

COLLEGE-TO-WORK TRANSITION: AN EXPLORATION OF THE PARTICI-
PANTS' VIEWS ON THE EXTENT AND IMPACT OF FACTORS AFFECTING
THE TRANSITION OF FEMALE EMIRATI GRADUATES INTO THE LABOUR
MARKET IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Social Sciences (DSocSci)
at the University of Leicester

by

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2017

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my late parents, Tabitha and Samuel Munorwei Chiambiro, my wife Isabel Chiambiro and my children Roanson Tinashe and Sharlene Kudzwai Chiambiro who are the forces behind the achievements. This should be my children's future guide in their career development for years to come.

ABSTRACT

Despite the huge number of unemployed female graduates, very little is known about their experiences and interpretations of the factors that restrict their transition into the labour market. The research question focuses on understanding the factors that affect the transition of female Emirati graduates from entering the labour market and recommendations to the UAE government policy makers to increase the participation of Emirati females in the labour market.

An exploratory phenomenological sequential mixed method research was used through focus group discussions with male and female Emiratis, followed by factor analysis of the data collected using a questionnaire. The intention is to understand the perceptions and interpretations of the restrictive factors.

The results show that patriarchal factors restrict female labour transitions. The results reveal the complexities of interpretations of social realities that are influenced by the religion of Islam that is considered as the way of life and anything written in *The Holy Qur'an* should be accepted. The results show that the majority of male respondents want their women to be home-bound, while women want to work for companies outside the home. The results further show that men should be given employment priority in Muslim societies. Men consider the working environments as unsuitable for females, yet men are in charge and fail to improve the female working conditions. The oil boom made the Emirati families rich and they hire

domestic workers who work under the supervision of women, thereby elevating the domestic role of women as managers and restrict their mobility out of the home. Shunning some jobs by Emirati females, fulfil men's motives of restricting women from entering the labour market. The no objection letter requirement by employers when employing female graduates restrict women because the approval depends on the male members of the society who are against working women.

Acknowledgements

I want to thank my research advisors, Prof. John Goodwin and Prof. Henrietta O'Connor for their advice, encouragement and guidance at all stages of my thesis work. Their enthusiasm for youth transitions theory has been inspiring.

I also acknowledge the following: Dr. Sundar Narayan for training me how to use Latex, Dr. Hammer for his continuous encouragement, my wife Isabel Chiambiro and children, Roanson and Sharlene for giving me the opportunity to do my work without disturbances.

I thank the staff and students (past and present) at the Higher Colleges of Technology in the United Arab Emirates who made my research experience most enjoyable. I had many meaningful discussions with them. Finally my thesis owes a lot to the contribution and efforts of many researchers and writers apart from myself and I acknowledge this.

Declaration

I declare that these ideas, results, analyses and conclusions presented in this research work are entirely my personal effort and other people's contributions were acknowledged as expected. This work is original and has not been submitted or presented at any other institutions for any purpose other than to the supervisors at the University of Leicester for their comments.

Robson Chiambiro

Student's Signature

Date: 15 June 2017

KEYWORDS, ABBREVIATIONS AND TRANSLATIONS

Keywords:

College-to-work, Patriarchy, Transitions, Youth.

Abbreviations:

UNMDG: United Nations Millennium Development Goals

MDG: Millennium Development Goals

UAE: United Arab Emirates

NBS: National Bureau of Statistics

GCC: Gulf Cooperation Council

Translations:

The Holy Qur'an: The Holy Islamic Scripture

Riba: Bank payable and receivable interest

Wasta: Helping one of the same clan or group

Bedouin: Nomads of Arabic descent

Majilis: A gender segregated place or room for entertaining visitors

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Chapter 1

Emirati Female Labour Market Transition

1.1 Introduction

The advancement of women in the public sphere is an important goal for the region, given the implementation of the eighth development plan, and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), that strongly emphasize the need for women empowerment. Al-Ahmadi (2011:154)

I am a higher education qualified male teacher born in Zimbabwe and educated in Cuba, China and South Africa. I worked as a university lecturer in gender-neutral co-educational systems in Zimbabwe and South Africa until 2007 when I moved to the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The UAE higher education national institutions are gender segregated. This research was prompted after learning that a number of female graduates were not working after graduation. The majority of these female graduates expressed concerns about their future careers, citing family restrictions and lack of suitable employment opportunities near their homes. My understanding

as a university lecturer was that all graduates, regardless of their gender, were supposed to be given equal opportunities to participate in the labour market. The following section 1.2 addresses the research problem statement, research question and sub-questions.

1.2 Research Problem Statement

This research focus on understanding the transition of female graduates into the labour market in the United Arab Emirates. The research problem statement is: There are more educated Emirati female graduates in comparison to their male counterparts, but female graduate transition into the labour market is restricted in the United Arab Emirates.

The lack of detailed literature on understanding the specific factors that hinder the transition of females into the labour market resulted in using a two format research design, starting with focus group interviews that allow gathering of views and insights on post-college experiences from the community where I worked as an educator. The second part of the research use the data collected in focus group interview discussions and the reviewed literature to develop a questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to different locations in other Emirates of the UAE, allowing four weeks of response time. The intention was not to be able to generalise the findings based on the quantity of responses collected, but to gain an understanding of common experiences of graduates from different locations in the same country.

1.2.1 Significance of the Study

The United Arab Emirates made some great achievements in educating their female citizens to higher educational levels, in comparison to other Muslim countries like Afghanistan (Moghadam 2002). The achievements of educating women resulted in female youth unemployment, which is not considered problematic by conservative Muslims because women are not encouraged to work (Metcalf 2011). Researchers from developed countries focus on youth problems at higher level of complexity compared to youth unemployment experiences in the Middle East (United-Nations 2015).

The government strategy of educating women to higher education without ensuring their involvement in the labour market (Williams et al. 2013) create bottlenecks because very few women enter the labour market. There is a need to change the mindset of many conservative local men to allow their female children to participate in the labour market (Evans 2009). This research helps the United Arab Emirates benefit from the return on investment (ROI) in human capital that has been underutilised because of gender inequality in the labour market. This research provides proactive strategies to engage all citizens into the labour market regardless of gender. The research provides insights in recommendations that reduce social instability activities by keeping job-seekers engaged in the labour market.

This research proposes some recommendations to UAE women to convince male members of their society to allow them to work. The understanding of the current female youth transition problems provides knowledge on how to tackle the problems without creating resistance among male members of Emirati society. The detailed insight into the problems provide a platform to design and develop constructive recommendations to be used to increase female labour market participation (Helie and Hoodfar 2012; Marmenout and Lirio 2013; Williams et al.

2013).

1.2.2 Research Question and Subquestions

There are a number of assumptions on why women are not involved in the labour market (Forstenlechner et al. 2012). This research work focuses on addressing the following research question: What are the implications and recommendations of the restrictive factors that affect the transition of female Emirati graduates from college to work?

To be able to answer the above research question, the following sub-questions are developed, firstly, what are the factors that restrict the transition of female Emiratis from college to employment? secondly, how do these factors affect the transition of female graduates from entering the labour market? thirdly, what are the implications of the restrictions that restrict the transition of female Emiratis from college to employment? and finally, what recommendations to give that can increase the participation of Emirati females in the labour market?

1.2.3 Research Design and Participants

The research focuses on both males and females who graduated from higher education who are either employed or unemployed. The inclusion of male respondents help the researcher understand the interpretations of male respondents on the restrictions that hinder women from entering the labour market. The working female respondents share their post-graduation experiences before and after securing their first employment. Those experiences assist the researcher in determining whether the transitions are smooth or rough. The focus group interview participants are college graduates from the Western region of Abu Dhabi Emirate.

This research use a sequential exploratory design starting with the qualitative

data collection using focus group discussion interviews (Creswell 2003). The five female participants were all unemployed. The five male participants were all employed and three were married and two were single. All male participants were returning students, pursuing bachelor degrees in Business Management. Three of the five female participants were bachelor degree holders and married, while the two single female participants were diploma holders. All of the female respondents graduated with business-related qualifications while all the male respondents had graduated with diplomas and higher diplomas in Engineering.

The mixed method is used because there is lack of empirical research and evidence of college-to-work female transition literature in the United Arab Emirates. The focus group discussion interviews provided the opportunity to collect data qualitatively from the affected participants. The focus group discussion results are analysed qualitatively using Nvivo-10, a qualitative application software. The results enabled me to identify dominating themes that are used to develop a questionnaire, that was later distributed to different participants in different Emirates of the UAE. The data were analysed using SPSS version 21 and interpreted using factor analysis.

1.2.4 Outline of the Thesis

Chapter 1 focuses on the introduction to this research work, the research problem statement, the significance of the study, outlining the research question and sub-questions that help in answering the main questions. Chapter 1 further outlines each chapter in this research work.

In Chapter 2, the focus is on regional literature review, focusing specifically on the United Arab Emirates female labour market participation. The chapter focuses on the position of the United Arab Emirates as a Muslim country, in a region where educating female children is not a priority, confirmed by Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon

(2008) and Egel and Salehi-Isfahani (2010). The chapter critically review the cultural values and norms as suggested by Simadi and Kamali (2004) as contributing to the restrictions of women at home and in the public domain and how they hinder the transition of women from entering the labour market.

In Chapter 3, the global and regional youth transition literature is reviewed that cover both the global and regional youth transition perspectives. The related youth transitions literature from a global perspective on youth unemployment problems is reviewed. The global perspective provides understanding of the factors that affect youth employment in general. The regional literature inform the researcher of the factors that are unique to the Middle East region, especially in Muslim countries. The factors that influence the transition into the labour market highlighted by Wentling and Waight (2001) and Farrell (2008) were explored and critically analysed from a social constructionist perspective. The religious, ethnicity, patriarchal, personal, educational, socio-economic, locality and family support factors are explored as they provide insight into the transition of females from college into the labour market.

In Chapter 4, the research methodology is discussed in detail putting more emphasis on the philosophical considerations and concerns that support the validity and the reliability of the research work from a philosophical standpoint. The ontology and epistemology that influence the methodology used were discussed in detail. The rationale behind using the mixed methods is documented, discussed and supported in detail together with the limitations of the research design used.

In Chapter 5, the presentation and analysis of the data is addressed. The meanings are documented, analysed and interpreted through the use of SPSS factor analysis. The results are qualitatively and quantitatively interpreted to reach to the meanings and interpretations of the social constructs hidden in the collected

evidence.

In Chapter 6, the implications of the research results on different stakeholders are discussed in detail, contribution to knowledge and recommendations to the policy makers and the female graduates are presented.

1.2.5 Research Limitations

This research was done in one of the religious countries that did not allow women to discuss their personal problems to a non-family member as supported by Helie and Hoodfar (2012). The sequential exploratory approach suggested by Creswell (2003) is used starting with the qualitative then followed by quantitative research due to lack of empirical evidence. The research participants could not fully express themselves in English during the focus group interviews. They showed through their facial expressions that they wanted to say many things but they were limited by the language. The use of translators was considered but it was not preferred because of the loss in meanings through the translation. This does not mean that there were no professional translators, but the weakness was that in any exploratory study, every experience was important to the researcher and suggested by Creswell (2003). The difficulties in understanding the language helped the researcher to probe further when the respondents were demonstrating any facial expressions that triggered interest to the researcher.

1.2.6 Research Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were addressed in this research by getting pre-approvals from the University of Leicester and also from the organisations where the research participants graduated. The research committees involved in evaluating the risks related to ethical concerns when dealing with human beings reviewed any ethical

concerns and approved this research as meeting the requirements. The participants received clarification on the purpose of the research and they signed consent forms before participating in the research. The electronic questionnaire had an option that allowed the research participants to either continue or stop participating in the research if they wished. The collected data were treated with confidentiality and the data were stored in off-line media. The on-line connected devices were password protected and all research respondents were identified using pseudo names.

1.2.7 Conclusion

The research explores the factors that hinder the transition of women from college into the labour market. The exploratory research design was chosen because it allows the researcher to gather the personal views and experiences of the research participants. The succeeding chapter 2 addresses UAE female labour participation, gaining detailed insight of other researchers such as Wentling and Waight (2001) and Farrell (2008) who covered related research that addresses youth transition into the labour market. Although the focus is different, the evidence informs the researcher of the complexities experienced in the labour market transitions.

Chapter 2

UAE Female Labour Market Participation

2.1 Introduction

The lack of specific literature on female unemployment in the UAE resulted in the need to focus on literature that addresses issues related to the dynamics of Emirati society. The commitment by the UAE to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals documented by Metcalfe (2011) provided an interesting dilemma to the UAE society. There is a need to understand Emirati social dynamics, focusing on religion, family and division of labour as the underlining focal points for the discussion. The lack of empirical evidence that document the detailed factors that affect female labour market participation force me to use mixed method research. Mixed method approach is considered for this research because of the ability to qualitatively extract information directly from the affected research participants and then critically analyse the views and interpretations using quantitative methods. This research explores the factors that hinder the transition of female graduates into

the labour market using quantitative factor analysis of each factor.

This section explores the chapter layout. Section 2.2 addresses a brief history of the UAE and the Emiratisation process. Section 2.3 focuses on the labour market participation with statistics on labour market participation. The section also addresses the Emirati youth social experiences and the decision-making process in a typical Emirati family setup. Section 2.4 focuses on the Emirati society and the division of labour from the interpretivist approach. This addresses the position of both men and women in their society and at the same time, be within the religious requirements and expectations. Section 2.5 explores the country expectation from the 1995 Beijing declaration of the United Nations on the Millennium Development Goals, where the UAE is a signatory to that declaration as stated by Metcalfe (2011). Finally section 2.6 concludes Chapter 2.

2.2 A Brief History of the UAE Labour Market

The UAE is a country formed in the last four decades by uniting the small seven kingdoms in the region as documented by Marchon and Toledo (2014). The seven kingdoms are referred to as Emirates. The largest Emirates in Abu Dhabi and the second largest is Dubai. The president of the United Arab Emirates is from Abu Dhabi and the vice president is from Dubai. Each emirate has its royal family with a king or ruler called a Sheikh. Each emirate has its own local government headed by its local ruler. The emirates are Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm Al Quwain, Ras Al Khaimah and Fujairah. These emirates are collectively governed through a federal government with its capital in Abu Dhabi. Each emirates has its local education system from primary to tertiary education but it also has a system of federal higher education institutions that are controlled from both Abu Dhabi and Dubai. These institutions are gender segregated and have campuses for men

and women in each emirate. They are government funded and are only for local citizens who learn for free.

The discovery of oil boosted the infrastructural development of the country that attracted labour-seekers to the region. The local population started to grow and this changed the social economic status of the local people. Most of the people who migrated to the Trucial States were from India and Africa, working as domestic workers, herders and sea divers as evidenced by Marchon and Toledo (2014). The local families rarely focused on educating their children as a way for economic freedom, as highlighted by Posti-Ahokas and Palojoki (2014), while education was valued by those who became citizens after immigrating to the UAE from Tanzania, India, Sudan and Iran to mention a few. All the oil refineries and oil distribution companies are government owned and they currently recruit local citizens as their first priority.

At some point before the Emiratisation process, the UAE had migrant employees occupying almost all of the most influential positions in both government and public sector. The government introduced a labour equity process with the intention of increasing nationals in the labour market. The process required organisations to reserve employment quotas for locals in their organisational structures. The organisations had to report on an annual basis their Emiratisation achievements and that allowed the private sector companies to be considered for any business dealings with the government. Failure to meet the required employment quotas resulted in losing and failing to be considered for any government-related tenders. Most public organisations in the UAE have government partnership, therefore complying with the Emiratisation process was of great advantage. Most government departments introduced a quota system, reserving some positions for locals. The locals were less educated and skilled and the process was viewed as discriminatory by most highly

qualified foreign migrant workers.

While the Emiratisation process was to benefit the locals, this failed to address the gender equality issues affecting most Muslim countries. The Emiratisation process was silent on the mechanism of including women, who were never considered for paid employment. The country policy makers never addressed the female unemployment as problematic, especially when it crosses the cultural and religious lines. The UAE government did not clearly outline its position on gender equality in its Emiratisation process. Williams et al. (2013) echoed the same sentiment of gender inequality and was wondering if the omission of gender equality guidelines was a deliberate move or it was left to the community leadership and families to decide on female labour market participation. The following Section 2.3 explores the labour market participation.

2.3 Labour Market Participation in the UAE

The UAE labour market is dominated by a skilled and unskilled expatriate workforce with only 10 percent of its work force being local workers highlighted by the following researchers; Mayers et al. (2007), Farrell (2008), Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon (2008), Ali (2010) and Williams et al. (2013).

The Emiratis prefer to work for public sector as evidenced in the work by Williams et al. (2013) and the data from the *UAE National Bureau of Statistics* (2009) showed that the majority of the nationals, 78.5 percent of working women and 87.2 percent of working men, preferred to work for government departments. This is for a number of reasons; firstly, because the government departments provide attractive packages and secondly, they have less working hours and days per week compared to the private sector. Lastly, the majority of the government departments

have gender segregated working areas for males and females. Women job seekers from conservative families, especially from Muslim countries, prefer organisations with female-only working areas and echoed by Al-Jabri (2009).

In most of the government departments, men still dominate in the leadership ranks. Although they have female-only working areas for female customers, most female employees interact with men during meetings within their organisation. The fear by most families who restrict their female job seekers was the constant interaction of women with men in public spaces or at work. The dilemmas faced by female job seekers in most conservative societies were never reported because of lack of interest in female-related research problems as Warrington and Kiragu (2012) highlighted similarities in a Kenyan conservative society. Goodwin and O'Connor (2005) and Strathdee (2001) acknowledged that the focus in the past was on the transition of male youths and little attention was paid to the transition of female youths into the labour market. That tendency of paying more attention to male youth resulted in side-lining female youth labour market unemployment problems.

The statistics produced by Godfrey (2003) showed that the world over was experiencing youth unemployment problems with a bigger proportion of the affected youth being the 15-to-24 age groups. What was not clear though in the data provided by Godfrey (2003) were the specific percentages of unemployed female youths.

It is consistent with what is reported by Nelson (2004) that in the UAE, women are expected to be home-bound and any research on labour market participation focuses only on male youth. This research is important as it provides insight to restrictive factors and the extent of their effect on Emirati female youths. In an effort to avoid a biased cycle of youth unemployment, policy makers in the UAE have to understand the unemployment preventative processes, as the curative approach does not help in solving the unemployment problems.

Farrell (2008:126) identified the critical factors that affected female Emiratis as, 'tribal origins, patriarchy, government and policy, external market conditions, religion, personal motivators and private sector perceptions and concerns'.

The difficulties when doing research in conservative societies are that, the research participants are reluctant to give out any information because they are very cautious when giving information to researchers. These are some of the limitations that were considered that avoided questions that directly question religion and ethnicity due to their sensitivity in Muslim countries.

The UAE issue a passport, a national identity card and a family book as forms of identification. The national identity card is given to all residence permit holders including expatriates. A passport is given to all UAE citizens either of immigrant descent or original local nationals. A family book is only given to nationals who claim to be actual Emirati nationals from birth. The irony though is that the history of the UAE goes back to 1972 when the UAE was formed as documented by Williams et al. (2013). The possession of a family book demonstrates true Emirati identity as it is only for those who are regarded as real Emirati. To support the Emirati identification and categorisation, Farrell (2008:115) stated that 'Emiratis distinguish between those who are 'pure' Emirati and therefore hold a Family book, and those who are of immigrant percentage, such as Iranian, Yemenis or Saudis, who merely hold U.A.E citizenship.' The benefits of being a real Emirati are associated with individual identification.

The critical factors that were linked to the labour market inequality were identified and discussed in the research work by Farrell (2008), but focusing on culture and just like other researchers Nelson (2004) and Mayers et al. (2007), Farrell (2008) took a positivist approach where the research work was basically giving accounts of the government efforts in resolving the labour market imbalance. This

analysis does not intend to discredit the work already done by the above mentioned researchers, but to highlight the limitations of the approach taken and to further reinforce and highlight the difficulties of undertaking a feminist research approach in patriarchal communities like the UAE. In this case of Mayers et al. (2007), their account of the experiences of the Emirati society, especially the women, were more of a description of the current status of affairs without focusing on the causes, effects and revealing the rationality behind the restrictive social practices.

To demonstrate government influence and control on research, Farrell (2008:107) stated that, 'while the existing literature, mainly published by UAE government agencies, alludes to an increasingly large body of female graduates available for employment, local women remain under-represented in the private sector.' The fact that the majority of the research work in the UAE is published mainly by the government agencies, demonstrates the rationale behind the positivist approach, accepting the premises of knowledge based on accounts of descriptive experiences. There is a need to combine the qualitative and quantitative research methods in this research endeavour to allow both descriptive and critical analysis of the results.

The reviewed literature reveals that there are serious problems in female youth transition from college to work in the UAE. The data from the UAE National Bureau of Statistics from 2008 to 2014, shows higher education enrollment (Table 2.1) and the 2008 to 2011 labour market participation (Table 2.2) of UAE nationals. The number of Emirati females enrolled in higher education surpasses their male counterparts as evidenced in Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon (2008) and Crabtree (2007), but the numbers of female graduates in the labour market demonstrates imbalanced labour market participation (Table 2.2). That imbalance triggered the need for this research. The data in Table 2.1 represents only UAE National students who enrolled into federal institutions. There are some UAE nationals who enrolled

in private institutions and are not covered in table 2.1. This does not mean that the whole research focused on graduates from federal institutions only, but it focused on female Emiratis who did not easily move from college to work. In the quantitative research section of data collection, the institutions attended were documented under the educational factors where their influence was analysed.

Table 2.1: Emiratis In Higher Education in UAE (UAE NBS)

Item	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Female	19 235	23 449	25 679	26 841	26 420	27 589	29 843
Male	13 929	11 874	12 390	13 159	10 336	10 508	11 862
Total	33 164	35 323	38 069	40 433	36 756	38 097	41 705

Source:www.uaestatistics.gov.ae

The UAE Bureau of Statistics shows labour force figures up to year 2009 and have no current labour figures. This work uses data presented by the World bank. The labour market participation shows a huge discrepancy (Table 2.2). The same source of information (Table 2.2) shows a very imbalanced labour force from the same national labour force, 92 percent of active participants in the labour market are men compared to just eight percent women in year 2008. There is a significant improvement after year 2008 with an increase in numbers of women entering the labour market. This improvement is very low compared to the male nationals. If one views the analysis on percentage increase of female employment in the UAE, then there were efforts put in place to address the imbalance. A thorough understanding of such restrictions needs critical analysis and understanding of the interpretations by those restricting women from entering the labour market.

The survey (*UAE National Bureau of Statistics 2009*) shows that 15.1 percent of rural women are working compared to 56 percent of rural male dwellers who are employed. Although 22.5 percent of urban females were employed compared to 58.5 percent of urban men, the figures show the percentage of employed women as low

for both the urban and the rural communities in the UAE.

Table 2.2: Labour Participation for Emirati Men and Women.

Item	2008		2009		2010		2011	
Gender	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	female
Locals	397,319	34,549	429,134	37,316	476,251	41,413	502,772	43,719
Total	4,478,534		5,182,772		5,751,827		6,072,126	

Source: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.TOTL.IN>

The percentage of local women involved in the labour market triggered the need for research as Morris (2005:6) expressed some concern on the labour force participation when stated that 'in 2004, with a total labour force of 2 731 000 men and women, only 254 000 were nationals, of this total of 9 percent, 6.4 percent were men, with the remaining 2.6 being women.'

The number of Emirati women in the labour market in 2004 was just above 16000 employees. The imbalance was too large to ignore and there is need to further study the causes of such labour market imbalances.

The concerns about the labour market imbalances were of concern for other researchers as echoed by Mayers et al. (2007:16) when, in their concluding remarks, they stated that 'Arab countries will not witness optimal productivity and development unless women are granted equal opportunities to work in their fields of interest.'

It is evident that the majority of female Emirati graduates are not working in employment of their own choice but are in employment of convenience. Their employment should be offered within their community since going outside their community is not encouraged. Female employees get employed through closely connected relationships with other family members who are already employed in the same organisation.

An understanding of the factors that hinder female graduates from entering the labour market is of interest to many stakeholders as Mayers et al. (2007) quoted *The Gulf News* when they said, 'in light of this, a 2004 Arab Women's Conference in Abu Dhabi, the UAE, asserted the need to investigate restrictive practices that inhibit women's entry into the job market.'

This demonstrated the need for research that reveals and determines the extent and impact of the restrictive practices of female youth transition in the UAE.

In an attempt to understand the factors that hinder female graduates from entering the labour market, the literature reviewed focused mainly on the youth transition theories and experiences from different perspectives with the hope of identifying some underlying principles applicable to the UAE. Much research work on youth problems by Nayak (2003), Goodwin and O'Connor (2005), Todd (2004), Goodwin and O'Connor (2004), Beck et al. (2006), De-Oliveira et al. (2016) and Goodwin and O'Connor (2006) are focusing on different perspectives to the youth unemployment problems still experienced in the Middle East (Afouni 2014; Kemp 2013; Kemp and Zhao 2016; Littrell and Bertsch 2013; Naguib and Jamali 2015; Uddin 2015).

Reviewed literature on youth problems from Canada (Brooks et al. 2002) and Australia (McDowell 2012; Morrison and Loeber 2005) were of interest due to their immigration population composition. The attention to youth problems in these countries was attributed to the number of immigrants who moved and settled in these countries and benefited from unemployment benefits (Jacob 2008). These experiences are relevant to this research because they inform the researcher on the implications of the UAE economic situation.

The main research respondents were Emiratis and the majority lived outside the city and perceived the urban lifestyle as influential to the Emirati culture,

(Simadi and Kamali 2004). Not all Emirati think that the urban culture negatively affects their culture, but the majority strongly believe that the increase of cultural diversity in the cities, causes Emirati cultural contamination (Crabtree 2010). Those with the same line of thinking did not allow their female children to work in industries that were male dominated and with cultural diversity as that was perceived as likely to change the local females' way of thinking (Roberts et al. 2009). Having analysed the nature of the oil and gas industry and noted that it was gender segregated, given the working environment and the societal expectations, the need to focus on other factors was eminent. The effort was to understand what the other researchers suggested and attempt to relate them to the UAE situation. As Blackburn et al. (2002:516), stated that, 'it is recognised that women may settle for poorer jobs to fit in with the domestic priorities.'

The rationale behind that choice was attributed to the tertiary industry available to most Emirati women in the rural communities that are already saturated (Rutledge et al. 2011; Williams et al. 2013). Mayers et al. (2007:13) suggested that women could easily get employment in public sector, but it was no longer the case because the public sector had been recruiting and reached the required quotas in most areas (Rutledge et al. 2011; Williams et al. 2013).

Analysis of rationale choice was important as the UAE females were highly qualified in comparison to the male counterparts. The rational choice by Blackburn et al. (2002:516), stated that 'the rational choice,... is for the person with more human capital, the man, to be the principal earner, while the woman takes primary responsibility for domestic work.'

In the UAE, the number of women enrolled in higher education were more compared to their male nationals, (Table 2.1) hence the women tended to be more valuable human capital (Walby 2011). Young men in the UAE entered the labour

market easily with high school certificates. That was not possible for young females due to the industry gender segregation and restrictions alluded to above. Instead, the girl child was forced to stay at home or to continue studies to higher levels than men, but on completion they were expected to marry and reproduce (Farrell 2008; Mayers et al. 2007; Nelson 2004; Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon 2008).

The current generation of young women are considered to be treated fairly because in the past, women were not even allowed to be educated (Crabtree 2010). The level of illiteracy in the UAE was high among the old women (*UAE National Bureau of Statistics* 2009).

The lack of choices and preferences in the public domain force women to enter higher education because staying at home is not the best option. This same sentiment is reported by Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon (2008:13) who stated that 'anecdotal evidence has shown that a large number of women in the Middle East pursue a university education because of limitations in other spheres of public space.'

This challenged the applicability of preference theory to the UAE society, specifically for women (Hakim 2006). Some less conservative families applied preference theories and their female children have preferences of what they want to achieve. The limitations are that the society at large did not accept that women decide on total control of what they want. The need for knowledge on equality among the young Emirati youth was echoed in Crabtree (2010), who highlighted the need for educating young people about the value of gender equality. There is a need to change the perception of the modern young males, to make them start treating Emirati women as equal citizens with equal decision making rights.

Another factor of concern was arranged marriage and women had to play by the social rules to be accepted in this patriarchal society. The identity issue of 'pure' or 'real' among the Emirati society is of interest. Schvaneveldt et al. (2005:81) stated

that 'historically, many young women were married at a very young age in most cases 10-12 years of age. This was done to ensure the virginal status of young woman.' As a result, that guaranteed that the family identity is secured because a woman was married before being exposed to other forms of premarital relationships and they remained virgins until marriage. This was also supported by the reasons why young women should be virgins at the time of marriage. The rationale behind close protection of female children from interacting with any males who were not brothers was a way of family control to avoid any possibilities of premarital sexual activities. In the UAE, cousins can marry each other. Restricting women and female children was a measure to control the reproduction process.

Mernissi (1982:183) highlighted the importance of virginity among female children to the patriarchal community when she stated that 'it is no secret that when some marriages are consummated, the virginity of the bride is artificial...resort to a minor operation on the eve of their wedding in order to erase the traces of premarital experience.'

The same sentiment was echoed by DeJong et al. (2005:53) when the same practice of virginity testing and reconstruction of the hymen prior to the wedding day was a norm. These restrictions on women formed part of the social practice and reflection of power control of the male dominating members in a society. Such restrictions are seen as religious values that are expected to be honoured (Al-Jabri 2009).

In the past, some Muslims believed that the ruler or caliph came from the people of the same origin and identity. Al-Jabri (2009:36) stated that 'it is true that the majority in early Islam times specified the caliph be from Quraysh, the only tribe qualified to lead.' This shows that, in an attempt to be in line with the ruling lineage, one must have faithful women to avoid mixed blood in the families. That mentality

is the focal point behind restricting women from interacting freely in public.

Meir and Gekker (2011:233) indicated the effects of displacement as it caused some adverse conditions, especially on women, because during displacement women are no longer doing their domestic chores and they no longer had a secure home where women could continue doing their domestic work. Displacement resulted in imposition of stricter patriarchal rules on women because of the insecurity among men.

