the workplace and others for women. Political decisions are made by all people including men and women. Bothe genders have the right to view for any particular position as they may wish to do and all people have the right to participate in the elections of the country and to cast their votes for whoever party they may wish to without any form of discrimination or coercion.

Defining free gender setting:

Gender segregation has been visible in many aspects of life. However, since the beginning of campaigns against gender segregation, the changes that have been noticed on the perception of people concerning gender segregation is very little. The change has been significantly small for the professional sector

though it is normal for both men and women to both benefits from working together. It has been evident mainly in many public sectors such as education for men and female to be segregated. However, numerous research works by different researchers and scholars have clearly shown that the changes towards a free mix gender community have been very slow. Specifically, the changes in the perception of different genders in the occupation and in the industries have been very minimal.

Free mix gender is the direct opposite to segregated gender. While gender segregation advocates for differences in the rights, responsibilities and opportunities for different genders in the society, free mix gender advocates for equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for both men and women. Free mix gender advocates equal positions or social status for both men and women. While the past has seen many societies and countries exhibiting sex segregation among the people, the fight against it has highly grown and the acceptance and support for mixed gender is slowly growing into implementation. In the countries that advocate for free mixed gender among the people, both sexes are allowed to participate in any activity that people are required to be involved in.

Most countries in the west have been the most active in the promotion of free mixed gender relations. Countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States of America have been on the frontline on the fight against gender segregation. Taking a case of the United Kingdom, the current monarch is Queen Elizabeth II. The queen is by tradition the official commander in chief of the British armed forces and is responsible for appointing the prime minister who acts as the president of the country. Queen Elizabeth took over from her

father, King George VI after his death. The country does not segregate or divide some professional positions for men and other for women. Any gender can take up any professional position in the country including taking the position of the head of state.

In comparison, countries that promote and run by gender segregation give different rights, responsibilities and roles to both men and women. A case of Saudi Arabia is among the countries in the world to practice gender segregation in the highest degree. The president of Saudi Arabia must be a male member of the country's founder. Women are not allowed to work only with the permission of their husbands or guardians. Men have the full control of the country and the family and everything that is done in the family must be done with the consent and acceptance or support from the man of the house. The women are not allowed to walk freely in the streets alone.

Under the free-mix gender societies, the constitution recognizes both genders as having equal rights. However, though there may still be minimal segregation in their roles and responsibilities, the differences are based on the abilities of the both sexes and not on the gender of the participants. For instance, there may still appear some form of voluntary gender segregation in the workplace such as in the construction industries where most of the employees are men. Moreover, it is visible in most organizations that there exists degrees of gender segregation in the type of jobs and employment opportunities where men are absorbed and the employment opportunities where women are absorbed. For instance, it is very common for ladies to be preferred for the receptionists' jobs and not men. However, it is worth noting that though such differences exist and may be dominant in the organizations and institutions, they do not form

part of mandatory gender segregation in which case the constitution of the country dictates and differentiates between the rights, roles and responsibilities of both male and female gender.

The effects of living in a freely gender setting on cultural identity:

Similar to gender segregation, free gender has numerous changes and differences to the cultural identity. Culture refers to the traditions, norms, customs, practices, language, values and world view that define how people understand the world around them and defines social groups such as nationality, ethnicity, region or the common interests among the people (The Social Report, 2010). The changes in the culture of living have major impacts on the cultural identity of people. The change from a culture that supports and promotes gender segregation to a culture that condones and rejects gender segregation has major impacts on the social cultural beliefs and understanding of people.

Saudi Arabia consists mainly of Muslims and people live under the Muslim culture. The Muslim culture is based on the Islamic religion in which men and women poses different roles and responsibilities in the society. Mixing between men and women are prohibited in the public and women are only supposed to do what their guardians and husbands tell them to do. They do not have the authority to make decisions where men are. This means that the people leaving Saudi Arabia are grown to the culture and understand and respect the norms, beliefs, relationships, responsibilities and roles as provided by the cultural identity of people. On the other hand, the culture and traditions

of the United Kingdom are very different from the traditions and culture of the Saudi people.

While the culture and traditions of the Saudi people support gender segregation and gives different roles and responsibilities for men and women, the culture of the people from the United Kingdom require the equality of men and women. As Bhugra (2004) explained, it is the racial, cultural, and ethnic identities that form part of one's identity. He also explains that personal identity changes with the development at the personal as well as the social levels along with the migration and acculturation. The personal identity thus changes with the change in the location and social changes among the people and their social beliefs and cultures (Ryan and Branscombe, 2013).

Experiencing free mix gender:

In light of the many women crossing the borders from Saudi Arabia into other countries in the world, we sought to understand their experiences with the change of gender perspectives and experience. Based on the research design selected for this research, it is important and significant to explicate the different experiences by the people who move from regions that promote gender segregation to regions that promote free-mix gender. According to Macdonald et al. (2002), this is important in setting the basis for the conceptual framework adopted for this particular research.

In order to gain significant research information and acquire enough information relating to the particular subject under study, the research considered three different perspectives. First, the socio-cultural perspective as

developed by Cole (1995), Vygotsky (1978), Doelling & Goldschmidt (1981) and Wertsch, Del Rio, & Alvarez (1995) assisted in understanding the experiences that result from the change of social and cultural values from segregation to free-right cultures. The second perspective is the symbolic perspective which sought to understand the differences in the position that men and women hold in different societies and the impact of the change from societies where women are not considered fit for any political position to societies which give women to candidacy of the political positions. The perspective followed the works of study by Blumer (1979), Blumer (1986), Clammer, Poirier, & Schwimmer (2004), Denzin (1992), Mead (1967), Kuhn (1964) and Urrieta (2007). The third final perspective is based on the theory of Al-Jabri on the formation of the Arab reason (Al-Jabri, 2011).

The following discussion explains the numerous experiences by the change in the society of people from countries that promote gender segregation such as Saudi Arabia to countries that promote free mix gender such as the United Kingdom based on the above discussed perspectives.

Developmental experiences

The most notable differences and first experience of many people is the developmental experience in the new world (Alhazmi, 2015). The first experience from people from gender segregated region is development which is essentially in two different perspectives. This includes the development in the personal attributes and personality and the development in the individual's perception towards others. As it is the case for adolescents from different genders to develop relationships among themselves (Connolly, Craig, Goldberg and Pepler, 2004), the people from the gender segregated areas develop new

ways of relating to other people without considering them so superior or inferior.

The transition is a way of change which develops the identity of people. Personal identity refers to the persistent and continuous unity of one's self and the individual person which is normally attested by the continuity of memory with the present consciousness (Batory, 2010). Personal identity majorly differs from ethnic or national identity which according to Ludwig (1997) consists roughly of the ethnic groups or nation that one belongs to. The construction of identity is majorly affected and influenced by the environments and regions around the individuals. The question on how self is best characterised has been under the research and attention from many researchers such as James (1950), Mead (1934), Greenwald & Pratkanis (1984), Kihlstrom & Cantor (1984) and Linville & Carlston (1994). One common statement and agreement from all these works of research was that personal identity is to a great degree affected by the environment surrounding an individual. The people in Saudi Arabia develop their identity and association with other people based on their experiences and the life the environment in which they have grown in. On changing their location and culture, the people begin to develop a new identity which is now based on the new environment in the Locations they move to. To many people, this is a positive change and development.

According to Vignoles et al. (2006), self-esteem, efficacy, continuity, distinctiveness, belonging and meaning are among the main factors affecting the development of personal identity. Thus a low self-esteem determines the personal identity of the individuals. The women in Saudi Arabia have most of them developed negative attitude and negative self-esteem on themselves and

thus has lowered the degree of their personal identity. Being given the role of homes and the responsibilities of taking care of the children and the homes, the self-esteem of the women has developed to be very low especially in the presence of men.

Psychological gender experiences

The second and among the most immediate changes that the immigrants into the united kingdom by people from Saudi Arabia is a change in the psychological experiences and beliefs. While most women in Saudi Arabia have been taught to living and doing things under the permission and influence of their guardians and men, the situation is different in the United Kingdom. The men are also affected with psychological differences due to the sudden change of environment into an environment that do not support their decision making in a way that their countries supported. Embracing the new phenomena becomes an issue for both men and women and though we can say that women love being in the new environment, most of them feel as if the other women are misbehaving or if the world have turned upside down for them.

To the immigrants, the change in the environment seemed as a change in the psychological gender complex. The major changes in the beginning of their life in the United Kingdom have huge impacts on their psychological understanding and knowledge. While most women from the Saudi Arabia expect that other women in other regions of the world also wear and live like them, the situation changes and May at some points lead to anxiety and stress for these people. It is difficult for them to transit from the already known gender segregated cultures and societies to the free mixed gender societies.

In this part, cross culture adaptation theory by Kim (1995) is applied (see p 24-26 in (chapter 2) about this theory)for the psychological gender experience as Kim theory is based on being stranger in the new culture, which means this theory includes all the people who start in a certain culture as outsiders and then became insiders. These strangers were socialized in Saudi Arabia and then move to the British culture and dependent on the new culture, as well as, experiencing direct contact with the new cultural setting in the UK. This theory is applied for the Saudis in the UK as they fit the description of stranger that Kim specified because they depend on the British culture to socialize and interact to achieve their goals of coming to the UK.

Applying the cross culture theory by Kim (1995) to the Saudis living in the UK will be on the transition from segregated gender setting o to mix gender setting and the stress they experience during the adaption process. Gender is a culture-based, ideological-based and political-based practice that has largely affected the governance of Saudi Arabia and the way its people behave in presence of others or when they move to other regions. As Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998) explain, it is impossible for individuals to arrive to a definitive understanding with all cultures and traditions. The transition from a society and culture that is based on gender segregation to a society where different people of different gender mix freely in all aspects of life becomes a major challenge to the people. This is what causes difficulties for the people at first adapt to the new environment in the United Kingdom. The challenge becomes even larger and more troublesome due to the changes in the cultural norms as well as the traditions the way of living of the people.

According to Kim (1995) and Harvey (2007), the adaptation cycle started with a stressful experience in the new setting of culture as strangers face lots of psychological issues and drawbacks to adapt and accept the new culture. The strangers' (Saudis) internal energy will be activated by preventing them from interacting with people who are different from their culture. This action will stop them from going forward; therefore, they feel depressed and lonely and in turn that affected their psychological experience. When a stranger learn to adapt and accept the differences in culture, norms and traditions they then reach the adaptation phase of cross culture adaption theory . Saudis in the UK might reach the adaption phase by accepting the mix gender environment over the time as it becomes normal by overcoming the stress and the psychological issues related to unfamiliarity and discomfort. Kim also suggests that the cycle might repeat itself with more different situations that Saudis face in the host culture.

Debating Free Gender in the U.K

The United Kingdom is among the countries that have worked to ensure the end of gender segregation in the public service. The men and women have equal opportunities and rights in the country. The fruits of what can today be called free mix gender have taken years, resources and hard work to be realized. As Malcolmson and Suzuki (2015) explains, the early Europe exhibited similar levels of gender segregation and discrimination as many other Arab countries in the world. The women were not seen as people who had the ability and the power to run any government and for that reason, they spent most of their time and work at home either as wives for the men or taking care

of children. They explain that the issue of gender segregation and the issue of allowing equality of women begun with the literature writers who wrote on the pains and sufferings that women go through in the course of their lives.

Though the United Kingdom have been praised for the many advancements in promoting women rights, many issues have been raised concerning the advantages and disadvantages of free mix gender among the citizens and the ruling of the country. According to Norris (2015), a debate has been arising on the true nature of gender equality in the public places. Specifically, an issue that was generally discussed was the difference gap in the performance evaluations of both genders in the United Kingdom elections debate. Though the country has experienced many changes in the constitution and in the governance structures, there still exist problems in the number of women who enrol of political jobs in the country. This shows that though the country has been on the frontline towards promoting gender rights and gender equality, there still exists a lot to be done to encourage people from different genders towards

The education sector still shows major variations in the number of men and the number of women enrolling for different programs in the higher learning sector (Hartman, 2010). In the political environment, men were still the most preferred candidates for most voters including women. Norris (2015) explained that women themselves did not show interests in women candidates and most of them leaned on men for the political positions. The candidacy also showed the same results as the voter's information. Most of the candidates in many elections in the country showed that women were still segregated and forced themselves to remain segregated as only a few of them went for the top jobs.

As the discussion above has clearly shown, gender segregation has major impacts on the lives of the citizens as well as on the growth of the economy. Saudi Arabia has proved to be among the countries where the issue of gender segregation will remain to be discussed while very little steps and policies are taken to end the gender inequity and segregation. While other countries and nations are on the run to end the segregation based on gender, Saudi Arabia has continually showed very minimal interest towards the total eradication of gender segregation in the country. The issue has been the case for most Arab countries though others such as Jordan and Iraq are slowly joining the list of countries in support for gender equality and free mixing among men and women.

The United Kingdom on the other hand has shown major progress in ensuring free mixing among the people. The government together with the people have worked to promote free mixing in all sectors of the government. However, there still exist issues in the number of women participating or taking part in the government positions as well as in the private sectors. This means that there is still a need to ensure that more efforts and resources are placed on ensuring free mixed gender on the people.

4. Islamophobia

The society of today comprises of people from different economic status, religion, social backgrounds and with numerous other differences. People in one society have different perceptions and stereotypes of others in the society. The differences in the population of groups of people in the society also majorly affects how they are represented. The people are very diverse in many different aspects and differ in almost every aspect according to their culture, race and location of living. This diversity has played a crucial and critical role in supporting the social nature that develops from the negative impact of social problems. For people to enjoy a peaceful coexistent with other people in the society, the members of the society must and should at all times remain tolerant to each other at all times. They should also understand that the survival of the people is threatened by unnecessary conflicts among themselves.

In the Western countries, there exists a widespread tendency to conflate the perspectives of individuals towards the Muslims as a strong political power. Based on the reaction of the westerners to terrorism and related terrorist attacks, there is a strong feeling attitude and feeling of the Westerners that consider the Muslims as the enemy within the West and the enemy outside the Western countries. Islamophobia continues to be expressed in Europe both in public as well as in the private in an increasing frequency and openness. The term Islamophobia was first used in the year 1991 Runnymede Trust Report. According to the report, Islamophobia refers to the unfounded hostility against the Muslims, which leads to dislike or fear of people of all or most of the Muslims. Islamophobia is not a new term, but one that has for the past decade

gained a higher popularity and use among the media people all over the world especially with the increased issues and cases of Islamophobia. According to Ruthven (2002), there have been reported increased levels of Islamophobia not only among the media but also among the politicians and the political life of the Europeans (Mustafa, 2002). The increased cases of terrorisms and incidences involving the death of hundreds and thousands of people, the world has seen major changes in the national security laws of major countries, especially in the development of laws and bills towards the protection against the terrorist activities from the Muslim extremists.

The events that happened on September 11, 2001, is the event that most people can remember and which accelerates their fear and their perception of the Muslims in the world and especially in Britain. Since then, the issues of Islamophobia and the discrimination against the Muslims largely increased. While there is a lot of laws and regulations against the racial discrimination and segregation, very small and few laws and regulations have been passed and implemented towards controlling and reducing the discrimination against the members of the Islam. On the legal basis, there exist very few researchers and scholars who study or conduct religious biases and religious-based discrimination as there are researchers and scholars studying and analysing the other aspects of discrimination such as racial discrimination. In the past number of years, the concept of Islamophobia has developed from a primarily political concept and term towards one that is primarily deployed in the analytical processes in the analysis of major issues in the world such as terrorist attacks and wars.

This chapter aims at the discussion and explaining the concept of Islamophobia. The argument of the study is that there are still high levels of islamophobia among the westerners despite the many laws and programs that have been enacted by the western governments as well as the international community. The part will begin with a discussion on the definition of the term and provide a brief history of the term. This will be followed with a discussion on the issue of Islamophobia as expressed by the media in the Western world, the forms of Islamophobia that are mainly visible in the Western media, the causes of Islamophobia in the Western world and the impacts that Islamophobia has had on the Western countries.

4.1 Defining Islamophobia:

The term “Islamophobia” first appeared as a concept in the 1991 trust report by Runnymede. In this report, Islamophobia was defined as the unfounded hostility towards the Muslim community that led to fear and dislike of all or most of the Muslims in the community. The use of the term in the report was in accordance to the context of the United Kingdom and the European community in general. According to Geschichte (2011), Islamophobia defines the prejudice and the fears of the society towards the Islam religion and the Muslim people. The term describes and explains not only the aversion to the practices of the religion but also the worldwide view of the Muslims and the political implication of the term to the other terms such as oppression, despotism and terrorism.

Lean (2012), in his research, defined Islamophobia as an irrational and a powerful fear and dislike of the Muslims and the Islam religion. He explained

that Islamophobia is manifested to the Muslims through actions such as prejudice, perpetuating, discrimination, hatred and in some cases physical abuse against them. Islamophobia is by itself a form of resentment that is based on religion. Sajid (2005) concurs with Lean and describes Islamophobia as the fear and/or hatred of Islam, Muslims or the Islamic culture. Sajid was part of the Runnymede Trust committee and thus most of his work has borrowed most of the concepts from the report. The article also provided a deep analysis and discussion into the topic of Islamophobia. However, contrary to the definition and understanding of many people, Sajid defines and explains Islamophobia as a necessary but an imperfect neologism suggesting that the term does not effectively and efficiently explain the experience of the Muslims. Richards and Omidvar (2014) explains that Islamophobia feeds on spreading fear of the Islam and designating or creating the view that Muslims are the enemies of other people in the society. The proponents of the Muslims also present the Muslim faithful as people who are largely and highly resistant to changes. According to Kumar (2012), the Western culture views the Muslims as being extremists, inferior, primitives and irrational in nature. These propositions enhances the hostilities and the hatred to the Muslims and finally results in the exclusion of the Muslims in the society.

Ramberg (2004) defines Islamophobia as the fear or suspicion of the Islam, the Muslims and any matters and issues relating to them. In a nutshell, Islamophobia is a term that is used to describe and explain the prejudice against, the hatred towards, or the fear of the Islam doctrines and beliefs, the Muslims or the ethnic groups that are perceived to be Muslims. Islamophobia is the root word that has been derived from xenophobia and is mainly

concerned with the cultural living standards and the ways of living of the Muslims and the politics of identity.

It is worth noting that despite the widespread use of the concept, there exist numerous controversies over the meaning and the understanding of the concept. Numerous commentators have argued that the term does not explicitly define the issues at hand. Many scholars and researchers have argued that the term “Islam phobia” does not express the full range and the depth of the expression of antipathy of the Islam and Muslims in the West today. As a result, numerous other terms have been developed to refer similarly to the concept of Islamophobia. Some of the commentators like to replace and use the term “anti-Islamic racism” to replace Islamophobia while others feel that the term anti-Muslimism would be more effective in explaining the experiences of the Muslims. While some people believe that Islamophobia is a grip to the whole world, Pipes (2009) believe that the promoters of Islamophobia exaggerate the concept in a habitual manner. Those who consider the term anti-Islamic racism argue that the term will combine the concepts of hatred and dislike of the religion but also the culture and with the full knowledge and expression of discrimination of the people in the specified religion (Al-Maktabi, 2005).

4.2 The history of Islamophobia:

Since the terrible tragedy that happened in September 2011, the Muslims have been regarded for long as terrorists. This mind set and attitude of the Muslims as terrorists makes the people in the society to fear the Muslims and in some instances feel insecure when around the Muslims. The roots of the Islamophobia pathology can be traced back to the late 1980s. However, the

concept was not popular and was not felt largely until after the attack in September 2011 as perpetrated by the Islamic group al-Qaeda. Since then, there has been an unending confrontation between the Islam community and the West. The confrontation between the Islamic community and the West emerged with the emergence of Islam.

With time, the relationship between the two civilizations has continued to divide them. With the increased number of terrorist attacks and Mass killings by the extremists from the Islamic community, the West has moved apart and the situation has exacerbated the issue of Islamophobia. Today, issues of Islamophobia and anti-Islamism, which have continued to grow faster and faster over the years, have become a subconsciously inherent issue based on the response of the people to terrorist attacks and other acts related to terrorism among the people from the West and along with the abuse and the aggression from the political leaders, religious leaders, radicalized Western groups and numerous Islamic groups from the West.

Brit (2011) explains that Islamophobia was clearly evident after the end of the cold war but was in low levels. Although Islamophobia became popular and more evident in September 2011, there were numerous instances where Islamophobia traits and actions were visible in the past. In most of the activities and incidences, the Islamic extremists were the main perpetrators in most of the attacks. One most notable attack that contributed to the heightened levels of Islamophobia in the past was the Oklahoma City Bombing. Only two years after the World Trade Center was bombed in 1993, the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building was completely destroyed through a bomb that was placed in a rental truck. According to Nacos and Torres-Reyna (2002) just after the

attacks, new begun spreading among the population of America that the Islamic extremists were responsible for the attacks, and that the government was in pursuit of the attackers.

Shortly after the news, the people in America who were citizens of the Arab countries and those who looked as Arabs became the victims of the angry Americans. However, contrary to the expectation of the people, the man behind the Oklahoma attack was an American. The quick assumption of most of the Americans that the Oklahoma bombing had been perpetrated and carried out by Islam extremists could only show the high levels in which the country automatically associates terrorism and the Islamic extremists.

4.3 The impact of the September 2001 attack on Islamophobia:

The attack that happened on September 2001 came to accelerate the negative attitude of the Westerners towards the Muslims. On this date, nineteen members of the Islamic extremist al-Qaeda boarded four commercial jetliners that left from different airports in the United States of America. After sometimes, the Islamic extremists hijacked the planes with plans to attack the cities in America with the planes. Two of these jetliners hit the Twin towers at the World trade center in New York, with another plane hitting a wing of the pentagon. In the fourth plane, the passengers aboard the plane overpowered the Islamic extremists and the plane crashed in a field. More than three thousand people died on that day with more than one thousand more injured. As the media and the government reported on the attacks, a spirit and a feeling of vengeance came from Americans throughout the country.

The attack awoken up the dying Islamophobia in the Western countries. The Muslim community automatically were associated with terrorist activities and

mass killings (Abu-Ras and Suarez, 2009). Stubbs (2004) explains that the following weeks were characterized by numerous hate criminal activities that were directed on the Muslims or those who appeared to have originated from the Middle East region. The criminal activities were viewed as involving the personal retaliation of some Americans for the loss of their loved ones and family members. According to Ibish (2003), the criminal activities included murder, assault, death threats, arson and vandalism. The events and the criminal activities that were done on the Arabs and the people from the Middle east region by some Americans were so severe that most of the victims were diagnosed with stress and depression and the reduced and poor mental health (Clark, Anderson, Clark and Williams, 1999; Klonoff and Landrine, 1995; Landrine and Klonoff, 1996; Utsey and Ponterotto, 1996).

After the mind-shattering attack, the whole world went to a shock. The American especially was so much traumatized by the activities of the day. To most of the Americans and the affected people, the only they could perceive the Muslim community was being death loving, mass-murdering and of medieval fundamentalism. Hindsight, the over-reaction of the affected people was inevitable.

As Brit (2011) explains, the attack triggered the growth of the negative attitude towards the Muslims. This was mainly for four different reasons and factors. The first was attributed by the old-fashioned xenophobic racism which refer to the hatred of foreigners that was already in the heads of most of the American and British. The second reason included the atheist anti-clericalism which refers to *“hostility toward Catholic priests, persists in French culture, and now often provides license for anti-Muslim tirades”*(Riemer,2016:4). The third

reason is the socialist nostalgia to the same culture and tradition. Finally, neo-con belief in reshaping the Middle East, for example Mozaffari (2004: 49-48) stated that the engagement of Americans' in the Middle East is mainly motivated by a re-evaluation of their own planned benefits. The 9/11 has greatly transformed their view of the world; their concept on 'security' and their role in leading the world.'"

To some sense, Osama bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaeda, which was responsible for the attack in September 2011, achieved his objectives, which was to force a massive over-reaction of the West which would lead to more polarization. This would in a way led to more Muslims joining the al-Qaeda and they would see that the welcome and the liberal democracy were in a fake order.

4.4 Causes of Islamophobia:

Islamophobia is caused mainly by the attitudes of the society towards the Muslim community. With many terrorist groups and acts of terrorism closely connected with the Muslims, the society has grown to have a fear and a negative attitude towards the Muslims. There exists very many and different forms of the causes of Islamophobia. However, the main cause of Islamophobia is the attitude of the people towards the other, specifically, the attitude of some Westerners. According to Weller (2006), the ignorance of religion by the individuals and people who are not Muslims is the one reason that has contributed majorly to the current state of issues with Islamophobia. In this revelation, the non-Muslims do not clearly understand the ethics and the practices of the Islam religion. This means that the non-Muslims only make assumptions about the believes and the practices of the Muslims. They make

the assumption that since most of the extremists are Muslims, the Muslims support and promotes hatred and violence towards the non-believers.

Lgbal (2010) explains that the other cause of Islamophobia is the media and the poor reporting of the media on the attacks perpetrated and caused by Muslim extremists. He explains that the media, especially in the Western countries, largely covers the stories of the attacks on the Western countries by the Muslim extremists but fails to cover similar attacks on the Muslim countries. The media reports poorly that the Islamic countries are also victims of the attacks by the extremists. The media, together with the political as well as the religious leaders explain that the Islamic states have not disseminated information regarding any violent attack and do not provide any factual reports concerning the issue. The results have been the world at large believing that the Muslims are the perpetrators of the many attacks to the non-Islamic states and not victims of the attacks.

Another factor contributing to the high rise of Islamophobia is the issue of incitement by individuals, groups, organizations and political leaders. Lgbal (2010) thus explains that there are different individuals and groups of people whose role and sole mission is to cause and to spread violence and intolerance across religions. Through the actions of perpetrating of the violence, they get the opportunity of accessing some resources that would otherwise be impossible to access following the normal course and standards. They cannot achieve their objectives through the peaceful and under the peaceful coexistence of the people. The perpetrators thus take advantage of the fact that most extremist groups embrace and support Islam religion to cause and spread inter-religious violence across the people. The media also assist these people in popularizing

the incidences and in the rise of prejudice and the discrimination against the Muslims. According to Khalil (2013), the Western media in particular have played a major and crucial role in the growing number of people who have been hurt and insulted by the Muslim extremists.

The media and the political leaders have used the issue to achieve their social as well as economic significance and interests. The Western leaders and countries have obtained an opportunity to speak out their ideals and thus remain competitive by perpetrating inter-religious violence. Moreover, since the media has remained to be very influential and powerful all over the world, it has been easier to convince the population globally that the Islam religion is inferior to other religions and an irrational religion as compared to other religions in the world.

Another cause of Islamophobia is the lack of legal policies and rules and binding instruments to address the issue. Though the issue of Islamophobia has become a global challenge, very few governments and organizations have come to understand the need to curb the situation. Lean (2012) explains that there does not exist any legal binding framework that presently addresses the concerns of the increasing level of Islamophobia. This has led to increased perpetuation statements by leaders and other individuals in the world that incite people based on religion backgrounds. People and the media around the world also have freedom to spread false information and news on a specified religion as well as the cultural values that those people believe in. The individuals go unpunished and thus their statements and actions seem to be legally and internationally acceptable by the world.

Numerous debates have been established and held all over the world on the intolerance and the religious discrimination that have been more and more confined in the society. This is to mean that there exists a good proportion of the general public that does not understand explicitly the different form of intolerance of religion and the significance and impacts of the people who are affected by it. The people at the grassroots are also very unaware of the status of the public dialogues that are conducted in the debates. According to Weller (2006), the objectives of the malpractices have been on the frontline towards preventing the people in the grassroots from achieving the objectives, the rational national decisions that are made during the debates concerning the issue. Bleich (2011) also claims and argues that even with the issue hitting up in around the globe, the politicians and the national leaders have shown very low interest in engaging in dialogues in resolving the issue.

The political leaders have been regarded and are both very influential and at the same time very authoritative. This means that they are in the best position to tackle the issue both politically and legally. They are responsible for coming up with laws and regulations aimed at curbing the issue. The politicians are responsible for enacting and establishing laws and policies towards guarding the behaviour of people in public places and towards others in the society. By the politicians and the leaders of the countries lacking to show interest and in contrast showing reluctance to address the issue works to promote the growth of Islamophobia and the establishment of tougher ways of expressing Islamophobia. The reluctance of the leaders also gives the perpetrators and opportunity and a position to continue with their ill-fall without the worry of any government rules and regulations.

Another potential cause of Islamophobia is the lack of education and knowledge of the public over the issue and its consequences. While there exists many local as well as international organizations fighting for human rights, there exist very few organizations that educate the public on the dangers of Islamophobia and its consequence to the society. This means that the population acts based on their ignorance towards the issue.

4.5 Forms and the Manifestation of Islamophobia

Islamophobia is expressed differently in different societies. However, all of these forms result in a particular form of discrimination to the victims. Islamophobia manifests itself in different ways and in different techniques. Apart from the social practices and activities of the people, the media and the politicians as well as the religious leaders also perpetuate the malpractices in different ways. In a study conducted by some researchers in Lancaster University about the representation of Islam in the British press, it analysed 200,000 articles about Islam and Muslims during 11 years from (1989-2009). The study confirms that the British media was unfair in representing Islam and Muslims, furthermore, the media linked Muslims with certain terms like *(Extremist and Fanatical)* to spread false image about Islam and distort the true content about Islam. The study mentioned some statements written by some British columnists in British newspaper. Such as, the writer Julie Burchill, who wrote an article in the *(Sun)* about Muslim women wearing headscarves by describing them as the dead who are able to shake the British freedom and tolerance everyday. Another example of this context in the same study is the opinion of the writer Jeremy Clarkson who claims that: we allowed Muslims to

walk in the street of London to urge passers-by for destroying the skyscrapers and kill infidels''(Baker et al, 2013).

In other study by Bleich (2011), he explains of a politician from Italy who planned for a competition that was aimed at selecting the most beautiful pig in the community. This is by itself discrimination and the expression of Islamophobia considering that the Muslims do not get into contact with pigs. As if this was not enough, the organizer of the event selected the mosques as the best and the most appropriate locations in which the perpetrators recruit the terrorists who engage in terrorist and mass killing activities. The remarks were by themselves unfounded and the event of selecting the most beautiful pig was derogatory in any view. The comments were also a way of insulting the Muslims and the Islamic religion. It also underestimated the fact that there are many people in the society who do not understand and are ignorant to the values, standards and the virtues that are advocated by the Muslims in the whole world. Another forms of Islamophobia in the UK is the attacked on Muslims Mosques in some cities in the UK as well as desecrate Muslim's cemeteries (Muir & Smith, 2004).

According to Buehler (2011), Danish Caricatures also exhibited and openly indicated hatred and hostility towards the Muslims in the society. The caricatures of Prophet Muhammad were also very discriminatory and insulting and provocative. The insults would also be followed with a series of insulting and inflammatory remarks and publications which expressed hatred towards the Muslims. Contrary to the expectation that they would speak peace and unity among the people, the caricatures were making commentaries that were characterized by social unrest of the people and violence. Later on, the political

leaders in Europe came and regretted and apologized over the matter. However, nothing was done on the issue other than the bare apologies and regrets of the matter. The leaders did not do anything in order to end and prevent the re-occurrence of the challenge in future.

The above practices and actions by the leaders, together with other issues have worked towards undermining and preventing the state of a sustainable peace in the world. Moreover, most of the countries have provided the citizens with freedom of expression and speech and this have been the excuse of many perpetrators of such utterances and actions. They pursue the practices under the pretexts of expressing their rights and freedom of expression.

Most of the media stations have also been among the major channels of expressing hostility and hatred towards the Islamic religion as well as the Muslims. The media has been on the frontline towards exaggerating and increasing the expression of negativity and hostility towards the Islamic religion and the Muslims. According to Kumar (2012), besides the social media and other communication channels, numerous scholars and researchers have closely related and linked the Islam religion and violence and mass killing. Addition to this, the influential political leaders, social leaders as well as the policy proposals have also been known to portray the Islamic religion as a kind of religion that backs up violence and terrorist activities. Numerous media stations have been very successful in convincing the world population and the global level that the Muslims are extremists and which is based on the speeches and publications and are directed towards large audience that are targets of violent activities. The remarks, in connection with the direct remarks of the political and the social leaders, create the attitude and the actions of the

society towards the Muslim population. Lean (2012) also explained that the media have made use of print and film media to propagate the hatred and the negative attitude to the public. The way they present news on terror activities and mass killing activities, they film that they present to the public only act to confirm that most of the terror activities and mass killing events were planned and executed by Muslims. This way, they discriminate the Muslims in the world and discriminate by portraying the Islam as a religion made up of people who love mass killings and terror activities.

Islamophobia has grown to the level of being expressed clearly even in the workplace. According to Poynting (2007), the major forms of discrimination against the Muslims also act to express Islamophobia in the workplace. After the September 11 attack, the discrimination of the Muslims has continued to increase all over the world. This has particularly been the case in today's working environment due to the high levels of terrorist activities in the environment today. According to Igbal (2010), Muslims in the different regions of the world have been reported to live or struggle with unemployment. Despite the qualifications of the Muslims, many companies and organizations are not willing to employ Muslims based on their religion and the attitude of the employers towards the Islam community. The lack of employment to the Muslims has led to deterioration of their living standards and well as their social relations with other people in the society. The attitude and the perception of the people in the society towards the Muslims have worked to prevent the Muslims from openly participating in public employment opportunities and from benefiting from the opportunities provided by the society.

The political leaders have also been acknowledged to be on the frontline in the propagation of Islamophobic statements and other numerous ways. The use and application of derogatory as well as insulting remarks during public rallies and meeting also keeps the Muslims away from involving themselves from keeping themselves in pursuit of the national goals and objectives. Through their public addresses and speeches, they inform the public that the Islam religion promotes and embraces radicalization and extremism. Muslim refugees and settlers are essentially faced by many challenges and problems working with the other people in the community. According to Sheehi and Churchill (2011), there are numerous countries and nations in the West that have laws and regulations prohibiting Muslims from having cultural centres or exercising their cultural rights in a comfortable manner. For instance, with the increased cases of terrorism and acts of mass killing, numerous countries have introduced laws that prevent Muslims from wearing their religious attire while in the public places for fear that the attires maybe used as hiding places for weapons and explosives.

According to Igbal (2010), countries such as Denmark, France ,Netherlands and other Western countries have been on the frontline towards enacting laws that prevent the Muslims from having cultural centres and erecting religious symbols in the public. For example, preventing women from face covering in many western countries such as, France in 2010; Belgium 2012; Netherland 2016 and other western countries (BBC, 2017). In addition, in 2011, Paris ban Muslims to pray in the street , as in Aljummah Pray (Muslims prayer every Friday afternoon) the mosque (where Muslims pray) might be sometimes full so ,the prayers pray outside the mosque by the street. This action is banned

now in Paris (BBC, 2011). Moreover, in 2014, Denmark government banned Halal meat for the reason of animal rights that come before religion (Express, 2014).

The government of these countries and others that promote and prevent public presentation of the Muslims, argue and consider the Islam as a religion whose virtues and values disregard the legal provisions of the country. Their main fear, and which is the fear of most people, is that the growth and development of Muslims in the world could undermine the peaceful and harmonious living in the future (Igbal, 2010).

The issue of Islamophobia has also had impacts to the Muslim immigrants in numerous countries and states. The main reason for this is that there exists a widespread and a worldwide notion that the Muslims might engage in terrorist activities which in the new countries which would cause loss of both lives and properties. Moreover, a normal and a widespread notion in the law enforcement agencies and the governments is the use of the Islamic attribute when reporting of criminal activities. In the modern day society, Islamophobia is expressed in numerous different ways and basically aims at the alienation of the Islam faithful from the society. The negative and the hostile attitude of the people towards the Muslims has gone far towards preventing and discouraging the people from appreciating and understanding the positive attributes and values of the Islamic religion and the virtues that the religion upholds. This is an issue that has continually impacted and affected the operations, the welfare and the function of the different bodies in the society.

4.6 Impact of Islamophobia

Islamophobia is a concept that has largely affected the Muslim community; leave alone the major impacts it has had on the society. The challenges of Islamophobia have major impacts on the Muslim community especially concerning where to work from and their movement around the world. Most of them do not consider movement from their countries of origin to other countries safe enough. According to Gottschalk and Greenberg (2007), Islamophobia has largely impacted on the Muslim faithful and has prevented them from participating in cultural, economic and the political activities and meetings that are held by the society. It is very common that their needs and requirements are not addressed in an effective manner by the governments and the leaders of some countries. This has mainly been because of their fear of public participation and their fight for their rights and freedoms. The negative perception of the public towards the Muslim community has also worked a long way in preventing the Muslims in the participation in public debates and rallies whose objectives are to address the issue affecting the Muslim community.

Islamophobia enhances hatred and strains the relationships between people in the society. These relationships are vital and critical to national growth and development and thus the impact of Islamophobia lead to low rates of national growth and development. It is worth noting that the Muslim community is a very significant and a very important group in the society. Thus, failing to involve them and preventing their participation in the major aspects, operations and activities of the community makes the community fail to achieve the

sustainable and holistic growth and development. Thus, Gottschalk and Greenberg (2007) explain that it prevents economic development and hurts the Muslim community.

The social exclusion and hostility characteristics hold on to the idea that Islamophobia has major negative impacts on the mental wellness of the affected individuals. It exposes the affected individuals to a wide range of mentally distressing conditions. The feeling that they are alienated from the society also largely affects the different ways that they support themselves. Khalil (2013) explains that the disrespect from the global society affects and enhances the development of destructive anger among the members of the community, alienation and disaffection. This largely negatively affects and underrates the performance of the young Muslims in the different aspects of life. The negative attitude of the society towards the Muslim community has largely affected the education of the Muslims and their employment status. The social alienation of the Muslims has prevented the young Muslims from living a normal life as other people in the society.

Numerous mainstream parties, political parties and local as well as international organizations use anti-Islamic messages and policies to succeed in leadership. The messages and the policies convince the public masses that the leaders do not support the operations of the Muslims. This is a clear indication that the leaders do not support the Islamic policies and practices and that they distance themselves with the religion. Since these leaders assume the various political positions later on, it is clear that the policies and laws that are enacted and implemented by these politicians and the law enforcement agencies do not address nor favour the wellbeing of the Muslims in many countries. This lack

of the political will and urge to support the Muslims leads to difficulties and challenges in the survival of the Muslims.

Social programs and development barely focuses on the needs and the development of the Muslims. Their exclusion from the society goes a long way in preventing them from publicly participating in sharing and benefiting from the available resources. The injustices and violence against the Muslims also goes a long way in driving the Muslims in the community to engage in criminal activities and violence. Sheridan (2006) explains that the characteristic disaffection towards the Muslims leads to violent radicalization. This is also the issue that has challenged their rising representation in the justice departments in most countries and states.

The people that are generally considered as being violent in nature reach a point of being physically violent. The rising incidences of violence and insecurity has also consumed much of the resources as the governments try to end terrorism in the countries and thus inhibited the initiation of developmental programs in those countries. Islamophobia divides the society and thus leading to failure of development and growth. Clearly, the negative impacts of Islamophobia in the society greatly outweigh its benefits. For this reason, it is vital and critical that the governments of the individual nations as well as the international community and the international organizations employ ideal and competent techniques to curb its development among the people in an effective and efficient manner.

4.7 Islamophobia in the United Kingdom

Islamophobia as used to discriminate against the Muslims in the United Kingdom incorporates the perception of Muslim as an aggressive political

ideology as opposed to religion (Islamophobia Education Pack, n.d.). Edvardsson (2008) describes the Islamophobia concept as the tense relationship between the Muslims and non-Muslims. In the UK Islamophobia involves the idea that Islam does not share common values with other cultures and that it is inferior compared to the other Western cultures. According to Marranci (2004), the Islamic culture and identity are considered dangerous or aggressive rather than the individuals. Therefore, Islamophobia in the UK is developed along the religious and cultural signifiers such as the mosque and headscarves that are considered essential in expressing the Muslim-self (Ibid). Many reasons are seen as the leading causes of Islamophobia in the UK and the Western countries in general. Some of the reasons include terrorism, ignorance or misunderstanding about some Islamic concepts and culture, fear, the Rushdie affair, among others. Also, the negative stereotypes (such as those linking Islam with violence) about the Islamic culture as presented by the media is another cause of Islamophobia in the UK. Islamophobia may also be as a result of the idea that at certain times, specific groups of people in the society are frequently targeted. As a result, people perceived to belong or to these targeted groups are exposed to racism and other related issues. A discussion of the separate cause of Islamophobia is given in this section of The study.

Different manifestations of Islamophobia in the UK

In the European countries, Islamophobia has been used to fulfil a variety of functions (Muir & Smith, 2004). As such, at different times, there have been different forms of Islamophobia (Ibid). Therefore, each version of

Islamophobia has had its features that were either unique, similar to or borrowed from previous versions of the same (Ibid). In the UK, Islamophobia has manifested in different forms that are the focus of this section. One of the common manifestations is the attacks (both verbal and physical) on Muslims in the public places and attacks on the Mosques (Christopher & Nielsen, 2002). Also, the desecration of the Muslim cemeteries is one of the forms of anti-Muslim hostility in Britain as well as other European countries (Ibid).

Also, negative stereotypes about the Muslims by the media have become a common phenomenon in the UK. Muir and Smith (2004) argue that the manner in which the media and people talk about the Muslims would not be considered if it was about other minorities such as the Jews. Also, the politicians propagate the negative stereotypes by claiming that the Muslims are not as committed to the rule of the law and democracy as the other minority groups (Ibid). Compared to other groups, there is pressure on the British Muslims to choose between the terrorist way and the British way (Kamal, 2003).

The anti-Muslim hostility also manifests in the professional and academic fronts. Mostly, the manifestation is in the employment and recruitment policies, and in the workplace customs and cultures. This form of hostility at the workplace mainly applies to the wearing of the veil among the Muslim women. Also, there is the lack of attention to the fact that the Muslims in Britain are disproportionately affected by social exclusion and poverty. Until the recognition of religion as one of the basis on which one can make claims of discrimination, Muslims were discriminated in the employment sector on the grounds of religion. That is, there have been anomalies in the legislation that made the Muslims less protected against hatred and discrimination when

compared to members of other religions (Muir & Smith, 2004). The different manifestations support the claim by Remona Aly (2015) that Islamophobia is a reality that is present for the British Muslims daily.

Causes of Islamophobia in the UK:

Terrorism

"Terrorism" no longer describes state conduct. It now refers to the acts of sub-state actors. Similarly, its function is no longer just a term expressing moral condemnation. It is now used as a legal term, and thus should be accompanied by a legal definition." (Young, 2006:101).

Most people associate terrorist attacks to the Islamic culture, which even Muslims fall victim to. The recent increase in the events characterizing Islamophobia in the UK trace back to the September 11th attack on the World Trade Centre. According to a study conducted by Sheridan (2006) the Muslim population in the UK increasingly reported negative experiences that were based on the religious and racial differences after the 9/11 attack. According to Khashan and Haddad (2002) the Islamic Militancy has presented a security problem in both domestic and international fronts, and that resulted in blaming the Islamic culture for every terrorist act. According to Thomas & Sanderson (2011), the increasing number of political events focused on the Muslim communities and states has worsen Islamophobia domestically.

The notion that links Muslims with the terrorist activities also applies in the UK. However, two significant discourses related to terrorism have emerged due to globalisation. One of the discourses views terrorism as a response to the violence by the Western countries while the other views it as an effort of

establishing an Islamic state everywhere. The second perception may apply to the explanation of terrorism as the cause for Islamophobia. The rapidly increasing terrorist activities that target the Western countries and the justification of the terrorist acts by the terrorist leaders are used as the justifications for establishing strong immigration policies that target the Muslims in the UK. (See the discussion on finding chapter p182-185).

It can be suggested that the issue of terrorism and Islamophobia in the UK relates to the foreign policy that relates to various conflicts taking place around the world. There is a perception that the fight against terrorism implies the fight against Muslims (Muir & Smith, 2004). These perceptions about the UK foreign policy, which may be accurate or inaccurate, serve as the lens, for both Muslims and non-Muslims, to interpret the discrimination against the Muslims in the UK. The actions of the government is to support the non-Muslims in most cases involving both the non-Muslims and Muslims (such as supporting Israel against the Palestinians) seem to illustrate that the UK government views the terms terrorist and Muslim as synonyms (Muir and Smith, 2004).

Misunderstanding of Islamic concepts and culture

A big percentage of the non-Muslims in the UK usually fail to understand the diversity of Islam culture. Most people consider Islam as a static and fixed entity rather than perceiving it as a dynamic and diverse religion. Untruthful and stereotypical representations of Islam are the result of such uninformed perception of the Islamic cultures. Therefore, there is the generalization of all Muslims such that the misdeeds of an individual Muslim are considered the

misdeeds of all Muslims collectively. For instance, Muslims may be considered as violent and terrorists due to the misdeeds of a few individuals who commit crime in the name of the Islamic religion. The concept is widespread in the UK especially due to the terrorist threats and acts that are linked to the Islamic countries.