According to Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon (2008:13) in the Middle East, 'public space is defined and regulated by tradition and related to the size and remoteness of towns and villages.' The influence of social factors in the Middle East societies are covered in detail by Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon (2008).

Farrell (2008:111) stated that 'the status of UAE women has been governed by social and religious norms and the contemporary local populations retain their tribal origins and insofar as an individual's existence is firmly embedded in commitments to issues of common descent.' It is interesting that an Emirati man can marry a non-Muslim woman and yet an Emirati woman cannot marry a non-Muslim man, and not even a Muslim man who is not an Emirati. It is also interesting to note that children born from a non-Emirati mother are likely to lose their social benefits once the father is dead because benefits are given to the male member of the family.

Farrell (2008:113), stated that 'while the religious, social and cultural norms may have traditionally placed Emirati women in the home-based role of mother and wife, increasingly Emirati women are working outside the home.' Very conservative families are strongly against the idea of working women. That was against other thoughts on preference theory that suggested that the Emirati females preferred to get married than to search for work. It must be noted that the manipulation was not intentional in some cases, but misinterpretations of the Islamic teachings (Al-Jabri

2009). The following section 2.3.1 explores the social experiences of boys and girls in the UAE society.

2.3.1 Emirati Boys' and Girls' Social Experiences

Crabtree (2007:579) highlighted the complexity of a feminist research because of its sensitivity when stated that 'in keeping with patriarchal cultural values predominant throughout the Arabian Gulf, sons are more valued than daughters. This however is a sensitive cultural issue that was difficult to discuss openly in the study as it contradicts Islamic values.'

Women were expected to be in the home, although the government encouraged women to be more educated and get employed yet religious teachings are contradicting to new plan. Girls in polygamous families focus their attention on child care duties as that is aligned with their future responsibilities as wives and mothers. It was important to note that even for expatriate communities, a male child was no longer a dependent on parents sponsorship after the age of 18 and yet a girl child remained under the parents sponsorship until the age of 24 or more if still unmarried. The policy was based on the vulnerability of female children but at the same time, the policy segregated based on gender.

Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon (2008:13) defined waithood as 'a long phase which refers to the bewildering time that a large proportion of Middle Eastern youth spend waiting for a full state of adulthood.' The period of waiting was different for male and female youth in the Middle East. This period was prolonged for men because of factors related to the ability to financially support the family and be independent. The period could be longer if men failed to get sustainable employment with constant income that allowed young males be able to raise money for marriage. The UAE government established a marriage fund that allowed young men to get some money

if they could not afford to raise the money for dowry. The waiting period affected the male youths because if they failed to get good employment that resulted in failing to manage the running costs of a family. Such prolonged waiting periods benefited female youths as they took advantage of the delay and acquired more education.

Shah and Al-Qudsi (1990) states that women in Kuwait are highly educated and they work in almost all industries that provided job opportunities for them, unlike in the UAE. Heaton (1996:42) argues that cultural and social division of work and responsibilities forces female children to take positions of mothers. The fulfilment of such social responsibilities encourages female children to orient themselves in family caring responsibilities and not focus on becoming financially sustainable to support the family because that is not considered female responsibility. The male children focus on activities that make them manliness and gain power and leadership roles (Carlson 2007). The majority of young female college students in the UAE got married in their late teen ages and early twenties (Farrell 2008). That affected their career development plans because of parenthood constraints and responsibilities.

According to Simadi and Kamali (2004), the ranking of value domains reflects that religious values dominated as the first priority among male and female respondents at the UAE University. At the bottom of the ranking were economic values. The religious and the economic values were incompatible values that were not expected to be in a competing environment.

The expectations were to find the economic values of the male respondents ranked within the top three. The possible reason behind ranking the economic values at the bottom was the fact that the research was conducted in the UAE where the government provided financial assistance to the nationals through the marriage and social fund. The other possible reason was that the locals were guaranteed lucrative remuneration for as long as they seek government employment. The results of

non-national males (Simadi and Kamali 2004) shows that the economic values were ranked fourth with an average of 24.5 percent. The economic values ranked at the bottom among the national Emirati men can also be attributed to the concept of togetherness in their society as Simadi and Kamali (2004:22) stated that 'the U.A.E society as part of Arab Moslem society, has been characterised by close interpersonal relationships.'

This was because UAE citizens received financial assistance from the family members and other members of the community. Their families continue staying together as big families. As a result they do not rank economic values as an important domain. They consider financial possession as materialistic which is contrary to Islamic teachings, and did not rank it high (Al-Jabri 2009). Unlike in other cultures where children are given the independence to move out of the house and start their own homes, in the UAE they do not encourage their children to leave their family because children are expected to take care of their ageing parents (Farrell 2008).

2.3.2 Decision-Making Process in an Emirati Family

Decision-making process demonstrates authority and in every Emirati family the final say rest with the head of the family or by the men of their clan. Petty decisions are taken care of at micro-level of authority where mothers make domestic decisions. The decision of who to marry and when to marry, for both men and women, are decided by the head of the family or by the elder male member of their clan.

Men regarded themselves as the members of the society with wisdom and ability to do such responsibilities. Emirati men are associated with camel management duties and responsibilities. Camels are highly valued and that responsibility to take care of valued assets is taken care by men in the UAE. The whole idea of power

control emanates from the concept of family supported by marriage contracts. In a marriage contract the powers are divided according to responsibilities and duties with more powers granted to the head of the family who paid dowry (Heaton 1996).

Al-Jabri (2009) stated that men and women are considered different based on their remembering capabilities in court and in decision-making process. Al-Jabri (2009:202) quoted the *The Holy Qur'an* as asking to 'get two witnesses, out of your men, and if there are not two men, then a man and two women, such as you choose for witness, so that if one of them errs, the other can remind her (2, al-Baqarah, 282).'

Given that the Islamic nations are guided by the teachings of *The Holy Qur'an*, whatever is written is not questioned and yet some of the actions of men interpreted the situations to their advantage for as long as there was evidence in *The Holy Qur'an*. From that point of view, the practice was that women are considered to be forgetful and make errors worse than men. In this case of forgetfulness and making errors in their judgement considered men to be at a better position in major decision-making processes, resulting in little faith in the competence of women in making critical decisions. Given that women are considered forgetful and making errors in testimonies, that creates a barrier on critical responsibilities that require critical decision-making. Trust and faith in one's actions is measured by the effectiveness of decision-making ability. Forgetfulness and errors are the factors that measure the effectiveness of decision-making, and women are regarded as being weak in such a critical ability (Al-Jabri 2009). Emirati women are rarely going to be making decisions because that responsibility is reserved for the male members of their society.

The following section explores the dilemma faced by the UAE as a country in a Muslim region with its flexible policies.

2.4 Viewing the UAE through a Needle Hole

The UAE portrays itself as an interesting case study in the Arab Gulf states because of its position as a Muslim nation. Heaton (1996:42) mentions the incompatibility of socio-economic roles and family duties by arguing that women married early and that process redirected their focus away from the career goals and make them focus on family responsibilities. The more women focus on management of family-related duties, the less they focus on labour market involvement. This was a result of early marriage that even hindered some of the females from completing their studies. This cannot be challenged because it is documented in the *The Holy Qur'an* (Heaton 1996) and therefore not for personal analysis and debate but to abide by the Islamic interpretations. In Islam just like any other religions, the believers are expected to abide by the scriptures. The world is experiencing Pentecostal Christianity that revives Christianity and that creates a challenge to Islam. The Muslims in return are reviving their religion by strictly following their scripture. Religious obedience enforces religious traditions and way of living among Muslim families and unfortunately women are the most affected from how they live and behave in public. Muslim women have little to do in challenging the interpretations. In as labour participation is concerned, the situation in the UAE is complex, unlike what Olah et al. (2015:87) compared in developed countries that either the government is responsible in providing employment for its citizens or it is a personal responsibility. The UAE has a complex system that involves family members and the community. The liberal approach taken by the UAE government of not enforcing Islamic laws creates contradictions with the traditional leaders who view gender equality as a threat to their religion.

Helie and Hoodfar (2012:1) states that conservative Muslims in most Muslim nations do not concur with the notion of gender equality as they regard that as a

Western imposition that attempts to bring Western culture into the Muslim nations. Helie and Hoodfar (2012) questions the concept of Muslimness, its origin and its definition, yet they acknowledge that Muslim identity in Islam is about Islam as a way of life. That leaves the UAE in a very questionable position in the Muslim region because of its liberal policies when it comes to treatment of women and relaxation of some restrictions on local women, especially in education (Al-Jazeera 2014; Marmenout and Lirio 2013).

Emirati parents encourage their daughters to further their education (Williams et al. 2013), and forgetting that acquiring higher education, especially in the UAE, does not guarantee employment (Marmenout and Lirio 2013). Single and married young females alike experience restrictions that are part of the factors alluded to in Chapter 3. Conservative Muslims view the interaction of men and women in the same area as unMuslim and regard that as a western imposition on their culture that contaminates their Muslimness (Helie and Hoodfar 2012).

This puts the UAE in an interesting position as they signed the Beijing 1995 United Nations Millennium Development Goals declaration, especially goal three, the elimination of gender inequality by 2015 (Kabeer 2010; Metcalfe 2011). The commitment to gender equality by the UAE government receives resistance at community level because the concept is not Islamic.

2.5 The UN Millennium Development Goals on Gender Equality

The signing and commitment to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (UNMDGs), especially the third goal that focuses on gender equality and empowering women (Kabeer 2010; United-Nations 2014, 2015), put the Arab Gulf

states at an international focal lens. The world focuses on reducing gender inequality and, from the article by Kabeer (2010), organisations that contributed to the implementation of goal number three of the Millennium Development Goals provided educational help. In the Middle Eastern Gulf nations, education of females was no longer the issue of concern because the female children were allowed to go and acquire education, but the employment of female graduates upon completion of their studies was a major problem (Marmenout and Lirio 2013). The current position of the Gulf states demonstrates progress in partially fulfilling MDG goal three, in comparison to other nations that have female restrictions from acquiring education, demonstrating the preference of educating male children as evidenced in Kenya (Warrington and Kiragu 2012), Afghanistan (Al-Jazeera 2014; Moghadam 2002) and China (Wang 2005) to mention a few examples.

The position of the Middle East in educating female children was viewed as a success story (Marmenout and Lirio 2013), yet the elimination of gender inequality was a broad concept that left the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) governments responsible for eliminating these restrictions. This research makes recommendations to policy makers based on the expectations of the world on how countries should fulfill the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. The antagonistic position of the governments and the conservative Muslim communities interpretations of gender inequality need to be addressed by the government (Heaton 1996; Helie and Hoodfar 2012) to prevent the social actors from interpreting the concept in their own way that disadvantages females. The fact that the Islamic conservatives view gender equality as a Western imposition in the Muslim countries, left governments hesitant to make decisions to clarify their positions as that created unfavourable tensions between religious and government's interpretations of gender equality as observed by Metcalfe (2011) and Helie and Hoodfar (2012).

2.6 Conclusion

The UAE is showing some efforts in trying to eliminate gender inequality but the challenge is to make religious and community leaders aware of the government's intentions if the government is to succeed. The position of the UAE in as far as complying with their commitment to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals demonstrated a great achievement because when they signed the declaration in Beijing, the statistics of women in education and employment were very low (Nelson 2004).

The UAE has shown great achievement in educating its female children in comparisons with other Muslim countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan. The majority of GCC countries showed commitment in educating their female citizens and the labour market participation is left to family, employers and community leaders to decide. The region is experiencing drawbacks because the majority of people in Muslim countries view women as home-bound with less public space activities (Bennett 2015; Ghvamshahidi 1995; Heaton 1996; Helie and Hoodfar 2012; Mernissi 1982).

The impact of women restrictions into the labour market hinders the fulfilment of gender equality. The concept of gender equality in the UAE is viewed as a Western World imposition and not common in the Arab Muslim world (Al-Jabri 2009; Helie and Hoodfar 2012). The society is guided by Islamic doctrine and the responsibility of every Muslim is to abide by *The Holy Qur'an*. Anything documented has to be fulfilled and treated as the truth. This creates situations where subjective interpretations of undocumented evidence are applied to control the communities. Islam is considered as a way of life (Helie and Hoodfar 2012) and, as such, culture and religion have gray areas that are not clearly differentiated in their interpretations.

The oil boom in the UAE provided situations that changed the social life of most local Emiratis. The majority of the families experience social and economical changes whereby they employ nannies and family drivers. That created different family roles for women as domestic managers and working for lowly paid and ranked jobs is shunned. Male members consider working for such lowly ranked professions as affecting their community status. No female Emirati works for lowly paid jobs even if they come from lower social classes. Any lowly paid jobs are relegated and reserved for expatriate job seekers. The unclear guidelines on gender equality in the process of Emiratisation requires revisiting to consider female transition into the labour market through the same mechanism that favours male Emiratis. The contribution to current knowledge on the factors that hinder female graduates from entering the labour market needs to be explored by cautiously considering the role of religion as a factor in the restrictions. Some of the reviewed literature on religion as a factor failed to connect the influence of religion on other social factors because of its sensitivity. This research emphasise on analysing the influences of religion on other social factors that restrict transition of women into the labour market. The UAE government policy makers must be aware of the factors that hinder the transition of females into the labour market. This will allow them to put policies that are inclusive of both genders. The current Emiritisation labour market quota system does not fully address issues of female workplace requirements as per their religious affiliations.

The following Chapter 3 reviews the perceptions of youth transitions from different regions who share similar experiences. The lack of empirical evidence about youth transitions from college to work in the UAE influenced the research and led to an exploratory approach because it supported detailed theory building insights on this research topic.

Chapter 3

Theory of Youth Transitions and Perspectives

3.1 Introduction

This Chapter 3, the literature review, provides evidence to support the relevance and contribution to knowledge. Exploring and critically analysing similar experiences from other places helps to understand the topic.

This chapter begins with an introduction that provides a brief introduction to the literature reviewed. Section 3.2 addresses the youth transition theories from a global perspective. Section 3.3 addresses the realities of labour market youth transitions, focusing on both linear and non-linear transitions. Section 3.4 presents a guiding theoretical framework presented by Farrell (2008). Section 3.5 focuses on transition guidelines that lead into labour market participation. Section 3.6 addresses the social factors and the proposed framework. The social factors are reviewed in section 3.7. Section 3.8 focuses on the Middle Eastern youth transition perspective.

This research focuses on answering the research question, **"What are the**

factors that affect the transition of female Emirati graduates from college to work and what recommendations should be made to the labour market policy makers to increase the participation of Emirati females in the labour market?".

The first sub-question "**What are the factors that restrict the transition of female Emiratis from college to employment?**" is partially answered in my literature review. The research focuses on experiences from countries with religious, cultural and social practices similar to the United Arab Emirates, like Indonesia, Iran, and other Muslim countries (Ali 2010; Egel and Salehi-Isfahani 2010; Naafs 2012).

The second sub-question "**How do these factors affect the transition of female graduates from entering the labour market?**" was partially answered in the reviewed literature. The research done by Erzberger and Prein (1997), Wentling and Waight (2001), Mayers et al. (2007) and Farrell (2008) identify the factors that are relevant to this research.

The third sub-question is, "**What are the implications of the restrictions that restrict the transition of female Emiratis from college to employment?**". The evidence from the focus group interviews are critically analysed and determine the effects on the participants. Kemp (2013:273) stated that research work that focuses on gender was outdated and general in nature and failed to address specific reasons of unemployment issues concerning women. This resulted in this research focusing on Egypt. Egypt impacted and influenced the socio-economic activities in the UAE by setting up the educational system of the United Arab Emirates (Burden-Leahy 2009).

3.2 Youth Transition Theories

Youth transition theory is important for this research because many theories on youth transition problems and experiences have different meanings in different communities. It is very important to understand youth transition theories from different perspectives, bearing in mind that the level of complexities of youth labour market problems are complex in nature. Different regions are experiencing different youth unemployment problems caused by different factors. The theory helps me to understand youth problems from different perspectives. The level of youth labour problems are so complex that in some regions youths are still experiencing unemployment problems that used to be experienced decades ago in other parts of the world where women were not allowed to study. While my research requires a focus on the latest empirical research output on youth transition problems, we might be naive in accepting that all regions are experiencing similar youth unemployment problems. Youths who are bound by traditional religious cultural backgrounds experience unemployment problems differently, hence the need to understand youth transition theories from different regions of the world. Youth transition theories help to provide the basis for this research because this research views youth transition for college-to-work and school-to-work as different transition experiences to be treated as different concepts.

School-to-Work transition problems are experienced in many countries as highlighted by OECD (2002), Furlong et al. (2005) and Nystrom et al. (2008). Godfrey (2003:2-3), confirmed that the 15-to-24 age groups were unemployed in most countries. The problems were even worse as evidenced in the work by Goodwin and O'Connor (2012) when they quoted the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 2012 unemployment data. The referred 15-to-24 age group coincided with the majority of the unemployed youths in the UAE.

Ryan (1999:2) acknowledges the efforts of addressing youth transition problems in developed countries. The existing literature on school-to-work transition focuses on compulsory school level experiences and the college-to-work transition requires a different approach because each graduate has to consider the route to follow to be employable in the transition process.

Evans and Furlong (1997:17-18) views youth transitions as trajectories, paths and navigation. Nystrom et al. (2008) addresses issues of professional trajectories and focuses on the narratives of graduate experiences of their career paths that lacked a structured progression. The graduates had no stable careers, unlike the majority of Emirati female graduates who are not even allowed to work because of religious-based social practices that required women to be home-bound (Helie and Hoodfar 2012).

In Goudsblom and Mennell (1998:70), the development of a social actor's aspirations depended on the interpretations of their social realities. The trajectories they followed were based on acceptable social practices. The difference with paths was that, in the UAE there are no clearly marked routes for female graduates. A female job seeker knows what is acceptable in the society and avoids seeking employment in organisations that do not comply with their cultural practices (Egel and Salehi-Isfahani 2010; Simadi and Kamali 2004). Contrary to the research by Bandura et al. (2001) that assumes that every child has a career choice, is different in the UAE because female job seekers have little career decision making. That career decision is decided by the elders in the family (Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon 2008). Social class and the cultural expectations influences the labour market participation and women follow trajectories that are predetermined by their male family members (Farrell 2008).

In the UAE, employed female graduates experience the trajectories in their

transitions because their job preferences and the employing organisations are approved by the responsible member of the society (Egel and Salehi-Isfahani 2010). Women are expected to work in women-only work environments and with full face cover veils (Egel and Salehi-Isfahani 2010; Farrell 2008; Simadi and Kamali 2004).

The navigation is more exploratory in nature and supports the individualistic theories. Navigation starts to emerge among some Emirati women because of the nature of the available forms of employment. Most local nationals prefer to work for the government. Men and women alike are either employed in semi-government, local governments or the federal government in most of the Emirates. They are afraid to venture into the private sector citing problems of long working hours (Egel and Salehi-Isfahani 2010; Farrell 2008; Williams et al. 2013). Goodwin and O'Connor (2005:3) states that the youth transitions took an individualistic approach. This is applicable for the majority of Emirati male job seekers and not women.

The employers in the UAE require a no-objection certificate, a letter granting permission to hire female job seekers from the family sponsor or guardian. Such requirements act as deterrents to navigation as female choices are restricted by the no-objection certificate. The no-objection certificate is a legal requirement when hiring local and expatriate female job seekers in the UAE. The no-objection certificate or letter has to be given to the employers by the sponsoring male member of the family before they can offer any employment. Failure to issue that no-objection letter means the sponsor or guardian is not allowing that person to be hired.

Previous research work on school-to-work transitions focuses on compulsory school level for example work by Canny (2001), Biggart (2002) and Furlong et al. (2005). This research focuses on graduates from higher education. The school-to-

work transition experiences reviewed focuses on youth in developed industrialised countries and the generalisations are less applicable to the UAE because college-to-work is career-focused.

While the reviewed literature is very important as the basis for the arguments, it must be acknowledged that college-to-work age groups are youths who completed compulsory secondary school education. Research by Layder et al. (1991) defines two major groupings starting with the structured variables that included class, gender and unemployment. This categorisation ignored other social structures; the political, economic, kinship and the religious social practices that exist in other communities that influence the labour market participation (Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon 2008). The second group was classified as individual variables that included personal attitude, personal achievement and behaviour. Layder et al. (1991) focuses on A-level school leavers, demonstrating the difference with college-to-work transitions.

There is currently no research work that addresses the implications of the effects of the factors that hinder the transition of female graduates from college to work in the Middle East. The assumptions that the youth unemployment research from other developed countries is applicable in the Middle East requires analysis and review. Youth unemployment problems are not seriously considered as problematic as supported by O'Connor and Goodwin (2005:53) when stated that 'there is very little material that examines the school-to-work transitional experience of girls.' Work by men has been valued more than work done by women in several patriarchal societies.

Haywood and Ghail (2003:21) stated that 'during the twentieth century the notion of the bread winner bringing in the family wage had a major impact on employment strategies. Women's employment was frequently deemed as supplemental, often sustained through low pay and poor working conditions...as

a result, work and men became synonymous.'

Work is associated with men than women as men are regarded as the bread winners. Being a bread winner means having priority to get employment in the UAE society. Women employment becomes optional. Considering a woman income as supplementary to that of the bread winner makes women employment less appreciated and more associated with part-time employment (Haywood and Ghail 2003). The idea of girls' employment being taken by boys (Cross and Bagilhole 2002) shows that proper employment was for men. Men are not expected to work in employment designated for women because of its lower status. That influences the lack of interest in researching female unemployment problems as their contribution to the labour market was and still is regarded as less valuable in the Middle East (Farrell 2008). UAE women are expected to be at home (Al-Jabri 2009; Alexander and Welzel 2011; Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon 2008), so the main focus on youth research was on male youths (Egel and Salehi-Isfahani 2010; Strathdee 2001; Swaan 2007). Swaan (2007:403) stated that,

most of these controversial practices concern the position of women in the family and in society at large; they derive not so much from the religion as from the traditions of patriarchy, pre-industrial society the world over. Tensions between men and women, parents and children have much increased due to the recent educational revolution that now has girls competing on equal terms with boys... many men attempt to cling to their superior position by invoking a patriarchal interpretation of the holy book and many women avoid a full confrontation out of loyalty to their men, their faith and their group origins.

The equality agenda challenges the male superiority at work and at home and employment becomes a right for men and not for women (Helie and Hoodfar

2012). Unemployment youth problems in other countries demonstrated different characteristics (Evans and Furlong 1997; Goodwin and O'Connor 2005) from niches to rationalised individualism. These pathways are not the same in Middle Eastern countries including the UAE. In the Middle East and other conservative Muslim countries, women are openly denied opportunities that male youths enjoy (Helie and Hoodfar 2012). Very few Emirati females drive themselves to college, work and even visiting friends and relatives on their own partly because of religious and cultural restrictions.

Ryan (2001:36) stated that 'the criticisms levelled at school-to-work transition include inadequate educational attainments, high joblessness, excessive job turnover and weak links between schooling and employment.' The restrictions are strongly connected to religious, social practices and values of the Emirati society (Simadi and Kamali 2004). Women are not allowed to work to financially support their families because that is the responsibility of men (Alexander and Welzel 2011). Employment is viewed as a route to financial benefits, therefore it is considered the responsibility of the male members of the Muslim society as it is documented in *The Holy Qur'an*.

In the UAE, youth unemployment research tended to be of an exploratory nature because of the lack of empirical data that exposes the complexities that are intertwined in the social makeup of the society. From an epistemological point of view, knowledge about the rationality and motives of what hinders the female graduates from entering the labour market has to be tackled with caution because of a number of issues.

Firstly from the religious perspective, women are exposed to social practices which are strongly controlled by their religious beliefs (Farrell 2008). Helie and Hoodfar (2012:3) stated that 'Islam is no longer understood simply as a question of

belief, instead, it becomes an all-encompassing identity, one that should shape an individual's sense of self as well as the collective code of conduct.' The issue of not allowing women to travel on their own without a closely related male member is part of Islamic teaching and practice (Al-Sharif 2012). It is important to understand the manifestation of Islamic religious beliefs in individuals because that helps in understanding the reasoning behind the restrictions.

Secondly, women are regarded as home-bound and not allowed to interact with other people in public as part of their Islamic restrictions. Trying to get the rationale, motives and reasoning behind such restrictions results in questioning the unquestionable, because of the social power structures and the religious affiliations as also suggested by Helie and Hoodfar (2012).

There is need for trust in the Islamic system and in the people in positions of power. Helie and Hoodfar (2012:3) stated that 'the consequence is that alternative visions of what it may mean to be a Muslim are dismissed as culturally irrelevant, they may even be denounced as blasphemous, a charge that can lead to severe sanctions imposed on individuals or entire communities including death sentence.' Based on this understanding, researching and addressing issues of Islamic religion has to be treated with caution. There is fear of questioning what is written in *The Holy Qur'an* because that can be interpreted as blasphemy and is punishable by death in Muslim countries.

Questioning anything about the society and its culture is regarded as challenging the authority. In the UAE, citizens rarely question the rationale and reasons for any decisions that are unfavourable. This is because of different reasons. The first is that the majority of the people have faith and trust in the decision-making process. The second reason is fear because in a patriarchal and autocratic society, the power is invested in the most respected member of the society and questioning demonstrates

lack of respect. The third is religious, as supported by Al-Jabri (2009:35) when he stated that

... the Islamic community delegates the rule completely to the caliph including the executive means... community does not reserve the right to monitor the actions of the ruler, because, as soon as homage is paid to him and he is elected caliph, he becomes responsible before God and not before the people who elected him. Hence the people have only to obey as long as the orders and the rules of the caliph do not fall under the Islamic principle which says there is no obedience of the created in disobedience to the Creator.

The reviewed literature demonstrates that the society is bound by religious principles and the people in this society must be obedient to their leaders. This is supported by Al-Jabri (2009:36) when said that 'the concept of one in charge in Islam is so wide that it can mean the head of the family, the tribal chieftain, or the Muslim ruler.' Anyone in charge in the Emirati community represented the community, country and the religious fraternity and the interpretations of the social rules, practices, regulations and religious teachings were automatically accepted by the community members without publicly criticising the process and the outcome.

The level of restrictions on women forces female graduates to follow what is good for their society although unfavourable to them (Evans and Furlong 1997; Nelson 2004). The factors that influence the employment of women are centred on power control structures in the UAE society as Mayers et al. (2007:15) stated that 'some men for example are opposed to women working at all, while others will permit women to work only in jobs in which they do not come into contact with men.' This problem of labour imbalance has been skirted around because of lack of openness in identifying and determining the causes of such imbalances. The reference to *The*

Holy Qur'an affects the faithful believers because they view materialistic things as a sin.

Societies have different ways of demonstrating their power control agendas. There are still societies that show division of labour and prohibit women to participate in public spheres (Helie and Hoodfar 2012). The control and restrictions are mechanisms used to create a space of power for men as strong members of the society and questioning their actions is a threat to their position of power. To some point, the interpretations are manipulated and are linked to their culture and religion. The existence of a thin line between religion and other social cultural practices is strongly manipulated by people in power as religious beliefs are not questioned.

Giddens (1984) said that

to be a human being is to be a purposive agent, who both has reasons for his or her activities and is able, if asked, to elaborate discursively upon those reasons ... but terms such as purpose or intention, reason, motive and so on have to be treated with caution ... because they extricate human action from the contextuality of time and space.

There is need to further probe the problems of youth transitions. Giddens (1984) highlights another line of thinking that transforms people's actions into norms when he stated that 'continuity of practices presumes reflexivity, but reflexivity in turn is possible only because of the continuity of practices that make them distinctively the same across space and time.'

Social customs are a result of continuity of the same practices and people treat them as social norms which is sometimes blamed on globalisation especially in the case of unemployment. The main cause of the Arab Spring in Tunisia was related to the imbalance in the labour market. The cause of the Tunisian uprising

started as a result of frustration of a Tunisian unemployed youth (Eltahawy 2012; Herrera and Mayo 2012; Murphy 2012; Romdhani 2013).

Murphy (2011:300) considered the youth unemployment problem as a small thing when stated that

the trigger for change was in a tragic way a small thing: Mohamed Bouazizi was a 26-year unemployed graduate living in the inland rural town of Sidi Bouzeid. Unable to find a job to support his family, he had tried to set up a market stall selling fruit, but as he lacked permit, his cart was confiscated by local police...In an act of despair and humiliation, Bouazizi made his protest by dousing himself in paint thinner and setting fire to himself on 17 December.

Pinto (2012:112) confirmed the same cause of the Arab uprising, when stated that 'in Tunisia, the act of despair of one fruit vendor unleashed a wave of revolution through the Arab World. The protests were sparked by the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi on December 17, 2010.' The level of hopelessness that the street vendor experienced after the police raided and took the merchandise caused the individual to burn himself to death in protest (Ghanem 2016; Megahed and Lack 2011; Murphy 2011; Pinto 2012). That demonstrates high level of frustration among young people in the Middle Eastern and North African countries. The level of frustration is underestimated because the cause of the uprising is considered a 'small thing' by some and not understanding the implications of youth unemployment (Murphy 2011). In support of the idea that inequality among the Arab youth contributes to the Arab uprisings and people including the youths had enough of being sidelined. What started as an Arab uprising has extended its implications and the refugee crisis causes social and political upheaval in Europe. This research highlights the need to consider youth unemployment as a global problem because

the current immigration problems faced by the European countries started from the Arab uprising in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and now a civil war in Syria. The instability in Libya opened an immigration route to Europe where the majority are young economic refugees from African countries. Most countries viewed the Arab uprising as a way to eliminate dictators from the affected countries without understanding the main cause and implications of the Arab uprisings.

Megahed and Lack (2011:400) said that 'after decades of submission and compliance, Tunisians and Egyptians have recently succeeded in removing autocratic regimes that were once perceived as being unshakable ... women and other vulnerable members of the population have also demanded their rights as equal citizens.'

The Arab uprising was a demonstration of changes in cultural and political norms. The Arab uprising focused on resolving political imbalances that mostly benefit men. The employment imbalances for women were given less attention because women unemployment problems were not a result of government restrictions. The exclusion of women to participate actively in the demonstrations did not allow women to push their female agendas (Eltahawy 2012; Megahed and Lack 2011). In an attempt to focus on one aspect at a time to remove autocratic governments, the uprising pushed the women agendas aside and ignored female problems (Eltahawy 2012). The Arab uprising is still an on-going process and whether the uprising was intended to resolve the unemployment imbalances in countries like the UAE has to be seen. The move by the government of the UAE to reduce social exclusion was clearly not focusing on women, but rather focused on all the nationals admitted through the emiratisation process. The process focuses mainly on male nationals not by design, but by default because men are expected to occupy influential positions in organisations.

The educational system that was initially designed in the UAE sidelined women

through the influence of Islamic teachings, local traditions and colonialism. Islamic teachings are interpreted differently and local traditions in communities carefully attempt to unify their cultural and religious practices. All Muslims are expected to do similar cultural and religious practices because they are all guided by the same *Holy Qur'an*.

The dominating religion of the colonising nations was not Islam and any actions are interpreted as undermining Islam if they are against the Islamic practices and values. Such experiences in Muslim societies and in the Middle East follow the same religious and cultural practices that are commonly practised in the Gulf region.

Al-Jabri (2009:67) echoed similar sentiments of not believing in anything foreign as dominant and influencing the local traditions, when he stated that

... in the social and cultural atmosphere of the 1940s and 1950s, the traditionalist was a person of renewal, opposed to the current situation, whether the one represented by foreign rule (colonialism) or that represented by the backward national situation, inherited from the pre-colonial period...yet traditionalism in the eyes of its followers and in the eyes of the majority of the Muslim Arab masters, meant righteousness of conduct, renewal in religion and working for the future through a call to return to the conduct of the righteous predecessors.

Some societies in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and South America, especially those that regarded themselves as very religious, view Western culture as polluting their cultures. Even Norbet Elias alluded to the differences in expectations of a civilized society when quoted by Goudsblom and Mennell (1998:40) as saying,

central to this study are modes of behaviour considered typical of people who are civilized in a Western way. The problem they pose is

simple enough. Western people have not always behaved in the manner we are accustomed to regard as typical or as the hallmark of civilized people.

This makes conservative communities safeguard their cultures by imposing tighter rules and regulations on their people. The resistance to western influence is based on the interpretations highlighted by Goudsblom and Mennell (1998) as the 'hallmark of civilized people'. The interpretation of the Western culture as civilized creates an environment of Western culture superiority that forces other cultures to resist any western influences as it portrays ethnocentrism. Those most affected in the process of restricting the Western cultural influence on the societies are women and children. In some societies educating and employing women is considered as the source of men losing the grip to power as that empowered women (Zenn et al. 2013). Education is expected to transform individuals and employment is expected to financially empower individuals (Posti-Ahokas and Palojoki 2014). The fear in most Islamic societies is the extent of the transformation, level of empowerment and implications on the citizens. Employing women is viewed as western culture because gender equality is western.

3.3 Social Realities of Labour Market Youth Transitions

Youth transition from college to work is complex in nature because of the diversities of choices. The complexities are a result of the social factors. The options available to individuals are to continue pursuing education, get employed or be unemployed (Bradley 1995; Riphahn 2002). Further education has to be education in line with the labour market that fulfils the required skills. Failure to make a good decision

results in taking a route that culminates in unemployment. The employment route is strictly based on either self employment or getting employed.

In the past, employment was viewed as permanent and job seekers are experiencing paradigm shift from permanent jobs to contractual employment (Bratberg and Nilsen 2000). This is associated with female type of employment because as bread winners men prefer permanent employment.

The last of the possible routes is unemployment, as a result of a number of factors. This last route is the focus of this research that focuses on youth transition from college to work. A number of research studies on youth transitions views unemployment as a problem (Chadderton and Colley 2012; Danziger and Eden 2007; Mariano et al. 2011; McDowell 2012). There is a need to explore the factors that cause unemployment as they are complex on their own and the nature of employment available today makes the labour market more complex because of uncertainty of employment continuity. The influence created by socialism needs analysis especially in the Middle East.

The disintegration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) into a free market created individual countries. The disintegration and unification of countries created alignment challenges for youths during the emergence of global markets (Machacek 1998; Olah et al. 2015; Roberts 2010; Tarknishvili et al. 2005; Walker 2007).

Ali (2010:695-696) said that '... as countries espouse a form of capitalism, depending on their specific experiences, business related values will change more rapidly than core social values and a contradiction between sociocultural orientations and business related ideology takes place.'

The relevance of focusing on the USSR and its disintegration is of great importance in understanding the major powerful systems that existed in the

Middle East until the fall of socialism. The disintegration of socialism opened the opportunities for capitalism to implement globalisation. This allowed corporations to move their operations to other countries that provided competitive advantages. That also allowed people to move to other countries in search of better opportunities.

Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon (2008:20) said that 'regulation of private employment in Middle Eastern countries has its origin in Arab countries in Arab socialism and in Iran in the Iranian Revolution. These movements have given rise to the perception of large enterprises as being exploitative.' Understanding the influences played by socialism and the emerging of globalisation provides some insight into the social dilemma that societies faced. Roberts (2005) highlights the role played by the United Kingdom government in addressing social exclusion, as compared to some societies where youths, especially women face extreme social exclusion. MacDonald and Marsh (2010) argues that some youths are extremely excluded from economic activities in their societies. This experience is similar to that of some of the Emirati female youths who are not participating actively in the economic activities of their country because of restrictions from their society.

Globalisation forced job-seekers to move to other countries regardless of the qualifications, knowledge, skills, competencies and experiences they possessed. The formation of the European Union and incorporation of countries that were aligned to socialism brought social changes in those European societies. Al-Jabri (2009:149) highlights the effects of the break of the USSR when he stated that

democracy in the Arab Nation and in many Third World countries suffered from following the Soviet model of government and administration...the model of the Soviet Union was the model that had hoped to effect a rapid and comprehensive growth for the benefit of the wider strata of popular masses, through mobilizing the latter within one party under

the leadership of the working class.

In an Islamic system of governance, the leader is nominated and appointed. The expectations are that the leader is working through the powers from God and whatever is said cannot be questioned. Such systems are experienced in countries like Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and other Muslim nations (Mtango 2004; Ryan 2014). The slow changes at government level to adapt to social and political changes restrict any changes that are likely to happen at grassroots level because of the bureaucratic process experienced in accepting such changes. The latter has been supported by Al-Jabri (2009:156) who stated that 'it must be stressed that political democracy is the regulating framework for democratic rights and the political system which serves and respects those rights. At the same time, experience has shown that social democracy as an economic choice cannot be realized in the absence of political democracy.'

The views of traditionalists on the separation of Islam and the state was evident that separation of religion from the state is not acceptable by the Islamic rulers as that removes the authority from the caliph of the Muslims (Al-Jabri 2009). The research study by Roberts (2005:126) supports the need to consider the role played by other societies which were formerly aligned to socialism with reference to the work done in Poland which categorised youths in different categories.

The youth categorizations in Poland were into five groups and one of the groups is of interest as it resonates some similarities to the UAE youths. According to Roberts (2005:127) this group is mainly composed of females with or without children of their own, but they are strongly linked to the role of taking care of children of their parents and relatives rather than being active job-seekers. This led to a need to understand how inclined the UAE was to socialism rather than to capitalism, during and until the fall of socialism, and how these systems influenced the social governance of

families in the UAE.

The fall of socialism witnessed global movement of individuals to different countries including those in the Gulf region. Ali (2010:700) confirmed that Muslim countries were not following the expectations of the faith of Islam although there is no mention of women in the employment selection because the research work focused on Muslims in general. The UAE saw a number of job seekers from the Asian sub-continent take employment opportunities that were deemed unsuitable by the local nationals. The youth transition complexities in other developed countries, although applicable to the UAE, differed from the complexities of the UAE youth transitions. These transitions are entangled in the social practices, norms and values that are strongly linked to their religion of Islam (Simadi and Kamali 2004). The diversity of the labour workforce in the UAE brought diversity in cultures and religion. The fact that non-Muslim women and other Muslim women are working with the local Emirati men, suggests the need to understand the complexities in gender restrictions in the region.

3.3.1 Linear Youth Transitions

The concept of linearity focuses on individualisation and identify linearity and non-linearity as possible routes experienced by youths (Furlong et al. 2005:19). According to Furlong et al. (2005:19) linearity is an experience where an individual progresses smoothly from education into employment. The individual does not experience long breaks but there are considerations for short breaks or disturbances. Linear transition that considers short breaks as insignificant can be challenged because there is no universally agreed time break that is considered to be short break. The classification of linear transition by Furlong et al. (2005) did not consider reversals because it ignores going back to college after getting employed. The

reason why Furlong et al. (2005) did not consider reversals in the analysis is because the research focused on primary and secondary school education levels. In their consideration of school, the focus clearly did not consider higher education. At the compulsory schooling level, reversals become problematic as they affect the linear progression process from start to finish, which is not the case with college-to-work transitions.

The research study by Lindberg (2008:377), although applicable to this research, did not address issues of restrictions by the members of the family from entering the labour market. The involuntary deviation could have contributed to this research if considered some restrictions experienced in many parts of the world. Lack of funding had resulted in people choosing to educate only male children members of the society, as evidenced in Kenya (Warrington and Kiragu 2012). The linear transitions has various categories starting with the direct link between school and employment. The other option includes any form of training provided after compulsory schooling.

The next option was from school to higher education or into further education then into the labour market. Some individuals decide to combine both higher education and employment and study part time. That transition falls outside the concept of linear transition because it is reversal. The weakness of considering reversal as problematic for higher education is that the transition is regarded as a phase that culminates with getting employment and employment for life. The other problem is that Furlong et al. (2005) considers transition as a phase measured by time and the progression sequence. This creates a problem to linearity theory because of the extent of the reversal that is not explicitly specified. The concern of classifying higher education as experiencing non-linear transition ignores the experience requirement as part of the career learning process. This classification of linear and non-linear transition is suitable for compulsory schooling levels. Tertiary

education and further studies should be considered as experiencing either smooth or rough transitions.

In college-to-work transitions there is a need for cautious considerations of the experiences that graduates face during the transition process. The other questionable considerations are whether to view the transition as made up of phases or processes. Answers to some of these considerations creates a different view of the whole process of youth transition and its structure. It is understandable that phases had activities but it is logical to consider the transition as made of processes with different activities because of the input and output in the process.

The structure and format of youth transition into the labour market is questionable when it comes to the starting point of the transition. The starting of youth labour transition into the labour market has not been categorically defined and outlined. This consideration of the starting point of the labour market transition is significant to this research because the research participants are not school going individuals but higher education learners (Orr 1992). The concept of linear transition in college-to-work transitions is questionable whether college-to-work transitions are linear. This creates the need to address transition as a process with activities ranging from enrolment into job related qualifications and doing activities that enhance candidates employability. In the school-to-work transitions, the job seekers have to complete a systematic curriculum and focus on specific outcomes. The limitations of treating the transition in higher education as a phase from graduation ignores the process of aligning the labour market requirements during course, program and qualification selection process which is closely linked to the labour market requirements.

The other limitation of considering the process as linear is ignoring the problems associated with individuals who are employed in areas that are different from what

they pursued at college prior to securing their first job.

Female Youths in the Middle Eastern countries face segregation and difficulties in getting employment (Mtango 2004). The theory of youth linearity grouped the majority of male and female youth in linear and non-linear transitions respectively, because females experience long breaks due to reproduction and child care responsibilities. Those female responsibilities make women break from college and employment. The same experiences are experienced by male youths who joined employment after secondary school education and they are doing reversals into higher education to further their studies.

Given the complexities of the Emirati society, this research considers youth transitions as a process from college enrolment to getting employment that forms part of a career of an individual. Treating the youth labour transition as a process from higher education enrolment to securing career-related employment, provides premises for understanding the problems in detail including the progression process during the acquisition of the required skills and qualifications.

The clarification of the boundaries of the application of the concept of labour transition allows the determination and understanding of the limitations of the application of linearity or non-linearity. Considerations of lineality are needed to determine whether the labour transitions are linear, rough or smooth. A smooth transition allows reversals and it should not be considered as problematic and an individual makes choices in the process while a rough transition has more factors outside the individual's control. The definition of college-to-work transition has to include satisfaction of the job seeker with the secured job. What is not clear in the reviewed literature is the definitive position of the researchers on the definition and boundaries of the college-to-work transition process. Goodwin and O'Connor (2007) treats school-to-work transition as a process. According to Vickerstaff (2003:271)

the transition problems are only limited to unemployment and for as long as individuals are working soon after graduation, there are no transition problems as that is regarded as smooth transition or linear transition. A study on the satisfaction of the currently employed individuals and determining their satisfaction levels from the start of their employment in their position might determine the smoothness and or linearity of the transition from college-to-work. Linearity and non-linear transition are experienced during the college-to-work transition, but the most relevant considerations in college-to-work youth transitions should be smooth and rough transitions processes. Linearity or non-linearity does not determine the nature of experiences because they focus on the progression from start to finish.

3.3.2 Non-Linear Youth Transitions

Furlong et al. (2005:20) stated that '...non linear transitions involve breaks, changes of direction and unusual sequences of events. They can involve extended or repeated experiences of unemployment, frequent moves between jobs and returns to education and training after periods in employment.'

This interpretation of non-linear transition can be contested because of its definition. The consideration of moves between jobs and return to education in the definition of non-linear is questionable because that ignores career requirements. In some careers individuals complete basic qualifications and secure employment and work for some time before returning to pursue further studies and that is not problematic.

The reported youth transition problems demonstrate the complexities associated with youth transition. The documented transition experiences show the ups and downs in the transition process (Bandura et al. 2001; Furlong and Cartmel 1997; Goodwin and O'Connor 2004, 2009; Jacob 2008; McDowell 2000; Nystrom et al.

2008; Vickerstaff 2003). Furlong and Cartmel (1997:3) acknowledges the complexities associated with the youth transitions as having social implications among the young people. The majority are staying longer with their families and the process becomes complex because it does not show signs of improvement in some societies. Similarly to the UAE society, job participation by women shows improvement but the nature of employment available for the female graduates is shrinking. This notion is supported by Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon (2008:23) when they stated that

discrimination against women, particularly married women are fuelled by the belief that women are less attached to the labor market and are more likely to quit their jobs after marriage and childbearing... because women are overcrowded in a limited number of sectors, this depresses their wages, giving rise to the gendered wage disparity, which is well documented in the region.

Family and society requirements play a role in determining the labour market involvement of women, especially in the Arab Muslim societies as supported by Mtango (2004). The mobility restrictions on female job-seekers in the UAE worsen the situation, especially with the influx of expatriate workers. The shunning of other occupations by the Emirati nationals, especially in the service industry and in education, creates unmanageable situations. Although a number of female Emirati prefer to work as administrators in schools within their communities, very few prefer to work for private organisations (Farrell 2008).

Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon (2008:22) said that 'women continue to experience greater hardship in their school-to-work transition. While seven out of ten working age men are employed, only two out of every ten working age women have jobs.' The social change is needed, but it makes youth transition more complex to accommodate the changes. In the past, the majority of UAE nationals did not consider educating

their female children. Burden-Leahy (2009:530) stated that the University of the UAE was founded in 1977 and was for male citizens only for some time. A campus for female only students was opened later. That shows male and female citizens were not equitably considered for higher education. The labour market was dominated by male nationals (Table 2.2) with women slowly participating in economic activities of the country but at a slower speed given their higher education attainment levels in the country (Table: 2.1).

UAE nationals are slowly taking positions in almost all government departments but the focus tends to be at management positions. Promotions to managerial levels are quick for the UAE nationals and there is a deficit at operational levels mainly occupied by foreign workers (Marchon and Toledo 2014; Williams et al. 2013). That makes the transition for the youth more complex because they focus on managerial positions and remuneration, given that not all can be managers. The situation becomes difficult to manage because the nationals, although they want to be managers, they lack experience (Farrell 2008).

Emirati male locals who join the labour market after high school without professional qualifications work as operators in the oil and gas industries (Salhi 2010). The UAE society prefer men to be more financially stable than women because of their family supporting responsibilities which put young men at a competitive advantage as compared to their female citizens (Helie and Hoodfar 2012; Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon 2008). Any employment opportunity taken by a woman is viewed as disadvantaging a male job seeker and preference is always given to local men (Salhi 2010).

3.4 The Theoretical Framework

Research study by Farrell (2008:125) provides a framework that guides this research. The theoretical framework (3.2) assists in identifying the possible restrictive factors that hinder the participation of female Emiratis in the labour market.

The research study by Farrell (2008) highlights the existence of factors and their relationship to the dependent variable.

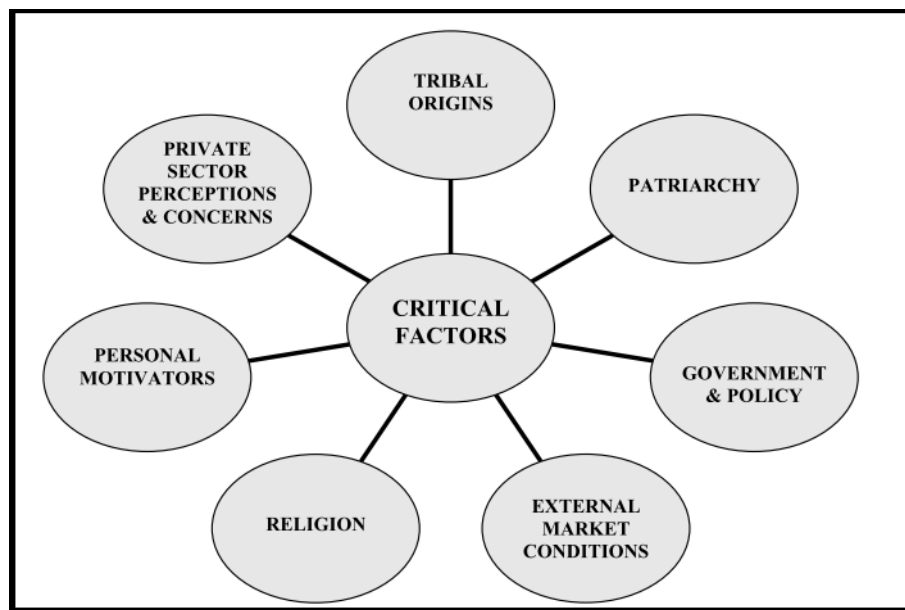


Figure 3.1: The Theoretical Framework (Farrel (2008:125))

3.4.1 The Proposed Theoretical Framework

The critical factors influence the transition to work. The transition to work depend on the critical factors. The factors that form the critical factors (Farrell 2008) represented in the proposed model (Figure 3.2) need analysis through the use of rotation techniques of correlation in factor analysis (Acton et al. 2009; Hair et al. 2010).

The identified factors (Figure 3.2) are expected to demonstrate relationship among themselves. The relationship among factors influence the transition of female graduates from college to work. The use of factor analysis in SPSS is recommended because it determines the correlations among the variables (Acton et al. 2009; Pallant 2007). It must be noted that not all the factors have direct influence on the transition to work. The factor analysis helps in identifying the factors that influence the transition to work. The results require critical analysis of other factors that are not directly influencing the transition to work but contribute to the influence of the critical factors.

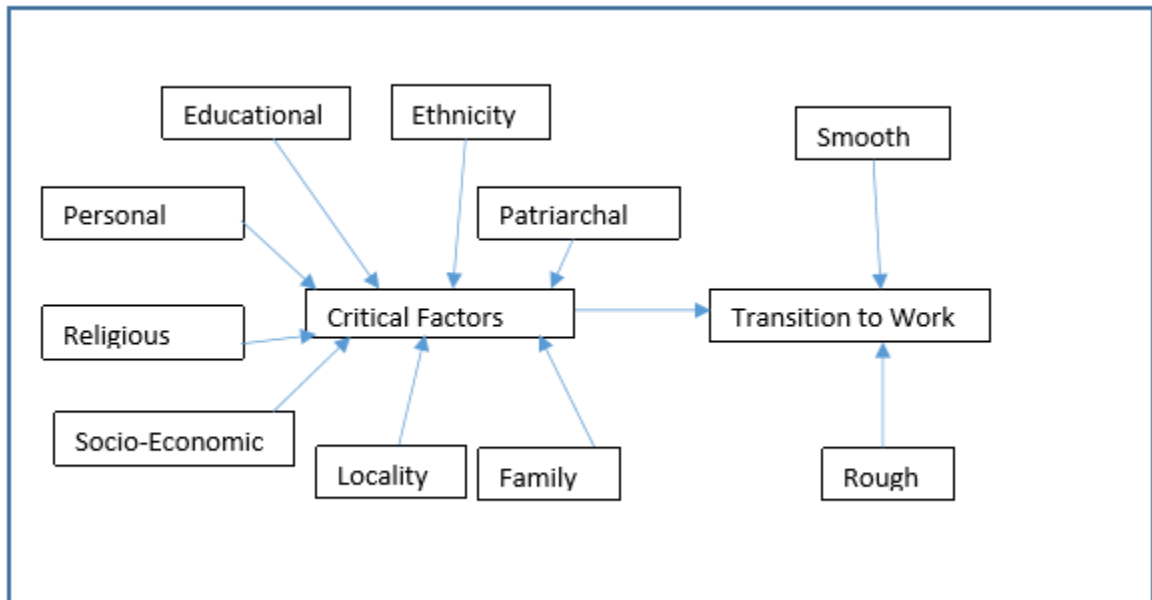


Figure 3.2: The Proposed Theoretical Framework

3.5 Conceptualising College-to-Work Youth Transition

For the purpose of this research, the concept of college-to-work youth transition involves the process of acquiring higher education and fulfilling activities voluntarily and involuntarily to increase the chances of getting employed (Lindberg 2008). The voluntary activities include commitment to acquire acceptable grades, taking part in career counselling, participating freely at career fairs and searching for job openings through different means. Voluntary activities also involve accessing employment opportunities through word of mouth and on-line job searching. Voluntary activities include sending curriculum vitae to several organisations, attending interviews and showing commitment to be selected from the interview pool through performing within the acceptable guidelines of the interviews.

The involuntary activities focus on activities that are out of control of the job seeker, such as the lack of employment opportunities, restrictions based on distance from home, location where the job is situated, the nature of work to be done and other applicable restrictions that hinder the job seekers from participating in activities that enhance the employment opportunities. When a job seeker can not voluntarily do any of the voluntary activities that enhance the chances of getting employment that is characterised as experiencing rough transition, while a job seeker who voluntarily participated in voluntary activities and resulted in getting employment experienced smooth transition.

For the purpose of this study, an individual experiencing smooth transition means achieving what has been planned even if it might not be linear transition. Similarly, a person experiencing a rough transition is having some difficulties in achieving the set career objectives. That might not necessarily mean non-linear, because the

restrictions experienced by some job seekers are not taking them anywhere; therefore the transition is rough and has nothing to do with linearity. This does not mean that the researcher refutes the existence of linear and non-linear transitions, but consider the transition from college to work as best characterised as smooth or rough transitions. For the purpose of this research, college-to-work youth transition is defined as a process from when an individual pursue higher education studies related to an individual's career goals, to a time when the individual secured the first employment opportunity that satisfied the job seeker. These transitions are affected by several factors that are identified and addressed in the coming sections.

3.6 Factors Affecting Female Labour Participation

This study focuses on the barriers that restrict the transition of female youths from college to work in the UAE. Previous research work (Farrell 2008; Wentling and Waight 2001) provides insight into the different types of restrictive factors. Additionally, work by Wentling and Waight (2001) highlights some barriers relevant to this research.

The majority of female graduates in the UAE argue that they have choices of what they want to do but in reality their choices have limitations linked to cultural, social and religious factors (Farrell 2008; Layder et al. 1991; Mayers et al. 2007; Nelson 2004; Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon 2008; Simadi and Kamali 2004). The minority groups in the research study by Wentling and Waight (2001) had little access to job related information. Access to information is very important when searching for employment. This is evident in the research study from Leicester by Goodwin and O'Connor (2005:17) when they said that 'the Leicester girls seemed to be very well informed about the jobs which were within their frames of reference...'

The Leicester girls had the information about the jobs and opportunities available to them because of a number of reasons; especially, the UK society did not restrict females based on religious gender roles to an extent of not allowing women to work and interact in public. Time played a very important role because during those years before the fall of Socialism, there were more opportunities for job seekers. The other reason could be that the opportunities that were readily available to these Leicester girls were dominated by females and only females were interested in such forms of employment (Goodwin and O'Connor 2005).

Weisskoff (1972:162) said that 'well over half of all working women in both the 1900 and 1960 were employed in jobs in which 70% or more of the workers were female.' With this in mind, it is also possible that the type of work that was available to the women of Leicester was lowly paid simply because they did not require any qualifications to do such work and men were not interested in lowly paying jobs because of their social status (Goodwin and O'Connor 2005).

In support of the same notion Goodwin and O'Connor (2004:100) said that 'they (women) were perceived as less academically able and expected therefore to leave school at the earliest opportunity in order to take low skill jobs requiring few or no qualifications.' That means females were forced by circumstances to work because the majority had little choice about their career. What was not mentioned in the research study about the girls of Leicester was whether the girls of that time were all British citizens because that was going to provide deeper understanding into other factors that played a role in the availability of such information to female job seekers. The fact that the researchers did not mention the demographics based on ethnic backgrounds demonstrate the irrelevance of segregation based on ethnicity in their research.

The reviewed research studies on youth transitions from other countries other

than the Middle East, focus on issues of youth unemployment at a high level of complexity while Middle Eastern unemployment problems are still at grass roots level. Youth unemployment problems in the Western countries are different to those experienced in developing and underdeveloped countries. Some of the school-to-work transition debates in developed countries discuss on mechanisms of how to improve youth employment, while in the Middle Eastern and conservative countries, the debates are focusing on mechanisms of introducing females to employment. Female employment is viewed as a new phenomena in Muslim conservative countries and communities like Afghanistan and parts of the UAE.

The majority of the UAE population are of Bedouin genealogy. Although the majority had moved into the cities in search of employment for their male members of the society, they maintained close connection with their Bedouin life style of having their traditional homes in the rural areas (Simadi and Kamali 2004).

According to Wentling and Waight (2001) there are different expectations and responsibilities put on men and women, with men having the dominant position when it comes to employment benefits. In the UAE, men are expected to provide for their families and they have an overall say in decision making process (Nelson 2004).

The following sections address the independent variables, the social factors that influence the dependent variable which is the transition to the labour market.

3.7 The Social Factors

The social factors that are analysed in this research study include religion, ethnicity, family, education, personal, location, patriarchy and socio-economic factors (Figure 3.2). These factors are linked to the practices, values and norms of the UAE society

(Simadi and Kamali 2004).

Female job seekers in the UAE experience similar problems depending on the family cultural values. Employment information is difficult to reach the female job seekers in their communities (Farrell 2008). In the UAE, women and men normally do not interact. Men and women have separate 'majilis', which are gender segregated spaces for interaction (Al-Sharif 2012). Depending on the availability of relevant information, women associations in as far as employment is concerned have limited information due to their limited sources. The term 'wasta' means connections within organisations by people with common interests and influences (Crabtree 2010; Farrell 2008). Their desires are fulfilled easily and those without family connections do not easily get what they want. The majority of people in the UAE with connections (wasta) are men because men are involved in almost all walks of life. Women are disadvantaged because they are restricted in some of the areas because it is socially unacceptable to interact with men, other than immediate family male members (Al-Sharif 2012; Farrell 2008). The privilege of being in the circles that are part of the decision-making process makes male children more powerful than women in the UAE because they easily access information. Female only access information through their male guardians or relatives. Female children without male guardians willing to help have limited opportunities outside the home (Farrell 2008).

Farrell (2008:124) acknowledged that the UAE society is a society with control of power in the hands of men. The attributes that make an individual acceptable in the society are when an individual accept the practices, norms and the values of that society. The principal source of values is associated with religion and this creates a dilemma for women in UAE society (Al-Sharif 2012; Simadi and Kamali 2004). Women are expected to get married, become mothers and take care of their homes. This female role is fulfilled through marriage and payment of dowry as documented

in *The Holy Qur'an*.

Farrell (2008:113) highlights the possible effect of dowry on the Emirati society when she stated that 'the rapidly rising cost of marriage due to greatly increased dowry expectations in line with the swift increase in the country's wealth, marriage to local women has becoming infeasible for Emirati men.'

The more dowry payment, marriage is considered as a business transaction and the more the women are subjected to men as domestic assets. While this topic is sensitive, there is a need to research on the topic empirically. In Afghanistan, another Muslim country, marriage is used to resolve some family disputes through the exchange of female children who are either forced to marry the complainant. Moghadam (2002:20) stated that 'in a patriarchal context, marriage and bride price are a transaction between households, an integral part of property relations and the exchange system, and an indicator of status.' This clearly indicates that women are possessed as human assets. The dowry paying family has the power to treat women as their asset. While this sounds unrealistic to some societies, there are females who are experiencing these hardships in some countries where they still pay dowry for marriage. These practices are happening in different societies with variations, but the variations are not fundamentally different because the founding ideals are connected to religious and cultural beliefs.

3.7.1 The Religious Factors

Religion was identified as a critical factor in Farrell (2008:151) and was approached in this study with caution due to its sensitivity in the region. Usually the analysis followed narrow empiricism because women are failing to enter freely into the labour market due to their religious and family laws (Sezgin 2012).

Conservative Muslim families deny their children to work in organisations that

practice values that are against the ideals of Islam. For example in the UAE, Muslim families deny their children to work for any financial institutions that generate banking interests (*riba*). Interest payable or receivable from any bank is unacceptable in Islam.

Simadi and Kamali (2004:21) stated that 'values represent many things such as the person's view about purity, believing in God, benefit and democracy and so on ...' The values that make an individual have to be in line with the social practices, and failure to meet such social expectations means one is regarded as an outcast. Simadi and Kamali (2004:21) went on to say 'in the Arabic Moslem society, the first source of values is religion' The values are affected by how people interact in the society and the way people live influence and affect the values that are considered socially acceptable.

The head cover that is considered Islamic in Islamic countries was worn in other parts of the world as a sign to cover heads of married women and that differentiated married from the unmarried women. The same sentiment was highlighted by Megahed and Lack (2011:403) when they stated that 'in the pre-Islamic world, the veil served to differentiate between 'respectable' women and 'available' women and worn by upper class women until the early 20th century.' Emirati women are not allowed to uncover their heads in public areas because it is a sin (Al-Sharif 2012). In societies where they follow arranged marriages, women are expected to behave modestly in public and the availability of a man not known to the family is regarded as a sin and that is documented in *The Holy Qur'an* that a woman should dress modestly (Al-Sharif 2012; Farrell 2008). Women were expected to be covered all the time to show obedience. Dressing modestly was interpreted by men as covering the whole body and no attractive part of a woman's body should be exposed to the public.