The diversities also encompass differences in the interpretations of the Qur'an and gender perspectives. Muslims are different based on their country of origin and the implication thereof that not all Muslims agree with some of the actions practiced by others. For instance, it is a common belief among the non-Muslims that all Muslim women are mistreated and oppressed, a basis for which the non-Muslims consider their beliefs superior. However, this is not a reflection of the truth since not all Islamic societies mistreat their women as the collective perception purports. Therefore, it is concluded that the Islamic culture cannot integrate with other cultures and are treated as aliens in the UK and the rest of Europe. A well-known scholar, Edward Said (1977), emphasizes the need to understand that there is nothing like single Islam but multiple Islam. Therefore, there exists different perspective and schools of thoughts within Islam making it important to understand the differences that exist between the groups that represent Islam, and the Muslims (Assadi, 2008). Unfortunately, most people in the UK fail to understand this difference and thus the reasons for generalizing all Muslims. Diversity is everywhere even in the same religion, tradition and same culture.

There is also the misunderstanding of some common Islamic religious terms (Boase, 2010; Spencer, 2014). The two main concepts that are within the scope of this document are the Fatwa and Jihad. The common understanding of the

word Fatwa is that it implies a death sentence. The common knowledge of the meaning of the word has resulted in a limited understanding of the same. The real meaning of the word is a legal pronouncement issued by an Islamic religious law expert. However, the British and, in general, the EU media has presented the limited definition and linked it to the killings of innocent people resulting in negative attitudes toward Islam and Muslims in general.

There exists a lot of misunderstanding about the cultural origins that result in the growth of Islam's radical interpretations in the west (Martin, 2015). Consequently, the concept of Jihad understood to mean Holy war is perceived as the principle underlying the Islamic faith (Ibid). Another fundamentally and simplistic belief is the perception among many people that concerns the Muslims support of Jihad activities. Martin (2015) claims that the Muslims support Jihad in unison. Islamic extremists have misused the word to mean the war against the unbelievers, an expression that is incorrect (Ibid). A commentary by Richard Burkholder (2002), the director of internal polling at Gallup organization, concerning the results obtained by a study conducted by the organization on 10004 adults from Muslim countries shows how the Muslims perceive the concept. According to Burkholder's comments, jihad is more nuanced as opposed to having the single interpretation portrayed by the Western media. Among the interpretations discovered by the study that remains widely unknown is the religious meaning of Jihad as an individual struggle to improve one's faith.

Fear of the Islamic Civilization

Islamophobia may be viewed as the attempts of the Western cultures to display their superiority over other cultures, and Islam in this context. According to Bunzl (2007), the Islamophobes question about whether the Muslims can become good Europeans. Therefore, the idea is not about national purification but rather Europe fortification. Marranci (2004) argues that the UK and Europe at large perceive Islam as a force capable of challenging the Judeo-Christian heritage in the UK. Therefore, Islamophobia is the result of the perceived need to protect and resist the possible consequences of the contact between the European and the Islamic values.

Negative stereotypes by the UK media concerning Islam

Muslim and Islam have been misrepresented in the British media and portrayed as the alien others thus resulting in racism against them based on the cultural representations (Saeed, 2007). Saeed argues that the British media uses the themes of deviance and un-Britishness to portray the Muslim and Islam. According to Miller (2002), our knowledge of a particular society is based on what is presented concerning the group. In turn, the decisions of the policies we accept and what we are prepared to do are based on the information presented to us. Cootle (2006) explains that the media is very powerful in presenting and explaining specific discourses that may misrepresent minority groups. By the acts of the media presenting Islam and the Muslims as aliens, minorities, and the enemy, some of the British people make the decisions to treat them so, including the European Muslims, since they are based on the

Islamic culture. Allen (2012) suggests that while there exists no evidence directly showing the role of the media in causing Islamophobia or the anti-Muslim hate, its role cannot be understated either as it's capable of influencing public attitudes that would justify the anti-Muslim expressions and attitudes.

The British media presentation of the minority groups in the UK gives the Understanding of the representation of the Muslims as non-British and explains the relation to Islamophobia. The media marginalizes the voices of the minority making them invisible or virtually ignored. For people who have no social contacts with such marginalized groups, the media serves as the sole provider for the information that gives them an understanding of such groups. According to Poole and Richardson (2006), the Western mainstream media uses hostile and negative images, discourses, and representation about the Muslims/Islam.

Islamophobia is further exacerbated by the fact that the religious outlook as expressed by the media does not take place on a level playing ground (Muir & Smith, 2004). The religious outlook by media cuts across all religions in the UK and not only Islam (Ibid). While that is the case, the playing ground in terms of the resources and platforms to defend the specific religion from the media attacks is not uniform across all religions. While religious disagreements are expected in the modern world and the fact that those debates do not only apply to Islam, the concern is the environment in which these debates take place. For instance, when compared to the church that has sufficient resources to combat the malicious media coverage on the church, the Muslims are a minority implying that the influence and access of Muslims to the public platforms is limited (Ibid). The implication for such imbalances is that the

media coverage of Islam is more demining (Ibid) when compared to the coverage on the church.

The targeted group

In her book *A Suitable Enemy*, Fekete (2009) describes a phenomenon of Europe that can be seen as a cause for Islamophobia in Europe. According to her, human beings in unsettling and unsettled situations look for other people (scapegoats) to whom they channel their ensuing anger and anxiety. The phenomenon makes a specific group of people the target, and, in this case, the Muslims. As a result, groups of people that are believed to belong to the targeted group are exposed to racism and other related practices, and, in this case, such treatment is what may be referred to as Islamophobia. Although the targeted group of people (Muslims in this context) may not be the reason for the contrasting group's anxieties, they are nevertheless blamed for such anxieties.

The scapegoat theory explains how some groups of people feel the need to oppress other contrasting groups physically or mentally for the purpose of building up group adhesion and sentiments (Roald, 2004). The contrasting group places blame on the targeted group as a way to justify the inequalities and discrimination. Mostly, Europe and the UK demand that the Muslims be integrated, if not assimilated for their acceptance within the cultural life and geographical boundaries. That is, the Muslims from different countries have to be Muslims of Europe thus the term Euro-Islam. However, for them to be recognized as Muslims in Europe, they need to adhere to the Judeo-Christian heritage that involves obeying laws perceived as threat to their religious and civic freedoms.

4.8 The victims of the Islamophobia:

The Muslim community, Muslim women, and students :

The July 7th in London and the September 9th attack in New York left the Muslim society in Britain and the EU member countries as the target of criticism and discriminatory acts. According to Kortweg and Yurdakul (2009) the public discourse directed on Muslims is founded on the alleged concerns about the incompatibility of Islam with the Western values. Tahir Abbas (2007) suggests that the Muslim minorities living in the Europe face a lot of issues relating to their identity, everyday citizenship, and adaptations to the religion-cultural values and norms. In Britain, most of the public debates that concern Muslims are associated with concerns relating to security (Modood, 2009). The concerns are based on the risks of the effects of home-grown terrorism. These political concerns resulted from the information that the British Muslims were the ones behind the 7th and 21st attempted bombings on the London transport system. As a result of such political debates that collectively link Muslims to the attacks, the Muslims receive collective stigmatization due to their Islamic identity.

The Muslim concerns in Britain and Europe captured the public attention during the controversial Rushdie affair protests (Dwyer, 2008). The protests were due to the Muslim's legitimate concerns about their religious needs being neglected (Ibid). The protests gave rise to Muslim representative groups including the Muslim Council of Mosques and legislature that recognizes both racial and religious discrimination. After the 7th July London bombings, the British government established new policies to prevent violent extremism and directed to the Muslim communities, especially the young people (Hopkins,

2007). The initial perception of the unwillingness of the Muslims to integrate into the British society thus raising concerns among the politicians and other groups (Dwyer, 2008) has decreased in the advent of the British Muslims. A speech by David Cameron on Immigration today proves this but also shows that while the minority groups (Muslims included) have gained a sense of belonging in the multicultural society, little has been achieved in maintaining the support of the sceptical western population who express (Manning, 2011).

The Muslim community and the Islamic cultures, in general, are the victims of Islamophobia. The victimization occurs at different levels and in different ways depending on various characteristics. This section discusses the Muslim community as a whole, the Muslim women, and students as the victims of Islamophobia.

The community as a whole

Among the Muslim communities, women do not participate in the labour market thus contributing to poverty among the Muslims. According to the Equal Opportunities Commission Survey (2007), the stereotypical and negative attitudes held by employers on the Muslim women were cited as the main factor that prevented the Muslim women from gaining employment. Such attitudes impact directly on the woman and indirectly on the community. The fact that a majority of the Muslims live in highly ethnically concentrated areas to avoid discrimination reduces their economic opportunities (Clark and Drinkwater, 2002). The economic characteristics and the geographical clustering of the neighbourhoods that are ethnically concentrated impacts on the number of opportunities and constraints that economically affect these

communities (Ibid). The reduced economic opportunities can be explained by the high unemployment levels and lower self-employment rates that contradict the ethnic-entrepreneurship view of ethnically concentrated areas (Ibid).

Khattab (2009) conducted a study to determine the effect of religion, skin colour, and ethnicity in the educational and occupational attainment in the UK. The research showed that in the UK, the culture (religion) and skin colour were the main mechanisms that disadvantaged some groups in regard to education and occupational attainment and social mobility to certain areas. Also, the report showed that the influence and strength of these two factors were dependent on the perceived compatibility of the particular culture with the hegemonic culture. Different scholars have also investigated the impact that being a Muslim has on the occupational attainment or in the overall labour market. The scholars have argued that the Muslim communities are the most economically and socially disadvantaged groups in the UK.

Women

Most of the debates in the UK that relate to Islam and Muslims focus on the women. Herbert and Rodger (2008) analysed narratives of South Asian Muslim women to establish how the women evaluated living in Britain using their experiences. The study focused on the city of Leicester. The research adopted the use of interviews in which the women gave their life stories and also the existing literature on the migrations of the South Asians into Leicester. The results indicated that the Muslim women suffered in two main ways; as women in their personal lives and as Muslims in the public spaces.

Islamophobia causes the exclusion of the Muslim women within some social space (Herbert and Rodger, 2008). While there are efforts to solve the suffering of the Muslim women in their personal lives, their suffering as Muslims remains largely unattended. Instead, the suffering has increased especially after the 9/11 attacks. While the study by Herbert and Rodger included women from the Hindu and Sikh religions, the encounter with Islamophobia was only evident among the Muslim women. A woman named Sameeha explained how she had experienced western hostility at the city centre. While the incidence was mainly targeted at her husband, it had negatively impacted on her (Ibid). For instance, she mentions that as a result of that incidence, she no longer goes to town as frequently as she used to, and when she goes, she is treated completely different when compared to the west clients. The disapproving looks she receives at the shops are meant to indicate that she does not belong there. She indicates that her attire makes it obvious that she is a Muslim, and thus she relates such treatment to that.

Although some women in some parts of Saudi Arabia are excluded from the social sphere due to tradition and strict culture , these women when they came to the UK they expect to experience the freedom in the multicultural society in the UK. Therefore, their exclusion in Saudi Arabia, which is a strict country, is justified by tradition. However, the exclusion of women in the public sphere in the UK, which is a multicultural country, is only justified as causes of Islamophobia.

In regards to the islamophobai effects on women , in 2015 report by Mark Littler and Mathew Feldman of the Teesside University in the UK, families and particularly women from the Middle East are more vulnerable to attacks. The

attacks included both online and offline attacks. The study showed that most of the offline attacks were mainly characterised by abuse that targeted women wearing the Muslim dress. The report cited that the confirmed attacks on women included 29 records of verbal threats, 15 cases of damage to property, and 21 cases of assault. There were incidences (seven in number) that were categorized as extreme violence on the Muslim women (Herbert and Rodger, 2008).

Students and the young people

A report conducted by Gilby et al. (2011) on the experiences of the Muslim students in higher education showed that experiences with Islamophobia were common. The study also suggests that most of the discrimination took place on the campus and mainly targeted the female students. On campus, Islamophobia is more tolerated when compared to other types of discrimination such racism, homophobia, or sexism. Religion is significant in creating an identity for the young UK Muslims as it influences the way they define themselves (O'Beirne, 2004). Although there are concerns by the non-Muslims on the willingness of the Muslims to be integrated and share similar political values as the British (Modood and Shaw, 2002), a study by Reed (2005) showed that some of the young Muslims had no problem in identifying themselves as British and Muslim. The students and young Muslims think that the government was not doing enough to ensure that their religious customs and rights were protected. According to Dean and Probert (2011), the experience of most British Muslim students pursuing higher education is unpleasing. The Muslims were dissatisfied with the academic support and quality of education they received,

including the assessment and feedback processes, when compared to the other students.

There are two interlinked and recurring issues in the criminal justice system that relates to the victims of Islamophobia. One of the issues relates to the likelihood of the Islamophobia victims reporting those crimes to the police (Allen, 2010). The second relates to the confidence that such victims have in the police (Ibid). While incidents of Islamophobia are on the increase and are unacceptable in today's society, most of these incidents go unreported (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2009). According to the 2009 annual report by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) approximately 79 per cent of the Islamophobia crime cases went unreported across Europe. Reasons that ranged from the lack of confidence that the police will do anything to claims of the police being racists were cited among those interviewed. The report suggests that 11 per cent of the Muslim respondents indicated that they were victims of discrimination in the previous 12 months. While the numbers (percentage) may appear to be relatively small, when translated to real numbers capturing the entire Muslim population, the number extends to thousands of victimization cases each year (Ibid). The implication is that thousands of victimization cases go unreported every year (Ibid). The fact that most Muslims considered the discrimination cases too trivial and thus not worth reporting indicates that they consider victimization of the Muslims as normal (Ibid) and expect to be victimized due to their religion.

4.9 Islamophobia and the case of the veil :

In a study conducted by Dwyer (2008), the issue of dressing emerged as one of the fundamental concerns that the British Muslim women raised. Mostly, the women were concerned about the ever-changing meanings that were attached to the different types of dress codes. They also pointed out how the meanings shifted in different places in the country. The main area of concern among the British Muslim women was how the different types of clothes, including school uniforms, were defined as either English or Asian. According to them, the so-called English clothes denoted modernisation or Westernisation, while the Asian clothes denoted ethnic culture and tradition. Thus, according to the study, clothing acts as a powerful identity representation for the Muslim women by acting as one of the Muslim religious and cultural signifiers in the public places (Marranci, 2004).

The wearing of the veil in Britain had not received a lot of legal and political concerns until recently. In fact, the practice had for a long time been seen to be similar to other ethnic dressing such as the turban. As a result, the practice was considered as a right in a Multicultural Society. However, recent court cases have led to debates about the rights of British Muslim women to wear the different types of veils (Bhandar, 2009). The debates span across the professional fronts where recent debates (the debates by Jack Straw and Jeremy Browne) have focussed on Muslim women's ability to perform their duties while they wear the veil. While the initial debates concentrated only on the covering of the head, the debates have shifted to the covering of the face (Lewis, 2007).

Endless debates between the Muslims and the Westerners on whether the veil should be defended or vilified have characterized the past few years (Haddad, 2007). Every criticism raised by the Westerners has been met with a counter-argument in defence of the Muslim womanhood (Ibid). Mostly the debates have adopted two main perspectives; the first perspective views the practice of veiling as a backward tradition that legitimizes the exclusion of the Muslim women from the public life (Atasoy, 2003). The second one is that a veil is a tool that empowers women, especially the young and educated Muslim women (Ibid). The second perspective defends the veiling practice by counteracting the first perspective using the examples of young and highly educated women who adopt the veil as an individual choice (Ibid).

Apart from creating a political tempest, expressions of religious differences such as the wearing of the hijab, the state authorities have found them to be an unacceptable and unreasonable expression of difference. In the UK, women's rights to use their dressing code as a manifestation of their religious faith and the state's ability in prohibiting such expression was settled in 2008 (Bhandar, 2009). Recently the United Kingdom has recognized religion as a basis for which discrimination claims may be made.

In the political front, the issue of the veil is founded on the basis that the Muslim women and girls should be given the freedom of expression. Part of the British political establishment says that the veil should be imposed on the Muslim women and girls. Others suggest that the government should ban the Muslim women from wearing the hijab in public places. A contrasting view given by the chairperson of the UK Muslim Women Network, Shaista Gohir, is that many women had adopted the use of headscarves, but the London 7/7

attack placed them under more scrutiny by the public and politicians (Goldsmith & Harris, 2014). She opposes the view that wearing the Veil is a Muslim obligation by saying that most women wore them as an expression of their difference and an expression of their Muslim identity (Ibid). According to her, the full-face veil has become the focus of the wider debate about the integration of Muslims and the British values. While the most Islamic scholars accept that the adoption of the full-face veil is more cultural than religious, most women who wear any scarf to display their religion publicly become a possible target of Islamophobia (Ibid).

A study conducted Wagner, Sen, Howarth, and Permandeli (2012) to compare the views of Muslim women about wearing the headscarves in both Muslim majority and Muslim minority societies showed two contrasting results. Indonesia was chosen as the Muslim majority society while India was chosen as the Muslim minority society. The study was conducted using in-depth interviews. The results showed that women in the Muslim majority societies perceived fashion, modesty, and convenience as the reasons for veiling. In contrast, the women in the Muslim minority societies wore the veil with the aim of being identified as Muslims or as a form of opposition to the discrimination and negative stereotypes. Also, Caroline Howarth, a researcher at the London school of economics, in an interview with the Reuters said, women in the minority groups used the veil as a form of affirmation to their cultural identity (Goldsmith and Harris, 2014). She also suggested that the veil is a resistant way of addressing the negativity held about Muslim communities (Ibid). The relevance of the study in this case is the application the results can be put into to explain the reasons behind wearing the veil in the UK. From the

results of the study, in the UK (being a Muslim minority society), the veil is an expression of the religious identity, and resistance to the negativity associated with Islam, Islamophobia.

In the UK, Islamophobia has been expressed in different cases that relate to the different types of the veil, mostly the niqab and hijab. The full-face veil has been viewed as a form of intimidation by most people in the UK, including the politicians. Recently, a Muslim woman wearing a niqab was accused of intimidating a witness at the Black Friars Crown Court (Cochrane, 2013). While the woman was allowed to wear the niqab during the trial, she was not allowed to wear it while presenting her evidence. The Birmingham Metropolitan College dropped its eight-year ban on the wearing of the niqab in the institution for security purposes.

The cases of discrimination on the women based on the use of the veil are also present in the professional fronts. The main reasons given for the discrimination are based on the importance of the non-verbal cues in communication, claiming that the veils impeded both visual and verbal communications (Dwyer, 2011). For instance, a teaching assistant at a school in the northern England received a suspension for her refusal to remove the full face-veil that she always wore (Cowell, 2015). The administration argued that it was necessary for her to remove her veil for her students to understand her while she taught. Another incidence took place when an advocate was only allowed to wear the niqab on the condition that she was audible, and that justice would not be compromised. (Dwyer, 2011)

In the UK, colleges and schools have been given the authority to set their uniform policies. For instance, there are provisions that allow the headmasters

to ask the students to remove the veils due to security reasons. While the UK claims to offer the freedom of expression to its citizens, there have been cases where students have seen their requests to wear the headscarves denied, even by the courts. For instance, there is the 2007 case where a student's appeal to be allowed to wear a niqab in class was denied by a high court judge.

The fact that more University students and the educated and professional women in the UK have adopted the wearing of the veil implies that the meaning of the practice is more complicated than just the conceptualization of it as a traditional symbol (Atasoy, 2003; Thomas and Sanderson, 2011). Despite the debate surrounding the wearing of the veil, especially the full-face veil, the current Islamophobia environment serves to increase the practice. Most women put on the veil as a way of identifying with their religion and also as a means of resisting the discrimination of the Britons against the Muslims. While the possible ban of the wearing of veils in public places has infuriated the Muslim community in the UK, the true motives behind such debates remain unclear. However, most Muslims view the debate on the wearing of the headscarves as part of the wider debate on the integration of the Muslims into the British value system.

In conclusion, Islamophobia is a daily reality for the Muslims living in the UK. While policy changes by the government have recognized religion as a basis on which claims of discrimination can be made, only a small portion of the Muslims report such discriminations. The anti-Muslim hostility has extended to the professional and academic fronts with the women being the main target due to the wearing of the veil. The debate on the wearing of the veil adopts two sides; one that perceives the veil as a sign of oppression of the women, and the

other views the wearing of the veil as a sign of assertiveness on the side of the women. The issue about the wearing of the veil in public places is part of the wider debate about the possibility of integrating the Muslims in the British Culture. One concern that remains a mystery to the Muslims in the UK is the magnitude with which the Government stresses that Muslims have to adopt the British values for them to be accepted in the UK, yet other cultures receive the pressure to adopt but not at the same magnitude as the Muslims.

5. Method and methodology

The representation of Islam and Muslims in the media has become a major topic of discussion and debate, particularly with the increase in the number of terrorist incidences, and recently the migration crisis. The main objectives of this research project is to understand the experiences of the Saudi's citizens living in the United Kingdom. Although there were many different forms of experiences reported by the participants, the project has attempted to focus on the issue of Islamophobia, and issues of cultural integration within a non-segregated gender environment. In order to achieve the objectives of this study, I engaged numerous respondents in an interview in order to understand their personal experiences in the UK.

This chapter will discuss, the use of computer aided qualitative data analysis and constant comparison techniques to conduct the evaluation process. The stories from Saudi Arabian men and women living and studying in the UK have helped to obtain an understanding of their personal experiences. This chapter seeks outline the demographic characteristics of the study sample. In order to maintain this, pseudonyms were assigned to each of the participants.

The first section of the chapter discusses the demographic characteristics of the participants. The second section discusses the format of the data collected from the data collection phase, which is the main input for analysis process. The third section will discuss the main tools and techniques employed during the analysis process in order to develop an understanding of the data collected. During the analysis process, the methods and techniques applied resulted in

several different themes and subthemes in line with the main research questions.

5.1 Distribution of the Participants

The study was conducted in three UK cities. They were chosen for the following reasons: Manchester is a city which contains a large number of Saudi students; London is the capital of the UK and the majority of Saudi migrants live there. London also contains the Saudi Arabian embassy and the Cultural Bureau; and Nottingham, which is where the main study took place.

A total of 25 participants received invitation letters to participate in the research study in June 2013. From these participants, five did not return their invitations. A total of 20 respondents were involved in the interviews. These were mainly students in different educational institutions, the other respondents were working for companies established in the UK. 90 per cent of the respondents were students. The remaining group of individuals was comprised mainly of professional employees. The male to female ratio was 50/50. The participants were aged between 20 and 45 and had spent between nine months to seven years in the UK. 50 per cent of the participants were married. 35 per cent of the respondents identified themselves as being Shiite Muslims and 65 per cent identified as Sunni. The majority of the student participants were enrolled in courses for medicine and business studies. Other respondents had enrolled to study computer science in British universities.

5.1.1 Format of Data collected

Qualitative data is extremely varied in nature. In social research the database of responses from the respondents can include interview transcripts from open-ended interviews and exploratory interviews. Techniques of data collection are also becoming very popular among the researchers such as the use of audio or video recording devices for the collection and recording of the live responses from the respondents.

Qualitative data is not the exclusive domain of qualitative researches, and is a term that includes procedure that is not quantitative in nature or which is not rendered in numerical format (Thorne, 2000). Qualitative researchers accept the concept that qualitative research studies aim at discovering the truth that exists in the world and use scientific methods and techniques as a way of building a complete understanding of reality in the world.

Qualitative data analysis is based on numerous principles. First, different people have different experiences and understanding of reality or the topics of research in qualitative researches. Secondly, social phenomenon cannot be understood outside its context. Thirdly, the collection of data in qualitative research works can be used to describe different phenomena or be applicable in the generation of theory that is grounded on the data collected and analysed. Fourth, the process of understanding the behaviour and the experiences of people is a process that occurs slowly and is not linear like other forms of processes in the research. Finally, exceptional cases that may arise during the research may yield newer insights into the problem under investigation or lead to the development of new ideas for extensive inquiry.

The discussion of the interviewees and made the results rich and with a higher likelihood of revealing complex details that would otherwise have been difficult to obtain if a different method had been selected (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The attributes of qualitative data can generate thick and rich data (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2004). Qualitative data is primarily collected over a long period of time, which allows for longitudinal analysis of the historical perspectives, the institutional perspective, psychological and the sociological processes of the research question (Nastasi and Schensul, 2005).

Qualitative researches result in the production of information from the field for analysis. The analysis of these data determines the theme that will be obtained from the responses of the respondents, the direction of the research, and the general conclusions of the research. Regardless of the size of the qualitative research study, qualitative data collection methods primarily elicit reports from the interviewees. Data was collected through the use of interviews, and captured on an audio recording device. Notes were also taken during the process of data collection.

The first process, a pre-processing procedure performed before the actual analysis of data, helped to organise the data in a form that was appropriate and suitable for the data. The organisation of data also aided the analysis of the information in an easier and approachable manner (Sestoft, 2011). Once data has been collected from the field, the best strategies for analysing the data must be obtained (Holm-Hansen, 2011). The right and the most suitable analysis technique enabled me to interpret the findings, and use these interpretations in making the conclusions for the research study. After the data collection process was complete, the tables in the relational database contained the specific

identifiers of the respondents of the research as well as their responses for each question in the interview guide. Databases are the best method of organising qualitative data, and for making querying the database easier, as well as searching for patterns (Codd, 1970).

Due the rough nature of the data, the first activity during analysis was organising the data in a more readable manner. During the design stage of the interview guide, the interviewee questions were followed by an empty space where I wrote short notes on the response of the interviewee. According to Miles and Huberman (1994) valid analysis of the collected data is immensely influenced by data displays that are focused enough to allow a full view of the data in one location and systematically organised and arranged to answer the research question at hand. In qualitative researches, the data collected from the respondents should be organised in a way that it is easy to look at, and allows for the entire set of data to be searched for patterns and themes during the analysis process.

I decided that the best technique for organising the data was in the form of a table showing each respondent's identifier and their responses to the research questions. This method of organising the data enabled me to have a clear view of the responses of each topic and the specific questions in an individualised manner. In the relational database system, the tables were formatted in a similar way to the hardcopy data organisation table. The main objective of using this application and relational databases was to provide tools and mechanisms for analysing data and searching for patterns. In relational databases, relevant queries assist the researcher in searching for similarities,

differences, sequences and patterns in the data. Relational databases also consolidate and bring the data into a similar location.

5.2 Methodology

The research questions represented a broad area of inquiry and analysis. While quantitative data about the size, location and other demographic features of the priority communities was a key research need, the study primarily focused on enabling the Communities and Local Government to ‘know’ these communities in depth. Data collection consisted of two phases which were consistent across each community.

STAGE	ACTIVITY	METHOD
1:	Population mapping Review of	Existing literature. National data sources. Local data sources.
2	Qualitative data collection	In-depth- interviews Email interviews

Table (5.1) Stages of Methodology Conducted on the Research

5.2.1 Project stages

Stage1: Population mapping the first stage consisted of collecting secondary quantitative data and primary data about locations of Muslim populations and

known civil societies. The primary method for data collection on population traits was through a comprehensive review of a broad range of secondary data sources, including the Census, Annual Population Data Survey, output of migration and population experts and academic research centres. This initial literature review assisted in developing a comprehensive picture of information currently available in the public domain, and in identifying key gaps in the existing knowledge base. It also helped to identify the main locations for each community to be targeted in the community research, as well as identifying key stakeholders and community interviewees. Massive and up-to-date population data is hard to obtain outside of the 2011 Census but I was able to obtain some important information from Local Authorities and community groups about migration since 2011. However, the 2011 Census data still informs the baseline of the population figures quoted in this study. I supplemented this data, where possible, by a limited amount of additional Local Authority information or other sources where reliable estimates have been made.

Stage 2: Qualitative data collection: I undertook primarily qualitative data collection through 20 one-to-one interviews with key respondents. I carried out this phase of the research between November 2013 and May 2014. The Saudi Arabian Muslim community was the most difficult community to access for the purposes of this report. A number of individuals who initially agreed to be interviewed either cancelled or did not turn up to one-to-one interviews. This was compounded by difficulty eliciting significant responses from the interviews that did take place.

The interviews were conducted in two steps. In November 2013 a pilot study was completed and I interviewed all of the 20 participants on a one-to-one

basis. During the pilot study, the participants were asking about their experiences in the UK and the challenges they face while living in the UK. From this point I started to set the interview questions from the participants responses of the pilot study. The pilot study indicates that the participants face issues of identity, religious identity, gender, cultural differences, discrimination and language barrier. Therefore, the pilot study consider as the gate to enter this research by establishing the research questions, aims and theoretical frameworks as well as setting the interview questions.

In January 2015, the second phase started; when I added the two elements of gender segregation and Islamophobia to my study. In this phase not all the participants was available for interview because some of them had returned to Saudi Arabia. Therefore, I contacted some of the participants by Skype and some by email to ask them more question.

5.3 In-depth interviews:

The interviews assisted in developing an overview of national and local contexts: the make-up of Saudi Arabian communities, key issues concerning violent extremism including perceptions, experiences and activities, current initiatives in place to counter this and existing civil society structures and development needs. The interviews also assisted in identification of further key contacts for the one-to-one interviews.

- Key data sources
- Denominations and pathways
- Primary influencers and institutions
- Key issues and needs for the specific community

- Links with countries of origin
- Civil society structures and capacity needs
- Current levels of contact and key barriers to engagement with public authorities
- Media consumption
- Appropriate communication channels for engagement and contribution.

The data from the in-depth interviews, raised from a cultural form of research, is highly relevant for the time we live in, where the variety of human practice in societies is experiencing profound cultural and political changes (Smith, 2003). Hence the data will provide valuable knowledge about a research area, and it will provide knowledge about the subjective experiences of Saudi nationals; the research will draw on the individuals lived experience of the social reality and the senses that the individuals give to those experience based on their own perceptions (Liamputtong, 2010). This kind of in-depth research seeks to collect data from a small sample to obtain rich, high quality information, and to focus on the individuals activities by interviewing and observing the participants in their homes.

5.3.1 The type of interview conducted in the study:

There are three types of interviews available to use to collect qualitative data; these consist of the informal conversational interview, the general guide interview and the standardised (open-ended) interview (Patton, 1990). The informal conversational interview depends on the unprompted generated questions in the “natural flow of an interaction” (Patton, 1990, p.280). The second type is the general guide interview, this type engaged with highlighting

a list of issues before the interview is conducted with each participant. “The standardized open-ended interview is extremely structured in terms of the wording of questions. Participants are always asked identical questions, but the questions are worded so that responses are open-ended” (Gall, Gall, and Borg, 2003, cited by Turner, 2010, p.756).

In this research, the first informal type of interview was used to enable the participants to speak comfortably without any feelings of stress or anxiety as a result of being interviewed. The individual being interviewed may not always be aware or realise that he or she is in interview, it is an informal interview, and this type of interview depends on the unprompted creation of questions between the researcher and the interviewee. In addition, this kind of interview allows the researcher to note the differences in the comments of each individual and the changes in the flow of the conversation in each interview. Furthermore, it opens up a range of benefits for the researcher throughout the interview, such as having the advantage of taking a slightly more direct position to increase the range of the answers and the insertion of relevant probing questions, as a response to such answers. In some cases, the interviewer might not take notes during the interview but the interviewers can write down notes immediately after finishing the interview, noting what they observed and learnt from the person being interviewed. Furthermore, in other cases it is appropriate to use a tape recorder or take notes (Patton, 1990). In this study, the tape recorder was used when possible.

Although the informal interview is more comfortable for the person being interviewed, it is more difficult for the researcher to analyse and collect the systematic data. This is because the diversity of discussion drawn from

different people and questions will lead to a variety of answers. As a result of the variability of the answers it is hard to gather them together and analyse them, so the researcher will need considerable time to analyse the responses of each individual (Patton, 1990). Analysis will occur after thematic analysis has been undertaken on the data, and various themes within the data as a whole will be set out that best answers the questions of the research.

The reasons behind the choice of the interview method in this study are as follows: The in-depth interview has the advantage of simplifying the gathering of complicated data; the questions for this type of method enable both a level flexibility and directness; you can form as many question as you want from the main research question, for example by probing the individual for reasons why they answered that way, and seeking clarification. Consequently, the questions are open-ended questions that are designed to allow the individual to provide a comprehensive answer. If the answer is short, the researcher has the opportunity to probe the individual for more information or clarification; it allows the interviewer to explore the individual's own personal experience or life realm (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995). The in-depth interview provides the researcher with the opportunity to find out the hidden perceptions and attitudes about elements of the individual's activities that could not be simply observed and we seek information about, for example, a particular kind of behaviour, thought, feeling and situations; this enables what the person is thinking in their mind, and to know what is in the person's mind rather than inserting something in his or her mind (Patton, 1990).

5.3.2 Interview sample

In-depth interviews were carried out with a sample of 20 Saudi migrants living temporarily in the UK. The reason for choosing 20 participants for the sample population interviews because these were the people willing to take part in my study and they fitted my criteria for participation. These criteria are:

- 1) being Saudi in the UK for more than six months,
- 2) have something to do in the UK either studying or working,
- 3) equal number of female (10) and male (10) participants,
- 4) ensure the diversity of Saudi female appearance in terms of wearing hijab, not wearing hijab and veiled female,
- 5) ensure the diversity of Saudis who came from different cities around the Kingdom,
- 6) equal number of single and married participants,
- 7) the age of the participants should be between 20 to 50 years,
- 8) the sample of participants should be living in London, Nottingham or Manchester.

The initial sample was selected from the Saudi social club in Nottingham and Manchester, the Saudi cultural bureau and the Saudi embassy in London.

A snowball method was used for this study because it is suitable for cross cultural research projects to find more participants. The snowball method allows the researcher to start with people they know and later progresses to enrol more participants by contacting the original participants in order to enlarge the potential pool of the study participants. This way of finding participants helped me to become known to others possible participants by a

process of positive recommendation; however, it could limit or restrict the participants' diversity (Liamputtong, 2010).

The majority of the 20 interviews were conducted face-to-face, some by telephone and email where necessary. Respondents were chosen on the basis that they offered a range of different types of knowledge and perspectives on community issues and dynamics. Selection of interviewees involved drawing up a long list of key contacts in each community. Shortlists were produced to ensure that there was adequate female and youth representation and a regional spread that reflected the distribution of the community in the UK. Additional names were added on the basis of subsequent recommendations made. The profile of the 20 respondents was as follows: 10 males and 10 females, six were between the ages of 20-29, 12 were between 30-39, and two were between 40-49 (See table 5.2). Two were involved in the community as academics (lecturer), most of them were students and two were professionals.

Age	Number of Participants
20-29	6
30-39	12
40-49	2

Table (5.2) Ages of the Participants

The interviews ran for 20-25 minutes and in Arabic to avoid any problems related to language and to encourage the participants to engage in the interview in a more comfortable way. However, translation problems accrued during the transcription process. For example, some terms in Arabic do not have any translatable words in English, usually because they slang words. It was difficult

even when I had professional translator support; he was not from the Saudi culture so he could not understand it but he translated it within the context. In some cases, I think it is important to take on account the meaning of the exact word especially in intercultural communication projects to ensure the understanding of both sides. In addition, only the important parts of the interviews were translated as some of interviews took long time and become less beneficial in some parts.

5.4 Analysis of Data

Data analysis involved generating understandable patterns by comparing what different respondents said about specific themes or questions. The central question was whether the data, information and range of views expressed led to the same conclusions. The analytical process involved reviewing field notes to develop emerging themes in line with the framework. Intercultural understanding of responses and non-responses was also essential in considerations of the data generated. A set of commonly held assumptions and understandings in any cultural group may mean that some things are simply left unexplained since they are commonly understood and do not require articulation. In addition, literal translation or interpretation may simply misrepresent or miss the significance of what is being articulated. In this context, there will often be a distinction between what is said, and might be noted or recorded, and what is meant. In looking for meaning, silences and body language were often as important as what was said. A good example of potential misinterpretation that came up many times was body language indicating discomfort and unwillingness to pursue a particular line of enquiry.

Finally, and most importantly, I was reflexive in my approach, critically reflecting on the role and influence that my own research intervention may be having on key respondents using critical judgment and being conscious of the need to interpret with integrity in relation to what we were seeing and hearing.

5.4.1 Data analysis tools and equipment

In the data analysis phase of the research, two main tools/techniques were used to analyse the data for patterns and themes and subthemes. Though qualitative research are known for the production of massive amounts of data from the fields, researchers and scientists have developed many techniques and methods of handling the data in order to generate the themes and the patterns.

In their research, Lage and Godoy (2008) noted and described numerous benefits that the application of CAQDAS offers to the researchers as well as to the overall research. First, the software systems are effective and enable researchers to manage the amount of qualitative data in an effective and easy manner. Secondly, due to the effectiveness and the efficiency of the software systems, they enable and enhance the closeness of the researchers to the data and enable the timely production of results and analysis. Third, they ease the researcher's communication about the data. Most importantly, the software-directed analysis lowers the possibility of bias during the analysis of the data.

Two main tools and techniques were applied in this research for the analysis of the data. These are the use of computerised software programs and the manual constant comparison analysis. These two methods will be used all through the data analysis for the research in order to derive the main themes and subthemes as depicted in the data collected in the research study.

Constant Comparison Analysis

Constant comparison analysis is the main technique and the most commonly used type of data analysis in qualitative research studies. Other authors such as Miles and Huberman (1994) use the term coding to refer to this type of analysis. The technique is important and helpful when I am required to read the entire set of data to identify the themes and patterns from the study. The research is first required to read the entire set of data and chunk the data into smaller meaningful parts. Each chunk is labelled using a descriptive and unique title or code that enables me to identify the data set during the process of analysis. The analysis involves me comparing the data sets with each other with the objective of labelling similar chunks of data with the same label. After the grouping process, the codes are then grouped based on their similarity and a theme is identified and documented based on the similarities identified during the grouping.

One way of conducting constant comparison is during the process of member checking (Merriam, 1998). This involves asking the participants if the themes, arguments, or assertions developed from the codes accurately describe their statements during the research (Janesick, 2000). Maxwell (2005) has explained that the process ensures and enhances the descriptive validity of the research and its acceptance to the target population of me. Constant comparative method is an iterative and an inductive method of reducing the data through the process of constant recording. The data collected from the respondents is compared to data from other respondents during the coding process. This process begins with open coding to develop the categories for the first round of data reduction

and then further reduction and recording allows for the emergence of more core categories from the research data (Charmaz, 2001).

The method of data analysis was applied for the research data in the following way. Boeije (2002) listed five steps that apply to the constant comparative analysis method as the main procedure for generating and identifying themes in the data collected from the field through the application of interviews. The first stage in the process is the comparison within a single interview. In this stage, I analysed the responses from each respondent at a time with the objective of understanding the main points, themes and subthemes presented in the responses. This enabled me to clean the responses for noise and develop the main themes mentioned by the respondents in their replies to the interview questions. In the next stage, I grouped the responses from the various interviews into a number of groups and categories basing the categorisation on the similarity of the themes and the subthemes that have been identified from the comparison in first step.

In the second step, I compared the results of step one from the interview responses in the same group of respondents with the objective of developing similarities and commonalities between themes and centres of explanation developed by different interviewees in the same group. This enabled me to develop themes that emerged and were discussed by the respondents in the same groups of respondents.

In the third step of the evaluation and analysis, I compared the themes and the topics of concern between the different groups as discussed in the second step.

In the third step, the number of data sets to be analysed had already significantly reduced enabling me to conduct the analysis in a faster and more

explanatory manner. In this step of constant comparative analysis, I reviewed the responses from the different groups and merged these responses based on the main themes and the main explanations into two main groups. This step enabled me to consolidate the responses from the many groups developed in the second step to only two groups. This meant that there were only two sets of data moving to the fourth step of analysis.

In the final step of comparative analysis, I compared the final two groupings of the sets of responses with the objective of consolidating all the different sets of reviews and subthemes. The results were the final set of themes and subthemes that were submitted as the results of the analysis process of the data collected for the research. The other goal of this step of constant comparative analysis was to eliminate redundancies and repetition from the sets of pre-analysis results. I compared the results from the third step, the two sets of results of the sub-analysis steps, to determine similarities and differences between the themes. I finally developed a set of subthemes which acted as the results of the analysis of the responses from the respondents.

Computerized qualitative data analysis

Qualitative data is characterised by its subjectivity, richness and comprehensive text based information. The analysis of qualitative data is usually muddled, vague and to a great deals a time consuming process. Qualitative data analysis refers to the process of pursuing the relationships between categories of data and the themes presented in the data with the objective of understanding the phenomenon under investigation in a better and a more comprehensive manner. Traditionally, the main method of analysis

applied by the researchers and scholars was the manual use of pen and paper to sort the data and to categorise the information.

In my research, I used computer software systems to collect qualitative data. However, numerous commentators and researchers have expressed concerns that these systems may guide researchers in different directions (Seidel, 1991). According to Barry (1998) the use and application of computer aided qualitative data analysis software could effectively and efficiently serve to distance the researchers from the data, encourage increased qualitative analysis of qualitative data and develop a sense of homogeneity in methods and techniques applied across the social science research works. Morison and Moir (1998) in their research explained that the application of CAQDAS serves to facilitate an accurate and transparent data analysis process while at the same time providing a quick and a much simpler technique of counting which of the respondents said what and when that was said, which in turn provides a reliable and general picture of the data.

Many researchers have often regarded qualitative data analysis as a technique of analysis that is primarily based on the qualitative research approach. The software systems that have been developed to assist in the implementation of qualitative data analysis have inbuilt tools and sub-systems that assist the researchers in the development of theory and discussion. According to Welsh (2002) taking a grounded approach and direction to data analysis means allowing the data and information to speak for itself rather than to approach the mountain of data collected during the research from within in search for the developing themes and subthemes. Kelle (1997) has explained that most of the developers and vendors for the software applications have resolved to shift into

the grounded theory due to the many advantages and benefits associated with the approach. First, the grounded approach is an already established brand within the field of research and as has obtained significant attention and acceptance among the researchers. This makes the qualitative data analysis software systems easy to sell to the researchers and the academic environment and to easily gain support from the growing population of researchers and scholars. Secondly, Kelle (1997) has claimed that most of the researchers and scholars claim to be employing the use of grounded approach in their research which is a clear depiction of the popularity and importance of the grounded approach in scientific research studies.

Considering the substantial development of computer technology, electronic means of data coding has gained support from researchers. The use of computer systems for data analysis ensures that the users are working more methodically, thoroughly and attentively on the data (Bazeley, 2007). The large amount of data gathered during this research project presented a difficult and time consuming task because of the requirement to examine the different transcripts and searching for themes and patterns. Therefore, the use of specialised computerised data analysis software programs was beneficial to the research. I made use of the Nvivo software application, a qualitative data analysis software application.

The Nvivo data analysis system follows a five-step process. The initial step is the tidying step which involves the reorganisation of data collected from the field into clean and organised sets of papers or forms. It also involves the collection of the responses based on the different research interview questions as they were in the interview guide. During the analysis process, I compiled all

the short notes collected from the research into word documents. I also made copies of the collected data and labelling the files based on the identifiers used to represent the respondents in the research. The second step is the sorting and sifting phase. It is important to note that the data collected from the respondents were in a raw format and as such sorting and sifting was necessary to ensure that the information is made consistent enough to ease the process of analysis. The data was sorted based on the interview questions. After this phase was complete, the data was now ready for input into the NVivo software system for the analysis process. The software enabled me to develop the patterns in the data from the respondents and assemble different structures to the responses.

Nvivo, qualitative data analysis computer software has many advantages and benefits and may significantly improve the quality of research as well as the quality of the results of the study. First, the software package eases the process of data analysis and enables the analysis to yield more professional as well as reliable results from raw data collected from the. Nvivo significantly reduces a great number of manual tasks that are required to be carried out by the researchers and gave me more time to discover tendencies, recognise themes and emerging trends and derive conclusions from the data collected from the field (Wong, 2008).

The Nvivo software provides five different and main tasks and services that enable researchers to ease their analysis operations in qualitative research (Bazeley, 2007). The first service is the easy management of data. The software provides for the organisation of the different, and possibly muddled, documents of data such as interview transcripts, surveys, notes taken during

direct observation and published documents. Secondly, the software enables for easy management of ideas. This is important in order to understand the conceptual and the theoretical issues that are developed and generated in the course of research. Thirdly, the software products can query data based on self-determined criteria, this allows researchers to pose different questions and queries to the data in the database and using the software system to answer the questions. The results of queries are automatically saved by the software for future interrogation and ensuring that querying and searching become part of the on-going process of inquiry from the data (Bazeley, 2007).

The process of analysing data becomes easier in situations where the researchers have the full view of all the data set. NVivo saves the data from the data collection process in an integrated research database and brings the data close to the researchers, providing direct access to the data. Moreover, the software system assists me in developing graphs and tables to demonstrate the relationship between the conceptual and the theoretical data regarding the subject of discussion. Finally, the software system provides reporting facilities for the results of the study (Bazeley, 2007). Based on the data collected from the field and the analysis of the data, the software system helped me to automatically produce reports detailing the results.