Heaton (1996:44) stated that '*The Holy Qur'an* teaches that husbands should be providers and wives should be obedient to their husbands.' The major question of concern is the level of obedience and in most cases the norms act as the determinants of what is acceptable within the norms. Husbands in Islamic societies are at liberty to apply restrictive actions on their women. When a woman does not follow orders that is regarded as disobedience and she could even be killed (Al-Sharif 2012).

There are social experiences that are even experienced differently in Muslim societies. The experiences of women in Pakistan, the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan have different interpretations in some of the issues that are linked to education, employment, social norms, family laws, culture and religion especially, with the treatment of women (Al-Jazeera 2014).

Simadi and Kamali (2004:22) stated that 'traditionally, the UAE society as a part of Arab Moslem society, has been characterised by close interpersonal relationships....including the nuclear family, relatives and close neighbours and the traditional socialization process emphasizes obedience, closeness and loyalty to parents rather than independence and self reliance.'

Youths from Emirati society have to behave according to the norms of the society and any deviation from the norms were unacceptable. The religious factors were so paramount that they dictate the type of society, its norms and its social values. Any values that are opposing the religious values are never allowed, especially in conservative Muslim societies (Al-Jazeera 2014).

Persaud (2009:129) stated that 'students who have a strong sense of spirit and confidence in their abilities will have a more successful transition than those who do not.' The values that are upheld and expected from a good child in the UAE include the submission to God, which is the focal point of Islam. It must be noted that very little will ever be suggested that is contrary to Islamic teachings. The following

section addresses Tribal and ethnicity factors. Ethnicity is another sensitive topic in the UAE.

3.7.2 The Tribal Origins and Ethnicity Factors

The UAE is a country with a tremendous cultural diversity in terms of its labour force and its national composition. The UAE was a group of tribal communities before the union in 1971 (Morris 2005). Al-Jabri (2009:162) stated that civil society was temporary while Bedouin or rural society was natural, where individuals are part of natural systems from birth and cannot withdraw from them. The experiences and interpretations by Bedouins are viewed as natural phenomena and should be maintained. Such interpretations of the Bedouin society consider the continuity of traditional life styles that clearly showed gender segregated responsibilities and division of labour and duties, where women are considered as home-bound.

Research study by Vanoverberghe et al. (2008:323), although done in a European country, had similarities to the UAE in that, women and Emiratis who did not possess the UAE citizenship identification faced difficulties in getting employment and the majority took long time, if ever, to get employment. The majority of the people in the UAE are of Bedouin origin and those who did not have identification papers since the founding of the UAE had to be incorporated into the Emirati society during the reign of the founder of the union, Sheikh Zayed Al Nahayan (Morris 2005). Those who managed to get their identifications verified got identification papers and were naturalised as UAE citizens, but a sizeable number failed to be incorporated (Morris 2005). A number of them hold a Comoroan passport due to a citizenship dispute with the UAE local authority. The Comoros Islands government in the Mozambican channel in Africa, offered passports to all stateless individuals claiming to be Emiratis. Those with Comoroan passport are treated as foreign

citizens even though they have never been to the Comoros Islands. They require work visas to work in the UAE just like foreign citizens seeking employment in the UAE. They are allowed to attend schooling but not allowed to attend state funded institutions. They claim to be Emiratis and they continue practising their Bedouin lifestyle.

3.7.3 Patriarchal Factors

Ghvamshahidi (1995:137), Kalabamu (2006:237) and Farrelly (2011:2) coincided in their definitions of patriarchy when Kalabamu (2006:237) defined patriarchy as 'a gendered power system: a network of social, political and economic relationships through which men dominate and control female labour, reproduction and sexuality as well as define women's status, privileges and rights in a society.'

While some researchers, such as Schvaneveldt et al. (2005:79), suggested that power control of men over their women is slowly vanishing especially when people become more educated, is evidenced in some societies. That is not the case in all societies because in countries like the UAE, females are more educated and they married Emiratis men who are less educated, but men maintain family power control responsibilities (Heaton 1996). This same sentiment was echoed by Alexander and Welzel (2011:249) when they stated that Islam supported patriarchy as part of Muslim identity. In other countries men get married to a woman and do not pay any form of dowry to the female's family. The payment of dowry contributes to the man's control in a patriarchal society (Kalabamu 2006).

Ghvamshahidi (1995:137) stated that 'patriarchy can be seen as a set of beliefs and attitudes toward all phenomena generating roles and regulations that determine a distinct arrangement for the relationship between men and women.' In UAE and in other patriarchal countries, women are faced with hard choices; to be faithful to their

religion and to maintain their reputation in the society as well behaved wives and mothers. Ghvamshahidi (1995:138) criticised the different Quranic interpretations that made women subordinates of men when she highlighted that 'it must be noted that most of the interpretations have been the work of Muslim male elites who came to power after the prophet Mohammed's death in Arabia.'

Although there are differences in their interpretations, they all focus on controlling family relationships with men in charge of family management (Bowlby et al. 1997; Carlson 2007; Damji and Lee 2001; Ghvamshahidi 1995; Heaton 1996; Kalabamu 2006; Mernissi 1982; Moghadam 2002; Walby 2002).

The Taliban in Afghanistan (Moghadam 2002) and Boko Haram in Nigeria (Zenn et al. 2013) do not allow their women to be educated. They also restricted women from participating in public activities because they view Western education as negatively influencing their Muslim culture. On the same note of cultural contamination, Meir and Gekker (2011) acknowledges the changes among the Bedouin in Israel who had changed their way of living and stayed in fixed spaces. Although they limited their mobility as nomads, they still followed their Bedouin culture.

Farrell (2008:137) highlighted the effects of the power control invested in men and how they exercised control over women in their choices, socialisation and marriage decisions. The Middle East and North African region follow similar cultural values and practices that are closely connected to the main religion of Islam. Their treatment of women vary, but they are common in the division of labour among men and women because the guidance is written in *The Holy Qur'an*. Although there are some changes in the expectations and the role of women today, most Muslim men prefer women to be home-bound and have limited public sphere involvement. Salhi (2010:113) quoted a party member in Algeria addressing women at a women

conference as follows; 'Dear Women, dear mothers, dear sisters and wives. Be women! Always and forever remain women! Give us many children. Sweep your floors and polish your furniture. Make us good soup, and if you have time weave the wool and make some rugs.'

That demonstrates women are expected to be at home at all times, even when countries experience unrest such as the 2010 Arab uprising in the Middle East and North Africa. It was common to hear statements such as 'even women and children were on the streets,' showing that women were not expected to participate. This same sentiment was echoed by Evans (2009:340), when quoting Isabel Huerta in Mexico during the 1968 uprising as saying 'the companeros (friends) wanted to send us to the kitchen, but we wanted to dedicate ourselves to learning to propagandise and to do what they were doing.'

This happened in a country in another region of the world where the religion is completely different from Islam. Instances such as this triggered the need to review patriarchal practices as the main cause of many restrictions experienced by women and young children in most societies. It must be noted that these restrictions are not only experienced in the Middle East but in other patriarchal societies in the world.

Farrelly (2011) noted that historical materialism and patriarchy are closely linked. Farrelly (2011) identified several theses from the work of Karl Marx, starting with the thesis of basic materialism. This thesis is relevant to this research study because the restrictions to labour market participation infringe the benefits to be enjoyed by female Emiratis. From a broader perspective, each human being require basic needs for survival. These basic needs are not in abundance and in some cases not in existence, therefore human beings need to work for survival (Ali 2010) and this was supported by the labour and scarcity thesis.

Even in the distant past, when food was abundant, human beings had to go out into the forest hunting and gathering food for their families. The role of hunting was for men and women were tasked with the responsibilities of gathering food provided that the environment was safe to do so. Any duty or responsibility of food gathering was not easy because such food was found in territorial demarcated locations. Such demarcations had to be treated with caution because fighting occurred and the stronger clans or groups dominated. This made men as the responsible members of such duties and thus reinforcing their patriarchal power structures. Women were not expected to fight for their men and instead they were protected by men while they were in their homes, taking care of the children and doing the domestic chores that were not regarded as dangerous (Farrelly 2011). The patriarchal responsibilities never evolved with changing times.

Youth unemployment problems are mainly considered as young male problems and not relevant for females because females get married. Females are that they will receive financial support and their problems are taken care by their husbands (Williams et al. 2013). Most women feel that they are being comforted when told not to worry about their future because they get married and their worries become their husbands' responsibilities. The male children are reminded to work harder because they are responsible for their future families.

Schvaneveldt et al. (2005:81) clearly stated the different roles of men and women when they stated that 'the husband assumes the role of the ruler, superior, controller, oppressor and master. The wife is often relegated to the role of servant and a submissive creature.'

This viewed women as unproductive and no good comes out of them. The definition of patriarchy (Kalabamu 2006), and the comments by Schvaneveldt et al. (2005) demonstrate the experiences of women in most Gulf countries. Changing

these social practices is resisted because they benefited those in control of power in the society. Those who are suggesting that patriarchy is vanishing have to understand that the majority of the conservative societies that closely link patriarchy to Islam are not in favour of changes because changes are against the religious values (Schvaneveldt et al. 2005). Social systems need to be understood as they are mechanisms that are put in place to safeguard the members of the society as correctly stated by Nash (1999:451) who said, 'social systems come to have established modes of practice which is how they operate and such practices of child-rearing, education, economic production, religious belief and the like, may be regarded as having causal properties (thus, patterns of aggregate behaviour that are stable over time.)' Social systems are complex and strengthen the patriarchal structures because they are supported by human positions and relations that are closely connected to religion and culture.

3.7.4 Personal Factors

Another category of barriers cited by Wentling and Waight (2001) are individual related barriers that focus on skills acquired, language, family, career guidance and lack of information, to mention a few. While the listed barriers are relevant to this research study, it is important to determine the characteristics of a good Emirati child, and reflect on perceptions of both male and female citizens in a society.

The focus of this research is on personal preferences, choices, behaviour and attitudes toward labour market participation. The fact that male graduates more easily get employment than their female counterparts, yet they are both exposed to individual-related barriers, needs to be pursued further. It is understandable that individually-related barriers are fundamentally entrenched in individual personalities (Simadi and Kamali 2004). They might not be fully replicated in other individuals,

but the fact that they affect the majority of females in a society prompted interest for this research.

Detailed analysis of the characteristics of being a good child needs to be pursued. The focus is on what makes a good child in an Emirati Muslim community and the effect it has on the female children, who are closely guarded and protected in UAE society (Meir and Gekker 2011; Moghadam 2002).

In patriarchal societies, young boys are given the freedom to make their own decisions simply because they are in constant interaction with mature men who are in power and control the communities and societies. Boys are prepared to be future leaders. Girls get married at a young age with the majority of them married before they turn twenty years of age. As a result, they are treated as lacking decision-making abilities because of both their young age and lack of interaction with men who are the decision makers in the UAE society (Craig and Sawrikar 2009).

In a conservative and restrictive patriarchal society, female children rarely attempt things out of the norm. Goodwin and O'Connor (2004) gave an account of female children in the 1960s who wanted to be like their mothers. It was true that female children gained vast experiences from their mothers and in turn they admired their mothers and wanted to do the same. This is a result of limited access to information and lack of other options.

There is need to consider personal factors from an individualistic perspective, focusing on rational choice theory and preference theory. Blackburn et al. (2002:515) stated that 'rational choice theory is, in one sense tautological, asserting that people choose to act in the ways that appear to best serve their interests. It would be odd indeed to have a theory that suggested people did not choose to pursue the ends they wanted to pursue.'

Blackburn et al. (2002) acknowledged the weaknesses of rational theory in a

patriarchal society. It ignores the restrictions faced by the vulnerable members of the society because the focus of the theory was on socio-economic decisions. The pursuance of certain actions in some patriarchal societies does not fulfil the individual interests for ordinary citizens, but the interests of those in power.

Preference theory needs critical analysis because when Blackburn et al. (2002:523) quoted Hakim (2006) he suggested that there were three types of women, the 'home-centred, the work-centred and the adaptive women'. The understanding of home-centred women is based on the circumstances that force them to choose to be at home and the majority of the decisions are based on family laws (Helie and Hoodfar 2012). The majority of those who decided to be at home focus their lives on child rearing, which might not be an individual preference but a result from pressure from the husband, family and the community (Al-Sharif 2012).

The work-centred women were focusing on professional career and they were either married and working at the same time. Some were single and decided to work and never got married. Others found themselves forced into the home-centred category at first, and at a later stage of their lives they pursued work career of their choice. The majority of Emirati families have nannies and maids. The understanding is that their intention is to become work-centred and leave their children in the hands of the care givers. Even some of those with maids and nannies at home choose to be home-centred mothers and others are forced to stay at home.

The third group is the adaptive women and, according to Blackburn et al. (2002:523), they did not fit in the home-centred or the work-centred categories. This was because of a lack of education during their early years meant they could not be either at work or at home, they had to find means of supporting themselves.

The UAE has a majority of home-centred women and a few work-centred and adaptive women (Farrell 2008; Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon 2008). The few who could

not support themselves get support from the government and they become home-centred. Home-based business initiatives are common in the UAE to encourage women to work from home. The UAE men are very supportive of home-based businesses run by their female family members. Whether this is a way to encourage home-based entrepreneurship or to encourage exclusion from public spaces requires more empirical research.

3.7.5 Educational Factors

The majority of female graduates in the UAE, pursue non-engineering studies because most of females in schools follow the arts stream, compared to the boys who pursue the science stream (Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon 2008). This is attributed by the gender segregated educational system that has different educational objectives and outcomes for boys and girls. The majority of young men who pursue science streams join in-house training or apprenticeships in the oil and gas industries. The apprentices receive generous packages as remuneration to encourage others to join the oil and gas industries (Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon 2008).

The UAE does not follow a co-education system in its public institutions of learning, both at schools and at higher education levels. The public tertiary education is only for the UAE locals. The gender-segregated schools allow the government to provide gender-segregated programmes. There is a need to probe the relevance of the qualifications of the female graduates because that contributes to the transition problems. Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon (2008) stated that 'the high level of resources and time committed by parents and students to education has contributed to the rapid increase in quantity, but not quality of education.' The weakness of gender segregated educational schools is that the system favours one gender from the other in terms of capabilities and career orientation through gender

aligned programmes. This does not produce fair results and outcomes for boys and girls in the UAE.

3.7.6 Socio-Economic Factors

The Middle Eastern countries experience a dramatic growth in economical developments since the oil and gas boom in the region (Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon 2008). The oil boom did not change the gender roles of men and women, although a number of researchers attempt to demonstrate that there is no differentiation between male and female gendered responsibilities (Farrell 2008).

Research studies by Bowlby et al. (1997); Ghvamshahidi (1995); Heaton (1996); Megahed and Lack (2011); Salhi (2010) demonstrate that the roles assigned to men and women were centred on patriarchal practices although some took a more liberal stance that put men in positions of power control . It is considered shameful for a Muslim man to request financial support from his working wife. The teaching from *The Holy Qur'an* reaffirmed by (Heaton 1996:44) that the head of the family is responsible for the management of the family. The same sentiment, although echoed differently by (Megahed and Lack 2011:405), valued the educated wives as important in the bringing up of disciplined children and the focus was never on their family financial contribution.

Bowlby et al. (1997:345) stated that 'the organisation of society into those who will legitimately occupy the world of paid work as the primary adult role and those whose main role 'naturally' is to care for and socialise children is part of the patriarchal division of necessary tasks between men and women.' Even when women did work from home and contributed financially, such work is not valued as work because it was associated with work done in the home. Women are associated with reproduction responsibilities and, according to some men, women are expected

to be restricted in the home, taking care of children and not expected to financially support the family. The same sentiments of not allowing women to work because financial contribution in the home is not their responsibility, but for men Salhi (2010:113) quoted Abdelkader Moghni as saying 'women should go home and leave their jobs for the thousands of young unemployed men. They waste their time, spending their salaries on make-up and dresses.' This shows that in some patriarchal societies, each employed woman is considered as disadvantaging an unemployed man and these communities do not consider female unemployment as problematic.

From an empirical point of view, it was important to probe further on the sentiment and considerations of the Emirati men on the values contributed by their educated and working women in the UAE, as that provides insight and reaffirmation of the patriarchal division of responsibilities and value of men and women.

Farrell (2008:115) highlights a questionable point when she stated that 'while higher education is free at all levels for Emirati nationals, not all locals may be able to take advantage of this opportunity. Some individuals may come from strata which consider higher education unimportant, others may be unable to attend due to familial economic needs and others may be attached by tradition to family-run businesses.' Education is free and in some cases free transportation to and from college is provided by the state, but other families can not afford higher education citing family financial reasons. This inconsistently demonstrates family restrictions because women are not allowed to study in some communities.

There are other factors that restrict Emiratis from entering higher education. Some Emiratis live in the rural communities that are far away from the city where most institutions of higher learning are located. That force them to commute or relocate to areas closer to the institutions of higher learning and at considerable cost. To some, relocation is not an option. Lack of a male member willing to chaperone

female members to college and or to work results in hiring family chauffeurs, thereby increasing the financial costs that acted as restrictions for some families. The other reason could be that female Emiratis are not encouraged to further their studies because they know that they will not be employed after wasting their time and effort in getting higher qualifications.

3.7.7 Locality Factors

In this research, location is linked to the local communities because they demonstrate diversity in the economy of the country. The location plays a very important role although the country is a federation. Each Emirate has its own rules and regulations that affect the economy in one way or the other.

Locality problems do not just emerge when job seekers are in search of employment because locality influenced the bringing up of UAE citizens. The type of education system in each locality influence the transition of youth from college to work. The focus of each emirate affects the results needed to enter higher education. The further the location from the economic hub, the more difficult it is for female mobility because female children must be accompanied by a chaperone at all times when out of the home.

In the UAE, the concept of 'wasta' (connections and relationships) is not considered as nepotism as in the western culture. It is considered as helping someone of your own society or someone closely connected to the family. Farrell (2008:132) confirms that the concept of helping someone who does not deserve, forms part of the social practice in the Emirati society. Some boast of benefited from the practice. 'Wasta' disadvantage deserving people and strongly disadvantage other Emirati nationals, especially those from other economically weak Emirates because they have less connections in the system.

Farrell (2008:132) stated that 'some participants seemed to think that 'wasta' was an intrinsic component of Emirati life and were therefore accepting of its daily impact.' Location and name affiliations play important roles in securing things of need in the UAE. The other issues of concern are the type of jobs that are made available to other members of the Emirati society. These types of jobs are not attractive, but there are no choices given the application of 'wasta'. While helping members of the community in securing employment is recommendable, the practice needs to be done fairly and objectively, contradicting the intentions because the intentions are never meant to be fair and objective. There are communities that are popular and that popularity comes with strong connections. People from those well-connected families benefit more than others.

3.7.8 Family Factors

The reviewed literature related to family highlights some questionable roles of a girl child before marriage. In patriarchal societies, it is clear that the power of control is the responsibility of men and women are relegated to domestic chores. What is interesting is the support of the same sentiment when (Heaton 1996:41) said 'marriage is often the first formal event marking women's initiation into adult familial roles, age at marriage plays a determining role in the subsequent life course of women.' This clearly shows that women are not considered as contributing members of the family institution before marriage. This complicates the position of an unmarried female child in her family as female children are not considered to occupy a hierarchical position in a patriarchal society. The achievement by Emirati women to further their studies and not get married young changes the social practices. Heaton (1996:42) stated that 'socioeconomic and familial roles are often considered to be incompatible, early marriage not only directs women toward

familial roles but also directs them away from socioeconomic attainment.'

Once female members of the family get married, then the chances of participating in socioeconomic activities are reduced. The majority of Emirati females who got married young realised that education allowed them to contribute economically in running their families and they returned to colleges and universities to pursue higher qualifications.

A male Emirati child has the freedom to do whatever is deemed manhood by the family and the society for as long as they observe the cultural, social and religious practices within their society. A family in a Muslim society is not just restricted to the borders of the home but goes beyond that narrow empiricism. Simadi and Kamali (2004:22) said that 'an individual has a network of close ties, including the nuclear family, relatives and close neighbours.' This shows that in a Muslim society, a family is not only made of immediate family members, but includes close neighbours and other relatives (Simadi and Kamali 2004). Any member of a Muslim family in the community is expected to act according to the community expectations that are guided by the teachings from *The Holy Qur'an*. Any deviations from these expectations have implications in many aspects that influence many social aspects including marriage decisions. The community members support the idea of a full face cover before marriage. Less approachable young females are regarded as obedient and faithful to their religion (Al-Sharif 2012; Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon 2008). Religious and obedient children from religious families receive high respect within the UAE communities.

3.8 Middle East Youth Transition Perspective

The number of research study on youth transition in the Middle East focused on transition to adulthood (Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon 2008) and recently new research studies on transition into the labour market started to emerge (Farrell 2008; Mayers et al. 2007; Nelson 2004). There is a need for systematic empirical research on the transition from college to work that focuses on the restrictive factors. Understanding systematic societal factors that hinder the transition of youth labour participation provides an insight into the difficulties experienced by female job seekers. The call for systematic research on youth transition reveals the underlying causes and difficulties faced by female graduates in securing employment. This also reveals the experiences of the disadvantaged because the youth transition debates from other western countries do not address the fundamental problems faced by female job-seekers in the Middle-East.

3.8.1 Family Perspective: A Son and a Daughter

Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon (2008:27) compares the family laws in Morocco and the Middle Eastern countries of Iran and Saudi Arabia in terms of divorce and they stated that 'family law grants women greater rights and equality in marriage and divorce ... in Iran and Saudi Arabia, the sharia gives men the exclusive right to divorce their wives.' Morocco, Iran and Saudi Arabia are Muslim countries and yet they have different views on the same issues of women treatment, which leads to questions about the rationale behind the differences. That is attributed to patriarchal practices, dominance and interpretations of Islamic laws. That automatically gives husbands the power to divorce their wives without taking responsibility for their actions. Women are free to divorce their husbands if they are not happy but, the implications of divorce are complex.

A detailed analysis of the rationale behind wearing the face veil demonstrates that a victim is double victimised. Women wear the veil so promiscuous men are not attracted by facial features on women faces and tempted to act sinfully (Al-Sharif 2012). Therefore a woman is sinful because Al-Sharif (2012:98) mentioned that,

for Saudi extremists I was awra, the word awra means a sinful thing, an intimate part of the body you should not show. It is against the law to show it....my face was awra, my voice was awra, even my name was awra. Women should not be called by name, but by daughter of.., wife of... or mother of ...

As the custodian of the holy shrines for most Muslims, Saudi Arabia has influenced the majority of other Gulf and non-Gulf Muslim countries (Al-Sharif 2012). Women should cover to reduce temptations of men to sin. This understanding is not questioned because some of the precautions taken are treated as a way to protect the vulnerable members of the society (Eltahawy 2012; Ruwanpura 2008). This results in not questioning some of the social practices as they logically implicate men who hold positions of power. Al-Sharif (2012:98) stated that,

in the days of Sahwa...I was taught that, if I left home, I would be fully responsible for any evil that would befall me, because men cannot be expected to control their instincts. I am the seductive fruit, they said, and I would seduce men in all my shapes and forms, so I was made to stay home.

To protect women from being victimised by men, men controlled women by providing strict rules through family laws. In societies where the family names come from the father side of the parents, value male children for generation continuity. Families in China (Wang 2005) and Korea (Larsen et al. 2010)

prefer male over female children and that demonstrates patriarchal tendencies. Larsen et al. (2010:317) reaffirmed that when he said that 'sons are critical to families in a variety of ways, for continuity of the lineage ... and for providing support in old age.' Male children have responsibilities that are different to those of female children yet once married, male children are expected to take care of their parents and that ignores the role of female partners in marriages. This shows that men, even married are expected to financially support their ageing parents. Male child responsibility ignores the possibility of contribution from female children because they get married and become members of a new family and assumed to have no influence in decision-making.

The majority of abandoned children in China were girls and those stolen were boys (Wang 2005). The one-child policy in China required each family to have no more than one child and that policy resulted in gender imbalance and female children were not favoured in the community because of patriarchal tendencies (Larsen et al. 2010; Wang 2005).

Child preference influence the education of children in countries with limited resources. Males are the most preferred children and that influence the number of children a family can have in some countries in Africa, Asia and elsewhere (Wang 2005; Warrington and Kiragu 2012). Families with first born female children and still reproducing tend to continue reproducing until they get male children in the UAE and in other patriarchal societies.

According to Wang (2005), the socialist ideology influenced children gender preferences when he stated that 'in China, the socialist revolution did not clean out son preference value in individuals' minds.' In the past, Chinese families did not provide equal importance between their male and female children. The segregation and discrimination of children based on their gender resulted in male children being

preferred and encouraged to advance educationally and professionally. There were some similarities in children gender preferences in the UAE and China, when Wang (2005:6) stated that 'in traditional China, sons are considered a greater economic asset than daughters who will leave the natal household upon marriage.' The same sentiment is echoed by (Schvaneveldt et al. 2005:81), when they stated that the birth of a female child brings sadness in the family, unlike when a boy is born. (Schvaneveldt et al. 2005:81) stated that 'if it was a girl the midwife said nothing, if it was a boy, the midwife would say 'Praise Allah' (Praise God).'

The reviewed literature viewed most patriarchal communities as less caring and consider women as less valuable. They failed to engage women fully in social issues because female children left their homes of birth and moved to another family. The vulnerability thesis by Farrelly (2011:11) stated that 'as species, humans are intrinsically vulnerable to morbidity and mortality. Furthermore, the historical condition of humanity has been one of scarcity of goods and high child mortality.'

Members of patriarchal societies view this thesis as favouring their patriarchal superstructure and whatever is done to exclude women is covered under the vulnerability thesis. In patriarchal societies, women are considered vulnerable to rape, sexual abuse and mistreatment therefore, they need to be protected and restricted from environments that are not safe (Al-Sharif 2012). The best solution is to address and change the mindsets of men who cause those vulnerabilities rather than to exclude women from the social activities because of fear of the dangers caused by same male members of their society.

Schvaneveldt et al. (2005:81) stated that 'the role of women evolved into being good and obedient wives and mothers.' This shows that a good female is the one who is obedient to the husband and does not do anything that negatively affects the traditional and social values and practices. A good female child becomes a good

wife and mother. The focus is on the characteristics of being a woman and not focusing on the possible contribution to family management and the community (Simadi and Kamali 2004).

3.9 Conclusion

This literature review demonstrates different experiences with youth transition. In an endeavour to understand and gain more insight into youth unemployment problems, literature from global and regional perspectives are reviewed. From a Chinese perspective, Wang and Lowe (2011) highlights the youth transition in a knowledge-based society and from the Eastern Europe perspective, Toomse (2003) acknowledges the importance of understanding the youth transition from an individual and societal point of view.

In all the reviewed literature on youth transition problems outside the Middle East the focus was complex but different from the experiences reported from the UAE (Farrell 2008; Mayers et al. 2007; Walby 2002). The level of complexity of the youth transition in the Middle East is a result of societal values, practices and norms that are closely connected to their religion of Islam which consider Islam as the way of life. The interpretations of documented evidence in *The Holy Qur'an* creates restrictions for women to participate and interact in public (Helie and Hoodfar 2012).

The research question allows me to review various literature on school-to-work transition in the Middle East and elsewhere. The reviewed literature did not identify the actual causes of the restrictions that hinder UAE female graduates from entering the labour market. The reviewed literature identified some of the critical social factors that affect youth transition into the labour market. The research addresses

educational, socio-economic, locality, patriarchal, family, religious, personal and ethnicity factors (Farrell 2008). The implications of religious interpretations on the believers, create restrictions because of the beliefs that are deeply entrenched in individuals and changing such beliefs require higher values to the existing value systems.

The first sub-question attempts to understand the factors that hinder the transition of female Emirati graduates from entering the labour market. The first sub-question, **What are the factors that restrict the transition of female Emiratis from college to employment?**, was partially answered through the identification of possible factors in the reviewed literature principally from the research study by Farrell (2008). The literature for example from Al-Jabri (2009); Farrell (2008); Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon (2008); Wentling and Waight (2001) provided some insight in experiences from both the region and other parts of the world where youth transitions problems are experienced. Although the work by Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon (2008) focused on the transition to adulthood, the other social experiences, such as the roles and responsibilities of men and women, contribute in understanding the restrictions that already exist in the Middle Eastern countries. Although the restrictions are not directly linked to barring women from entering the labour market, they restrict women from participating in social activities which in turn strongly influence the labour market participation. Transition to adulthood (Posti-Ahokas and Palojoiki 2014; Salehi-Isfahani and Dhillon 2008) paid attention to the ability to be sustainable, but the focus was mainly on men fulfilling their duties.

Research by Farrell (2008) provides evidence of Emirati culture that hinders the labour market participation and, although the focus is on the private sector, the research creates an assumption that female graduates have easy access into the public

sector labour market, which is not the case. The lack of systematic research on youth unemployment requires a thorough consideration in doing research that addresses the basic youth unemployment problems. Such systematic research contributes to debates on youth transition in the Middle East. The lack of research work on youth unemployment problems makes any research study on youth unemployment valuable but lacking systematic solution to youth unemployment problems. This research contributes to the debates on youth transition by systematically reviewing research study by Farrell (2008) and analyse the level of influence of each factor.

The second sub-question, **How do these factors affect the transition of female graduates from entering the labour market?**, attempts to understand how each factor identified in the first sub-question affects the transition of female graduates from college to work. The reviewed literature did not fully confirm how the restrictions affect labour market participation. The lack of information from the reviewed literature influence the research methods for this research study. The restrictions on women from leaving their homes prevent women from entering the labour market. The manifestation of patriarchal practices deny women the opportunity to work by convincing women that the working environment and the nature of work in industries are not suitable for Emirati women. Women then shunned such employment opportunities, citing poor remuneration and unsuitable working conditions.

The third sub-question, **What are the implications of the restrictions that restrict the transition of female Emiratis from college to employment?**, attempts to understand the implications of the restrictions that restrict the transition of female graduates from college to work. This sub-question is partially answered by documented evidence from other societies. The implications of youth unemployment in Tunisia caused the Arab uprising in year 2010. In Farrell

(2008), some research participants mentioned an increase of divorce among Emirati youth because married women were not allowed to work. Positive implications are that, the future generations of girls are not expected to experience the same restrictions being experienced by their current educated parents. The debates on youth transitions require a new detailed analysis of the relevance and application of school-to-work transitions theories in college-to-work debates given the existing conceptual differences. Theories and debates on linear and non-linear transitions require further analysis on their application to college-to-work transitions.