It is important that qualitative research and qualitative data analysis is conducted in a thorough and a transparent manner (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The validity in qualitative research is the question of whether my views what he or she thinks that they view so that there exists evidence in the data of how the data was interpreted (Kirk and Miller, 1986). The application of

software systems in the process of data analysis has been explained by numerous researchers as adding rigor to the process of data analysis.

In conclusion, the application of the NVivo qualitative data analysis in research provided numerous benefits and advantages to the overall research. First, the use of the software system significantly enhanced the results and the quality of the research. Focusing on the data and the analysis process and bringing the data closer to the researchers, made it easier to have a full view of the data, and at the same time assist me in developing relationships with the data. The analysis process was facilitated and resulted in the production of more professional and academically acceptable results from the raw data collected from the respondents. The software eliminated and reduced much of the tasks that are conducted manually and thus provided more time to me for the recognition of tendencies, patterns, the recognition of themes and subthemes and the derivation of conclusions for the research.

6. Finding and discussion

The findings of this research project have been divided into two parts: the first part is discussing the finding of cross-cultural adaptation theories such as cultural shock and Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. The second part is divided into several themes. These themes were identified as part of the analysis component of the participant responses. They are discrimination, isolation, the oppression of women, human rights, religion and cultural differences, the need to tackle Islamophobia, the cultural differences between Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom (this includes differences between social and gender identities) cultural shock, the perception of Saudi Arabians in the United Kingdom, and challenges in a mixed gender culture. These are the major themes that were identified from the interviewing process and were deemed as key and important issues.

6.1 Findings of Cross Cultural Adaptation theories:

In this research I find that some participants had developed a level of adaptation and adjustment while living in the UK. These levels were varied from one to another depending of his/her ability to adjust and overcome cultural differences. The levels of adjustment and adaptation for the research participants were determined through out the theories of cross-cultural adaptation, such as, Kim theory of cross cultural adaptation, Cultural Shock and Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity.

6.1.1 Kim theory of cross cultural adaptation:

The theory of cross culture is applicable in this research because it is based on the strangers definition that Kim's study focused on which fits with the research sample of Saudis living in the UK. Kim pointed out that strangers refers to the cultural outsiders who seek to be cultural insiders through out three factors: 1) socializing in one culture then moving to another culture, 2) depending on the host culture for social and personal needs and 3) involved in a direct communication with people from the host culture (see p.25 in chapter 2 in this study).

In terms of Saudis living in the UK the definition of strangers created by Kim is applied: 1) Saudi people in the UK were socialised in Saudi Arabia and they moved to the UK for a purpose of work or study. 2) The excising of this group (Saudis) in the UK required a socialisation in the host culture (the British culture). For example, the Saudis who came to the UK they need to go to the universities, supermarkets café shops, GPs , banks and etc. that confirms Kim definition of strangers when she mentioned that strangers need to depend on the host culture for social and personal needs. 3) The last factor of defining strangers is communicating in a direct way with people from the UK and that is obvious from the participant's responses from the interviews. For example, a divorced woman and mum of two boys told me that (P19) “ when I went to my boys school at first time, I went to the coordinator office as we do not know what to do and where to start, then the coordinator took us in a tour to introduce the school to us then shows us the uniforms and from where to buy it. She took the boys to their class and she sat with me to make sure I have everything I need for the boys, she showed me the nearest library, bakery,

pharmacy and then she told me if I need anything that she can help me with. I felt so good that day as I was not expect that as a stranger coming to new place.”. That clearly indicates the direct contact between the stranger (Saudi women) and the people from the host culture (the school’s coordinator).

The application of the Saudis in the UK as strangers was confirmed in the above section. However, the experiences of strangers are different from one to another, not all the participants has a positive experience as a strangers like (P19).

Some of strangers suffer from the stress when they cannot interact and communicate in direct with the host culture as what Harvey (2007) states (See p.26) in regards to strangers experience of stress- adaptation growth dynamic cycle. When the strangers go through stressful experience their internal energy will prevent them from going on in the host culture, then the learning process of host culture will be activated by accepting the norm of the host culture that will lead to resolution and adaption of the new culture. This cycle was indicated by (P11)’s experience when he told me about his experience as a stranger in the UK. P11 is a master student who attended English Pre-sessionial course. When he entered the course he said, he was waiting the English Language teacher to come. He stated “I was expecting an English male teacher as I grown up in the most conservative part in the kingdom, where we are not allowed to talk or see women except our sisters, wife, mom and daughters. The educational system in Saudi Arabia does not allowed mix gender setting. I was surprised that the women who entered the class were our instructor. During the first week I did not talk to her, even when she asks me a question I answer with stress. I was feeling that I am outside the group, specially when we have a

group discussion that require me to deal with my teacher or other female students. Then I experienced that my experience in the UK was not that good, as I felt as a stranger. No one can understand me when I speak to women and stressed. My classmate thought that I have psychological issues,. However, I know its not about my mental, its about my culture. I cop with this issue by observing that mix gender setting is a cultural norm in the UK”.

In regards to the outputs of this theory kim suggested three outputs (see p.26 in chapter 2 in this study). The Saudis in the UK reached only the first output by balancing between their internal psychological setting and the requirement of the host culture. And the above example is confirming that.

6.1.2 Cultural Shock Theory:

Cultural shocks normally occur when migrants of people between cultures started. The notion of cultural shock first discussed by Oberg in 1960 and it refers to the anxiety of being in a new culture (See p.27 in chapter 2 in this study).

In this research cultural shock need to be discussed and analysed duo to the distinct culture between Saudi Arabia and the UK. The findings of this research indicate that Saudis living in the UK had experienced cultural shocked (See Table 6.2) in many aspects. This part will discuss the findings and the levels of cultural shock experienced by the research participants.

The theory indicates that when experiencing culture shock, there are two situations to face. First, rejecting the new cultural setting and becoming unable to live in a foreign culture. This situation is not applicable to the participants of

this research as none of them returned home before they achieve their goals in living in a foreign culture for the reason of culture shock. The second situation is remaining in the new cultural setting and being capable to live in a foreign culture. All the research participants experienced the second situation of which is remaining in the UK to achieve their goals.

Those who persist in the UK follow four phases to adapt the new culture in the UK. They are honeymoon, aggressive attitude toward the host culture, recovery and full adjustment.

According to (P2) “in my first three months in the UK I was studying an English course with mostly Saudi and Arab students, I had a great and nice experience, I was so happy to come to the UK from the first time. I learned how to live in a new country in terms of dealing with differences in all life aspect. On a personal level I enjoyed being a woman in a western culture that allowed me to do all what I want with no judging as well as being independent and not related to men for any reason. I experienced a new social life, new transportation system like busses, which we do not really use in our home country, and a whole new type of life in general. However, a few months later things have changed specially when I started my degree. I was really disappointed as none of my Saudi students with me in my master course. I felt so lonely. I spend the first term of my study with no friends. Not even like to communicate with anyone. I felt no one will understand me , my culture or my way of living. Until I had my Chinese friend the feeling of homesickness started to reduce and things started to settled down by going out with her and study together ”. From the respond of this female participant we can indicate that (P2) was going through the honeymoon stage when first came to the UK,

by enjoying the new culture with her native people. However, when she started to get a way from her Saudi friends she experienced cultural shock and she started the new phase of adjustment, which is hostility toward the host culture by setting a lone and not engaging with the social live. Nevertheless, after the first term (P2) recovered from the difficulties and had a new friend to socialise with. The example of (P2) shows that this participant flowed three phases of cultural shock started with honeymoon and ending with recovering. The finding indicates that most participants of this research have experienced some difficulties while living in the UK as a new cultural setting. Thus, they normally located in the third phase of the adaptation process in cultural shock theory that allowed them to deal with cultural differences and the feeling of anxiety caused by cultural shock.

Another example of the challenges faced by the participants that caused cultural shock and then reaching the fully adjustment is the respond of (P6) who left Saudi Arabia for the reason of studying and finding a good work opportunity in the UK. He said that “No pain no gain. You cannot feel the meaning of pleasure and comfort unless you go through fatigue and discomfort. I left Saudi Arabia because I did not feel that I got fair work opportunities. And I came to the UK to build my career. When first coming in the UK, I faced lots of challenges in terms of differences, anxious and the pressure to complete my study and find the good job. I have been thinking many times to go back home, however, my wife always advice me to be patient and to go on with my study. I change tow universities during my Phd study duo to the differences between me and my director of study and every time I feel homesick and disappointed. now, the situation is different , I am teaching in one of the popular universities

in the UK and I am enjoying that. I enjoy serving the students, and I enjoy being benefitted from the culture and the system of this country in developing myself and my job. Working here in the UK has given me the chance to be very liberal with my help and generous in spreading knowledge to students; it is my nature to give without limits and I can practice it here with much appreciation and motivation from the admins of the University. however, working in this country did not isolate me from communicating with my colleagues who work in the same field in Saudi Arabia, which is an opportunity for me. Also, I attended many conferences, I presented papers and I published a book. I learned that there are some difficulties that we must overcome.”

This is the only participant who overcame most of the challenges and reached the fourth level of fully adjustment according to the cultural shock theory. (P6) adapted the things that challenged him when he first came to the UK, such as education system, gender setting and cultural differences.

6.1.3 The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity:

In my research, I measured the level of cultural differences for the participants under study throughout (DMIS) Bennett’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, as I used (DMIS) as a tool to measure intercultural experience.. The theory (Bennett’s theory) has been explained in chapter two of this thesis (p. 29). In this part I am presenting the findings according to the participants’ responses in regards to the six stages of (DMIC) that developed by Bennett. The stages are: denial, defence, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration (Bennett,1993;2004a;2004b) (see p31 in chapter 2 in this study).

The ethnocentric stages of (DMIS) :

According to Bennett the first three stages of DMIS are conceptualized as ethnocentric, which means the individuals own culture consider in some way as the central of reality (Hammera, et al., 2003:423). These stages are denial, defence and minimisation of cultural differences.

In term of the First stage of DIMS orientations, the Denial of cultural differences that refers to the persons' own culture is the only real one and other cultures are not distinguished (Bennett, 2004b: 1). The analysis of the interviews in regard to gender experience have shown that the majority of the participants agreed that when they first come to the UK they were in the denial stage of adaption as they thought that their culture is the only culture exists and they do not acknowledge that there are other cultures. For example (P13) stated that "I could not believe what I saw when I first came to the UK, I saw a women wear very short. I never thought that women could wear these clothes. I felt that I am in another planet. I have never travel outside Saudi Arabia before. I was really feeling bad as this is prohibited in my country women do not were this kind of cloths in public they have to cover them self .I totally disagreed with what I saw" . This example indicates what Bennett stated about Denial stage as the people who located themselves in this stage are "disinterested in cultural difference even when it is brought to their attention, although they may act aggressively to avoid or eliminate a difference if it impinges on them" (Bennett, 2004b: 2). . That what occur from the respondent reaction when he exposed to cultural difference as he did not know about the freedom of women that allow her to where what she want as a principle of gender equality and he (P13) totally disagreed with it.

Some participants experienced the defence stage that explained by Bennett as the stage in which “other cultures may be discriminated in more complex ways, but they still do not appear as complicated as one’s ownThe Defence worldview is polarized into us/them distinctions, so the prevailing attitude is one of being under siege.” (Bennett, 2004a: 17).In this context, (P10) claimed that “studying or working in mix gender setting consider as challenge to us (means Saudis) in some cases as some sorts of gender integration and communication may interfere with Islamic laws and cultural identify such as physical communication, emotional relationships between men and women instead of formal marriage.”. This response from one of the research participants shows that this participant defence his cultural views while living in the UK and see the British cultural as something inferior in compare to the Saudi culture which he considers as superior.

In addition, (P1) stated that “I would sit with a male in a restaurant, for example, for two hours or more. But with a lady, either Saudi or Western, I wouldn’t sit with her alone, a third party should be available. The prophet Muhammad peace be upon him said, “A man must never be alone with a woman, for verily the Shaitan (evil) is their third”. I once met a lady in London with her sons and that was totally OK with me as I didn’t commit a sin, but I won’t feel comfortable sitting with a woman alone for I know that it is unacceptable thing regarding my values”. This example also confirm the defence stage as participants (13-1) defenced their culture, as it is superior to other cultures.

The their stage of DMIS theory is the minimisation of cultural differences that means “the state in which elements of one’s own cultural worldview are

experienced as universal.....People at Minimization expect similarities, and they may become insistent about correcting others' behaviour to match their expectations. '' (Bennett, 2004a: 4-5). (P8) mentioned that many Muslim's women in the UK prefer to work or study in a segregated gender setting, for example, British Muslim woman, who I met in Aljumaa pray, told me that I prefer every place is like our mosque as we feel more comfortable without Men. she does not wear hijab but she prefer the segregated gender environment. Then I mentioned that (me too)'' This indicates that although the British women are grown up in a mixed gender cultural setting that is culturally different than Saudi culture, the similarities between her and the participant of this research are obvious. This is the minimisation of cultural differences that occur when the similarities between the people of different cultures emerge.

The ethno-relative stages of (DMIS) :

Overcoming the first three stages (*Denial, Defence and Minimisation*) is leading to the ethno-relative stages that include the last three stages of DMIS orientations (*Acceptance, Adaptation and Integration*). These stages are described "as more ethnorelative, meaning that one's own culture is experienced in the context of other cultures." (Bennett, 2004a: 6).

The fourth stage of the Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity is the acceptance stage. "Acceptance of cultural difference is the state in which one's own culture is experienced as just one of a number of equally complex worldviews" (Bennett, 2004a: 6). A few participants have accepted some aspects of the British culture in regard to gender setting as (P6) mentioned that "our (Saudi/Islamic) culture is limited us to be more careful when dealing with other gender. For example, I am not allowed to sit with women alone in a

room but I can in public or if there is any person staying with us. So, this situation could be up normal here in the UK. This might be the biggest challenge form me but I am fine with it now as I lived in the UK for 6 years now. During that time I encountered a lot of situations in my study that required me to set with a female and I am familiar with that situation.” This example shows that there is a few participants have reached the acceptance stage of DMIS theory by accepting the differences in cultural practices that occur in the host culture.

Moreover, (P8) confirmed that acceptance stage is clearly emerge in her responds to the question regarding dealing with the other gender, she said that “Although I felt the difference especially at school, I still deal with male teachers and friends in limits. I have experienced that for 7 years living outside Saudi Arabia and nothing has changed. It is the rules and principles that I put for my self in life with which draw the ways I treat others. It is for me a way of life, it is something related to the Islamic religion that women and men equally have to deal with each other in limits. I speak, discuss with and to those men at school, but I don’t go out with any of them for dinner for example. I talk but in certain topics; I don’t discuss indecent topics for example. , I imposed limits on myself as a part of being a Muslim woman, the limits that are expected from women as well as men, excluding the full body coverage and the headscarf. I feel like my cultural identity still the same. I feel the same person in Saudi Arabia and outside Saudi Arabia. However, the opportunities that occurred such as being more able to talk/contact/deal with the other sex outside Saudi Arabia show to myself a part of my personality that I did not experienced before living outside Saudi Arabia.”

The acceptance stage was clear in some participant's answers for example, (P1) "Our own culture is a big challenge for me as long as I adapted the new setting of culture and mix gender setting as long I feel confused why we grown up in an environment that prohibited mix gender." That means the participants in this level accept and believe that culture differences are existed and they are accepted.

Adaptation to cultural difference is the fifth stage of Bennett theory that stated "in which the experience of another culture yields perception and behaviour appropriate to that culture. One's worldview is expanded to include relevant constructs from other cultural worldviews.....people at Adaptation are able to express the alternative cultural experience in culturally appropriate feelings and behaviour" (Hammer et al ,2003: 425). The responses of (P16) and (P5) and (P9) have showed that some participants reached the adaptation stage of (DMIS) theory. They mentioned that they have more than one culture. For example, (P16) "Before I was effected by my culture but now I take what is right from it and leave the things that I do not agree with. (Me): How? Any example?(P16): I am exciting now in a free gender setting in the UK .I have not seen any problems living in that setting except my culture. Therefore, I decided if there is no problems why I have to worry about my culture in this particular issue.". Moreover, (P5) said that "I am not personally in favour of gender segregating. Some people think that the reasons that there are gender segregation in Saudi Arabia is a result and response to the strong Islamic rules in the country. Additionally, a lot of (Sheikhs) asserted that "*Islamic rules of segregation are supposed to preserve chastity in both men and women and therefore «protect» believers from temptation, evil and sin*". For me, I don't

see any relation between religion and gender segregation! However, the situation in the Kingdom is quite different, there are many social events and organizations don't separate women.”

(P9) is another example of being in the adaptation level of Bennett's model as she said that “As a student in the UK, I can say that the mixed gender environment in the educational institutions offer several advantages since it allows individuals from different cultural background to integrate with each other, and that the diversity is one of the most interesting and enriching points of education”.

The above-mentioned examples indicate that the adaptation level was reached by some of the participants who have extended their cultural horizon in order to include other cultures' perspectives such as the British culture in a manner of what is suitable for them.

Using the (DMIS) in this research in regards to cultural differences of gender experience shows that most female participants are in the defence stage while male participants are mostly in the adaptation stage. That's clearly indicate that Saudi women are less adapted to the new setting of mix gender than Saudi men. Because most of them stay at home even if there are studying in the UK, they normally stay home after they come from their courses taking care of the kids. As one of the female participants (P19) mentioned when asked her about her daily life “ I came home from university and I started to cook for the kids and I do not go out with my friends during the weekdays only once in the weekend to take care of the kids”.

However, none of the Saudi male or female reached the adjustment level in the (DMIS). In my opinion, it might be because the length of stay did not exceed

the 7-8 years and this stage might require more time than that. Most of the participants agreed that the more they stay in the UK the more they adjust the culture there.

6.2 The Emerging Themes:

6.2.1 Discrimination

Many of the participants felt that Islamophobia had resulted in a great deal of discrimination towards Muslims in the West. For example, (P19) stated that :

“After the attacked in Paris in November 2015, last week when the Christmas light switched on in Nottingham city, between 8-9 individuals of old people was swearing to my friends and me and asked us to leave the country saying its their country”.

In addition. (P7) mentioned another example that clearly indicate discriminatory events by saying that:

“In the bus stop sometimes the bus drivers looked at me suspiciously and sometimes they even do not stop for me and I remember one time the bus driver does not allowed me to enter the bus because of my look as I have bear and I look like a Muslim guy”

However, some participants mentioned that they do not face any kind of discrimination simply because their cultural and religious identity were hidden.

For example, a young lady (P18) stated that :

“I have not face any because I don't wear Hejab and I don't like to talk about Islam in front of other people”

Islamophobia can develop when Muslims are perceived as not belonging to Western societies by way of differences in social, cultural and religious ideologies. In addition, the ideological perception that helps to create discourses of ‘us’ and ‘them’ is integrated into the way that Muslims, as well

as Islamic relationships are excluded from dominant social and cultural positions in the West. As a result, orientalist perceptions are perpetuated. This relationship forms the general basis of orientalist thought, which is polarised geographically and has led to division across the globe into two unequal parts. These two parts are generally referred to as the Orient, and the West (or occidental countries). In terms of difference, there are many political and religious institutions in the West that perceives Islam as not only a strong political competitor but also a challenge to Christian orthodoxy. As a consequence occidental countries are placed in opposition to the Orient. Although Islamophobia may be viewed as a relatively new concept, there are historical antecedents.

6.2.2 Isolation

The participants observed a significant change in attitudes towards Muslims because of the media reporting of the terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001. Prior to the attacks the media generally employed the term fundamentalism in relation to Muslims, more recent coverage has made considerably greater use of the term terrorism. Consequently, post-9/11 reporting has converged dramatically around the related notions of terrorism and counter-terrorist measures and legislation.

Title of Newspaper	<i>The Guardian</i>	<i>The Daily Mirror</i>
Articles mentioning Muslims before 9/11 -2001	817	164
Articles mentioning Muslims after to 9/11-2002	2043	920

Table (6.1) Articles that use the word Muslims in two British newspapers Whitaker (2002).

The above table shows the use of the word Muslims in two British newspapers: The Guardian as one of the respected broadsheets in the UK, and the Daily Mirror as one of the British national tabloid newspaper. According Whitaker (2002), the number of using the word Muslims has significantly increased only in one year in both (The Guardian) respected broadsheets and (Daily Mirror) tabloid newspapers in the UK. That means Muslims now better known in the media than before 9/11.

According to the participants, the media has a significant role in isolating them from the engagement in the British society. For example:

(P11) “Thanks to the media portraying us in a negative image, we as a Muslims feeling isolated and lonely in a non-Muslim country.”

(P14) “We cannot engage in the British society because we are blamed for the action of extreme Muslim terrorist done under the name of Islam. These actions represent Muslims and Islam in a wrong way .”

(P5) “terrorist activity such as those done by ISIS is why we suffer of isolation while living in the UK.”

The implications of this shift become clearer when one considers the argument that fundamentalism is not always associated with violence, although social representations of fundamentalism appears to suggest otherwise. As a result, fundamentalist points of view that are associated with a specific ethno-religious

group could be understood to represent a symbolic threat to all members of that group whether they believe in extremist views or not.

The perception of Islamic fundamentalist terrorism represents a very real prospect of threat for individuals who belong to that ethno-religious group because, by its very nature, terrorist activity seeks to harm, both physically and psychologically. In addition, media reporting in the UK has inadvertently conflated British Muslims with Islamic terrorism and fundamentalism, with frequent calls for the British Muslim community to do more to combat and condemn terrorist activities. The religious and cultural bias of the British media's position against the British Muslim community can be compared to the terrorist acts that were committed by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) during the 1970s and 1980s. Bombing campaigns carried out on mainland Britain by the IRA did not result in the UK media demanding that the Irish community condemn or do more to prevent such activity.

As a consequence, British Muslims are frequently perceived in terms of a symbolic threat, not only from their supposed fundamentalist views, but also in terms of a realistic threat. Accordingly, such terminological conflation contributes to the emerging social representation of hybridised threats from British Muslims. These Muslims are often perceived by many members of the ethno-national in-group as having terrorist links or as sympathising with the cause of terrorism (Allen, 2012). Therefore, the category of terrorist automatically activates a specific set of social representations that decides how individuals should be treated, the rights they should be given, and how they are repositioned in relation to 'Britishness' (It refers to 'The quality of being British or of having characteristics regarded as typically British. 'According to Oxford

dictionary). Groups that are labelled as deviant may be dehumanised and demonised, which results in both a de-politicisation and de-legitimation of their claim for acceptance within society.