The fourth sub-question, **What recommendations should be made to the labour market policy makers to increase the participation of Emirati females in the labour market?**, was partially answered from different reviewed literature that documented evidence of manipulation of Islamic teachings to foster the patriarchal agendas. The government needs to clarify its obligation to fulfil the United Nations Millennium Development Goals initiative.

The reviewed literature provided insight into the complexity of the research in a number of aspects; firstly the research focuses on the UAE, a Muslim nation but with vast cultural diversity. The society is based on Islamic values and yet it does not fully declare itself as an Islamic state (Simadi and Kamali 2004). The treatment of women in the UAE is clearly not defined as liberal therefore, the difficulties in getting literature that clearly state the current statistics of female employment. Secondly, the lack of repository of previous research work limit the availability of the empirical evidence that is related to this research topic. The absence of empirical research evidence on youth transition from college to work in the UAE creates a gap for research in almost all aspects of youth transition and female unemployment problems. Youth problems experienced in other advanced countries are at a higher level of complexity while the problems in the Middle East are still at a domestic

and fundamental level focusing on division of labour between men and women. The reviewed literature on university-to-college (Olah et al. 2015) addresses issues that are at a higher level of conceptualisation in comparison to the current youth transition problems faced in the UAE.

The next chapter focuses on the philosophical considerations and the methods selected for this research.

Chapter 4

Philosophical Considerations and The Research Process.

4.1 Introduction

In the previous Chapter 3, the literature related to the transition of Emirati females into the labour market was searched and reviewed. The literature review provided some insight into the factors that hinder the Emirati female transition from college to work. The reviewed research show research gaps that are going to be addressed in this research project. In an attempt to understand the research gaps in youth transitions, a well-thought research process is needed to unravel the hidden insights.

This Chapter 4, the research philosophical considerations and the research process, begins with Section 4.1 that outlines the chapter content. Section 4.2 addresses the philosophical considerations, covering the rationale behind the use of the philosophical position undertaken. This section also covers the ontological, epistemological and philosophical positions of the researcher. Section 4.3 addresses the research design used and its justification, followed by Section 4.4 that covers

the methodological procedure and its justification. Section 4.4 continues to cover the qualitative research as the initial stage of the applied methodology. It gives details of the sampling of the participants in this research and justify the sampling strategy. The dominating themes required to develop the questionnaire for the quantitative research are addressed in the same section. The quantitative methods use questionnaires to gather data from the research participants. Section 4.4 continues to address the reliability and validity of the research, paying attention to issues of ethics and the contribution of this piece of work to knowledge. Section 4.5 explores the data management tools and issues of research confidentiality. The strengths and limitations of mixed methods research are covered in Section 4.6. Section 4.7 explores the limitations of the research design. Finally Section 4.8 concludes the chapter.

4.2 Philosophical Concerns and Considerations

Issues of ontology and epistemology are important when designing social research as they influence the methodology and the philosophical position of the researcher (Mason 2002). Constructionism is a philosophical position that treats the society as continuously being influenced by the human beings through their interpretations and actions (Bryman 2008; Mason 2002). The ontological position in this research takes its conceptual framework from the work of Blumer (1969) and Benzie and Allen (2001) and is based on the treatment of society as a 'symbolic interaction'. Blumer (1969:80) stated that,

to indicate something is to extricate it from its setting, to hold it apart, to give it a meaning ...to make it into an object... The object is a product of the individual's disposition to act instead of being an

antecedent stimulus which evokes the act....the proper picture is that he (the human) constructs his objects on the basis of his on-going activity.

Contrary to Bryman (2008) who consider ontological considerations of objectivism and constructionism as different philosophical positions, Blumer (1969) viewed both objectism and constructionism as happening in a human being's experiences when interacting in the society through interpretations of objects and symbols presented to them. Apart from what has been alluded to above by Blumer (1969), Blumer (1969:80) further stated that,

in any of his (human being) countless acts, whether minor, like dressing himself, or major, like organizing himself for professional career, the individual is designating different objects to himself, giving them meaning, judging their suitability to his action and making decisions on the basis of the judgement. This is what is meant by interpretation or acting on the basis of symbols.

The restrictions that are experienced by the Emirati female graduates in their transition from college to work are a result of social interpretations of the objects and activities in UAE society (Williams et al. 2013). The individuals who enforce the restrictions, whether from the government, organisations, family or society, have reasons for interpreting their social activities, values, practices, norms and objects the way they do.

It must be noted that not all Emirati families restrict their female children from entering the labour market. These differences demonstrate cultural diversity of Emirati society and the effects of their interpretations of their social objects around them. The restrictions are viewed by most people from democratic countries as disadvantaging females but local men consider their actions as protecting female

members of their society (Crabtree 2007). There are some Emiratis who allow their female children to participate in the labour market by taking opportunities that are available to them (Wang and Lowe 2011). The differences in treatment of female graduates in Emirati families demonstrate the differences in interpretations of the world around the members of the same society.

The restrictions are viewed as a means of conserving UAE cultural identity. The interpretations are based on an analysis of what is viewed as acceptable in Islamic society. Such interpretations of symbols are from the social actors, including all stakeholders, the graduates themselves and the other members of society who safeguard the influence of different cultures on local culture. This is supported by research work by Blumer (1969:81) when he stated that,

the second important implication of the fact that the human being makes inductions to himself is that his action is constructed or built up instead of being a mere release. His action is built up step by step through a process of such self induction. Self-induction is a moving communicative process in which the individual notes things, assesses them, gives them a meaning, and decides to act on the basis of the meaning.

Female graduates are in a dilemma of fulfilling their personal expectations and, at the same time, watching the societal requirements in terms of their social interactions and interpretations, bearing in mind that Muslims consider Islam as a way of life (Al-Jabri 2009). Muslims are expected to value the Islamic values and norms in their society (Simadi and Kamali 2004). The fact that the female graduates are part of the Emirati society means that their actions are closely monitored and they are expected to act within the acceptable norms of their society. Their interpretations of the social objects and symbols around them are expected to be within the acceptable Islamic

considerations. The moment the interpretations of the events and activities around them differ from acceptable practices in their society, the social actors (females) feel out of place and as misfits in their society. This is the reason why some female graduates are employed and experience social restrictions differently.

It is important to understand that culturally diversified societies, with significant expatriate communities, tend to challenge the sociological definitions of society. The presence of a large expatriate and a culturally-diversified community creates a society of symbolic interaction (Blumer 1969). Blumer (1969:84) stated that 'under the perspective of symbolic interaction, social action is lodged in acting individuals who fit their respective lines of action to one another through a process of interpretation; group action is the collective action of such individuals.' Blumer (1969) denied the sociological considerations of a social system because the understanding of a system is that, it operates in unison and consider all individuals to work to achieve the same objective. The interpretations of the social phenomena are never the same.

This brings us to the ontological position that this research is based on. The researcher acknowledges, agrees and takes the ontological position that society is a symbolic interaction, as Blumer (1969:87) stated that,

first from the standpoint of symbolic interaction the organization of human society is the framework inside of which social action takes place and is not the determinant of that action. Second, such organization and changes in it are the product of the activity of acting units and not of forces which leave such acting units out of account.

Emirati society base its Islamic interpretations on *The Holy Qur'an* and any interpretations that are documented in *The Holy Qur'an* have to be followed as described. Those social occurrences that are not documented, usually because they were not present in the past, are open for discussions. Operating in a global society

creates difficulties in adopting Western values that contradict with the documented evidence in *The Holy Qur'an*.

4.2.1 Ontological Considerations

Bryman (2008:18) stated that,

Questions of social ontology are concerned with the nature of social entities. The central point of orientation here is the question of whether social entities have a reality external to social actors, or whether they can and should be considered social constructions built up from the perceptions and actions of social actors.

The expatriate communities, with their social actors, provide a clear understanding that the social actors are in constant interpretations of their surroundings. Social habits are developed by the social actors themselves, through the interpretations of the objects, situations and actions of others. (Blumer 1969). The rationale is based on the fact that some social actors have experienced different social situations in places even more strict than the UAE. As such, they were part of much strict societies and interpreted the social situations, objects and actions and made decisions based on their interpretations of such communities. The idea of having an objective reality independent of societal interactions deny the developmental process that goes hand in hand with current social developments influenced by human interaction. The expatriate community in UAE is huge and culturally diversified. Its existence is definitely traced back to the founding of the nation during the oil and gas boom. Therefore, the idea of an objective reality outside the involvement of human beings is questionable as the experiences in expatriate communities exist because of the involvement of foreigners in the country. Therefore the existence of a society itself is a social construct.

The term 'expatriate' itself is a socially constructed concept that refers to foreign individuals in another country. The assumption that such social reality existed without human being influence, interpretations and involvement is questionable because social reality is an interpretation and a social construct on its own. The social actions are interpretations and constructs by social actors in any given society. This philosophical position and understanding is important in this research because it sets the starting point for problem analysis.

Blumer (1969:85) stated that,

one primary condition is that action takes place in and with regard to a situation. Whenever be the acting unit, an individual, a family, a school, a church, a business firm, a labor union, a legislature, and so on, any particular action is formed in the light of the situation in which it takes place. This leads to the recognition of a second major condition, namely, that the action is formed or constructed by interpreting the situation.

Research in the Social Sciences needs clear ontological position, as demonstrated by the two different ontological positions (Bryman 2008). These philosophical positions influence the methods and the research strategy because the research evidence needs to be supported by the applied methods and methodology used in reaching at the research findings. This is correctly supported by Blumer (1969:86) when he stated that,

since the interpretation is being made by the acting unit in terms of objects designated and appraised, meanings acquired and decisions made, the process has to be seen from the standpoint of the acting unit....the objective observer is likely to fill in the process of interpretation with

his own surmises in place of catching the process as it occurs in the experience of the acting unit which uses it.

The use of the focus group interviews in this research is a suitable research data collection method, bearing in mind the social restrictions of the researcher to interact with female research participants. The method allows the researcher to observe the research participants during the focus group interviews. A one-to-one interview could have been used, but the restrictions in the UAE, that a woman is not allowed to be in a confined area with a stranger, resulted in selecting focus group interviews, to involve more participants in the discussions. During the focus group interviews, the researcher passively participate in the research data collection process and interpreting the experiences of the research participants. The constant probing into the factors and causes of the restrictions allowed the researcher to feel the experiences of the research participants. The initial focus group interview questions and their follow-up questions trigger situations that represent the environment of the research participant. The cautious approach to questioning allows the researcher to understand and observe the reactions of the research participants. During the focus group interviews the researcher observe research participants' reactions and trigger follow-up questions. Potter (2000:61) stated that 'we don't simply observe the world. The very act of observation involves placing an interpretation upon it. Interpretation doesn't even have to be conscious. It can be an unconscious process as well.'

Having taken the ontological position that social actors in interpreting their social realities and be part of their formation through constant interaction with the social world, there is need to find out how such experiences are generalised. The quantitative methods are used to achieve that objective.

The second part of the research methodology use quantitative methods. The

quantitative research methods are basically used to compare the experiences, actions and interpretations of the research participants who did not participate in the focus group discussions. While the ontological position is confirmed, the epistemological consideration of this research work is equally important to acknowledge. The combination of both the qualitative and quantitative methods in the research attempt to collect broad research evidence that is analysed and presented in accordance with the social research paradigms that are acceptable in the Social Science discipline. The following subsection 4.2.2 address issues concerned with acceptable knowledge in the field of Social Science (Bryman 2008).

4.2.2 Epistemological Considerations

Bryman (2008:13) stated that,

An epistemological issue concerns the question of what is regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline. A particularly central issue in this, is the question of whether the social world can and should be studied according to same principles, procedures and ethos as the Natural Sciences.

Studying static objects that do not interpret social realities require different epistemological considerations unlike when studying human beings that are interpreting their social realities. Social realities exist and the researcher acknowledge that social actors are in constant interaction with social realities and influence these social realities. The ontological position is that of symbolic interactionism where human beings interpret the objects, give them meaning and make decisions based on their judgement of situations within their surroundings.

The research question, **"What are the implications of the restrictive factors that affected the transition of female Emirati graduates from**

college to work and what recommendations should be made to the labour market policy makers to increase the participation of Emirati females in the labour market?", is an exploratory endeavour to understand the possible causes and implications of restrictive factors on Emirati females. The researcher acknowledges the relativism in each interpretation by the research participants. The research participants interpret the factors that influence their transition from college to work, based on their social interactions and experiences. The key epistemology combines both critical realism and interpretivism. These restrictions have to be understood from both the affected female graduates and from the views of restricting members of the society because they have reasons in applying those restrictions. This gives clear understanding of the influence of the social structures that are in place in the society and how they are interpreted by the social actors.

Bryman (2008:14) defined critical realism as

a specific form of realism whose manifesto is to recognise the reality of the natural order and the events and discourses of the social world and holds that we will only be able to understand and so change the social world if we identify the structures at work that generate those events and discourses...These structures are not spontaneously apparent in the observable pattern of events; they can only be identified through the practical and theoretical work of the Social Sciences.

Evidence provided by social actors themselves on why they are restricted from entering the labour market is gathered through understanding and interpreting the members of the Emirati society. The use of an interpretivist approach to understand the interpretations by the social actors is supported by Mason (1996:56) when he stated that 'interpretivism does not have to rely on total immersion in a setting,... can happily support a study which uses interview methods for example, where

the aim is to explore people's individual and collective understandings, reasoning processes, social norms and so on.' There is a need to understand the views of the restricting members of the society. Therefore, the use of male focus groups in the research is to understand their interpretations of their restrictive actions. The assumption is that women themselves do not understand why the social system and male members of the society impose restrictions on them.

4.3 Research Design

The research focus on the interpretations of the social realities experienced by the research participants. Experimental research design, cross-sectional design, action research, ethnography, grounded theory, historical research and longitudinal research are all unsuitable for this research.

This exploratory phenomenological research focus on a phenomena that is a reality in Emirati society. The research attempts to understand the meanings of the interpretations and experiences of the restricting and restricted members of the UAE society. The process gives me the opportunity to understand the implications and factors that hinder the transition of female graduates from college to work. This requires an exploratory research design that use qualitative and quantitative methods to collect and analyse data.

The research uses mixed methods, combining qualitative and quantitative methods. The lack of literature on college-to-work transitions that specifically addressed Emirati experiences result in choosing an exploratory research design that is strongly supported by the use of mixed methods research (Creswell 2003). The methods allow collecting more data about the reasons why women are restricted from entering the labour market during their transition from college to work.

The methods allow initial data collection through qualitative means, followed by a confirmatory quantitative means, through a questionnaire that use both closed and open-ended questions. The closed questions collect data that focus on the dependent and independent variables. A Likert scale from 1 to 5 allows respondents to express their perceptions and views within a range of options. Strongly disagree to a statement is at one extreme rated at 1. Disagree, neither agree nor disagree and agree are in the middle rates 2,3 and 4 respectively. Strongly agree is at the other extreme rated at 5. The highest rating indicates that the respondent strongly agree to a given statement and the least rating shows that the respondent strongly disagree to the same statement.

Open-ended questions ask open views about the causes, possible solution and recommendations to policy-makers on labour restrictions where each responded is expected to express openly their views.

The data collection focus on both females and males who are employed and unemployed. Personal experiences are collected, interpreted and analysed. Even those women who are currently working, some of them had difficult experiences in securing their first employment. The two types of social actors, the female and male research participants provide their experiences and interpretations of their social realities during the focus group interviews. The next section focuses on this research's methodological procedure.

4.4 Methodological Procedure

Exploratory research allows more data to be revealed as a necessity in theory development (Creswell 2003; Twinn 1998). In open discussions, Emirati people normally discuss sensitive topics from a general point of view, referring personal problems

as social-wide problems. If a problem is entangled in religious interpretations they acknowledge the problems and accept them as religious interpretations. Focus group discussions are considered suitable tools for this research because participants discuss openly as if the discussions are not personal but as general social problems. One-to-one discussions tend to be too confrontational. The more the research questions and discussions become more specific, most participants become more protective and refuse to share the information. Focus group discussions allow me to observe while the research participants participate in the discussions. This allows asking follow-up questions targeting those participants who demonstrate reservations in their expressions.

Given that this research requires in-depth understanding of the interpretations of the research participants, follow-up research is viewed as important to gain more insight into the interpretations of each research participant. The questionnaire is designed based on information gathered from the reviewed literature and from the main themes raised during the focus group interviews.

During the focus group interviews, the research participants are informed of a follow-up research that verifies the discussions of the focus group interviews. After the focus group discussions, themes that dominate the focus group discussions are identified to develop the questionnaire. The theme building stage is not considered as involving data analysis phase because the process is not done to answer the research question but to gather themes that help in preparing the questionnaire to use in the quantitative phase of this mixed-method research. During questionnaire development, more reading and discussions with other people affected by the restrictions allow preparing a comprehensive questionnaire. The discussions can be formal knowledge gathering especially in restrictive societies because of the requirements for approval for formal research activities. Formal discussions allow gathering data as they contribute to more knowledge on the topic.

The questionnaire is developed with clear knowledge of some sensitive issues not to be included, especially questioning religious influences that might be interpreted as blasphemy. The religious factors are asked indirectly in the questionnaire because of their sensitivity in Muslim nations. I consider combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods to strengthen the reliability of the collected data.

4.4.1 Mixed Methods Research

The mixed methods strategy is chosen due to the exploratory nature of the research. The focus group discussions are considered suitable for gathering data related to the youth labour market transition restrictions. The themes from these discussions are analysed for the purpose of developing a questionnaire that is used to gather confirmatory responses of the restrictions in the wider UAE labour market. It must be made clear that the mixed method strategy (Figure 4.1) use the themes revealed during the focus group discussions and the literature review into nodes (Appendix C.1). Although there is data analysis to determine the themes, the analysis is not considered as a data analysis phase for answering the research questions but used to build the questionnaire. The questionnaire is used to collect data that is combined with the focus group discussion data to answer the research question in the data analysis phase. This was done to reveal and confirm the experiences of research participants from different areas of the UAE.

The research strategy (Figure 4.1) is done in three blocks; the data collection, data analysis and data interpretation. The first block consist of the focus group discussions, the theme development and the questionnaire development. The second block consist of qualitative and quantitative data analysis. The quantitative analysis use factor analysis in SPSS and qualitative analysis use Nvivo . The last block consist of factor analysis interpretations and Nvivo interpretations to come to the

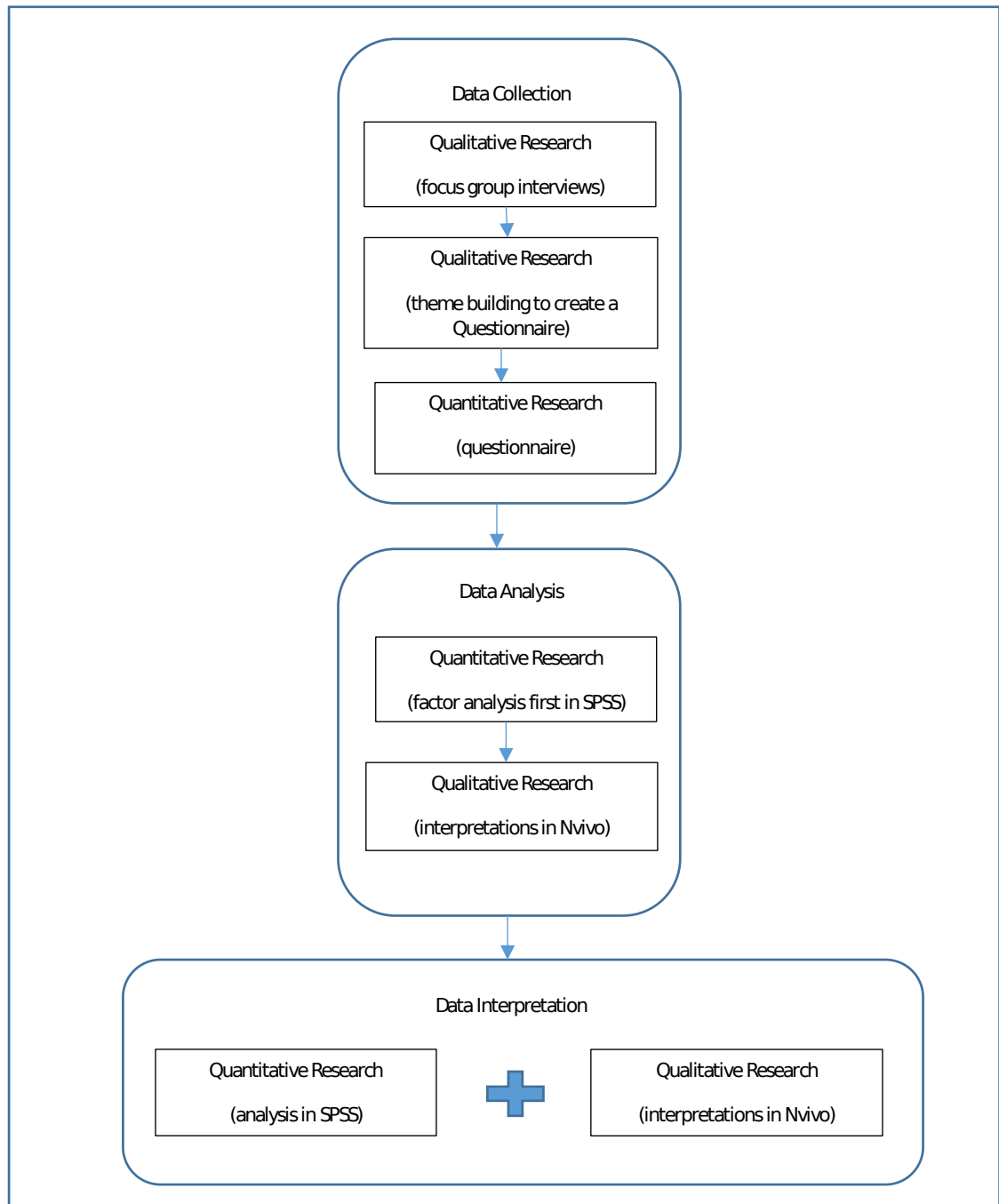


Figure 4.1: The Mixed Method Strategy

conclusions.

4.4.1.1 Qualitative Research: Focus Group Interviews

This research focus on understanding the restrictions and the experiences of female Emirati job seekers. The research use a sequential approach as shown in Figure 4.1. The integration at data analysis follow a sequential approach because the collected data have to be confirmed whether they support each critical factor. The mixed methods are used at data interpretation and both qualitative and quantitative data are given equal importance in interpreting the findings.

The participants in the focus group interviews participated on a voluntary basis. The email message that outline the objective of the research is forwarded to more than twenty possible participants. The names and emails of participants who agree to contribute to this research are randomly selected. A Microsoft Excel random function is used to select the first five participants. An informed consent letter outlining the purpose of the research is given to participants using their emails. An informed consent form (AppendixA.2) is signed and returned to the researcher before the day of the interview to give the researcher an opportunity to identify other research participants in case of withdrawals.

A moderator's focus group interview guide (Appendix A.3) consist of main, follow-up, probing and prompted questions. Seven main questions are used and follow-up questions are intended to elicit responses in any discussion that is not completely exhausted during the sessions. Follow-up questions are intended to clarify issues discussed and probing questions allow more detailed interpretations to be clarified by the respondents. The prompted questions are intended to ask for reasons behind any actions and interpretations suggested by the research participants.

The environment is expected to be conducive for a focus group interview without interferences that could disturb the discussions (Bajramovic et al. 2004; Breen 2006; Twinn 1998). The researcher understands that any tool has its own weaknesses and

some of the weaknesses result from oversight during design of the tools such as the moderator's guide and questionnaires. Any errors should be detected when pilot studies are conducted. In this research, both the moderator's guide and the questionnaire went through a pilot study where possible research participants answered and the results were used in modifying the tools to gather the actual data for this research (Breen 2006). The pilot results help to understand the effectiveness of the research tools in the actual data collection process (Breen 2006).

It is understandable that women are not in full control of their social activities and men are strongly involved in shaping society on behalf of their women (Kalabamu 2006). Therefore interpretations of male members of the society are important in this research. Involving men in separate focus group interviews allow male respondents to express their interpretations of the norms, practices and values of their society and reveal the reasons behind their social restrictive practices.

Twinn (1998:654) confirms that, as data collection methods, focus group interviews provide more insight into the research topic. The group provides significant information on the research topic during their discussions and through observation of the research participants. The focus group interviews allow the researcher to observe the research participants and more than just listening to what they discuss, the researcher is able to observe facial and bodily expressions as they express their feelings about the topic.

4.4.1.2 Male Focus Group Interview Participants

The research require male participants who are either employed or unemployed, married or unmarried. The intention is to understand their interpretations of women unemployment in their society.

The unmarried men are of interest to understand their view on what their future

wives would be in terms of education and whether they would support their wives to work once married. The employment status of the male research participants is not that important, although the researcher understands that an unemployed male might seek to marry an employable spouse for financial help.

A number of children and their ages influence employment of married females. During the focus group interviews, a short participant information sheet (Appendix A.1) was used to capture demographic data of all focus group research participants. This data helped to understand the demographics of the respondents.

A number of participants considered for focus group discussion was from five to seven members. The number of focus group interview participants should be manageable. Focus group interviews with many members result in taking too much time before all members contribute to the discussion, resulting in participants trying to contribute simultaneously. This was echoed by Twinn (1998:657) when she stated that

the analysis of the interaction within the group demonstrated that in larger groups there was a tendency for several women to speak at the same time. This resulted not only in lost data, due to the difficulty of transcribing and translation, but also in lost opportunities for issues to be explored in greater depth. ...in larger groups participants tended to break into smaller discussion groups of two or three which once again resulted in lost data.

These factors about the number of participants were all considered because the research is about women. The topic affects both married,unmarried, working and not working wives. The topic is sensitive because those allowing their spouses to work are viewed as liberal and unMuslim. Open-mindedness is viewed as being westernised and against local cultural identity. Those not allowing their wives to

work are viewed as real conservative Muslims. It is important to get the views of men on female labour imbalance.

The male participants were evening part-time students with higher diploma qualifications. They were doing a one-year top-up programme for a bachelor degree in Business Engineering Management. A formal request to the campus director to do research was approved as part of the ethical considerations. The campus director's personal assistant forwarded the email message with the consent forms to evening students who were willing to participate in my research. The students who were prepared to take part agreed to meet me and discuss the research process and procedures. A date was set for the focus group interviews.

The participants were given pseudo names for confidentiality of their identity. Male participants were identified (Appendix A.1) as RUMC-A, RUMC-B, RUMC-C, RUMC-D and RUMC-E. RUMC-A, RUMC-C and RUMC-D were married and were twenty-nine years of age or more with each having more than one child. RUMC-B was single and twenty-eight years of age. He completed a higher diploma in Engineering three years prior to this research interview. RUMC-E was a twenty-five year old, holder of a higher diploma in Engineering. All the male participants had studied at the same institution of higher learning, but from different campuses spread around the UAE. Married male research participants were married to college graduates, but none of their wives was working. RUM-C holds a senior management position while the rest of the male respondents occupied mid-level management positions.

4.4.1.3 Female Focus Group Interview Participants

All female focus group participants are former students who studied at the same institution where I was working as a lecturer. The institution where I used to

work conducted career fairs every year and invited graduates to come and interact with employing companies. During these visits former graduates complained of lack of suitable jobs for female job-seekers. I decided to collect email addresses of former graduates seeking employment for my study. When time to do my data collection came, I used the email addresses to approach and invite possible research participants in my focus group interviews. Email messages were distributed to possible respondents and those who agreed to voluntarily participate were identified and invited to take part in the research study.

All female participants were unemployed and were identified as MZWC-A, MZWC-B, MZWC-C, MZWC-E and RUWC-H. MZWC-A agreed to participate in the focus group interview discussion and came to the interview. When the interview was about to start, she felt uncomfortable and requested to be excused from continuing. She thought she was being called in for a job interview and when she realised that it was a research interview, she did not want to continue. Surprisingly she brought the signed form of consent that indicated she wanted to participate in the research. She agreed to be interviewed for few minutes and she had difficulties in understanding the interview questions because of her low level of English language communication skills. She was single, twenty-two years of age and had completed a diploma the previous year in Business Management. Her contributions were not included in the discussion and not used in this research.

MZWC-B was a married twenty-five year old mother of one child. She had completed her bachelor degree in Business Management. MZWC-C was more than twenty-nine years of age, married mother of more than one child and had graduated with a bachelor degree in Business Management.

MZWC-E had graduated from the same institution of higher learning with a diploma in Business Management and was single. MZWC-B, MZWC-C and MZWC-

E were from the same campus. RUWC-H was a married mother of more than one child from a campus of the same institution of higher learning. RUWC-H graduated with a bachelor's degree from the Business division majoring in Human Resources Management just like MZWC-B and MZWC-C. The three did the same programme of study and had graduated six months prior to this research interview.

The marital status was important because married women are treated differently. Married women's social experiences are different to those of single female children. Married female research participants with children described how they were treated in comparison to those without children. The employment of women in the UAE depend on the number and ages of their children. The younger the children, the more they experience restrictions although almost every family has a nanny to take care of the children.

4.4.2 Data Collection and Coding

Gender issues are of concern to me as a researcher and as an educator because in many countries women are given less decision-making importance in social, political and economic activities. I developed different perspectives in analysis and interpretation of social issues. Interpretations should not be interpreted based on the face value of our social entities. Social issues require well informed philosophical analysis and interpretation to come to the bottom of every social phenomena. Such philosophical understanding influence the research design used in this research.

The data were initially collected through focus group interviews. During the focus group interviews, participants were recorded using Audacity software that captured audio and was stored for coding. The questionnaire was developed in SurveyMonkey and allowed the researcher to include a statement that requested the research participants to participate voluntarily in the research (Appendix B). The

questionnaire was distributed electronically to respondents who had showed interest to participate in the quantitative research. Initially the research participants had two options, if they did not want to participate they clicked the "I do not want to participate" button and they exited the questionnaire. The other option was to click the "I want to participate" button and that allowed them to enter and voluntarily complete the questionnaire.

There was a need to use variable selection because the research used several independent variables and correlation with the dependent variables is needed. There is a need to determine the loading or strength of each element of the independent variable. This is possible through the use of factor analysis to determine correlated independent variable items. Factor items with an unacceptable correlation matrix are removed from the list and those with strong loading are further analysed (Pallant 2007). The data collection and analysis procedures were reliable. In an attempt to confirm the factors that had a strong relationship to the dependent variable, factor rotation was applied and, through the use of SPSS the factors were rotated using the Oblique technique (Pallant 2007) revealing factors that were correlated through the use of direct Oblimin. That helped to determine the degree of correlation among the independent variable items.

Transition to work is the dependent variable that depends on independent variables. The chosen independent variables are reported. It must also be noted that correlation does not mean that these independent variables caused the dependent variable but that demonstrates a strong and negative relationship with the dependent variable (Pallant 2007).

4.4.3 Transcribing Procedures

The data collected during the focus group interviews are recorded and stored in audio format in sources folders. The audio files were transcribed using the transcribing facility that allowed the researcher to listen to the audio and type the words in a text-editing application. This took considerable time as the researcher had to listen carefully, document that information and create nodes that categorised information according to themes. For the purpose of this research the nodes are either critical factors or transition nodes. Information about the factors affecting the transition of women from college to work were recorded in the critical factors folders. Personal experiences about employment were recorded in smooth or rough transitions nodes. Data collected from the questionnaires were added to the respective nodes for data analysis.

4.4.4 Dominating Themes

The request by the researcher to apply recording technology demonstrated the understanding that focus group interviews are rich sources of data that require thorough analysis. The main focus of the researcher as a moderator (Breen 2006) was to observe the personal reactions of each research participant, listening to their interpretations of their social practices and norms as that contributed to the determination of the dominating themes. Personal experiences that were strongly emphasized by participants allowed the moderator to ask follow-up questions. Dominating themes were documented, recorded and later used in developing the questionnaire used in the quantitative phase of the research (Creswell 2003). Through the use queries and word frequencies, words that dominated focus group discussions and data from the reviewed literature are presented in a word cloud as shown in Figure 4.2.

Data from the focus group interviews was used to design the questionnaire. The majority of the male focus group participants mentioned that women were not getting employment because they were afraid of driving on dangerous roads. Some mentioned that, according to religion, women are not expected to work, they must stay at home and take care of the children and the family. Women, on the other hand, are saying that men do not want to see women work because of religious misinterpretations that women must stay at home. Since this was a religiously sensitive question, it was asked indirectly in the questionnaire (Appendix B). It was also highlighted that female members of the UAE society are not allowed to travel on their own without a male member of their family. This was a religious restriction and it was asked indirectly in the questionnaire (Appendix B). The participants in the focus group interviews were asked to confirm the applicability of some restrictive actions. As exploratory research, the focus group data partially confirmed the restrictive tendencies. I was not satisfied that I can present a qualitative research based on the data from only on focus group interviews because I used two different groups. I considered a mixed method approach because it was necessary to combine both the male and female discussion results in a questionnaire that consolidated the answers by several respondents from different locations in the UAE. The questions and statements in a questionnaire were to further explore and confirm the sentiments expressed during focus group interviews.

Theme development creates a strong base for the questionnaire because the information collected confirmed the data that had already been collected during the focus group interviews and during the literature review. The information used to create the questionnaire was from the reviewed literature, personal experiences of the research participants and their own interpretations of the factors that affected the transition of Emirati females from college to work.

information as possible through discussions and interviews. The researchers mostly preferred qualitative research methods where different interviews are employed with the researcher guaranteeing the quality and quantity of data collected. The respondents in this research were not willing to answer open-ended questions because a majority of respondents left the questions blank.

4.4.5.1 Questionnaire and Questions

The data collected through the literature review and focus group interviews influenced the development of the questionnaire. The collected data were grouped into the critical factors and the transition themes. Appendix C.1 shows the nodes used to gather information related to each theme. The information from each node was used to prepare questions and statements for the questionnaire. The other information that influenced the questionnaire design came from the tree structure (Appendix C.2) where statements of interest were evident that they needed further probing. These statements were included in the questionnaire (See details in Appendix B).

The questions were categorised into themes from Figure 4.2, Appendix C.1 and Appendix C.2. These themes helped in focusing on the key aspects that contributed to the experienced restrictions. The transition theme was needed to help understand the concept of transition. The questions under this theme were inclined towards the intention to move into the labour market (Appendix B.12 and B.13). Another theme focused on personal factors. The statements under personal factors were mainly on preferences and choices of individuals in aspects related to employment (Appendix B.14). These preferences ranged from the preferred working environment to working hours. Another theme addressed family support to enter the labour market, given to them by their parents (Appendix B.15). Educational factors

focused on the quality of education received by the graduates and its contribution in labour market participation (Appendix B.16). Socio-economic theme addressed issues of the position of a female graduate at work and home (Appendix B.17). The statements attempted to get the perceptions and views of both men and women about the role of women in social and economic activities. Location and employment themes focused on the effect of the location and distance to and from work places (Appendix B.18). The mobility aspects of the labour market were rated. The masculinity and femininity themes were addressed from male and female perspectives (Appendix B.19 and B.20).

These statements were designed in this format because of the sensitivity of statements against Emirati culture. The more the statements were positive about men's attitudes and behaviour in the society, the more participants tended to strongly agree to the statements. That demonstrated an element of fear in criticising the system.

The last of the closed-ended questions addressed the helping each other theme (Appendix B.21). In the United Arab Emirates, nationals value helping each other, even if they do not deserve it. That is part of their social responsibility. They call it *wasta* the term meaning helping others in Arabic (Farrell 2008; Simadi and Kamali 2004).

The questionnaire had four open-ended questions probing further on the possible causes of female unemployment. The first open-ended question was asking about the possible reason for high Emirati female unemployment (Appendix B.22). The second open-ended question asked on any suggestions to increase female graduate employment (Appendix B.23). The third question asked on job expectations of the graduates (Appendix B.24). Finally the last question asked for advice to policy makers on how to improve female employment (Appendix B.25).

The questionnaires used for this research were designed in SurveyMonkey, an on-line software application. Before creating an on-line questionnaire, a paper-based questionnaire was designed and given to a group of students who agreed to participate in a pilot study. The purpose of giving the students to complete the questionnaire was to make sure that the real research tool will be clear and understandable by research respondents. A link to the survey was distributed to the research participants through email messages. The email addresses of possible research participants were collected during college trade fair activities from former graduates who visited the career fairs. Email addresses were updated regularly before this research in case other possible respondents had changed their addresses. I requested my colleagues in other cities to ask former graduates from their colleges to voluntarily provide their email addresses during career fairs in different campuses. Survey were distributed to other Emirates using a questionnaire collector. A collector was designed that allowed the researcher to forward the research link to the questionnaire respondents through email addresses collected from different colleges during career fairs. The time frame for data collection was set to over a month from June 9 2014 to July 2014 and using the same email messages facilitated a follow-up capability available in SurveyMonkey.

4.4.6 Data Reliability and Validity

Issues of reliability and validity are important when doing research, as Mason (1996:188) stated that 'judgements of validity are in effect, judgements about whether you are measuring or explaining what you claim to be measuring or explaining.' Restrictions on female graduates entering the labour market are realities in the Western Region and other parts of the UAE. Most of these restrictions are based on social interpretations of social practices, norms and values of the UAE

society. The interpretations are best understood when research participants express their own personal interpretations and meanings of their social realities. Exploratory research that use focus group interviews was the best method to understand what the social actors think and feel about these social experiences. The restrictions are imposed by the male members of the family (Farrell 2008). The male members of the family interpret their social practices, norms and values according to the Emirati society when they imposed restrictions on their female members of the society. The use of both qualitative and quantitative methods in this research strengthen the validity of these methods in collecting the data needed to understand the interpretations by both male and female research participants resulting in answering the research question.

The issue of validity is not only about the tools used but also the data analysis. Mason (1996:191) stated that 'validity of interpretation is the second way to think about validity. This involves asking how valid your data analysis is, and the interpretation on which it is based.'

The similarity in responses collected from research participants in the other Emirates, who did not participate in the focus group interviews, demonstrated the validity in the methods and research strategy used.

The collected data provide some reliable outcomes. The application of Nvivo in the data coding provided a transparent method on how the interpretations were achieved. Mason (1996:39) mentioned that 'reliability involves the accuracy of your research methods and techniques.' The combination of qualitative and quantitative data was an endeavour to demonstrate that the methods used were reliable.

The pilot studies demonstrated the reliability of the research methods used in this research. The pilot studies of the focus group interview questions and the questionnaire supported the reliability of the research instruments as they yielded

the expected results. The pilot studies helped the researcher to refine the on-line tool used in the quantitative data collection process.

Each factor has individual items that form the factor. The items that form the research tool are reliable if they measure the same construct determined by the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The Cronbach's alpha above 0.7 was acceptable because that shows that they measure the same variable. The Cronbach's Alpha was above 0.7. That demonstrated that the scale was reliable and further analysis was reliable too. In a situation where the Cronbach's Alpha is lower than 0.7 (Pallant 2007), then such items are not used to determine the critical factors. Any questions that were negatively worded (Pallant 2007), were changed before checking the reliability of the results because negatively worded elements of a construct affect reliability of the instrument and the collected data.

4.5 Data Management Tools and Confidentiality

Confidentiality is important in this research as the topic is sensitive, focussing on cultural issues that involve restrictions on female members of UAE society, either by the social system or because of the restrictions imposed by male members of the society. Anonymous identities of research participants are maintained throughout the research as agreed in the signed informed consent letter. Respondents who answered the questionnaire did not put any form of identification on the questionnaire. The SurveyMonkey application software allows data integration with SPSS application used for statistical analysis.

4.6 Strengths and Limitations of Mixed Methods Research

The use of mixed methods allowed the researcher to explore research participants' view points on restrictions experienced by female graduates from entering the labour market. The mixed methods used in this research follow sequential mixed methods (Creswell 2003), starting with the qualitative approach where data were collected through focus group interviews. The focus group interviews allowed the research participants to discuss and express their personal experiences. Mixed methods allowed the researcher to collect huge data sets, that provided in depth understanding of the restrictions. In theory development, focus group interviews were considered suitable because they allowed the participants to express their personal experiences. The mixed method research is suitable for research topics that do not have enough empirical evidence. The use of qualitative methods followed by quantitative changed the commonly used approaches of starting with quantitative followed by qualitative methods as commonly used.

The weaknesses of focus group interviews are experienced when the research participants failed to attend the focus group interviews as that reduced the contribution to the topic. Although the recommended number of participants is from five to seven, it does not prohibit the use of less than 5 individuals. Another limitation of mixed methods is the amount of time needed in doing the research. The use of two data analysis steps creates limitations because the intention is to gather data using both methods and analyse them in one combined data analysis chapter.

4.7 Limitations of the Research Design

Bryman (2008:16) stated that 'the phenomenologist views human behaviour as a product of how people interpret the world...In order to grasp the meanings of a person's behaviour, the phenomenologist attempts to see things from that person's point of view.'

That creates some limitations because the interpretations by the research participants has to be accurate and honest accounts of their experiences. The researcher accepts whatever is said as true and honest interpretations of their social realities because of the lack of empirical evidence on similar research topic in the region. The researcher analysed the experiences and interpretations as provided and the researcher's analysis is based on the information provided.

Merely basing phenomenological studies on one method tends to create several questions, given that the society impose social restrictions and some experiences accounted by the research respondents resulted from the sensitivity of cultural issues in this society. Culture and religion are sometimes confused because they are both social entities that are closely related and confused, especially in Islamic societies because Islam is regarded as the way of life (Al-Jabri 2009; Helie and Hoodfar 2012). Due to the sensitivity of religious discussions, the phenomenological research design had to be cautious when accepting all of the experiences and personal accounts of individual respondents on social realities.

Although people from an Islamic society are expected to act in the same way, the differences are based on their interpretations of their actions. That validates the use of focus groups with the use of probing and follow-up questions to probe accounts and experiences that might be caused by fear and or sensitivity of the topic.

Another limitation of the research was that the research participants had just graduated and not enough time might have been allowed for them to secure their

first employment. The limitations are caused by lack of an agreed time that is considered as minimum period for unemployment. The time taken before one is employed after graduation is relative to any economy and no empirical research has determined globally acceptable unemployment period.

If given the opportunity to repeat a similar research, I will make sure that the focus group interviews are given more time and start the discussions from a broader perspective. Direct questions that probe certain cultural issues are sensitive. In future I will start indirectly and try to understand what they do not like about other countries and compare with their cultural restrictions.

4.8 Conclusion

The methodology used has to be acceptable to contribute to knowledge in the Social Sciences discipline. This Chapter 4, focused on understanding the interpretations and perceptions of the respondents who voluntarily participated in this research. The researcher acknowledges the symbolic interaction (Blumer 1969). The philosophical position taken in this research is that human beings are not static objects and societies are different, although there are fundamental similarities in each society. The researcher acknowledges that individuals react to their surroundings and interpret social realities based on their perceptions and interpretations of such social realities. This differentiate how social actors interpret their social realities, although some inference and previous experiences from elsewhere play an important role in the reactions to social objects and occurrences.

Interpretations and reactions to social objects result in social constructions of the societies that we perceive differently today. The epistemological considerations are important in any research as they provide a mechanism of considerations of

acceptable knowledge. Interpretations of the social realities based on face value create questionable premises. Given that the research respondents were from the United Arab Emirates, a country that is autocratic, ruled by a monarch and being an Islamic state, requires critical analysis in each interpretation provided by the research participants. This is an exploratory research study that attempts to understand the rationale behind the labour market imbalance in the UAE. The rationale behind such labour market imbalance could not be fully understood through literature review, therefore the need for an exploratory phenomenology research approach. The use of mixed methods allowed the researcher to use both qualitative and quantitative methods to collect information related to the research participants' interpretations of their social realities. Literature review revealed that to be a Muslim, one is expected to believe the truth as the one written in *The Holy Qur'an* without questioning. Interpretations of what is not written in *The Holy Qur'an* is open for discussion. Islam is considered as the way of life (Al-Jabri 2009; Helie and Hoodfar 2012) and as a result any criticism on cultural interpretations risk to be interpreted as criticising the religion of Islam.

The next chapter focuses on data analysis and discussions.

Chapter 5

Presentation, Analysis and Intepretation

5.1 Introduction

In the previous Chapter 4, the focus was on the methodology used in this research. The areas of attention were the validity and reliability of the applied methods that contribute to knowledge in the field of Social Sciences. The evidence and interpretations were gathered and presented in this Chapter 5. This chapter begins with this Section 5.1, the introduction of the chapter topics. Section 5.2 focuses on the research findings and how they were achieved. Specifically, the personal experiences of the focus group interview participants for both males and females were documented in the same section 5.2. Section 5.3 covers factor analysis of critical factors. The interpretations of research results are covered in Section 5.4 followed by the research discussions in Section 5.5. Finally Section 5.6 concludes the chapter.

5.2 The Research Findings and Data Analysis

This section provides the platform to express the findings that were gathered during the research process. A number of the female research participants who participated in the focus group were unemployed. The restrictions that are enforced by the family members are work environment, distances between their homes and the work place, female responsibilities, cultural and religious concerns. One of the observations is that the religious restrictions are never addressed as restrictions, but referred to as religious misinterpretations of Islam by many social actors. The religion of Islam strictly follow the Islamic teachings that are documented in *The Holy Qur'an*. The roles and responsibilities are clearly documented and failing to abide by such teachings is regarded as a sin or unMuslim and punishable in countries practising Sharia Law (Al-Jabri 2009; Al-Jazeera 2014; Helie and Hoodfar 2012).

5.2.1 Qualitative Research Findings and Analysis

The focus group interviews allowed the researcher to interact with the female research participants who are experiencing difficulties in entering the labour market after graduating from colleges and universities in the UAE. It is not common practice to find a male researcher collecting evidence from women, especially when the topic addresses problematic and sensitive gender equality issues. When the research participants recognised that the main objective of the research was to explore the causes of labour market restrictions, they volunteered and promised to participate. Acting as a moderator allowed transparency, reliability and validity of the method used because the research participants expressed themselves freely without fear of giving information to a stranger in restrictive communities.

5.2.1.1 Focus Group Interviews: Responses from the Research Respondents

Married respondents focused their attention on the working conditions in the companies around their homes. Married respondents preferred flexible working times for mothers and to have dedicated working environment for female workers only. The same sentiment was reflected in Al-Jazeera (2014) documentary when the girls stated that men and women should not interact at work. It must be made clear that due to content restrictions for the thesis, the researcher choose the most outstanding quotations that strongly demonstrate the points related to restrictive practices and sentiments of the research participants.

5.2.1.2 Emirati Female Employment Problems

The first question explored the main problems of employing female Emiratis in organisations and different views are documented. The responses to each question are analysed. The first respondent, MZWC-B complained stating the working environment as not suitable for female employees. MZWC-B stated that 'actually the big problem is the environment of the work, I need ehh a private section. We want to work in a private section and can contact other male employees by phone. We can't work with men in the same section.'

Each participant was asked the same question and MZWC-C stated that 'social pressure, I mean ehh as B said, there is pressure from our family to work in specific places where there are less men and females environment. But I think about myself, is a pressure to take care of my children and circumstances that I have in my house. This is also ehh build up strong pressure on me ehh to just put my view to my family, not to work, why you work? You don't need to work? Many things like this!. Recently I have tried to focus on my family but later I will work!'

An interesting observation from the information provided is that MZWC-C started and completed her studies with the same number of children when they were even younger than when she graduated from college. The question of focusing on the family after graduation demonstrates that the circumstances in her home are restrictions from the husband. The expressions, both verbal and facial, showed signs of frustration, anger and a sense of hopelessness. MZWC-C could not express herself further, exposing her husband because they marry cousins and the other research participants were all related and came from a small community of well connected members alluded by Simadi and Kamali (2004).

When the same question was asked to male respondents, the first respondent RUMC-C mentioned factors that hinder female employment to be the distance from home to work (Appendix C.2). He highlighted issues and concerns on transportation, and yet most of the Emirati families travel hundreds of kilometres going for shopping with dedicated family chauffeurs. When it comes to going to work then it becomes an issue of concern. RUMC-C stated that it was not acceptable to travel long distances for employment even if a woman was going to be driven by a trusted family driver. Interestingly, the same driving arrangements are used to drive the same female students to college during their studies. That demonstrates lack of government influence because families send their children to study but not to work after graduation. Emirati families comply with government requirements to educate female children but no commitment is done to reduce female unemployment.

Respondent RUMC-A is a supervisor, married and his wife has a bachelor degree. She is not working citing lack of suitable employment for women in the Western Region yet there are women working under RUMC-A. RUMC-A initially stated that the reasons depended on the employers' perspectives on hiring women. He was quoted saying 'it is much more difficult for people to accept that women be working

and it is culture, basically for various reasons ... a woman is expected to work close to home and or within an acceptable standard or culture for example ... here is a point, it is a restriction on where a woman should work is a question of every society basically.'

The views raised by male research respondents reflected social interpretation of their social practices, norms and values. In their responses, they referred to their actions in plural form (ie, we) and not as personal judgement. They did not put themselves in the position of taking personal responsibility for the actions taken in their society. They reflected group responsibilities of their actions as alluded by Simadi and Kamali (2004). This group ownership of responsibilities is reflected in many responses, especially when RUMC-A continued and stated that

I believe that we see women in certain types of jobs, you know although the jobs might not have been identified, each individual, each one of us could imagine women working in such and such area but not in every area as an example, working in sewage It is not me who basically stop her but ehh, the image...sometimes we limit ourselves with what is assumed from us, people see women as working on ehh, behind a desk or ehh in a more appropriate ehh, area, an area with where there is basically ehh no danger or associated with it. Also women go on maternity and from an operation point of view, will prefer to hire men than women because women go on maternity leave for sixty days.

The restrictions appear to be an expression of concern and care for their women by Emirati men, but on thorough detailed analysis and further probing male respondents, the restrictions are connected to productivity from the employer side. From the family side, restrictions are connected to their culture which is strongly influenced by their religion. For as long as the actions are documented

in *The Holy Qur'an*, they are not subjected to any change (Helie and Hoodfar 2012). Male respondents viewed driving long distances to work as not safe for their women. They highlighted the working environment as not suitable for women in the Western region, but they did not specify the nature of the conditions they considered unfavourable.

All male respondents accepted that, in their culture, female workers do not necessarily need to share their salaries with their husbands. In their culture a woman can work, but she is not responsible for providing financial assistance for the family (Al-Jabri 2009). On asking the male respondents why they bothered to support their wives to work, they expressed a sense of no benefit at all. Participant RUMC-B stated that 'we believe whatever she gets is for her if she likes to participate to help is ok, it is up to her but completely all is for her.' Given the division of labour and responsibilities in Emirati families, allowing women depends on individual families. If a woman gets employed she risk compromising her domestic duties and responsibilities (Helie and Hoodfar 2012; Holmes and Jones 2013). In their responses, male focus group research respondents referred to communal regulations and the continuous use of 'we' demonstrated a social consensus on their practices, norms and values, (Simadi and Kamali 2004).

5.2.1.3 The Causes of the Labour Market Transition Problems

The respondents were asked to identify the causes of the transition problems faced by women from entering the labour market. The conditions required to be fulfilled were barriers to female employment, as stated by MZWC-C when she said that 'when I am now searching for a job I will put many things as conditions from my husband for specific jobs because he does not allow me to work with men. I will look for companies that allow my husband's conditions with more female in the work ehh

I think also private space for women.'

The restrictions are different and depend on the requirements of the families because some are conservative and some are liberal. In general, most married women are more restricted by their husbands because they are not allowed to mix with men. There are some contradicting interpretations cited in the Al-Jazeera (2014) documentary in Afghanistan by the Islamic school (Madrasa) stating that women are not allowed to work while other teachings from *The Holy Qur'an* cited by Al-Jabri (2009) mentioned that in the past women were allowed to work although no mention of paid employment.

A different view was expressed by male respondents, with participant RUMC-A refusing to even hire any women when he said 'if I am the company owner, I will not hire any woman because I am not obliged by any law in this country to hire any woman.' Male respondents mentioned the costs of hiring a female employee, especially with reference to maternity leave costs because there are no contributions from women during maternity leave. Not all male respondents agreed completely on not hiring women, but they all agreed on a percentage of acceptable number of women to hire in a company if they were in charge. It must be noted that some of the male respondents are already managers and supervisors in companies where they work.

Male respondents accepted in principle that as government companies they would not hire females more than 30 percent of their workforce. This is because the government required an unspecified percentage of women to be employed in government companies. Otherwise male respondents were not prepared to hire any women if they worked private companies.

The other dominating theme was the distance and the working environment of most employing companies that were located distances away from their homes. They

raised issues of dangerous roads and too much traffic. Women found it difficult to travel every day to and from work on dangerous roads.

Female respondents mentioned that most companies did not allow women to cover their faces when working in their premises, for security and safety reasons. That creates situations where women are automatically restricted from working in such organisations. Their family male members did not allow them to work in working environments where they could not cover their faces and where there were no female only sections. The restrictive conditions are interesting because the companies are managed by men who did not require anyone to cover for security reasons, yet they (men) required their females to fully cover their faces in public spaces. Male research respondents stated the working conditions as unfavourable for their female job seekers yet they are in charge in most organisations in the UAE. Men could easily change the working environment if they want their female job seekers to work in acceptable working conditions.

The responses to the question of whether female Emirati are spoiled because they did not want to work, showed that most female respondents highlighted the contradictions they experience from the male members of their society and the labour market. They highlighted their culture as the problem. On the contrary, the male respondents view working as a luxury for women and women did not need to work because the financial support they receive from their male members and the government support was more than enough. The female respondents were very cautious not to put blame on anyone but they blamed their culture which is influenced by men. They acknowledged that their society is influenced by men. That is not considered a problem but treated as God's Will and not treated as wrong social interpretations. Both male and female respondents did not acknowledge that the restrictions are caused by their social interpretations or social constructions of

the objects around them. They view all the actions outside the influence of human beings.

5.2.2 Quantitative Research Findings and Analysis

The questionnaire (Appendix B) has a total of 25 questions and statements. The statements have sub-items. The last four are open-ended questions and the rest were closed statements. The transition to work research focused on both female and male transition experiences to allow comparison by gender. The other comparisons focus on marital status and used cross-tabulation of the variables. The results are presented in the following sections.

5.2.2.1 Employment Status and Experiences

Understanding the employment situation of the respondents is important because that provides data of the employment balance between male and female respondents. The results (Table 5.1) show 63 valid responses on the employment status by gender. Twenty-seven of the 63 were males (43%) and the rest (57%) were women. Thirty-one respondents were married (M). Of the 31 married respondents 14 (45%) were females and 17 (55%) were males. Twenty-seven of the respondents were single (S). Of the 27 single respondents 9 (33%) were male and 18 (67%) were females. Three of the respondents were divorced (D) and all divorced respondents were females. One male respondent was separated (SP) and one female respondent was a widow (W).

Of the 36 women who answered the questionnaire, 12 (33%) were employed for forty hours per week compared to 17 (63%) male respondents. Six female respondents worked for one to thirty-nine hours per week as compared to seven male respondents. One (2%) male respondent was not employed and looking for a

job as compared to 16 (25%) females who were not employed and still searching. Two male and two female respondents were not employed and were not searching for employment opportunities (Table 5.1). Of the 63 total respondents 18 (29%) females were unemployed compared to 3 (5%) unemployed male respondents.

Status		Marital Status and Gender												
		S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Employed	for 40hrs+	2	6	14	3	0	3	1	0	0	0	17	12	29
	upto 39hrs	4	3	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	7	6	13
Unemployed	but Searching	1	9	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	16	17
	not Searching	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4
	Total	9	18	17	14	0	3	1	0	0	1	27	36	63

Table 5.1: Employment Status By Gender

5.2.2.2 Transition to Work and Experiences

In this research study, the transition to work is treated as a process. For the purpose of this research, sending curriculum vitae (Table 5.2), visiting career fairs (Table 5.3), attending interviews after graduation (Table 5.4) desire to work for a company (Table 5.7), desire to develop a professional career (Table 5.8) and applying for jobs are indicators for labour market transition preparedness. The analysis use cross-tabulation by gender. Sixteen male respondents agreed that they wanted to work for their current employers, compared to 29 female respondents who did not want to continue working for their same organisations. That show the desire to be engaged as employees, but female respondents have limited choices and opportunities to change employment.

Thirty-two female respondents want to develop professional careers, compared to 24 male respondents. This demonstrates the desire to enter the labour market (See

details in Table 5.8). When it comes to applying for online jobs, 13 out of 26 male respondents applied for online jobs as compared to 17 out of 35 female respondents. The results show that the majority of both male and female respondents did not use online application processes because they prefer using family connections to get employment in the UAE as stated by Simadi and Kamali (2004).

Sending curriculum vitae to prospective employers demonstrated the preparedness of the job seekers to enter the labour market. The results (Table 5.2) show that 12 out of 26 male respondents agreed to have sent their curriculum vitae to organisations compared to 22 out of the total 35 female respondents, 63% of female respondents had forwarded their curriculum vitae to prospective employers. That shows that most Emirati male job-seekers used other means of job searching because they are the majority in the labour market yet 46% of male respondents forwarded curriculum vitae to prospective employers.

Choices	Sent CV to many Organisations												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	1	1	5	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	6	3	9
Disagree	3	3	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	6	11
Neutral	0	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	3	6
Agree	4	6	4	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	8	11	19
Strongly Agree	1	6	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	12	16
Total	9	18	16	14	0	2	1	0	0	1	26	35	61

Table 5.2: Sent CV to Many Organisations

Fourteen out of the 26 male respondents agreed that they visited career fairs as compared to only 11 female respondents who visited career fairs (See Details in Table 5.3). This may be attributed to the restrictions on women not to interact in public spaces and, as a result the majority of female respondents did not attend career fairs. The failure to attend career fairs hindered the flow of employment information from prospective employers to female job seekers. Sending

curriculum vitae to organisations without accurate information on current job openings affect employment because the curriculum vitae were not related to specific job announcements. Sending curriculum vitae for non-related openings hinder the chances of getting employment because the job seekers failed to address the job requirements in their applications.

Choices	Visited Career Fairs												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	2	4	4	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	6	10	16
Disagree	1	2	2	7	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	11	14
Neutral	0	3	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	5	8
Agree	6	7	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	11	8	19
Strongly Agree	0	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	6
Total	9	18	16	14	0	2	1	0	0	1	26	37	63

Table 5.3: Visited Career Fairs

Attending interviews demonstrate two major aspects in an economy. Firstly, interviews demonstrate availability of job opportunities that are being offered by employers. Secondly, attending interviews demonstrate that job seekers are actively searching for employment. Failure to attend interviews is viewed as lack of interest of the offered opportunity. The results (Table 5.4) show that 18 out of 35, 51% of female respondents attended interviews after graduation and only 12 out of 26, 46% male respondents attended interviews after graduation. The female who failed to attend interviews are likely to be unemployed and were not allowed to attend interviews.

Interestingly the results show that more male respondents are employed than the female respondents and yet fewer male respondents attended interviews after graduation. The 24 male respondents were employed (Table 5.1) yet 12 attended interviews after graduation making it 50% of working male respondents got employed without attending interviews compared to all the 18 employed female respondents

Choices	Attended Interviews after Graduation												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	3	2	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	8	14
Disagree	2	2	2	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	7	11
Neutral	1	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	6
Agree	3	11	5	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	9	16	25
Strongly Agree	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	5
Total	9	18	16	14	0	2	1	0	0	1	26	35	61

Table 5.4: Attended Interviews after Graduation

who went through interviews (See details in Table 5.1 and 5.4). The reasons are that the government departments recruit male high school leavers and provide in-house training and professional development without undergoing interviewing processes.

The circumstances that make an individual pursue a career are based on different factors. Personal preferences influenced individual career choices. In the following subsection, personal preferences of research participants are presented.