“Britishness within which beliefs about belonging and national identity were reconstructed around race. ... Non-white people were signified as ‘alien races’ whose settlement in the United Kingdom would present a threat to the traditional British way of life. ‘Race’ became a lens through which people experienced and made sense of their everyday lives. (Israel,1999: 92–3)” (Poynting, & Mason , 2007: 65) .

the failure to integration is the common belief about Muslims in the British society. According to Amin (2003: 462) “There is a cultural complexity to the ‘rioters’ in 2001 that cannot be reduced to the stereotypes of Islam, non-western values, gang trouble, the idea of entrapment between two cultures. These are young people who have grown up routinely mixing ‘eastern’ and ‘western’ markers of identity, through language, bodily expression, music and consumer habits, and who are not confused about their identities as cultural ‘hybrids’. Their frustration and public anger cannot be detached from their identities as a new generation of British Asians claiming the right to own Oldham or Burnley and the nation, but whose Britishness includes Islam, halal meat, family honour and cultural resources located in diaspora networks”(Poynting, & Mason , 2007: 75) .

It is likely that the enhancement of the self-efficacy principle will be at the psychological forefront in such situations because when faced with hybridised threats from an out-group; the in-group must maintain and enhance feelings of competence and being in control.

Given that self-efficacy constitutes a fundamental human motivational principle, it is likely that individuals will strive to maintain and enhance this principle by taking control of perceived threats, either through the depolarisation and de-legitimation of British Muslims. These Islamophobia practices may have an underlying cause, which serves to enhance the self-efficacy principle of identity in potentially threatening situations. In addition, they may seek to take control by seeking to support proposals to limit the human rights of Muslims, for example, through an increase in surveillance and less tolerance of Muslim requirements within the workplace and in public spaces.

The research findings indicate that the ethno-religious category Muslim is in the process of acquiring negative social representations, which is attributed largely to the nature of media representations of Muslims in the UK. Media articles tend to anchor Muslims to negative phenomena, such as terrorism, a culture clash and immorality. Social psychological theories, such as that of social representations, may depict more subtle processes whereby the category Muslim comes to acquire negative social representations. Anneke Meyer (2016) has pointed out that the negative representation of asylum seekers and refugees have also been conflated with terrorism. Asylum seekers are seen as posing both a realistic and symbolic threat to the West this conflation has contributed to the negative representation of British Muslims in contemporary UK society.

You can say that many Saudi women don't feel oppressed. Few women saying that they are proud of using the hijab

6.2.3 Women oppression

The participants highlighted how the West has developed a view that women are an oppressed section of society in Saudi Arabia, however, some Saudi women don't feel oppressed and the other do. In this part the participant's responses showed that there are two aspects related to women oppression: 1) wearing the veil and hijab and 2) the issue of guardian and patriarchy in Saudi Arabia.

In regard to hijab and veiling, a few women saying that they are proud of using the hijab. For example, according to (P17) A woman who started to wear hijab recently, has witnessed two phases of experience:

“At the beginning I wasn't wearing but now I start to wear it. I can see how it does make me proud of myself as a woman and a Muslim. I don't have to act like a man to feel strong. The hijab shows my identity”

However, (P15) gives an example of an empowered woman, who opposes the western views about the Muslim's women because she has the option to choose between wearing hijab or not:

“In the class room there were a lot of Chinese ladies who always asked me to try my hijab as a fashion style because I used to wear it as a turban rather than a traditional scarf. One day I told the Chinese lady while we were in the toilet that she could try my turban. I took the turban off my head and then she saw my hair, she was very surprised that I have hair. Then she asked me why I am covering my hair as I have a nice hair, she asked if I was forced to wear it. I was laughing, then I said, this is the moment I have to explain to her that I chose to wear my hijab because I feel more confident with it. In addition it's mostly related to religious purposes but you have the right to choose to cover your hair or no. then the Chinese lady asked me that's why Dina-a Saudi lady- does not wear hijab while she is a Muslim. I said yes.”

In some cases, the wearing of the veil in public places in the UK is perceived as a symbol of female subordination, and as a marker of patriarchy, the veil represents the subjugation of women in Islam because it is believed that women are forced to wear it by Muslim men. From this perspective, the female code of dress in Islam functions as a metonym for the perceived repressiveness of Islamic religion and culture. The assumption of patriarchal domination and matriarchal submissiveness in Islam consolidates and reproduces orientalist views of Islam as culturally inferior to the West. The act of veiling is constructed as evidence of violence, which has routinely become associated with Islam, whilst the act of unveiling is identified as an example Western gender equality and freedom. In this respect, because the veil is understood as a symbol for the oppression of women, Western societies such as the UK can reposition itself as a symbol of emancipation (Meyer, 2016).

The Qur'an addresses both men and women with regard to sexual modesty. However, female sexual modesty receives the most attention and is one of the most debated gender related issues within Islam. The debate is centred on whether or not the hijab, a form of dress that requires women to cover their entire body except for their hands and face, is a requirement in Islam.

Conservative scholars have argued that the Qur'an is clear about the restrictions on women's dress and the hijab is a requirement; whereas, other Islamic scholars believe this mode of dress is not required. According to Islamic conservatives, the hijab prevents women from being viewed as objects of lust by men. The alternative argument is that the Qur'an offers a vague definition of modest dress (modesty is of course culturally defined) and that the Islamic verses that refer to adopting this type of code were specifically written

for women who were living as part of the Prophet's family. Those Islamic reformists that have argued against the compulsive wearing of the hijab, also agree with the principle of sexual modesty and also validate a woman's right to wear the hijab if she chooses. Reformists also argue that men's responsibilities to be sexually modest are not given proper attention, even though the matter is addressed in the Qur'an.

Popular stereotypes about women in Islam provide a negative counterpart in which UK constructions of gender can be positively reflected. By erasing the multiplicity and variety of veiled Muslim women's lived experiences, they are constructed as other when compared to British women. In striking contrast to the image of the oppressed veiled Muslim woman is the image of the emancipated British woman. Not only do women in the UK have control over their income, but they also have complete control of their bodies and sexuality. From this perspective, the reduction of images of Muslim women to monolithic categories maintains the construction of the Muslim as other; in addition, Muslim women are also perceived as underprivileged and oppressed. The critique of veiling practices which has served to locate a social attitude of 'us' and 'them' illustrates that the increasing visibility of veiled female bodies in the public sphere indicates a 'Muslimness' rather than Western femininity.

This approach is based on sexual expressiveness and bodily display. In the UK, society is obsessed with bodies and the possibility of revealing the female body. Popular images of women on television screens, in magazines and on billboards promote an unveiled female body that is constructed through a strict regime of diet, exercise and plastic surgery, whilst at the same time serving to promote glamorous and youthful female bodies. In striking contrast to this

image stands the image of the veiled Muslim woman who is perceived to be sexually constrained, illiterate, domesticated and poor.

The other aspect that emerges during the discussion about women oppression by the participants of this research is the guardian issue. This means every Saudi women in Saudi Arabia must have a male guardian to take care of her and presenting her in some of the government departments. For example the guardian has to sign a government papers to allow the women to travel. In regard to this issue there are lots of arguments going on that ask for removing the guardian domination. For example, some participants contributed to social media camping lunched by Saudi women in twitter in (2016) that ask to end the guardianship in Saudi Arabia (Doaiji, 2017). Famous women in Saudi Arabia adapted the case such as Lubna AlOlyan (businesswomen in Saudi Arabia who consider to be one of the top 100 most influential people around the world).

In this regards (P4) claim that:

“I am a 34 years old women from Saudi Arabia who does not have the write to travel between Saudi Arabia and the UK (where I am studying) with out my guardian permission, that really upset me. (Tell me ! how did you contribute to the camping in twitter?) The hashtag of I am my own guardian has reached 14 Thousands vote and contribution so, every one known about it . I was one of the people who really do not agree with the guardianship as I have my dad who are above 80 and he can not do anything for me ”

6.2.4 Human rights

Wearing the veil is viewed as a significant obstacle for social and cultural integration between Saudi Arabian migrants, specifically female participants, and the UK. Veiling in a liberal democratic country such as the UK, where veiling is voluntary, indicates that this is a choice and mainly used as a symbol

of Muslim identity. Nonetheless, this is not always the case and there may be Muslim girls and women who are made to wear a veil. However, this research project has discovered that in some circumstances veiling represents freedom of choice within the UK. Hopkins (2016) has stated that interpreting the veil exclusively as a marker of gender oppression has neglected the fact that there are women who choose to wear the veil. Nevertheless, there are those that argue the autonomous decision to wear the veil is the result of a false consciousness rather than a genuine choice. This means that veiled Muslim women are not simply oppressed but they are also blind to their own oppression.

The failure to acknowledge the possibility of the autonomy of veiled Muslim women ensures the continued representation of women in Islam as voiceless victims. Moreover, dominant perceptions about a veiled Muslim women's lack of agency has continued to entrench dangerous notions of a Muslim problem whereby Muslim men deny Muslim women the freedom to exercise their rights and freedom. Therefore, this discourse silences and obscures alternative forms of agency, repeats simplistic West versus Muslim dichotomous frameworks, and contributes to the separation between 'us' and 'them'. However, acknowledging that the social status and life conditions of many Muslim women need to be improved to achieve gender equality, it should also be recognised that to consider all Muslim women as passive victims is not an accurate reflection of how many Muslim women perceive their lives. Furthermore, the articulation of the female Muslim body has failed to accommodate a multi-layered experience and acknowledgement of the possibility of genuine choice.

For example, a women who used to wear a veil (P10) pointed out that :

“ I can see how people looked at me when I enter a bank or a hospital, they were whispering and staring at me like if I came from a different planet.”

6.2.5 Religion and Cultural differences

The participants also overwhelmingly argued that Muslims are frequently viewed by Western media as people that use their culture for strategic, political and military advantage, rather than as a religious faith and as a way of life which has been shaped by an historical and longstanding legal tradition. For instances (P5) said that:

“ If any one respect other people in term of their culture and religion and accept that there is differences in culture, we will live in peace. In my relationships, I always apply the verse of Qur'an that says (For you is your religion, and for me is my religion). I don't and will not accept any way other than Islam, but I peacefully and respectfully deal with Christians, Buddhists, Jewish or any non-Muslims for its their own choice not to follow my religion.”

In the West, Muslims are often assumed to have a manipulative view of their culture rather than hold a sincere belief, and that their faith is now indistinguishable from waging war not only on their neighbours but also in Western countries. Awan (2016) has noted how Islam is now seen as a violent religion; in addition, a perspective has developed in the West where religious interpretations by some terrorists are consequently viewed as an all-encompassing description for the whole Muslim community and the Islam. As a consequence, Muslims has contributed to the erosion of an individual Muslim identity as a group with a distinctive nationality, ethnicity, class, and gender. This point of view can be viewed as an aspect of modern day Islamophobia. In addition, Islamophobia has also been used against Muslims, in terms of cultural

differences, because it underlines how Western culture is perceived in superior terms to Islamic culture.

In terms of a prescriptive religion, it is not religious doctrine that imposes itself on society but rather it is individuals that interpret religious texts and creates orthodoxies. The importance of religious interpretation is necessary to understand when addressing why some Islamic fundamentalists perpetuate acts of terror. Therefore, religion is based on an individual's interpretation as opposed to taking a position that condones violence. A similar interpretation can be made for honour killings, which are also a result of cultural traditions and religious interpretation in contrast to religious doctrine. Unfortunately, the Western media has frequently failed to distinguish between Islamic scholarship and individual interpretation.

For example, (P6) clarified through a Verse of Quran how the relation between Muslims and non-Muslims can be shaped , as well as, the interpretation of this Verse for the extremists and other ordinary Muslims :

(P6) “thought that most Muslims, except extremists, believe in the Verse of Quran which stated that *“Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly. Allah only forbids you from those who fight you because of religion and expel you from your homes and aid in your expulsion - [forbids] that you make allies of them. And whoever makes allies of them, then it is those who are the wrongdoers.”* However, I do not think that extremists interpret that verse right , otherwise we will live in peace” Quran 60:8-9 .

6.2.6 The Need to tackle Islamophobia

All of the participants recognised that there is an urgent need to address Islamophobia, not only on a social level but also within areas of legality. In an

interview carried out for this research project with two imams (P7- P13), they demonstrated how bad news and negative images were creating images about Muslims which were different from their day to day experiences. Therefore, the media serves to create an environment in which negative images of Muslim people are flourishing. In the UK, according to the imams, Islamophobia is not obvious or a prominent feature in everyday life, but sits beneath the surface and only brought to life by the UK media. The impact this has can be highly damaging to the social cohesiveness of British Muslims. For example, one of the imams (P7) stated that it is always a struggle to get the truth across about Islam to the media, and issues like discrimination within the UK labour market and housing is frequently ignored.

The imam (P13) spoke of the importance of what is prioritised by the police and other authorities and that this eventually decides if, how and when Islamophobia can be prevented and eliminated. Both the imams did not identify that Islamophobia is so apparent in Sweden, in contrast to other countries. Yet underline that Islamophobia could have crucial effects on both Muslims and the society in general. For example, they both mentioned the role of newspapers and the other mass media organisations in the UK in promoting examples of where Muslims worked as ambassadors within their communities and across society as a whole. The imams also declared that, in their view it is time to embrace and highlight the positive attributes of Islam and the Muslim population instead of emphasising and bringing to light the negative aspects.

The research results also established that Islamophobia was mainly perpetuated against religious practices rather than against ethnic groups. In order to address strategies in preventing Islamophobia in the UK it is necessary to draw a

distinction between religious Islamophobia and ethnic Islamophobia. For the purposes of this research project, the term Muslimophobia has been used as a method of differentiating the religious (Islamophobia) and the ethnic (Muslimophobia). According to Cheng (2015) the difference between Muslimophobia and Islamophobia is that Islamophobia refers to the hostility toward Islam as a religion. However, Muslimophobia refers to the hostility toward Muslims as the people practicing the Islamic religion. In addition, Islamophobia is a reaction against the religious basis while Muslimophobia is a reaction against the ethnic Muslims, as they are different in lifestyle, outfit and traditions (Erdenir, 2006).

6.2.6.1 Attention to Legal Framework

Laws, regulations and guidelines are necessary when trying to eliminate or prevent Islamophobia. The findings of this research have made a strong case of suggesting that the European Union (EU) should seek to modify European labour market policies and increase the legal protection against religious discrimination. Guidelines on good employment practice can then be implemented that can serve to accommodate the needs and requirements of Muslim's living and working in the West. Any discrimination on religious or cultural grounds should also be made unlawful.

6.2.6.2 Portray Positive Images of the Muslims and Islam

The media also has an important role in the portrayal of Islam and Muslims. As mentioned earlier, the media has a powerful influence on the way that Islam and Muslims are stereotyped in Western society. This was illustrated by the imams (P7-P13) who stated that there ought to be more positive images of their

religion and Muslims in general. The imams also argued that more attention should be focused in the media on the positive things about Islam and Muslims and less on negative stories and articles. They also argued that the wider British society also has a role to play and that schools should seek to promote positive representations of Islam as well as elevating political discourse that does not seek to demonise British Muslims in terms of Islamic fundamentalism or international terrorism. Public discussions also need to take place on the recognition of what Muslim women want to wear, whether it might be a headscarf, a hijab or a turban, which serves as a recognition of their religious beliefs. It is also necessary that the media should make attempts to engage with imams or Islamic scholars and academics as positive representatives of the Islamic community.

6.2.7 The differences between the culture of Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom

In order to understand correctly why it may be challenging for individuals from Saudi Arabia to live and conduct their businesses in the United Kingdom, the research sought to first understand the differences between the cultures of the United Kingdom and the culture of Saudi Arabia. According to the responses of research participants, the main differences between the two cultures can be divided in terms of social identities and gender identities. The following discussion explains these two categories:

Social Identities

Social identity is a person's sense of who they are based on their group membership(s). Tajfel (1979) proposed that the groups

(e.g. social class, family, football team etc.) which people belonged to were an important source of pride and self-esteem. Groups give us a sense of social identity: a sense of belonging to the social world (McLeod, 2008).

In contrast to the individualism of the UK, the culture of Saudi Arabia is primarily a social, cultural and religious collective. According to P3, “the values, the requirements and needs, and the goals of a group of people are more significant for the individuals than the goals, values and needs of an individual”. Similar to the UK, Saudi Arabia is a country that hosts many social groups that are affiliated to each other in terms of family relationships. However, according to P3, the most powerful and significant social groups in Saudi Arabia are the traditional and conservative group and the modernised and liberal group. The research conducted by Caryle Murphy (2013) demonstrated similar findings. Murphy pointed out that, “one is progressive, outgoing, at ease with global interactions, the other is inward-looking, extremely religious”. According to (P18), each of these groups has its own unique norms, values, motivations and needs and both have notable roles and responsibilities in modelling the values, the behaviours and the goals of individuals in society.

Respondent (P17) noted that, “the traditional group is significantly conservative and rarely accepts any changes or alternations to the identity of their group. According to this respondent, “any attempt to change their norms and values is viewed and perceived as an attack to the identity of the Saudi Muslim”. The traditional group considers children as a group who must receive, and as such replicate, the values of the culture taught by their parents and other adults in their community. According to the results obtained from the

research, approximately 35% of the participants in this research are traditional Muslims while the remaining group were mainly modernised Muslims. The impacts and challenges resulting from cultural shock were more evident among the traditional Muslims than it was within modernised Muslims. Although modernised individuals have learnt to respect the values of different cultures, within traditional Muslims from Saudi Arabia there is a tension between their values and the beliefs of different cultures. P5 explained that, “while the modernized group seeks and pushes for reforms and changes in the social life of the people from Saudi Arabia, the traditional group tend to oppose these changes and seek to maintain the social status of Saudi Arabia”.

The modernised group appreciated the different changes that have seen a recent push for changes and reforms in Saudi Arabia. However, according to P2, the changes they push for must not entirely discard or render irrelevant the customs and traditions of the Saudi society. In the research conducted by Murphy (2013), most young people in Saudi Arabia are in the modernised group. Although this group of people want to maintain older traditions, they also want to have a greater control over their destiny. According to P2, “the group views that staying under the traditional Islamic identity and norms of their culture do not conflict with their needs to modernize and evolve and develop the society living in Saudi Arabia”. Mona Almunajjed (1997) has argued that this group is particularly focused on the status of women in the Saudi society. Furthermore, this group understands that the preservation of the identity of the traditional Saudi Arabian makes up a natural, as well as an essential element in the social, cultural and religious evolution of women in the country.

A major and significant characteristic of the modernised participant is that they do not believe the main challenge and problem comes from their religion. According to (P13), the main challenge is the way that religious texts are interpreted by political leaders and the Qur'an to the general public. (P15) has pointed out that, "the main dilemma is not mainly on the leading role of the Islamic norms in the government and the public life but rather mainly on the enforced dominance of one section, the Wahhabism". The modernised group argue that scholars and religious leaders should focus their attention on studying how the Islamic community will deal with the new emerging issues related to modern life and the needs of the individuals, rather than being preoccupied with trivial matters. Moreover, the people in this group conduct continuous assessment on the significance and the importance that is of little significance. As a result, this group of people hold on to the cultural prerequisites of Muslims, and Islamic teaching. In addition, they also pursue a modernised life that imitates individuals in Western society and that is also consistent with Arabic and Islamic traditions.

In order to understand the extent of the difference between genders, a closer analysis of the concept of Ikhtilat is necessary. (P19) has offered a significant explanation of this term and how it is applied to both genders. Ikhtilat is an Arabic term referring to the mixing of genders or in a more specific manner, the physical interaction between people who are of opposite sexes and who are not biologically related. Traditional groups of Saudi Arabians advocate the implementation and the strengthening of the private as well as the public policies, and the social traditions and customs that prevent Ikhtilat regardless of the social situation. As a consequence, the members of this group recognise

and support any form of limitation on the interaction between men and women. These limitations include preventing girls and women from studying or working in settings of a mixed gender, and the establishment and development of women-only facilities in the Saudi Arabia. As a result, not only are the men and women in this group denying and rejecting the notion of Ikhtilat, but they are also not accustomed with working alongside people of the opposite sex (Van Geel, 2012).

(P19) has pointed out that understanding Ikhtilat is very different for modernised Saudis. This group does not accept it and it is allowed under specified conditions and circumstances. As (P15) has stated, “arguments that relates to the conditions or circumstances in which Ikhtilat can be allowed however seem to have taken a spatial dimension”. This dimension Van Geel (2012) has argued is a necessity and a dimension of behaviour or cultural dressing. As a result, this group of people may be willing to lessen their perception and rejection of the Ikhtilat if it happens in a professional environment or has been brought about in cases of ill health issues. This group of Saudis reject such concepts such as Ikhtilat; however, their rejection changes depending on the circumstance in which it happens, and they will either allow it or reject it depending on the social context.

By way of contrast, the social identity in the UK is very different. It is a mixed and individualistic culture that places a focus on the rights, values and the goals of the individuals rather than a groups. Moreover, the genders interact and work openly regardless of the situation and the circumstance. The people are modernised and generally hold collective viewpoints regarding social and cultural issues. In addition, privacy and confidentiality is a right and is

recognised and protected by law; whereas, in Saudi Arabia their laws are based on the interpretation of religious texts.

Gender Identities

Al-Rasheed (Alsadiq and Hausheer, 2014; Sanauddin, 2013) has stated that gender identities in Saudi Arabia consist of an interplay between religious nationalism, political factors, and socio-economic factors. According to Al-Rasheed, during the establishment of the country, the government of Saudi Arabia faced significant challenges and difficulties resulting from different tribes and communities, which held conflicting interests and values. The attempt by the Saudi government to unify the country led to the establishment of policies, rules and regulations in accordance with Islamic law. As a result, men and women were not allowed to meet or interact in public, and all women were required to wear black garments that covered the majority of their body.

The government of Saudi Arabia promoted the image of a woman that dresses in the black Abaya, avoided contact with unrelated men, and who abided by the teachings of the Islamic religion, as the ideal woman (Sanauddin, 2013). As a result, Women became the most visible feature of the religious identity of Saudi Arabia. This image is one of a woman who stays at home to take care of the children, as well as taking responsibility for cooking and looking after the house. Saudi men were tasked with responsibilities that were deemed as being unsuitable for Saudi women. The constitution of the country, which is guided by Sharia law, has required men to take up the role of being guardians in the society. Women were to avoid men in public areas and were to be focused on their families. Men also assumed the roles of leaders, protectors, and providers

of the family, and the primary nation builders of the Saudi Arabian state (Morgan, 2016).

However, with the increase in globalised economic and cultural systems, the interaction between Saudi women and women from other cultures, has led to changes in the status of women in the country. Al-Rahseen has noted that the boom in the production of oil in the 1970s provided women in the country with better and easier ways to access education and the public services. In addition, the increase in national incomes meant that the government could afford to construct the gender-separated institutions, colleges and public agencies. As a consequence, the illiteracy rate among women decreased significantly and the rate of employed women in Saudi Arabia began to increase. However, religious and social policies has continued to prevent women from working in areas that might serve to change the image of what it is meant to be as a women living and working in Saudi Arabia. The majority of women continue to avoid professions that might place role of women within this society at risk. For example:

(P9) “ Nowadays women can live freely without men dominating them, living in the UK shows me that these are no differences between men and women we all have almost the same rights. (Except having less salary and less representation in politics than men)”

(P4) “ In Saudi Arabia, people must learn how to respect women and understand gender equality then establish rules and policies that protect women from men abuses, so women can live comfortably and confidently ”

(P17) “ I learn that women are similar to men in the UK, relating to them as a person not as someone who cooks and take cares of the kids, not someone who needed to be excluded from the community. The negative image is here in our minds what we gain from our culture that we grow up with regard to our

identity as a women, and that what makes me resist any changes related to gender role”

(P10) “ It is more comfortable to have your own sphere based on gender; I used to work in a female section in the university. It was more comfortable than working with men as there is no rules to engage with women. You work freely; no body can understand the value of female only spheres till they try it. It provided me with privacy and most of my friend prefer this in my country ”

6.2.8 The feeling of anxiety, stress and discomfort

The majority of participants referred to experiencing significant anxiety and stress with initial interactions with the opposite sex. All the participants had feelings of fear, anxiety and stress during their first few days upon entry into the UK. A participant (P3) explained that they felt as if they had entered into a new world, which was completely opposite to his native country. Many were excited about being in a new country, although their first few weeks in the UK were completely different to their expectations. One of the participants (P9), who had travelled to the UK to study, pointed out that because of their lack of knowledge in spoken and as written English, they die not know what was saying during lessons. Another participant (P20) claimed that they were shocked to find a class where male and female students interacted freely, and where male and female lecturers taught students. This clearly demonstrates one of the main cultural differences between Saudi Arabian and British society

As a consequence of this culture clash, around 60% of the participants experienced homesickness, loneliness, racial discrimination, problems with immigration regulations, living arrangements, and interacting with other people around. For instances:

(P20) “Despite of treating me so fairly and kindly either inside the University or outside, I went through homesickness at the beginning”

P9 “There is a few racial harassment but I try to ignore such behaviours that lead me to feel lonely and sad ”.

(P7) “Every year there is anti-Islamic demonstration in my city Nottingham they always demands to close all mosques and to kick Muslims out of the country. And this is a typical British racism, as they never like migrants in general.”

(P14) “They (some British classmates) never like to be a friends with other nations I have been here in the UK more than 7 years but I have not have even one British friend. (Me: have you ever try to become close to them)? Yes, I tried by asking one of my classmates to go out for coffee but most of the time he stays with his own friends but never even invited me once to have a break with them. that why we feel excluded and lonely then we started to feel depressed and homesick.”

The lack of local networks for social support and financial issues are also some of the reasons and behind experiencing stressful conditions while living abroad (Liang and Fassinger, 2008). Homesickness is also a significant and major contributor to how migrants react to their new environment (Ying and Liese, 1994).

Poyrazli, et al. (2004) has demonstrated that social support was significantly negatively correlated with the acculturative stress in students studying in a foreign country. The other significant factor responsible for the anxiety and the stress levels in most of the Saudis results from the perception of the citizens of the host country. Wan (2001) has claimed that international students from Asia felt that the American students were often unfriendly towards them. As a result, individuals from other countries, especially from the Islamic countries, are

more prone to illnesses and diseases resulting from depression, psychological distress. Therefore, the most important factor leading to depression is the impact of cultural differences

6.2.9 Cultural Shock

Cultural shock refers to the anxiety that results from an individual losing their personal connection to their native country (Morgan, 2016). As noted in earlier chapters, Saudi Arabia is a gender segregated culture, while the UK is a non-gender segregated society, and many of the participants from Saudi Arabia experienced a cultural shock on their arrival into the UK.

The participants explained that they experienced feelings of discomfort and confusion in the UK as a result of differences in culture. The table below notes the number of participants who experience a cultural shock on their arrival into the UK. There was no significant difference between men and women. This indicates that a lack of cultural differences between Saudi men and women, otherwise the results may have favoured one gender over the other.

Gender	Cultural Shock	No Cultural Shock	Total
Male	8	2	10
Female	7	3	10

Table (6.2) Number of Participants Mentioning Cultural Shock

75 per cent of the participants experienced significant levels of cultural shock from their arrival in the UK until the end of a period of three to four months. (P1), “I wished to go back home in my first week of being in the UK. Although I was really surprised to be in a new country, the lack of friends and social support was significantly challenging to me being in the country.” (P11) was surprised at being in a country where one could freely interact with opposite genders in public places, “I felt embarrassed to see women walking on the streets without putting on their Abaya. Though they themselves seemed very happy, it was just embarrassing to see them walking in the open exposing their body parts”. Many students felt very uncomfortable about studying with and being taught by teachers and lecturers of opposite genders.

The main impact and most immediate challenge for the participants were of cultural shock and stress. According to research conducted by Eschbach, et al. (2001) confusion and emotional discomfort of cultural shock can lead to significant amounts of psychological stress, and a large variation in signs and symptoms. These symptoms according include depression, anxiety, stress and feelings of helplessness (Mio, 1999). Many of the participants experienced cultural shock in a different manner. (See page 169 the findings of cultural shock theory).

6.2.10 Perception of the Saudis to the United Kingdom

The UK and Saudi Arabia enjoy a good political relationship. A key component of this relationship is cooperation in security and defence. The UK and Saudi Arabia also share technology, experience, and skills in dealing with

the international terror and other political and social problems. In cases where there is a conflict of interest strategic dialogue to end the conflict is frequently initiated between the two countries. Nonetheless, as far as the Western media are concerned, the close cooperation between Saudi Arabia and the UK is frequently marginalised in favour of an Orientalist approach to Arabic problems and tensions within the region. As a result, there is a negative impact on the Saudi Arabians living, studying and working in the UK.

For example, (P9) “even when the two countries: UK and SA are having a good relation; the relation between Arab and UK by most of population is not good because UK is selling arms to SA. That’s what created the conflicts between the two nations ”

6.2.10.1 Sources of Cooperation

Sources of cooperation bring about potential economic benefits between the UK and Saudi Arabia. 113,000 Saudi national visas were processed by the UK government in 2013. This number has steadily increased. Over 16,000 students are enrolled in the British universities and colleges. In addition, over 100,000 British Muslims perform the Umrah and Hajj every year. They also travel to and work in Saudi Arabia. This social interaction has helped to create a forum that has helped to enhance and understanding of the differences between the UK and Saudi Arabia. As members of the G20 they share international responsibilities and are required to work together.

The participants all agreed that the cooperation and relationship between the two countries should be maintained, primarily because Saudi Arabia is the economic hub of the Middle East, and is one of the UK’s biggest trade

partners. Furthermore, the UK is one of the leading advocates for diversification in Saudi Arabia, and it has a high number of business and economic investments in the country. The importance of this relationship was viewed by many participants as means of helping the country towards embracing a more modern outlook through the interchange of cultural and social values bought about by trade between the countries.

For example, (P3) is a businessman in Saudi Arabia who came to the UK to support his wife while studying in the UK. He stated that:

“ I have enhanced my business skilled during my stay in the UK as I met people from different cultural backgrounds. I become more open minded than before by understanding differences. Before I was not that good in dealing with female customers or partners in business, but now I get this experience ”

6.2.10.2 Potential Challenges

During the post-cold war period, Saudi Arabia responded by increasing political engagement with emerging Asian and former Eastern Bloc countries. The country played an increasing international and diplomatic role within the region. At the same time, the UK pursued wider economic interests in the Middle East and Gulf regions. The participants did not agree with this policy or a return to a new Western presence of this type in the region. However, they agreed that security and defence cooperation between the British and the Middle East should continue. For example, (P12) said that:

“ After 9/11, the reason behind the existing of the western defense in SA is the deal between the western countries and SA which aims to protect SA from any attack and in return western countries get benefit from the Saudi by buying oil at a cheap price. However, the existence of the western military in the area is considered as a threaten to us and as we do not want any western countries to

have a voice in our policy or strategy. We do not want to end one day like Iraq where the Americans have hand on there political system”.

6.2.10.3 British Engagement in the Middle East

The drive towards a greater involvement by the UK in the Middle East and specifically the Gulf region has been increased by the threat of terrorist engagements. With a Muslim population of over 100,000 citizens, the UK has an interest in maintaining security both domestically and internationally. As a result, there has been an increase in the military cooperation between Saudi Arabia and the UK, specifically the selling of arms to the country in order to help the Saudi army fight rebels in neighbouring Yemen. For example, (P16):

“we are only scared of our war with Yemen, therefore, we need the support from our allies in the west to make sure that the area is stabilized because the west have the power to help us”

6.2.10.4 The Gulf's Security Landscape

Future security in the region depends on stable political systems in Iran, Iraq and Syria. The growing sectarian risk in these countries as well as an escalation of violence in Iraq has put the Gulf area at risk. Alternatives include the division of Iraq into a confederation of separate ethnic and religious states. A similar situation also faces Syria where opposition to the existing regime has led to civil war. Concessions towards Iran have led to a strategy of negotiating deals on nuclear power in return for helping towards the fight against terrorism. These negotiations have been seen by some participants as a move in the right direction towards peace in the region, such as (P11) who said that “ starting the negotiation with Iran is the first steps to save our country from there

internal danger ”. However, other participants such as (P13)who disagreed and “wanted to keep Iran out of any case related to us as there are the true enemy of SA” .

6.2.10.5 Trade and Economic Issues

The global financial crisis and subsequent economic austerity policies in the UK did not affect the strong trade deals between Britain and Saudi Arabia. The participants pointed that the British sold defence and training equipment, as well as retail services, and financial investment throughout this period. Over 6,000 British companies export to Saudi Arabia. The UK has also invested in healthcare and education. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia controls most of the UK’s investment in hotels and real estates. Nonetheless, there are challenges that continue to hinder bilateral trade primarily the bureaucracy in Saudi Arabia that results in impediments to visa processing.

(P3) ‘’ When we (businessmen) want to invest in different countries , the first thing we search is the attractive places in the country. In case of investing in Saudi Arabia the first two places comes to mind are the Makah and Medina as holy cities and most people from around the world come to visit them. However, the regulation in Saudi Arabia is strict in regards to non-Muslims. In fact, non-Muslims cannot enter the holy cities. This makes that investment in Saudi Arabia for non-Muslims very difficult ’’

6.2.11 Challenges in a Mixed Gender Culture

Communication differences also present a major challenge to Saudi Arabia citizens in the UK. The participants pointed out that communication in a non-gender segregated culture was difficult. 50 per cent of the participants described communication problems while living in the UK. One participant (P15) stated that, “individuals from one culture may do things that are not

allowed by another culture. While women in western cultures consider men as having similar roles with men, women from Muslim culture have different interpretation”.

A lot of effort is required in cross-cultural interactions because of numerous opportunities for misunderstanding information (Merchant, 2012). Gender variations in communication shape the perspective of individuals, creating more opportunities for miscommunication and misunderstanding. According to Quinn and Luttel (2004), cultures have different perceptions towards gender variations, which shape interactions. The results indicate that Saudi women respect their men and may not communicate their ideas in a loud way because of religious and cultural conventions. This is because Saudi men believe that raised voices are aggressive and disrespectful.

Meyer (2016) has also demonstrated that Saudis experience communication challenges in the UK. It is very challenging for Muslims to understand complexities in gender variations in the UK. Moreover, it is difficult to cultivate an awareness of different cultures because Saudi citizens have limited interactions with people from other communities.

Since the UK has many diverse cultures there are differences in methods and forms of communication. Noor (2007) has pointed out that it is problematic for Saudis to establish an intercultural competency, because other communities consider their culture as inferior and obsolete, and one in which women are demeaned or marginalised within every day society.

The participants indicated that there are difficulties in engaging with other ethnic groups when discussing gender differences. Many of the participants offered a defensive reaction because they feared stereotyping other cultures.

Many of the major concerns in cross-cultural communication cover conflict and negotiation procedures, self-disclosure, and identity construction in group and personal settings (Merchant, 2012).

The participants emphasised the challenge of dealing with prejudices. Saudi citizens experienced discrimination because of gender stereotypes. The participants suggested that they are discriminated against based on negative stereotypes that individuals from other cultures have towards Muslim societies.

(P17) recalled a situation that shows how is the view of people from other cultures about Muslims:

“I remember that a neighbour shouted on my 4 years girl when she was 'barking' to his dog through the fence. I know that she was wrong as she makes the dog bark, but she is only a child. He (the neighbour) started to shout at her then he called her 'Dirty Muslim'. This was more than heart breaking for me. Words cant describe my feeling. He said that to a child! Can you imagine? How can a child be a 'dirty' something. a target of hate only for her origin, not for what she believes in as she is still only a child. I wasn't wearing Hijab that time and I tried all my best to be kind with him since we arrived. We sent him flowers and card when his leg was broken. It was the first time my daughter annoys him and although his dog use to bark all the day annoying us we never complained”

Another example from a female (P2) clarified the view of gender stereotype for Muslims :

“ I do accept some male guests here like my neighbour, the landlord or the Internet guy. I can serve them tea and have a short chat with them. I think that this is acceptable in my culture but I wont do it in my society because people are used to the separation. But to say that I will accept a mix gender gatherings in family. It is against our believe especially when not necessary. Even when I have guests we set separately and even when I visit neighbours, some of them understand what I prefer and the others feel that my life style is strange and weird. I can accept mix-gender environments at work that is difficult to be segregated like markets and hospitals but not everywhere. I can live in it when

needed, but I won't 'choose' it as a life style.'''

(P16) is a dad who share his experience about the prejudices faced by his daughter:

''My friend's daughter (she is 12) was called a 'terrorist' recently. Her teacher dealt with it but it affected the child. My daughter (only 6) was told once by a classmate that 'Mom says Muslims are YUCK don't talk with them'. Look where are the media driving people.'''

Families that live in multi-racial societies also face prejudices because of perceived differences in mixed-race couples, and a lack of clarity over what type of language and culture they belong to. This has led to members of some mixed-raced families to become confused in their choice of cultural heritage (Shah, 2015).

Many of the women participants noted that women from other communities referred to them as inferior, submissive and without a proper religion. They were criticised for wearing the hijab, which some people in the West view as an out-dated practice. Gender stereotypes also had an effect on the interaction between individuals. This is because an increase in prejudices towards certain cultures prevented individuals from sharing their personal experiences for fear of discrimination.

Integration is a challenge cited in non-gender segregated societies. The participants stated that integration into UK communities is difficult because of the diversity in nationality and cultures. Foreigners need to feel part of the community as well as have a sense of belonging. While there are a significant number of mixed married between Muslims and non-Muslims in the UK. Several male participants suggested that some women from western ethnic

groups considered Muslim as terrorist, intruders, murderers and should not be accepted into the UK because of Islamophobia.

Ignorance as well as distorted image about Muslim society offers a challenge, particularly for Muslim women. On one hand, the participants suggested that distorted images about Saudi Arabians negatively affected their integration process. Many participants believed that Muslims are feared and hated by other communities, especially the British people, and they associate Muslim society as responsible for all terrorist activities. Saudi women fear wearing the hijab and other items that symbolise their religion because of protests from British people. On the other hand, a few female participants stated that they do not want to engage with the British culture that why they feel ignored and isolated.

The responses from the participants clearly demonstrated that cultural differences represented a significant risk in terms of relationships with people of other cultures. 50 per cent of the participants indicated that diversity in culture led to an increase in stress, for example (P14) stated a story of being in touch with people from different culture:

“My relationship with those who have different cultures and religions is very few and limited. I don’t remember that I went out with a foreigner except my study teamwork, and this happens only twice a year. Having two old friends of mine, who were my schoolmates in Saudi Arabia, here in Nottingham is the reason behind not starting a new friendship. I spend the weekends with them and that satisfies me.” he gave an example of his relationship with one of his university colleagues. He said, “During the break times, I sometimes spend the time with my atheist laboratory mate. We drink coffee together, chat about our academic issues or our social life. But I haven’t met him outside the university campus or even called him by phone. It happened only once when we had a team project that required us to be in touch. We meet in Costa café but I was very stressed as all the group were from different cultural background, which

let me feel that my ideas won't be clearly understood. Therefore, I remain silent most of the time. I think the situation will be totally different if I am doing the project with people from the same culture of me.”

In addition ,(P8) mentioned that :

“I remember once in the weekend, when I first come to the UK ,I went to a shop near the university and I saw one of my classmate. I said hi to her . I cannot forget the way that she looked at me. Like if I done a mistake, then she said hi back and went out of the shop. This was in the morning, I went home and I set until the next day in the evening because I was very stressed and depressed of they way she reacted. She sent me the feeling of you have no right to say hi to me.”

This is highlighted by Zlobina, Basabe, Paez and Furnham (2006) and their observations that diversities in cultural practices created challenges for integrating into different societies. Differences in the way that gender is viewed within new cultures can also lead to stress and depression. As a result, an adjustment period for migrants during the stay in a new country is usually viewed as stressful. The negative attitude of some British people towards Saudi Arabians in the UK is believed to be caused by adverse media reports about Muslims and their religious beliefs, which creates difficulties during the adjustment period.

However, some other participants have different opinion in regard to cultural differences and adjustment (P2) claim that:

“I like to hear from those who are culturally different than me. I ask them, accept them, meditate and think about their lives. And then, I can see the difference between them and me. I don't care if they are high class or low. I just like to know and visit them. The example I have is when my Polish friend, who is a single-mom, told me about her story, that she had her children without

getting married. Her story goes totally against my morals as a Muslim, but I accepted her as a friend”.

(P6) clarified that the differences between cultures is fine to deal with:

“The society here is already multi-cultured, so they know a lot about the cultures of the foreigners who live here. I like to be careful when talking to anyone not to argue with the differences especially the aspects related to the religion to avoid hurting anyone. When dealing with people, I don’t care of the cultural differences. As a Muslim, I must treat everyone kindly regardless of his race, colour, nationality, religion or culture. However, I have to admit that I find it much easier to convey my messages to people who share the same culture as me”. he then gave an example shows that he deals with everyone equally. He said, “In our department we have a monthly meal that is attended by 25 students with different genders, races, religions, and cultures. I’ve never try to sit beside an Arab or Saudi student. Rather, I sit beside and a have chats with different people with different backgrounds”.

Many of the participants also indicated that language barriers were a problem during the integration process. Language barriers for new migrants had resulted in challenges to social and cultural integration as well as placing a limit on employment opportunities. For the women participants finding employment was viewed as particularly difficult because of their cultural beliefs, which are primarily centred on looking after the family and maintaining a good home. These cultural shocks became less pronounced in second generation Saudi Arabians because they experienced an education in UK, were more fluent in the English language than their parents and, as a result, access to more diverse and secure employment opportunities were made open to them. Consequently, second generation . However, some participants do not agree with the language as barrier in the integration process for example, (P11):

“I like to communicate with anybody I meet in any place I go regardless of their background and nationalities. My language doesn’t help when I first

came, but I always try doing my best. For example, I was in Nero Cafe this morning, and I sat with a French man. I greeted him, initiate a conversation and enjoyed the little chat with him through the body language”.

Saudi Arabians were in a position to integrate more successfully than the previous generation. Nevertheless, tension can arise between the generations when second generation Saudi Arabians adopted a western life style. The following participants (P14) comments illustrate this tension:

(P14) “some citizens from other countries living in a mixed ethnic society are likely to suffer from lack of the sense belonging. For instance, a second generation Saudi Arabian may feel that he or she does not really belong in UK. The feeling is also similar when in Saudi Arabia, since it may not be considered as home. This might cause identity problems for a number of people, because they do not know which place they belong.”

However, (P20) have a different view about belonging and living in two countries, he said that he become more open to diversity by stated that:

(P20) “I used to live in my Islamic country and to be surrounded by Saudi cultured citizens. But here, as being in a multi-cultural/multi-religious country, I lived and dealt with all kinds of human beings. I had the chance to experience new people with new mentalities, backgrounds and beliefs, new cultures, new sights, new sounds i.e. new language with many dialects, new food, and new weather”.

Changes to gender roles were also viewed as one of the many challenges faced while in UK. Several of the participants noted that Saudi men and women were often forced to abandon their traditional roles because of influences from their culture to word the western culture. In the UK, the exposure to Western cultural influences by Saudi Arabians frequently led to adopting new and different ways of thinking and living. As a consequence, Saudi Arabian women have discovered and often rapidly adopted a different way of living. However,

many of the participants noted that this resulted marginalisation from the Saudi community. This phenomenon has been noted by Harris, et. al (2016) who have argued that Western culture, religion, and legislation (in terms of equal treatment) and their adoption by non-Western citizens frequently led to marginalised statuses within their communities. In addition, the differences in religious beliefs and attitudes between Saudi Arabian women and women in the UK have also made it more difficult for Saudi women to interact with other women.

45 per-cent of the participants stated that cultural diversities between the Saudi Arabian and UK citizens exposed Saudi women to cultural shock. The occurrences were found to be higher for women than for men. Cultural practices such as the dressing style, and the separation in public places between men and women were frequently cited as representing a problem of integrating in UK society. Many participants also felt that the lack of Muslim cultural identifiers in UK also led to cultural shock and feelings of alienation. Nonetheless, this is a difficult area to address because many participants believed that increasing visible signifiers, such as mosques, only led to more discrimination within the indigenous population. This was partly believed as a result of negative media stereotypes.

Discussion of the Findings.

The coverage of the terrorist attacks in New York on 11 September 2001 was viewed by many of the participants to be at the centre of negative stereotypes of the Muslim community. Following the attack many participants believed that as far as the Western media were concerned all the terrorists were assumed

to be Muslims. As a consequence, many individuals in the Western world perceived every Muslim as a terrorist. This has been highlighted by the recent experiences Muslim men and women travelling abroad who have suffered discrimination by airline companies and airport security personnel. As respondent (P18) has pointed out, “Muslims are subject to an intensive body search and interrogation simply because they are dressing as Muslims or have a Muslim name”. P14 also argued that, “people from the Islamic countries and with Muslim identities are profiled and are targeted, and many are still experiencing incarceration”. This point of view is reinforced by who stated that, “the incident and the series of events leading to the major death toll in September 11, 2001 are still fresh in the mind of most of the people, not only in the country where it happened but also in the UK.” P9 also believed that most people in the UK do not like having Muslims living in the UK but have to tolerate them.