5.2.2.3 Personal Choices and Experiences

The respondents were presented with 10 statements about their employment preferences, focusing on different preferences (Question 14, Appendix Table B.14) as future employees. Ten items were explored and probed to measure the preferences of the respondents. I used a cross-tabulation of each item and gender. The respondents were asked the following itemised statements:

1. Preferred working in their community,
2. Preferred to work with male Emiratis,
3. Preferred work with expatriate,
4. Preferred working in female-only environment,

5. Preferred working for well paying jobs,
6. Preferred staying at home,
7. Preferred working for government,
8. Preferred working for forty hours per week,
9. Preferred working for five days a week and
10. Preferred working as a manager.

The responses were presented in Table 5.5 and 5.6.

Choices	Item 1		Item 2		Item 3		Item 4		Item 5	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Strongly Disagree	0	1	0	6	0	4	6	4	0	1
Disagree	1	5	3	5	1	3	7	4	0	1
Neutral	4	4	4	12	9	14	8	9	0	5
Agree	11	9	10	9	9	10	1	6	10	14
Strongly Agree	7	15	6	2	4	3	1	11	13	13
Total	23	34	23	34	23	34	23	34	23	34

Table 5.5: Personal Preferences

Choices	Item 6		Item 7		Item 8		Item 9		Item 10	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Strongly Disagree	12	17	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	2
Disagree	5	11	0	4	0	1	0	0	1	4
Neutral	3	3	4	7	5	7	2	4	4	8
Agree	2	2	8	10	9	12	11	16	9	6
Strongly Agree	1	1	11	12	8	13	10	13	9	14
Total	23	34	23	34	23	34	23	34	23	34

Table 5.6: Personal Preferences Cont.

A total of 63 responses were received and 57 responses were valid with six missing values. Fifty-seven responses were analysed in this section.

Fifty-seven respondents responded to the statement on whether they preferred to work in their community. One female respondent strongly disagreed with the

idea of working in her community while five disagreed with the statement. Four male respondents and four female respondents decided to be neutral. Twenty-four female respondents prefer to work in their community compared to 18 male respondents. The results show both male and female respondents prefer working in their communities.

The respondents were asked whether they prefer to work with Emirati men. The majority of male respondents have no issues working with their male counterparts. Four male respondents are neutral and 16 agreed working with Emirati men. Female respondents expressed a different perspective because 11 female respondents disagreed with the statement with twelve who were neutral. The remaining 11 female respondents preferred working with Emirati males. The results show that female respondents do not prefer working with Emirati male workers.

When research respondents were asked whether they prefer working with expatriates, the results show that 14 female respondents were neutral while 13 female respondents preferred working with expatriates.

The respondents were asked whether they preferred working in female-only environment and 17 female respondents agreed with the statement. This is consistent with what was expressed in the focus group interviews (Appendix C.1) where MZWC-C echoed the desire to have a working environment with fewer local male workers.

Highly paying jobs are strongly preferred in the United Arab Emirates, because the responses demonstrated that, with all the twenty-three male respondents agreed and strongly agreed to the statement. The results show that both male (100%) and female (79%) research respondents prefer working for well-paying jobs. This is the reason why the locals shun jobs that are relegated to expatriate employees because they pay less.

Research respondents were asked if they preferred staying home. Both male (74%) and female (82%) respondents disagreed with the statement which shows that men prefer that women be at home while female respondents are against the idea of being house-bound.

The respondents demonstrated that they prefer working for the government. Twenty-two of the 34 (65%) female respondents and 19 (83%) of male respondents agreed that they prefer working for the government. This preference increased the competition for government employment opportunities, in an environment which men have first employment preference because Muslim women are expected to be home-bound and take care of the family.

The majority of women prefer working for less hours to give them the ability to balance their domestic and employment responsibilities. Twenty-five of the 34 female respondents wanted to work for less than 40 hours per week. Both male (91%) and female (85%) respondents prefer working for five days a week and supports the reason why Emiratis do not prefer working for private sector which work up to six days a week (Farrell 2008).

Research respondents were asked if they preferred to work as managers, and the results showed that both male (78%) and female (59%) respondents preferred to work as managers even without experience. In Table 5.1, 18 female respondents were working and in Table 5.6, 20 female respondents prefer to work as managers. That shows that even female respondents who have not yet started working prefer to start working as managers.

5.2.2.4 Family Support to Secure Employment

The cross tabulation by gender, marital status and family support statements are explored in this section. The analysis provide different views on family support.

In the reviewed literature, marital status contribute to labour inequality (Helie 2012; Helie and Hoodfar 2012; Mir-Hosseini 2012). The first statement explore whether the research respondents wanted to work for a company (Question 12 in Appendix Table B.12). Women were encouraged to start business from home and the results show that 29 out of 35 female respondents want to work for a company (Table 5.7), contrary to establish home-based businesses (Table 5.12) where 41% female respondents said family prefer than they run home-based businesses and 47% disagreed with the statement.

Choices	Desire to Work for a Company												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	1	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	3	7
Disagree	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Neutral	1	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	3	5
Agree	6	9	7	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	14	15	29
Strongly Agree	1	7	3	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	14	18
Total	9	18	16	14	0	2	1	0	0	1	26	35	61

Table 5.7: Work for a Company

The second statement explored if respondents desire to develop professional careers. The results (Table 5.8) are evident that both male and female Emiratis desire to develop professional careers. Home-based businesses are desired but not preferred choices by Emirati women. Emirati women are forced by circumstances against their wishes and work from home or start home-based businesses.

The results from the family support question (Question 15 in Appendix Table B.15) demonstrate that married female respondents get minimal support related to career choice, while single female respondents strongly agreed that their family supported them in choosing a career.

The second item focused on family support in finding employment and married female respondents are getting minimal support, while single female respondents are

Choices	Desire to Develop Professional Career												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	5
Disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neutral	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Agree	4	4	4	4	0	2	1	0	0	0	9	10	19
Strongly Agree	5	13	10	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	22	37
Total	9	18	16	14	0	2	1	0	0	1	26	35	61

Table 5.8: Develop a Professional Career

getting some support from their family members.

Home-based businesses are strongly encouraged in the UAE (Farrell 2008). Most married female respondents strongly agreed to getting family support for starting businesses from home, while single female respondents strongly disagreed with the same statement. The results confirmed (See Section 3.7.1) that families do not support their female members to enter the labour market outside the home. The restrictions are part cultural and religious.

Choices	Family Support you get Employment												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	2	3	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	8	10
Disagree	2	2	3	5	0	1	1	0	0	1	6	9	15
Neutral	1	3	6	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	6	13
Agree	3	7	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	8	15
Strongly Agree	1	3	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	8
Total	9	18	16	14	0	2	1	0	0	1	26	35	61

Table 5.9: Family Support for Employment

In Muslim communities and societies women are expected to stay at home and the same sentiment was echoed during the focus group interviews (See Appendix C.2 and Section 3.7.1). This is consistent with what was expressed during the focus group interviews. There are different views about the social-economic responsibilities and duties among Emiratis for both men and women. The focus group research

participants have different views about the role of females in their communities both at home and at work. One of the male respondents expressed liberal views compared to married male respondents who aligned themselves to their traditions. This is understandable because of the social status of married men. Married individuals are expected to abide by the social norms and practices to propagate continuity of Emirati identity. Some of the expressions from the word tree (Appendix C.2) show that male Emiratis are prepared to give their women more financial support that exceed the promised salaries from employers. One of the female respondents (MZWC-C) approached her husband after being promised a job offer and stated that 'I said they will give me 30 000 Dh and he said stay at home and I will give you 40 000 Dh.' The evidence demonstrate that men are prepared to pay more than what can be offered to their wives when employed.

Women are encouraged to run home-based businesses or just stay at home and take care of their children and the family (Helie and Hoodfar 2012). This fulfils the religious and cultural requirements because women will be in controlled environment at all times. The results in Table 5.10 demonstrate that single female respondents are encouraged to work more than married female respondents. Male respondents are encouraged to search for employment and support their families. Specially, men are not allowed to stay at home while married women are strongly encouraged to stay at home. Fifty-four responses were valid and most of male respondents did not complete the statement.

The respondents were asked whether their families demonstrate any preferences on gender-based employment. The statement explore whether families support male members of the family to get employment. The results in Table 5.11 show that both male and female respondents agreed and strongly agreed that their families encourage male members of their families to work. An interesting observation is

Choices	Family wants you Stay at Home												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	3	5	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	6	15
Disagree	1	7	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	4	10	14
Neutral	0	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	6
Agree	1	2	1	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	9	11
Strongly Agree	0	2	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6	8
Total	5	18	14	14	0	1	1	0	0	1	20	34	54

Table 5.10: Family Support to Stay at Home

that both married male and female respondents strongly agreed with the statements that women are expected to stay at home while men are encouraged to search for employment to support their families. Consistent with the focus group interviews, focus group female respondents expressed a request to educate Emirati men on gender equality and employment. The sentiments expressed mostly by women demonstrate desperation when stated that 'men must know we also want to work and get money and support ourselves. They think we are happy stay at home. Teach men to allow women to go for work because is good for both people.' The sentiments by females were very different compared to those by male respondents.

The results of the questionnaire are consistent with what female focus group respondents expressed especially, when MZWC-B stated the following

eehh Because they ehhh have a think that ehhh the women should sit at home she don't ehhh want to work. Also they told that no women go to work you are , if you are married you sit at home you take care of your home, husband your children. They don't want to you work, what do you don't have, your husband already work, he give you money, you have something to eat, you have something to wear, you can do anything, you can go to anywhere with your husband so why you want to have a job even if my husband salary is 5000 they told ehhh, you should not

work your husband is already at work and you should sit at home.

Married women are not encouraged to work and the sentiment by MZWC-B shows the lack of support from family members. That also demonstrate patriarchal control tendencies where men control women and is confirming the sentiments expressed by Farrell (2008) in Section 3.7.3 when she highlighted the effects of the control mechanism that restrict women in decision-making processes.

Choices	Family Encourages Men to Work												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Disagree	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Neutral	1	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	4	7
Agree	1	9	4	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	6	11	17
Strongly Agree	3	6	7	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	16	26
Total	5	18	14	14	0	1	1	0	0	1	20	34	54

Table 5.11: Family Encourages Men to Work

Family members of married female respondents prefer women to run home-based businesses because that limited the interaction of women with men in public and this is consistent with the reviewed literature by Helie and Hoodfar (2012). The results in Table 5.12 demonstrate that married women strongly agreed to the statement that mostly family prefer women to run businesses from home. The single female respondents disagreed with the statement because single female respondents are not married. The main focus for such groups is to secure required education and once married they start experiencing matrimonial restrictions that are evidently documented in this research study. The possibility that the majority of single female respondents disagreed with the statement is because they are not focusing on running businesses because such businesses would be run by their mothers. The responses in Table 5.11 show that the majority of married female respondents strongly agreed that their families prefer men to go out and search for work while female family

members run home-based businesses. This appears to fulfil the need for micro businesses in communities as a way of encouraging entrepreneurial spirit yet the main objective satisfy family restrictions on females by preventing them from interacting in public.

Choices	Family Prefers you Run Home-Based Business												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4
Disagree	0	9	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	14	14
Neutral	3	3	9	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	13	4	17
Agree	1	4	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	10	13
Strongly Agree	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	6
Total	5	18	14	14	0	1	1	0	0	1	20	34	54

Table 5.12: Family Preference for Home-Based Business

The respondents were asked whether their families encouraged them to drive. The results (Table 5.13) are interesting because 11 married female respondents out of the 14 female married respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. That shows that married female receive minimal support to drive and that limits their mobility. The separated and divorced female respondents respectively agreed and strongly agreed with the statement (see Table 5.13). This reaffirmed that married female respondents are the most restricted members of Emirati society and the restrictions are imposed by their husbands and not by parents. The divorced and the separated female respondents are encouraged to drive because they need to support themselves and their families. A detailed analysis reveal patriarchal tendencies of denying women the opportunity to be independent so that they rely on men for their mobility.

The transition of females into the labour market require the support of family male members because they are in position of power both at home and at work. Men influence the decisions in their local labour market through the application of wasta

Choices	Family Encourages you to Drive												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	0	2	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	12
Disagree	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Neutral	2	6	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	7	11
Agree	1	7	4	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	6	10	16
Strongly Agree	2	1	8	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	10	2	12
Total	5	18	14	14	0	1	1	0	0	1	20	34	54

Table 5.13: Family Encourages you to Drive

(Farrell 2008). The social norms and values of the Emirati society are closely linked to family connections and any attempt to disobey the social practices, norms and values result in being blacklisted and treated as a misfit in society. Every member of the Muslim society is expected to behave in a Muslim way (Helie and Hoodfar 2012). The following section explores the effect of educational factors in transition from college into the labour market.

5.2.2.5 Educational Factors

The UAE provides free undergraduate education for Emirati nationals in public institutions of higher learning. Most of the students' tuition fees are paid by employing organisations as part of organisational corporate social responsibility with the focus on educating male youths. Most of the female youths are directly funded by the government as a way to balance the labour market inequality.

The respondents were asked statements related to their qualifications and the institutions they attended (Question 16 in Appendix Table B.16). Both male and female respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the statement that getting a good job requires a university education (Table 5.14). The results show some interesting results because five married male respondents and six married female respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement that getting a

good job requires a university qualification. This might be attributed to cases where people are employed based on *wasta* (Farrell 2008) the influence of family connections within Emirati society (Simadi and Kamali 2004). The majority of the respondents, four single male respondents, 15 single female respondents, both eight married male and female respondents, a divorced and a separated respondent all agreed that a university qualification is needed to get a good job.

Choices	Getting a Good Job Requires a University Qualification												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	4
Disagree	1	3	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	6	11
Neutral	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2
Agree	2	9	6	5	0	1	1	0	0	0	9	15	24
Strongly Agree	2	6	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	9	13
Total	5	18	14	14	0	1	1	0	0	1	20	34	54

Table 5.14: University Qualification

All of the state institutions demonstrate the commitment of their leaders and complaining about the quality of education demonstrate a lack of appreciation of their leadership. Leaders in UAE are appreciated through their social involvement in uplifting the society. The Emiratisation process in the UAE is associated with high remuneration. Emirati nationals in government departments are generously remunerated. As a result they prefer working in government entities than working for private sector. The following section addresses working conditions and the reasons why job seekers search for employment.

5.2.2.6 Socio-Economic Factors

A cross tabulation of data by gender, marital status and statements that measure the transition from college to work (Question 17 in Appendix Table B.17) produced interesting results. The first statement, I want to work to support my family explore

the reasons for seeking employment especially for female respondents. In Islam women get financial support from the male members of the family and in most Muslim nations women are not allowed to work for salaried jobs (Helie and Hoodfar 2012). Both male and female respondents agreed and strongly agreed that they wanted to work to support their families. There are interesting observations from the data collected, especially the rationale behind allowing women to work. The results in Table 5.15, show that 14 single female respondents agreed and strongly agreed that men should provide financial support to the family even if the wife was working. Thirteen married male and 12 married female respondents both supported that men are responsible for financial support for their family. During the focus group interviews, both male and female participants agreed that any income received by a wife belong to her and she use her money for her personal use and this is consistent with the the reviewed literature by Heaton (1996) and Salhi (2010). The rationale behind supporting the statement is based on their religion and culture that view men as responsible for financial support for their family (See details in Table 5.15). The other interesting observation (See details in Table 5.15)is that none of the single female respondents disagreed with the statement simply because it is known in UAE society that men must provide for the family.

Choices	Men Must Provide Financial Support to the Family												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Disagree	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	3
Neutral	0	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	4	5
Agree	1	7	6	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	7	11	18
Strongly Agree	3	7	7	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	16	26
Total	5	17	14	14	0	1	0	1	0	1	19	34	53

Table 5.15: Men Must Provide Financial Support

The respondents were asked whether it is embarrassing for a husband to earn

less than a wife if they both work (Question 17 in Appendix Table B.17). The results reveal that both men and women (42%) agreed that it is embarrassing if a husband earns less than a wife compared to 38% who disagreed with the statement (Table 5.16). The results show that 64% of married female and 43% of married male respondents agreed that it is embarrassing for a husband to earn less than a wife if both are working.

During the focus group interviews (Appendix C.2), male respondents were asked what percentage of women will they hire if they own a company and RUMC-A clearly stated that he was not going to hire any because he was not obliged by any UAE law to hire women. Male focus group respondents did not strongly support hiring women job-seekers.

Choices	Embarrassing if Husband Earns Less than Wife												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	0	1	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	8
Disagree	1	8	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	10	12
Neutral	1	4	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	5	6	11
Agree	1	1	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6	12
Strongly Agree	2	3	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	7	10
Total	5	17	14	14	0	1	1	0	0	1	20	33	53

Table 5.16: Embarrassing if Husband Earns Less than a Wife

The respondents were then asked (Question 17 Appendix Table B.17) whether the working environment was only suitable for men. The results show that 56% of female respondents disagreed with the statement while 53% of male respondents think that the working environment is only suitable for men (See details in Table 5.17) Working environments are dominated and managed by men and men are in positions of power. Male respondents acknowledged that the working environments are only suitable for men and most men give minimal support for working females (See details in Tables 5.18 and 5.19). The working environment can only be improved

if men want women to work.

Choices	Working Environment is Good for Men												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	0	4	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	8	9
Disagree	0	7	3	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	11	14
Neutral	1	2	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	3	8
Agree	2	4	5	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	8	7	15
Strongly Agree	1	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	5	7
Total	4	17	14	14	0	2	1	0	0	1	19	34	53

Table 5.17: Working Environment

Male respondents strongly agreed that women must stay at home, while the majority of female respondents strongly disagreed to be home-bound (Table 5.18). Four out of the five single male respondents supported the idea of not allowing women to work. Thirteen of the 17 single female respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. Eleven of 15 married female respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed to the statement compared to their male married respondents who strongly supported that women must not work. The UAE labour market is dominated by men (Farrell 2008) that create difficult situations for women seeking employment because Emirati male members do not strongly support females participate in the labour market. The results show that even single male respondents agreed that women must not work because culturally, women must not work in UAE.

Choices	Women Must not Work												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	0	5	1	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	12	13
Disagree	1	8	2	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	13	16
Neutral	0	1	4	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	5	3	8
Agree	3	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	3	9
Strongly Agree	1	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	2	7
Total	5	17	14	14	0	1	1	0	0	1	20	33	53

Table 5.18: Women Must not Work

The majority of male respondents preferred to see female members of their society at home (Table 5.19). Male respondents expressed different views about women working when RUMC-C stated that 'they must stay at home and keep kids and do domestic work. I would not want my wife to work.' The other point to note in the discussions is the individualistic possession of male respondents as they demonstrated individualistic ownership of their wives and families without including their wives as part of the family as stated by a male respondent who stated that 'this is the issue, when my wife has a choice, she must keep my kids, I want them to learn Arabic and not learn languages from a nanny.' The interpretations of male respondents were a reflection of Emirati family traditions that show power invested in men who do not allow women to work.

The results in Table 5.10 show that the family strongly prefer their married family members stay at home which is consistent with the expressed sentiments from the focus group discussions. Table 5.19 confirm that male respondents support the idea of having the female members of the society stay at home. Collectively, these two tables (Table 5.10 and Table 5.18) provide evidence that women are strongly against the idea of being home-bound. The results in Table 5.19 show that 63% of male respondents agreed that women must stay at home. Five of the 14 married male respondents chose to be neutral demonstrating some liberal sentiment compared to other male respondents. It is interesting that five out of 17 single female respondents and five out of 14 married female respondents supported that women must stay at home. The results from Table 5.19 show an equal split of respondents supporting the statement (42%) and those against the statement (42%). This is attributed to cultural and religious norms that consider women to be home-bound and the respondents are facing changes to their cultural values and norms.

The responses of male respondents demonstrate that men in Emirati society are

Choices	Women Must Stay at Home												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	0	3	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	9	10
Disagree	0	7	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	12	13
Neutral	0	2	5	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	6	2	8
Agree	3	5	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	9	15
Strongly Agree	2	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	1	7
Total	5	17	14	14	0	1	1	0	0	1	20	33	53

Table 5.19: Women Must Stay at Home

not expected to support women getting employment and work outside of the home because the results show that 30% of male respondents decided to remain neutral. One chooses a neutral option to express a safe position to prevent taking sides in a discussion. The following section explores whether the respondents can commute and relocate to other emirates for employment.

5.2.2.7 Location and Proximity to Workplaces

The primary economic activities of the UAE are in oil and gas industries that are found far away from cities. These oil and gas explorations are concentrated in Abu Dhabi in the Western region of the Emirate. Most of the national workers come from other emirates of the country. The respondents were asked questions about relocation and commuting to work from their current locations (Question 18 in Appendix Table B.18). This section uses cross tabulation of can commute, gender and marital status to provide insight into youth transition into the labour market. Fifty-two responses were valid out of the 63 responses.

There were 19 male and 33 female respondents (See details in Table 5.20). The results show 19 male respondents of which four were single, one separated and 14 married. The 33 female respondents were 17 single, 14 married, one divorced and one widowed. The results show that 93% of married male respondents can

Choices	Can Commute and Work Elsewhere												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	0	3	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	11
Disagree	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
Neutral	0	4	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	7
Agree	2	8	8	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	11	11	22
Strongly Agree	2	0	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	1	8
Total	4	17	14	14	0	1	1	0	0	1	19	33	52

Table 5.20: Commute to Work

relocate to other emirates for employment compared to 71% of married women who cannot commute and work out of their community. The majority of single female respondents agreed with the statement. Although the results suggest that married male respondents can commute and work outside their community, that does not mean that their wives can do the same because the results in Table 5.19 demonstrate that married men want their wives stay at home. Themes from the focus group discussions highlighted the same feelings that women are expected to stay at home (See Appendix C.2).

Choices	Home is Close to Employing Firms												
	S		M		D		SP		W		Totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Strongly Disagree	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	5
Disagree	1	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	6
Neutral	0	1	4	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	5	3	8
Agree	1	11	3	7	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	19	23
Strongly Agree	2	2	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	10
Total	4	17	14	14	0	1	1	0	0	1	19	33	52

Table 5.21: Home is Close to Employing Organisations

The respondents were asked whether their homes are close to employing companies (Question 18 in Appendix Table B.18) and the results in Table 5.21 are interesting because 24 out of 33 (73%) female respondents agreed and strongly agreed that employing companies are close to their homes and yet not all of

them are employed. The restrictive reasons given by male respondents during focus group interviews were related to long distances from home to work yet the majority of female respondents agree that they are living near prospective employing organisations in the communities. The results show that 63%, 33 out of the 52 valid responses agreed that their homes are close to prospective employing companies yet 33% of all the respondents are not employed.

A male focus group respondent, RUMC-C stated that 'no, I will not allow her to work 100km away from home because its dangerous to travel alone going on daily basis, actually if she is working here which is nearby now it is acceptable but if get an offer before in different places with around 30 minutes away from where we live now we don't accept because of the distance.' It is understandable that if the roads are dangerous to travel women are restricted not to use dangerous roads but some women are even denied to work in organisations within walking distances. The reason behind is the interaction of women with the public is not encouraged in Muslim societies.

5.2.2.8 Open-ended Questions: Reasons for High Female Unemployment

Most respondents did not answer open-ended questions and I am assuming that the respondents did not want to write but to just select the given options. The other possible reason for not answering open-ended questions can be attributed to lack of desire to respondents to express themselves in English language.

The respondents of the questionnaire were asked four open-ended questions that focus on the reasons why female unemployment was high (Questions 22-25 in Appendix B.22-B.25). The respondents were asked their opinion on what are some of the reasons that led to high female unemployment (Question 22 in Appendix B.22)

Those who answered the first question mentioned tradition, work environment and the need for flexible working timings as factors that hinder the transition of female graduates entering the labour market. The tradition is linked to the way of life of Muslims, where women are expected to be home-bound. Women are expected to have a male chaperone when travelling and not allowed to interact with non-immediate male members of the family. Women preferred flexible working timings that allow them to do domestic chores and work requirements. Some mentioned that their parents needed counselling to accept female employment

The second question was about what respondents think can be done to increase female employment but many left the question unanswered (Question 23 in Appendix B.23). Those who answered suggested training and awareness to be made to men that women were not working for money, but to satisfy their personal job satisfaction.

The third question was on job expectations after graduation (Question 24 in Appendix B.24). Those who answered the third question about their job expectations demonstrated that they expected management jobs. They expected male members of Emirati society to allow their wives to work.

The fourth and last open-ended question asked advice to policy-makers on female unemployment problems (Question 25 in Appendix B.25). Most recommendations for policy makers focus on asking companies follow Islamic laws when employing women. They suggested that the policy-makers enforce all companies to provide female-only working sections and allow married women to work less hours per day. Some respondents mentioned the need for employment equity for both men and women without considering gender and marital status. In the UAE, government employed couples are not allowed to receive double provision in benefits such as housing, air tickets and medical insurance. The government normally pays the

benefits to the one of the couple with the highest basic salary. Almost always, all benefits are paid to the husband when both are employed in the public sector. This is a problem of fairness to married females because in Islam men can marry up to four women and all benefits are paid to husbands.

5.3 Factor Analysis

This research study explore the factors that hinder the transition of female graduates from entering the labour market. Hair et al. (2010:94) stated that 'the primary purpose of factor analysis is to define the underlying structure among the variables in the analysis.'

This research use R-factor analysis (Hair et al. 2010) to analyse the variables of the principal components that influence the transition of female graduates from entering the labour market. The research use more than fifty observations and the acceptable Bartlett test of sphericity must be less than 0.05. The results (Table 5.22) show the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy with more than 0.6000 used to measure the appropriateness of factor analysis (Acton et al. 2009; Hair et al. 2010; Pallant 2007).

The factors that met the sampling adequacy in Table 5.22 are analysed using dimension reduction a process that reduces the number of variables and identify principal variables that are considered to affect the dependent variable. Those that demonstrate positive and negative correlations are further analysed. In this research, negative principal components are important to consider and analyse because they are negatively correlated to the transition into labour market(Dependent variable). The principal component analysis is used to determine different group variables starting with the transition preparedness. Principal component forms a group of

items or statements that correlate to the independent variable that influence the transition of female graduates into the labour market.

Factors	Eigenvalues per component						
	KMO	1	2	3	4	5	Total(%)
Working Environment	0.607	3.308	1.649	1.379			70.401
Transition Preparedness	0.616	3.997	2.843	2.002	1.647	1.234	68.961
Location Factors	0.649	2.979	1.683	1.057			71.496
Family Support	0.694	3.814	1.848	1.072	1.016		70.459
Women Responsibility	0.694	3.071	2.214	1.187			64.722
Personal Preferences	0.714	3.423	1.899				53.211
Helping Others(Wasta)	0.714	2.377	1.207				59.730
Patriarchal Factors	0.778	4.979	1.469				56.968
Educational Factors	0.830	4.768	1.487				52.977

Table 5.22: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy

5.3.1 Transition Preparedness

The transition preparedness is measured by the actions taken by graduates in preparing to enter the labour market. When seventeen variables were exposed to dimension reduction, the principal component analysis revealed five components from one to five. To help understand the interpretation, the Oblimin rotation is performed and the structure and pattern matrices with five components show loading for the variables (See details in Table 5.23 and 5.24). The loadings show both positive and negative correlations to the given statements. The interpretations consider the negative loadings as demonstrating negative factors that affected the given statement while positive loading demonstrate positive correlation to the same statement. The factor loading coefficient of more than 0.7 is recommended for consideration as alluded in Hair et al. (2010) because the research sample was less than 70.

The results of Oblimin rotation produce a structure matrix (Table 5.24) with the same five retained components. Component four consist of negative components

Variables	Components				
	1	2	3	4	5
I applied for on-line jobs	0.873				
I sent CV to many companies	0.809				
I visited on-line career sites	0.685				
I considered the studied program		0.891			
I considered the studied degree		0.884			
I was offered job offers after college			0.831		
I declined job offers myself			0.770		
I was offered job offers after graduation			0.715		
My family supported me to get a job				-0.824	
I attended interviews after college				-0.785	
I visited career fairs				-0.689	
I looked forward for to my first job					-0.851
I bought newspapers with jobs					0.547
I attended several career sessions					0.545

Table 5.23: Transition Preparedness: Pattern Matrix

which are family support, attended interviews and visited career fairs. These are negative variables that contribute to the failure of graduates to enter the labour market. The first component demonstrate the preparedness of the graduates by engaging with many companies through on-line job application process. The studied programmes demonstrate the desire by female graduates to enter the labour market. Failure to attend interviews and career fairs hinder the transition into the labour market.

5.3.2 Personal Preferences

The personal preferences had ten variables subjected to principal component analysis. The results (Table 5.25) show that the respondents prefer to work for five days a week, in highly paying jobs, in their community, as managers, for forty hours a week and for the government. Staying at home has a negative loading that demonstrate a negative correlation. Although male members of Emirati families prefer their women stay at home, Emirati females were against the idea of staying

Variables	Components				
	1	2	3	4	5
I applied for on-line jobs	0.853				
I sent CV to many companies	0.826				
I visited on-line career sites	0.700				
I have a desire to work for a company	0.541				
I have a desire to develop a professional career	0.515			-0.500	
I considered the studied program		0.891			
I considered the studied degree		0.871			
I was offered job offers after college			0.828		
I declined job offers myself			0.778		
I was offered job offers after graduation			0.719		
My family supported me to get a job				-0.817	
I attended interviews after college				-0.796	
I visited career fairs				-0.718	
I looked forward to my first job					-0.778
I attended several career sessions					0.664
I bought newspapers with jobs					0.637

Table 5.24: Transition Preparedness: Structure Matrix

at home. The results also show component two with high loading for working with male Emirati and expatriates because the Emirati females have no problems working with expatriates. They are split on working in female-only spaces between male and female respondents.

Variables	Components	
	1	2
I prefer working for 5 days per week	0.774	
I prefer working for a well paying job	0.719	
I prefer working in my community	0.678	
I prefer working as a manager	0.673	
I prefer working for 40hrs per week	0.660	
I prefer working for the government	0.644	
I prefer staying at home	-0.566	
I prefer working with male Emiratis		0.890
I prefer working with expatriates		0.861
I prefer working in female-only environment	0.414	-0.534

Table 5.25: Personal Preferences: Pattern Matrix

The Oblimin rotation produce a structure matrix and the results loading are not

very different, as shown in Table 5.26.