P9’s opinions demonstrate the ease with which misinformation and fears of unsuccessfully integrating within UK society can create mythic explanations about what might be wrong, and how problems can be fixed.

Approximately 65 per cent of the participants believed that some Muslims in the UK continued to experience racial profiling “*refers to the use of race as a key factor in police decision to stop and interrogate citizens*” (Weitzer & Tuch, 2002:435) by the British authorities. One of the participants (P2) argued that the UK public believed that a “dark bearded man, walking on a busy street or in a bus, or any other public area, is a potential suicide bomber and who should be avoided at any cost”.

The UK media is also believed to be primarily responsible for perpetuating an image of Muslims as terrorists. (P12) stated that, “the media coverage in most terrorist attacks is a clear negative depiction of the Muslim community. As such, the fight against terrorism is perceived as a war against the Muslim community or at least those Muslims that the western countries do not like.” (P18), in answer to the question of whether the West has categorised Muslims into good and bad, argued that, “the western countries only like and want to be associated with those Muslim countries that serve their interest both economically as well as politically, and particularly those countries with huge reserves for oil and other precious raw materials and minerals”. Moreover, the media coverage in the West of the attack on 11 September 2001 was believed by many of the participants to place the blame on all Muslims for the incident.

Results and Findings

The participants on the whole experienced gender based cultural barriers in the UK because of the following reasons. Some UK citizens failed to understand Muslim culture and its emphasis on gender roles and variations. This is illustrated by the following participant (P11), “Islamic religion recognizes human rights, the roles of females and the roles of males. However, people from other cultures misunderstand our interpretations, calling us using defamatory names”. Instead of trying to understand any cultural or religious differences some British citizens were believed by the participants to judge Muslims using existing cultural prejudices. This is not to put the blame entirely on the British people, as several of the participants pointed out, Saudi Arabians

also had expectations of British culture that was not supported by the native population; as a result, additional problems of integration have been created.

Many of the participants expected Western media organisations to present a fair and balanced opinion of the Muslim community. These participants wanted to see reporters who understand Islamic beliefs and respect the differences between Saudi Arabian culture and the UK. As P6 pointed out, “I expect the reporters to represent Muslims in a fair manner which I believe is very far from being achieved”. (P2) supported this statement by arguing that:

“I do not expect much from the media since I know who specifically controls the media in the West. However, I hope that some objectivity and fairness is portrayed in the programs broadcasted by the media and that the truth about the essence, beliefs and customs of Islam is expressed without any form of prejudice.”

(P8) wanted more opportunities within the Western media for Muslims to voice their concerns in order to prevent the dissemination incorrect information about Muslims and Islam. This point of view was also supported by P5, “I think they need to do more research out there and get more Muslims involved in the media”.

Although there are lots of programs in the UK media that tend to spread positive image about Islam and Muslims, such as the TV show (Muslim like us) on BBC and (What British Muslims really think) on Channel 4. , No one of the participants knows about it.

The other major issue that was discussed by the participants was the representation of Muslims in Western entertainment such as films and television programmes. (P20) pointed out that many films portrayed Muslims as terrorists with a death wish. Negative stereotypes of Muslims were also

identified by the participants as evident in cartoons for young children, for example Disney's *Aladdin* (dir. Ron Clements and John Musker, US: 1992). P8 has noted how, "a broad spectrum including Hollywood action blockbusters, cartoons and British artistic movies are all means through which either crude or exaggerated stereotypes are reinforced or otherwise more subtle disdain of Islam is obtained". (P10) also stated that the "Action movie genre is very able to focus on the topics such as threat, fear, terrorism or vengeance and this is the main case in the movie series 24".

For the participants, numerous films made in the West were cited as offering a negative portrayal of Muslims, which were frequently predicated on a clash of civilisations that depicted Muslims as the enemy. For instance, (*The Siege* in 1998) is one of the movies that represent Muslims as terrorists even before 9/11. As well as, (*The kingdom* in 2007) which signify Saudis and the Arab Muslims as a group of terrorist. There are even more movies like (*American Sniper* in 2014) that negatively represent Muslims. (P10) claimed that while the Islamophobia in films may be viewed as a form of creativity and representation of non-Western people, they actually have a detrimental effect on the perception of Islam and Muslims. This has been illustrated by (P18):

"The western media has for long been seen by the Muslims as being a negative influence on the perception and the mind-set of the media towards the Muslims and their religion. The orientalist stereotypes of Muslims as a terrorists and tyrannies at home suppressing their women have been disseminated in the media on a worldwide scale through caricatures and stereotypes."

According to most of the participants, certain common images and stereotypes dominate the visual and print media. Furthermore, the hostility of the media towards Islam, combined with the values and the practices of Western

journalists to develop a limited representation of Islam, has been among the main focus of the media in the UK. This has been observed by (P17) who has argued that it is the myths and the predetermined notions about the minorities that contribute and establishes the social order. As a result, it is responsible for dictating who participates and who does not participate in the different issues that affect the people in the community. This has an impact on who belongs to the wider society and who viewed as an outsider in the community.

(P7) argued that the UK media was dominated by hostility towards Muslims, and frequently offered coverage of Islam that distorted the reality about the Muslims way of life. Consequently, this has destroyed the trust of UK citizens towards Muslims. (P7) has also stated that the degradation of standards in the Western media has led to quick and easy stories, which has helped to perpetuate the Western view of extremist Islam. (P7) pointed out:

“The focus on the extreme minority or the fringe groups which represent a small section of the Muslim population, often unacceptable and do not in any way represent the actions and the beliefs of other Muslims, acts to disguise the vast diversity and range of perspectives amongst the Muslims and equate the outlook and actions of a few groups of individuals to the large population of the Muslims.”

Only a few participants have acknowledged that some western Media has fairly represent Islam and Muslims such as movies. For example (P2):

“I watched (Civic Duty 2006) and (Rendition 2007) I think these tow movies are really interesting to see as a Muslim. On one hand, they highlight that not all Muslims are terrorist. On the other hand, it shows how the western media effects the people by presenting Muslims as terrorist.”

(P4) noted different stereotypes that are dominant within the UK. (P4) has argued that the media portrays Muslims as being intolerant, strange and very different from other people in the world. Muslims are also perceived as misogynistic and women are viewed as the property of men. In addition, Muslim women cannot be trusted with making decisions. Finally, Muslims are portrayed as violent and cruel and they do not care about the lives of other people. (P4) also pointed out that in Saudi Arabia, women wear the Abaya not because they are forced to, but because most of them have been taught to carry out this practice, and they make their own decisions on what to wear. Therefore, this type of dress is an integral element of their cultural identity and not worn as a result of religious law making or government prescription. By way of explanation, (P4) claimed that Islam provided people with a cultural education; as a result, all Muslims developed a clear understanding of the religious and cultural heritage.

Many of the participants that are studying pointed out that Saudi male and female students have different experiences because of the UK's gender integrated society. Female Saudi students overwhelmingly experience a more challenging environment than male students. This is illustrated by P19's experience of studying in the UK. Before coming to the UK, (P19) (female) had only experienced single gender institutions. As a result, it was difficult for them to adapt to a new way of life. Consequently, (P19) described staying at home on their own for much of the time, rather than interacting with other students. This is supported by one participant (P12) who pointed out that, "I try to avoid male students in our discussions in our classes. It does not matter if the male students are British or Muslim".

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

In this thesis, I focused on how the intercultural experiences affect Saudis who are living in the UK either for study or work. Plus, the research investigated the impact of such experiences on the Saudi identity. Factors like mixed gender culture and Islamophobia (especially after 9/11 attack) were also addressed in order to form a better picture of the intercultural experiences that influenced Saudi students and employees in the UK.

By and large, today the number of Saudis travelling overseas to study or work keeps increasing and they are facing a new educational experience and a completely different social environment. For that, they, Saudis, are going to meet different groups of people with different cultural and religious background, lifestyle, cultural norms and values, and beliefs. For instance, the culture of the people living in the United Kingdom is composed of different grouping of people whose beliefs are not as those in the Saudi Arabia. This is very challenging for the Saudi people to adapt the cultural way of life in Saudi Arabia to the new way of living in the United Kingdom.

In this research the findings were reached through a qualitative methodology. A number of 20 Saudis living in the UK were interviewed to explore their experiences in the UK, as well as the impacts of living in a different cultural background. Some theories of Intercultural adaption were applied such as cultural shock by Oberg and the development model of intercultural sensitivity by Bennet.

The Saudi culture represent gender segregation practice as it is applied in both public and private domains. The constitution guiding the acceptable norms and forming the regulations to be followed by every citizen of the country does not allow men and women to interact publically (unless there is a blood or marriage relation). This segregation has shaped the cultural life of Saudis and determined their day to day activities and operations. It also determine the perception of the individuals regarding themselves, their community and their expectations from the general public. On the contrary, the culture in the United Kingdom is a mixed gender culture where the values and rights of every citizen apply regardless their gender, cultural background, religious affiliation, and race. It is a culture in which gender segregation is actually a punishable offense. There are no specifications on how any of the genders should dress themselves whether in public or private domain. Men and women are culturally encouraged to interact with each other without making a big deal of it. The change from a gender segregated culture to a mixed gender culture is challenging for both the Saudi men and women.

Moreover, due to the increasing cases Muslims being involved in terrorist activities and other criminal activities, a great wave of fear falls on the high percentage of the world's population with regard to Muslims. A growing wave of perception has developed in which the non-Muslims perceive Muslims as terrorists or associate with terrorism. This perception of the Muslim community as associate to terrorist activities is called Islamophobia.

Islamophobia is a complex issue that consists of many different expressions and features. There might be an urge to separate those acts that are against religious or ethnic belonging because it is easier to distinguish how strategies

and efforts can be carried out more suitably. The research findings have demonstrated this dilemma misunderstandings become easily apparent when the notion of Islamophobia is after all a multifaceted concept. As stated before, an extension of the concept might be required, whereas for instance, Islamophobia means a phobia against the religion, Islam i.e. hostility towards the Qur'an, religious scripts or prophet's etc. In contrast, the notion Muslimophobia, which consists of a phobia against an ethnic belonging, i.e. fear against Muslim culture, countries, lifestyles, traits, etc. This also emphasises the racialization process as well as the need to divide ethnicity from religion. Therefore, there is an argument that it might be easier to solve and reduce the violence, harassment and murder associated with Muslims and their religion. A closer analysis of post-9/11 media has revealed further oversimplifications and stereotyping. In result of the 9/11 attacks, some of Western media created a perception within public discourse predicated on negative orientalist stereotypes that served to emphasise Islamist radicals masterminding terrorist strikes, and with non-Western exotic names such as Al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, and the Taliban. As a result of this focus on orientalist stereotypes, the Western media has largely failed to establish to the Western society that the overwhelming majority of Muslims are have nothing in common with so-called Islamic fundamentalist terrorism or terrorists. The finding of this study has also demonstrated how movies, documentaries, news reports and articles within the Western media on figures like Osama Bin Laden served to perpetuate negative attitudes towards Muslims, as well as encouraging an on-going suggestion between Islam and terrorism. This suggestion has become more problematic and significant in the light of many

instances of discrimination where Muslims have been associated with terrorist activity.

There are many more challenges that are experienced by the individuals from Saudi Arabia in the United Kingdom. Some of these challenges included language and communication difficulties, difficulties adopting to the new educational system, cultural shock, and fitting in the new style of living. The cultural, social and the religious norms have a significant impact on the demeanour of Saudis and similar cultural backgrounds. While most of the youths and adults from Saudi Arabia have recently moved to the United Kingdom and other similar mixed gender countries, more and more challenges have been reported to affect individuals in the new culture. Such as discrimination, isolation, the oppression of women, lack of human rights, religion and cultural differences, Islamophobia issues specially against women, the cultural differences between Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom (this includes differences between social and gender identities) cultural shock, the perception of Saudi Arabians in the United Kingdom, and challenges in a mixed gender culture. All of these challenges were discussed according to the participants' responses and different results have been obtained during this research.

Limitations and Recommendations

Data analysis represented both general and particular challenges in the current social and political context, as well as specific challenges in relation to some of these communities. These include the following:

1. The sample sizes for each community were relatively small and respondents were not intended to be a representative sample of the relevant communities.

2. Since the interviews were not based on a random sample, the study does not claim to provide an analysis of the Saudi Arabian population as a whole, nor was this the intention of the study. I analysed views and comments in the context of existing data, knowledge of the current political and social context for these communities, and the comments of other respondents.

3. Many factors of the topic guide were designed to identify the key needs and challenges facing the community. Hence the research tended to generate data on problem areas and challenges, when respondents felt they had limited time to ensure that their voices got heard. This may not reflect many of the positive and optimistic views of respondents. However, respondents were often aware that the discussions may come across as negative in tone, and try to balance this by highlighting perceived positive aspects of both their communities and their lives in the UK. I had endeavoured to set out the best story in the explanatory power perception in the context of what is already known about why some of our respondents might express negative feelings.

4. In the current context, the politicization of the research field meant that all respondents were conscious of being part of a community under public and government scrutiny. Respondents were made aware of the purposes of the research through a show card that explained the research as well as possible uses of the research. They were informed that this research would potentially be used to inform a publication that would enter the public domain and would cover aspects such as religion, intra-community dynamics and links with country of origin. A climate of some scepticism within Muslim communities, discrimination, both real and perceived, and awareness of government interest in what is happening on the ground, meant that respondents were often

sceptical about the use of the information that they were providing. Many participants may have had his or her agendas for both positive and negative reasons. My analytical response to these difficulties was to be critically attuned to who was speaking, their location in the community, the interests that they may have, and to judge their comments in the light of this context.

I was aware that there are dynamic and charged debates and movement taking place within these communities on a whole range of issues ranging from religion, its expression and orientation in the context of being Muslim minorities living in a non-Muslim society, to negotiations about roles, responsibilities, duties, gender relations, and relationships with country of origin. This awareness underpinned the analysis of the data and the conclusions drawn from responses received. For all these reasons, the research should be viewed as a snapshot in time rather than reflective of the full complexity or range of issues, challenges and changes taking place in these communities. For example gender roles (in September 2017 during the correction process of my research the Saudi government announced that women in Saudi can drive), perceptions of ethnic and religious identity, changing in attitudes among the young in both conservative and liberal stances and the levels of integration or tensions within and across communities. I am conscious of the dynamism and the rapid changes taking place in some communities, both positive and negative.

Future Studies

If a similar study is going to take a place in the future I think the following aspects should be considered:

- The study should be carried out on different European societies (especially the French and Danish) in order to investigate their motives against Islam and Muslims.
- Focusing on Muslim women particularly in terms of mix gender culture and her being a victim of Islamophobia because of her hijab.
- The contribution of the media in understanding Muslims community and how Muslims see these attempts in regards to the adaptation and integration process to the British society .

Appendix

Appendix A

Personal Information Questionnaire ID:

Please note all information is confidential and your anonymity will be respected.

Name: _____

Age: _____

Sex: _____

Marital Status: _____

Do you have children? How Many?

Do you live at home or in student accommodation?

Ethnic Origins: _____

(i.e. parental ancestry)

Languages Spoken:

Family Members/ Ages and Occupations:

[Please include parental occupations]

Family History:

Appendix

Years of Migration if your parents migrated to Britain and their initial reasons for coming.

Have you or your family lived anywhere else besides the U.K.?

University: _____

Subject/Year: _____

Please specify qualifications sought, i.e BA, MA et

Appendix B

Experience in the UK

I am interested in your experience in living in the UK can you tell me about your cultural experience in the UK

1. How did you decide to come and live here?
2. What kind of experience do you think you got here?
3. Can you give me examples of situations?
4. What are the opportunities and threats that you encounter while living in the UK?
5. What are the strengths and weaknesses from your experience in the UK ?

Cultural differences

Appendix

1. Within the multicultural British society, how do you deal with cultural differences? For example, people from other countries? Give me an example.
2. Do you like the British culture? Why? Example?
3. Do you interact with people beyond your Saudi friends?

- **Cultural value**

1. Tell me about the cultural value in your home society in relation to cultural differences?
2. How living in a foreigner culture has influenced your views about cultural values and traditions? Has it affected your communication with people from different culture? Give me examples?

Religion

1. How religion principles might shape your perspective about cultural differences?

- **The media**

1. Which kind of media do you usually use while living here?
2. What kind of influence the media might have on your view of British culture? Give me an example.
3. How do the media representation about different culture could influence the communication between them? Example

Migration

1. What is your experience as a migrant in this country?
2. Is there any aspect that may impact the way you live and communicate to others here? Give me an example?

Appendix C

Interview Schedule Student

Name: ID No:

A1. University Choice

What made you choose this university?

Factors involved?

2. University Services

Are you happy with University facilities for Muslims?

(Prayer facilities/Food/Time off/Social Spaces/Services for discrimination?)

What about Halal food? Are you happy with what university provides ?

So do you eat on campus then?

What about social spaces at university?

What about services in terms of discrimination, who would you go to if you felt you

Were discriminated against?

If not, have you gone about dealing with these issues?

How have you done this?

3. Non-Student Relations

(Academics/Other staff/Secretaries,Tutors, HOD)

Do you feel comfortable participating in class?

Do you have a good relationship with your teacher(s)?

How do you think you have been perceived in classroom/campus?

Appendix

Do you feel you have been treated as other students? Less favourably, more favourably?

If not, have you done anything to respond to this?

Have you had any problems with any other member of staff? HOD, Secretaries,

Librarians etc

4. Islamophobia/Discrimination on Campus

Do you feel safe on campus?

Where do you feel most safe? Why?

Less Safe? Why

Have you faced any particular problems since you came to University?

Do you feel you have suffered discrimination of any kind?

On account of your race, religion, gender, abilities?

Have you responded to this? Privately/Officially etc?

How has university dealt with your concerns? Who in particular?

If not, why did you not report it?

If you were discriminated against, who would you go to?

5. University and Politics

Do you think coming to University has made you more aware of politics?

If so, which aspect of being at university?

What else has? Non-curricular activities- Study circles/Camps etc..

Are you careful about the way you might be active?

Are you concerned about how you may be perceived?

Appendix

-by other (non)Muslim students/staff?

If so, why is that?

B.ISOC/Student Society

Are you involved in the ISOC or other Student Societies? [checkq'aire]

What does your role involve?

What are the main challenges in this role?

Is there anything you feel inhibits the society from working effectively?

Is there anything you would like to see changed within the society?

Appendix D

Gender segregation

1. How could you describe your life in SA in regards to gender segregation? Why?
2. In the UK , how do you experience mix gender environment ?
3. In your opinion, what are the positives of living in free gender environment?
4. What are the negatives?
5. What are the challenges that you face when you encounter mix gender settings?
6. What are the changes that could occur in your cultural identity while living in mix gender environment ?example
7. What are the effects of free gender setting on your cultural identity? Example
Does that affect you or your identity as a Muslim or Saudi? If yes How?
8. As a male/female came from gender segregation environment, do you accept mix gender for your family here in the UK?
9. What are the factors that could effect your decision on accepting or rejecting mix gender environment?

Appendix E

Islamophobia

- 1) How do you define Islamophobia?
- 2) Have you been exposed by Islamophobia?
- 3) How?
- 4) Does Islamophobia Concerning you while living in the UK?
- 5) In what way do you consider media correlating with Islamophobia?
- 6) Example?
- 7) As a Muslim , how do you feel towards islamophobia issues while you are in the UK?
- 8) In order to prevent and/or eliminate Islamophobia what do you think you can do?
- 9) Any reflections that concern with Islamophobia?

Appendix F

Equality Interview Schedule:

Equality Objectives & Commitments

1. If you start by telling me what you actually do, what your role is?
2. Who is in your team and what are their key responsibilities?
[are their dedicated student officers?]
3. Who directs the Equality Work?
4. Who is responsible for ensuring that the Equality team meets its objectives? That policy is put in to action?
5. What does the Equality team aim to fulfil at the university?
6. Is key legislation incorporated in to University Policy? i.e. [Race Relations Amend

Appendix

2000, HR Act 1998, Employment Equality [Religious] Regulations 2003]

7. Is there a general equal opportunities policy or is there also a separate racial equality

Policy?

8. How did the university respond to the Employment Equality on Religion legislation?

What type of action did it take?

9. What is understood by 'Equality' and 'Diversity'?

10. Which staff receives equality training?

11. *What is equality and diversity training at the university supposed to achieve?

12. Is there a rep in each dept that oversees the implementation of policy?

13. Does the university policy on equality cover all students and staff?

14. Does policy protect students against religious discrimination?

[Was this in response to anything in particular?]

15. In terms of your anti-racist strategies, do you consider how the institution itself may

Contribute to racist practices?

Appendix

Appendix G

Code	Title	Age	Annual income	Gender	Hometown	Marital statues	Education level	Occupation	City in the UK
P1	Mr	30-35	25000	M	Medina	Single	(PhD)	Student	London
P2	Mrs	30-35	25000	F	Riyadh	Married	(PhD)	Student	London
P3	Mr	40-45	25000	M	Jeddah	Married	Secondary	Businessman	Nottingham
P4	Miss	30-35	25000	F	Riyadh	Single	(PhD)	Student	London
P5	Dr	45	45000	M	Makkah	Married	(PhD)	Academic/offi	London

Appendix

								cial	
P6	Dr	35-40	45000	M	Makkah	Married	(PhD)	Academic/lecturer	Nottingham
P7	Mr	30-35	25000	M	Makkah	Single	(PhD)	Student	Nottingham
P8	Mrs	30-35	35000	F	Riyadh	Married	(PhD)	Student	Nottingham
P9	Miss	20-25	25000	F	Jeddah	Single	BA	Student	Nottingham
P10	Mrs	30-35	25000	F	Makkah	Married	(PhD)	Student	Nottingham
P11	Mr	20-25	25000	M	Tabuk	Single	MA	Student	Nottingham
P12	Mrs	25-30	25000	F	Dhahran	Single	(PhD)	Student	Manchester

Appendix

P13	Mr	30-35	25000	M	Taif	Single	(PhD)	Student	Manchester
P14	Mr	30-35	25000	M	Jeddah	Married	(PhD)	Student	Manchester
P15	Mrs	30-35	35000	F	Dammam	Married	(PhD)	Student	Manchester
P16	Mrs	30-35	25000	M	Riyadh	Married	(PhD)	Student	Manchester
P17	Mr	25-30	25000	F	makkah	Married	(PhD)	Student	London
P18	Miss	25-30	25000	F	Jeddah	Single	(PhD)	Student	Nottingham
P19	Miss	25-30	25000	F	makkah	Single	(PhD)	Student	Nottingham
P20	Mr	30-35	25000	M	Dammam	Married	(PhD)	Student	Nottingham

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