Variables	Components	
	1	2
I prefer working for 5 days per week	0.774	
I prefer working for a well paying job	0.719	
I prefer working in my community	0.678	
I prefer working as a manager	0.673	
I prefer working for 40hrs per week	0.659	
I prefer working for the government	0.645	
I prefer staying at home	-0.566	
I prefer working with male Emiratis		0.890
I prefer working with expatriates		0.862
I prefer working in female-only environment	0.412	-0.532

Table 5.26: Personal Preferences: Structure Matrix

5.3.3 Family Support Factors

The family support factors have 11 variables that are analysed using principal component analysis. The applied Oblimin rotation reveal high negative loading which show different views between the respondents and their family members (Table 5.27). The correlation matrix reveal high negative correlations. Strong views are presented in component three where the families encourage male members of the family to work. Component 1 show that both male and female respondents, especially single females, strongly disagreed with the statements.

The Oblimin rotation structure matrix reveal different loading for the component variables. (Table 5.28).

5.3.4 Educational Factors

The nine educational items that form the educational factors are subjected to principal component analysis. The Oblimin rotation is conducted to further help

Variables	Components			
	1	2	3	4
Your family wants you stay at home	-0.856			
Your family wants you to work in ladies-only area	-0.814			
Family prefers you run home-based business	-0.755			
Your family allows you to work	0.636			
Your family feels employment is for men	-0.579	-0.386		0.330
Your family encourages you to drive	0.482			0.462
Your family is to drive you to work if employed		0.852		
Your family helps you find a job		0.726		
Your family helped you choose a career		0.698		
Your family encourages men to work			0.956	
Family feels female unemployment is a problem				0.844

Table 5.27: Family Support: Pattern Matrix

Variables	Components			
	1	2	3	4
Your family wants you to work in ladies-only area	-0.847			-0.400
Your family wants you stay at home	-0.841			
Family prefers you run home-based business	-0.724			
Your family allows you to work	0.669	0.339		0.363
Your family encourages you to drive	0.616		-0.389	0.568
Your family feels employment is for men	-0.605	-0.458	0.301	
Your family is to drive you to work if employed		0.806		
Your family helps you find a job	0.354	0.781		0.324
Your family helped you choose a career		0.737		0.317
Your family encourages men to work			0.939	
Family feels female unemployment is a problem				0.858

Table 5.28: Family Support: Structure Matrix

with the interpretations and the pattern matrix (Table 5.29) and the structure matrix (Table 5.30) are presented for interpretations.

The results in the two components are grouped on qualification and the evaluation of the educational institution. The respondents showed confidence in their educational system as represented in component one and they have no problem with their institutions of higher education (Table 5.29). The reviewed literature on Emirati educational system does not consider institutions of higher education as contributing to the restrictions of females from entering the labour market. The

Variables	Components	
	1	2
Your college reputation is valuable	0.958	
Your qualification is respected in the labour market	0.919	
Your program adds value	0.917	
Your qualification gives you confidence in the labour market	0.877	
Your education's quality is acceptable	0.765	
You can return to the same College for further studies	0.599	0.485
You can return to the same department		0.843
Your education results meet the employment requirements		0.776
Getting a good job needs a university qualification		-0.410

Table 5.29: Educational Factors: Pattern Matrix

choice of career of most women could be a contributing factor. A detailed analysis show that career choice is determined by male members of the community and at times there is no choice for females to choose fee-paying institutions. They are forced to join national institutions that provide free education.

One point to note is the negative correlation of -0.410 that confirm that respondents feel that getting a good job is not about individual qualifications as suggested in Table 5.14, where 28 % of respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed that getting a good job depend on the university qualifications.

Variables	Components	
	1	2
Your college reputation is valuable	0.944	
Your program adds value	0.909	
Your qualification is respected in the labour market	0.898	
Your qualification gives you confidence in the labour market	0.879	
Your education's quality is acceptable	0.784	
You can return to the same college for further studies	0.709	0.621
You can return to the same department	0.364	0.882
Your education results meet the employment requirements		0.792
Getting a good job needs a university qualification		-0.385

Table 5.30: Educational Factors: Structure Matrix

The results evidently show that the qualifications have little effect on restrictions to enter the labour market. All the respondents valued their qualifications and the

institutions of higher learning.

The next section focus on the suitability of the working environment.

5.3.5 Working Environment

Nine variables under the working environment factors were subjected to principal component analysis. The Oblimin rotation reveal acceptable variable loadings greater than 0.70 needed for interpretation of the factors. The pattern matrix (Table 5.31) has three components variable loadings.

Variables	Components		
	1	2	3
Men are to provide financial help	0.873		
Women are to work near their home	0.790		
Women are to work if their family is poor	0.662		
You want to work to support your family	0.637		
A husband should not earn less than a wife	0.515		0.343
Women must not work		0.945	
Women must be at home		0.942	
Working environment is good for men			0.905
The available jobs are only suitable for men			0.873

Table 5.31: Women and Working Environment: Pattern Matrix

The results (Table 5.31) show three components. The first component show the variables that support the need for employment for both men and women. The second component show the restrictive variables that contribute to the restrictions on women with strong support that they be denied to work and they should stay at home (Al-Jazeera 2014; Helie and Hoodfar 2012).

Hoodfar and Ghoreishian (2012:235) stated that,

Islamist fundamentalist and religious conservatives insist that God has ordained men to be in control of their women folk and that women's place is in the domestic sphere ... they thus advocate for a social system

where women's mobility is very restricted and women do not come into contact with non-kin male individuals, except when supervised by their male kin.

The religious and patriarchal factors are embedded in actions and daily practices of social actors because of the sensitivity of any issues related to their Islamic teachings, Muslims rarely question such social interpretations (Al-Jazeera 2014; Helie and Hoodfar 2012).

The third component show the views about the working environment. Working women were expected to work in exceptional circumstances, principally when there are no male members to financially help them support families (Farrell 2008; Helie and Hoodfar 2012).

Variables	Components		
	1	2	3
Men are to provide financial help	0.857		
Women are to work near their home	0.846		0.343
You want to work to support your family	0.640		0.328
Women are to work if their family is poor	0.625		
A husband should not earn less than a wife	0.618		0.476
Women must be at home		0.952	
Women must not work		0.944	
Working environment is good for men			0.910
The available jobs are only suitable for men			0.877

Table 5.32: Women and Working Environment: Structure Matrix

The results show that women are strongly denied to work and, if allowed to work, they are expected to work close to their homes. While the working environment in the urban setup is accommodating to female employees, environments in the rural areas and in the oil fields need improvement because the working spaces are designed for male occupations.

The next section focused on the distance and location from home to work.

5.3.6 Location Factors

The eight location variables (Question 18 in Appendix Table B.18) were subjected to principal component analysis. The scree plot supported the retention of three components. Oblimin rotation was applied to the three components and the pattern matrix (Table 5.33) and structure matrix (Table 5.34) are presented.

Variables	Components		
	1	2	3
You can relocate to other Emirates for work	0.964		
You can stay in other Emirates	0.963		
You can commute and work elsewhere	0.875		
Your home is close to employing firms		-0.883	
There are good jobs in your community		-0.779	
There are jobs that are suitable only for men			0.798
Your home location is a problem for you to work			0.742
Your family members drive to work			0.475

Table 5.33: Location Factors: Pattern Matrix

The components in the pattern matrix reveal that relocation factors loaded strongly positive in component one, availability of good job opportunities and home proximity to employing organisations demonstrate negative loadings in component two. Employment suitability for men, effect of home location and family chaperone requirements loaded strongly positive in component three. Mobility restrictions on female job seekers (Hoodfar and Ghoreishian 2012), the location of employing firms and scarce opportunities in their communities made the transition of female graduates into the labour market difficult and this is consistent with the information provided in Section 3.7.7 where some emirates are not economically viable. The majority of male respondents commuted to other Emirates for employment while women are not allowed to relocate or even commute to work.

The structure matrix (Table 5.34) reveal results that are not very different from the pattern matrix (Table 5.33). One variable that crossed over the

components(family members to drive to work) is not surprising because of the lack of employment opportunities in the community, females are expected to be driven to work. The unsuitability of employment in the communities force male family members to drive long distances to work.

Variables	Components		
	1	2	3
You can relocate to other Emirates for work	0.962		
You can stay in other Emirates	0.951		
You can commute and work elsewhere	0.906		
Your home is close to employing firms		-0.869	
There are good jobs in your community		-0.804	
Your home location is a problem for you to work			0.769
There are jobs that are suitable only for men			0.748
Your family members drive to work		0.333	0.563

Table 5.34: Location Factors: Structure Matrix

The need for relocation show different loadings. Job seekers often have to relocate in search of suitable employment opportunities. Some families do not both support and encourage females to drive (Table 5.13 in Chapter 5). The next section focus on the role of men in society.

5.3.7 Patriarchal Factors

The eleven patriarchal variables were subjected to principal component analysis. To aid the component interpretations, Oblimin rotation reveal the pattern matrix (Table 5.35)and the structure matrix (Table 5.36) with the seven variables having a high loading greater than 0.7.

The results confirm the dominance of male members in Emirati society, consistent with the reviewed literature that, in a Muslim society, men have more power over women (Al-Jazeera 2014; Alexander and Welzel 2011; Helie and Hoodfar 2012; Hoodfar and Ghoreishian 2012; Salhi 2010) and women are expected to stay at home.

Variables	Components	
	1	2
Male members of your home make decisions	0.812	
A husband salary must support the family	0.810	
A husband career is more important than a wife career	0.800	
A husband must afford to pay marriage cost	0.788	
Men must not ask for money from the wife	0.777	
Whatever male member of the family says is followed	0.744	
Male job seekers must have priority to get employed		0.819

Table 5.35: Patriarchal Factors: Pattern Matrix

The structure matrix (Table 5.36) reveal the same seven variables with high loading, although less than those in the pattern matrix (Table 5.35).

Variables	Components	
	1	2
Male members of your home make decisions	0.816	
A husband salary must support the family	0.810	
A husband career is more important than a wife career	0.795	
A husband must afford to pay marriage cost	0.787	
Men must not ask for money from the wife	0.777	
Whatever male member of the family says is followed	0.743	
Male job seekers must have priority to get employed		0.815

Table 5.36: Patriarchal Factors: Structure Matrix

The role of men in Muslim societies are documented as religious, hence such interpretations of social roles are difficult to critically analyse as that could be interpreted as challenging the religion of Islam (Helie and Hoodfar 2012). The patriarchal interpretations are blended into religious teachings. Any attempt to question the religious interpretations risk being regarded as blasphemous that is punishable by death (Helie and Hoodfar 2012). The results in Table 5.19 show 30% of female respondents supporting patriarchal tendencies that women must stay at home. Component two in Table 5.36 show that men should be given priority when searching for employment. The next section focus on the role of women in Emirati society and their value to the Islamic community.

5.3.8 Women Responsibility Factors

The variables on female responsibilities are subjected to principal component analysis. The data were further subjected to Oblimin rotation to aid in component interpretations and the pattern matrix (Table 5.37) and structure matrix (Table 5.38) are interpreted.

Variables	Components		
	1	2	3
Women must stay home and keep kids	0.807		
Married women are less committed at work	0.802		
Women feel frustrated if not working	-0.741		
Women get powerful if they work		0.896	
Some women become irresponsible if they work			0.760

Table 5.37: Women Responsibility Factors: Pattern Matrix

The components in the pattern matrix (Table 5.37) reveal female responsibility, commitment and their position in society. Women are strongly encouraged to stay at home and take care of the home and the children. Component two suggested that women become more powerful when they get employed and they no longer rely on men for financial support. If they can financially support themselves this makes financial support from their male members of their society less valuable, thereby making men less powerful.

Variables	Components		
	1	2	3
Women must stay home and keep kids	0.810		
Married women are less committed at work	0.797		
Women feel frustrated if not working	-0.744		
Women get powerful if they work		0.897	
Some women become irresponsible if they work			0.777

Table 5.38: Women Responsibility Factors: Structure Matrix

The results in the structure matrix (Table 5.38) supported the expectations of women in terms of their domestic role and responsibilities of taking care of the family

and children. The respondents fear that women become powerful when employed and were no longer under the control of men. This is consistent with the evidence in the reviewed literature where for example, Salhi (2010) outlined the expectations of women to be home bound. The negative loading on the variable in component one suggest that females get frustrated if not working. This can be attributed to women focusing on other things that are regarded as irrelevant to their roles and responsibilities of taking care of the children and the home. Especially, male respondents suggested that females should focus on their domestic chores and not stress themselves by going to work because employment compromised their duties as mothers and wives in the home. The majority of Emirati men strongly support that women must stay at home and not work, as evidenced in Tables 5.18 and 5.19. The female transition into the labour market become difficult because the male members of the Emirati society are strong supporters of home-bound females. Men are in control of most government departments and companies that are earmarked for emiratisation, yet men are not allowing their female members to work.

The next section focus on the Emirati cultural practices, values and norms where helping one of their own clan without merit is viewed as normal (Simadi and Kamali 2004).

5.3.9 Helping Others (Wasta) Factors

The variables under the helping others (wasta)(Question 21 in Appendix Table B.21) were exposed to principal component analysis with the expectation this would aid in the interpretation of the results. The Oblimin rotation was applied to aid in the interpretation of the components and only loadings above 0.7 are retained. The interpretation of the components focus on the pattern matrix (Table 5.39) and the structure matrix (Table 5.40).

Variables	Components	
	1	2
Helping others to get a job is normal	0.809	
Getting a job is about who you know	0.702	
It is better to hire single than married women		0.894

Table 5.39: Helping Others (Wasta) Factors: Pattern Matrix

The results (Table 5.39) reveal two components that are showing wasta, the term referring to helping one of your kin. In other societies, wasta would be considered as nepotism, but in the UAE this is regarded as helping others. The second component show that helping others could easily be applied, but benefiting single female job-seekers and not married women. Married females are always in difficult positions because, once married, they are under the control of the husband. In such situations, the application of wasta depend on the husband because in most cases women are expected to be home-bound.

Variables	Components	
	1	2
Helping others to get a job is normal	0.793	
There are few working females	0.708	
It is better to hire single than married women		0.873

Table 5.40: Helping Others (Wasta) Factors: Structure Matrix

The results in the rotated structure matrix (Table 5.40) has a new variable in component one that reveal that there are few working women. The need for helping others has to be applied regardless of the marital status in the Emirati society. The results in both tables for component two reveal that wasta is extended to single females.

5.4 Interpretations of Research Results

The results in Table 5.1 show nine single unemployed females but still searching for employment. Nine married female respondents were unemployed but seven of out of nine were still searching for employment. Two married female respondents were no longer searching. The results show that although men prefer their women to stay at home and do home-based businesses, women are not in favour of that option. The evidence from Table 5.7 show that 83% of female respondents prefer to work for a company. Similar sentiment is expressed in Table 5.8 when 91% of female respondents expressed the desire to develop professional careers. That indicate that female Emiratis are not given the opportunities to fulfil their dreams but they are excluded from the main stream economy because of social factors.

The respondents strongly agreed that their families wanted them to run home-based businesses as shown in Table 5.12. An interesting observation from the results show that the majority of male respondents, both single and married, were neutral to the statement. These males did not want to take a decision on whether to support home-based businesses or not. There are three possible reasons for this position, one being that male respondents did not want their wives to engage in any form of work that attracted attention even at home. The other reason is that female members should not run businesses at home because that created pressure on them, compromising on the responsibilities of taking care of the family. The third and most likely reason might be that the statement was interpreted as referring to male members of the family and the female respondents were neutral because that did not apply to them.

The principal reason behind the introduction of home-based businesses is to protect women because they are vulnerable members of the society (Holmes and Jones 2013). The results in Table 5.10 show that the male respondents disagreed and

strongly disagreed to the statement because they were expected to support their families. The responses by married female respondents showed the preferences of their families who preferred that women stay at home.

The majority of male respondents, 70% of both single and married agreed and strongly agreed that women must not work and such sentiments were echoed in Al-Jazeera (2014). Thirteen single females and 11 married female respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed to that statement. The results in Table 5.11 show that most families encouraged men to work with 80% of male respondents and 79% of females respondents, agreed and strongly agreed to the statement.

It is important to understand that most companies in the UAE are based in both the cities and in the oil fields far away from residential communities. Driving to work is a requirement because there are few public buses. The public buses are not favourable means of transportation for the UAE nationals because of the interaction with men. Some families do not encourage their female children drive (Farrell 2008) and the results in Table 5.13 reflected this sentiment, where 44% of all female respondents reported that they are not encouraged to drive by their families. The results from Table 5.20 support the same sentiment, that women are not allowed to commute and work elsewhere. Again 44% of female respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed that they can commute and or relocate for work. The results reaffirmed that Muslim female members are not encouraged to travel or stay alone without one of their male family member or the husband being present (Farrell 2008).

The evidence in Tables 5.18 and 5.19 show that women are encouraged not to work and stay at home, although some female respondents supported the idea of staying at home. The rationale for those who agreed that women should stay at home might be strong believers in women need to take care of their domestic chores.

Some respondents have homes that are far away from employing companies as shown in Table 5.21. Specifically, six female respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed that their homes are close to employing companies. Seventy-three percent of the female respondents agreed and strongly agreed that their homes are close to employing companies (Table 5.21), but only 50% of the female respondents were employed (Table 5.1). These results could be attributed to the working environment being only good for men and the results in Table 5.17 confirm this, showing that both male and female respondents agreed and disagreed to this statement.

The results affirmed the circumstances that the UAE is a Muslim nation that is mainly governed by family Islamic law (Sezgin 2012). The country committed itself to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, which focused on elimination of factors that hinder female employment. The United Nations Millennium Development Goal relevant to this research is the third goal, that focus on promoting gender equality and empowering of women (Metcalf 2011; United-Nations 2014). The challenge that the UAE government face is how to influence of family law (Sezgin 2012). In Islam Law, gender equality is a foreign concept and not clearly defined (Helie and Hoodfar 2012). Muslim communities view division of labour as the responsibilities that is documented in *The Holy Qur'an*, and while the country has achieved more in educating female citizens, the empowering aspects and gender equality at the community level have encountered resistance.

The sentiments of a man as the head of the family and the wife as the subordinate were echoed by the girls of the Taliban (Al-Jazeera 2014). In the Muslim world, men maintain the status of the affairs as documented in *The Holy Qur'an* and as interpreted from Islamic teachings. The government prefer family laws that are in line with Islamic teachings and beliefs because that maintain order and stability in their communities (Helie and Hoodfar 2012). The United

Nations Millennium Development Goals were expected to be fulfilled by the year 2015. The UAE has done what other countries like Afghanistan failed to achieve (Al-Jazeera 2014). Achieving the UNMDG is expected to be based on improvements in individual countries regardless of the performance of other countries. Having qualified females available for work but unemployed, demonstrate failure in fulfilling the UN Millennium Development Goals.

5.5 Summary of Research Findings

This research study has highlighted a need for a thorough consideration of the complexities in youth transitions that is considered to encompass all regions and generic in nature. This research study show the need to engage youth transitions from a different paradigm. The new approach consider college-to-work as a distinct paradigm to the school-to-work transitions due to the experiences and the structure of the processes. The College-to-work youth transition require a new conceptualisation of the transition process because of the structure inputs and outcomes.

The experiences in youth transitions are generalised as linear, non-linear, smooth and rough. This research suggest that college-to-work transitions should be considered as either smooth or rough because linear or non-linear is a structural categorisation that is irrelevant in college-to-work transitions because of the reversals from work to college after graduation. College-to-work transition is not linear. In school-to-work experience both linearity and smoothness are not problematic transition experiences whereas in college-to-work linearity is not important any more because college students can do courses without prerequisites any time during the period of study and is not problematic. College students can study and work at the same time. In a school-to-work transition, the structure is rigid and requires

linearity. The inter-change use of the concept of school-to-work creates confusion when applied in different societies.

In this research study the transition to work is the dependent variable that depends on social critical factors. The proposed theoretical framework in Figure 3.2 show that the college-to work transitions are influenced by social factors. These social factors form the critical factors that determine the smoothness and roughness of college-to-work experiences. The critical factors demonstrate correlation with the college-to-work transition.

In an attempt to explore the factors that affect female transition to the labour market, this research study follow qualitative research using focus group interviews followed by a quantitative confirmatory research using a questionnaire. The research questionnaire was developed from themes gathered from the reviewed literature and the focus group interviews. Lack of empirical research on youth transition from college to work resulted in using exploratory research, where the research attempts to collect data from the affected youths. The research focus on social factors that were initially suggested by (Farrell 2008). While Farrell (2008) listed the critical factors, this research further analysed the factors that are critical in restricting women from entering the labour market using principal component factor analysis. This research provided insight into the main problems that result in restrictive actions by male members of Emirati society and revealed the core causes of the restrictions. The core causes of the restrictions are based on the interpretations of the social and religious values.

The research results demonstrate restrictive tendencies that are linked to patriarchal factors that are strongly influenced by religious factors. Religious factors influence every interpretation because in a Muslim country Islam is the way of life. That means all the social and religious interpretations are based on Islamic

interpretation of the social entities. Women are not allowed to interact in public because that is unacceptable in Islam. Division of labour demonstrates that men are expected to provide for their families while women are expected to take care of the home and the family.

When research respondents were asked the problem of employing female Emirati in organisations, female respondents mentioned the working environment that lacks private sections for females (MZWC-B), social pressure from the family (MZWC-C) and lack of employment opportunities in the area (RUWC-H). The real factor that affected all the female respondents was the working environment that is not designed for married female job-seekers. Male respondents echoed the same sentiment stating that the working environment is not suitable for women job-seekers.

Focus group Female respondents were asked if they were spoiled and they did not want to work. They stated that they wanted to work. MZWC-E stated that she was not spoiled because she was supporting her mother. RUWC-H stated that there was no suitable work for women in their region. The main problem for not working was the lack of suitable jobs and working environment for married women.

Female and Male focus group respondents were asked if Emirati men were jealous to see their women working. MZWC-B accepted that her husband was jealous to see her working because he has a high school certificate and if she gets a job she will be earning more than him. MZWC-C and RUWC-H were married to husbands at executive level and they expressed different views because their husbands were not worried about how much they were going to earn. MZWC-C thought that her husband was not jealous but expressed care when she said that

I think this is wrong because they are not jealous from us because we have bigger salary than theirs, from my husband view, he take ehhh this is a care, why you working and making yourself tired, and you have a

lot of work in home , you do double job do your work at home and take care of my children ,eehh our children because they are still young and he said how much do they give you because whatever I do I will not get his salary because eeehhh he have ehhh very high position so even I say they will give me Dh30000 he says stay home I will give you Dh40000 , that's what he said so it is not money issue or jealous because of money issue. I will give you clue about that, now we are going through a pressure, we have a new house and we spend all what we had on that new house and now I need work , this time I need a salary but he said no, we don't need, we will not need, just do not make yourself tired just stay in home.

The male focus group respondent (RUMC-A) mentioned that men will always dominate and they consider that women will go for maternity leave, then salaries of men will always be higher than those of females. RUMC-A mentioned that the society does not view a woman as a leader therefore women can view their actions as restrictive but that is not the case.

The focus group respondents were asked if they feel unemployed women feel frustrated and bored staying at home. Female focus group respondents expressed that they feel useless in the community when doing nothing yet they are qualified. On the other hand the male focus group respondents suggested that women are bored but there are a lot of things to do in the house to make them busy and engaged.

The research results show that women must stay at home (See details in Tables 5.19 and 5.10), must not work (See details in Table 5.18 and 5.11, cannot commute or relocate to cities with employment opportunities (See details in Table 5.20), family do not support females to drive (See details in Table 5.9), women are encouraged to do home-based business against their wishes (See details in Table 5.12) while families

support men to work (See details in Table 5.11. Men are expected to earn more than their wives so that they are able to support their families (See details in Tables 5.16 and 5.15). The results show restrictive practices that are considered as normal in Emirati society because of division of labour and responsibility between men and women. Gender equality can never be addressed and resolved in a society that clearly shows differences based on gender responsibilities. These gender responsibilities are not considered as equitable therefore women's responsibilities will never be valuable. Until such time when division of labour is equated to monetary value, women's contribution will never be considered essential and valuable.

This proactive research study on youth unemployment demonstrate the importance of resolving youth unemployment problems before they go beyond borders evidenced during the Arab Spring youth unemployment uprising. When the 2010 Arab uprising started in Tunisia, most European countries never thought it was going to affect them in any way. Today, the refugee problems in Europe is a result of the Arab uprising that affected the Middle Eastern and North African countries. The Arab uprising that started as a youth unemployment problem in Tunisia changed governments in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and is causing a long civil war in Syria. This research reveals some restrictions that require attention to resolve female unemployment problems in the UAE.

5.6 Conclusion

Understanding the influence of family law in a Muslim community, (Sezgin 2012) is important because that provides detailed understanding of the requirements and expectations of Muslims. According to female focus group participants, lack of power in decision making about their employment originate from family laws. Muslim family laws consider arranged marriage (Khan 2012). Muslims are expected to

abide by the Sharia law (Al-Jazeera 2014; Sezgin 2012) and the ultimate goal of any religious believer is to be respectful of their religion. This makes interpretations of the religious requirements difficult to question. Islam is regarded as a way of life (Al-Jabri 2009; Helie and Hoodfar 2012) and social interpretations by religious scholars and the family male elders are regarded as well-informed interpretations and not subject to questioning. Islamic teachings in *The Holy Qur'an* schools (Madrasas) (Al-Jazeera 2014) outlined activities that are sinful and punishable by death. Girls and boys as young as ten were constantly reminded that disobeying parents is a sin, failing to cover female bodies from head to toe is sinful and women are not allowed to work if they interact with men because that is a sin too. Family law interpretations are viewed differently in different Muslim countries and their applications are different. Some of the restrictions experienced by individual families are completely different within one country and represented experiences from one extreme to another (Al-Jazeera 2014).

Depending on the decision made by male members, the female members of Emirati society have little choice in choosing what they want to do in life. The concept of gender equality has not been regarded as Islamic, but rather as a foreign imposition of western values (Helie and Hoodfar 2012). Most of the male focus group respondents echoed the same sentiment, that gender equality is an alien concept because the UAE was operating in a global society. Arranged marriage (Sezgin 2012) indicates the most limited preference choice for most Muslim women. The choice of a partner is decided by family elders and that is an indication of restrictive practices.

Female mobility restrictions (Hoodfar and Ghoreishian 2012) prevent females from accessing information needed for employment. This is because male members of the family are against female employment (Table 5.18). Important information

about employment fail to reach female job-seekers because of limited access to information about the labour market. Although there is internet access in almost every home, difficulties are experienced when female members want to physically attend interviews outside the home (See details Table 5.4). The male members have to grant permission to their female members to go out of the home. Since they are against female employment, the permissions are granted selectively.

Wasta is commonly applied in Emirati society and married females are left at the mercy of their spouses. Men control the home and the organisations. The work environment in most organisations is considered by men as unsuitable for female employment (See details in Table 5.17). Men do not improve the working conditions in order to restrict women from working.

Having analysed the results, the next chapter address the implications of the research to a number of stakeholders.

Chapter 6

Implications, Recommendations and Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the implications of the research output to different stakeholders. Section 6.2 covers the implications for the youth transition researchers and debates, the UAE government policy makers and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals Task force. Section 6.3 details the contribution of this research study to knowledge. Section 6.4 focused on the recommendations of this research study then Section 6.6 concludes the research work and possible future research is covered in Section 6.5.

6.2 Implications and Interpretations

While the Arab Middle East reflects a diversity of business contexts, many countries in the region still fall short in women's work force

participation. The Gulf countries in particular rank well in educational achievements, but these achievements are not yet transferring to the workplace. (Marmenout and Lirio 2013:144)

The interpretation of the results of this research focuses on the implications of the findings on various stakeholders and its contribution to knowledge. The research does not question or challenge any rationale behind any religious interpretations, but attempts to explore, understand and gain detailed insight into the process of female youth transition into the labour market.

6.2.1 Implications for Youth Transition Debates

Debates on college-to-work youth transitions have to reconsider and review the concept of school-to-work transition in comparison to college-to-work transition because they require a paradigm shift in their considerations. The school-to-work literature demonstrates some short comings when applied to college-to-work transitions. Youth transition debates have to address the characteristics of the college-to-work youth transitions because understanding the major differences in their structure influence their application. School-to-work and college-to-work transition concepts require a thorough understanding of differences, especially because college-to-work transitions are career focused from the start of the process.

The restrictions on female employment in some parts of the world, where religious and social practices are interpreted differently, require a different approach to the youth transition debates. This research recommend a change in considerations of college-to-work transition as a process from the start of enrolment into a career-focused endeavour to acquiring a first job. The process has to be treated as smooth if the desired goals are achieved as stated. This has nothing to do with linearity. The youth transitions debates have to acknowledge the different participants' experience

in school-to-work and college-to-work youth transitions.

Youth transition debates have been interchangeably using school-to-work and college-to-work and even treated them as the same. This has resulted in using linearity and not linearity in school-to-work transitions that were meant for college-to-work transitions. Linearity demonstrates structural progression in a process while smooth and rough demonstrates personal experiences. This research suggest a need for a clear differentiation in the application of linear, non-linear, rough and smooth in youth transitions debates. The reason for a need of clarity is because some societies like the UAE are still experiencing basic youth labour transition that are experienced in school-to-work transitions where females cannot choose their own profession. This has to be decided for them yet in college-to-work transition, students can design their own career path based on the demand in the labour market.

This research study has demonstrated the contributed to some knowledge to what Farrell (2008) had done by understanding how each critical factor affected the transition of women into the labour market. The use of factor analysis to determine the factors that critically affect the transition of women into the labour market contributed to the youth transition into the labour market debates. This research study unlike that of Farrell (2008) considered that female graduates are experiencing difficulties in entering the labour market whether public or private sector. This then supports the idea of having a systematic research on youth transition into the labour market in the Middle East because there is lack of empirical study that addresses female employment experiences in the region. Research work by researchers from developed country have a bias in understanding the fundamental causes of youth unemployment problems in the region.

6.2.2 Implications for the UAE Government Policy Makers

Education is an important and defining element in young people's lives. When conceived properly, it has the potential to transform opportunities and life chances. (Smyth et al. 2014:492)

The need to compete economically forced countries to operate globally and education play an important role in developing and transforming communities and societies. The gender segregation in UAE schools, universities and places of work reflect different religious interpretations because in some Muslim countries they have co-education (Al-Ahmadi 2011). Women face difficulties in positions of leadership unless the organisations are gender segregated. Higher education institutions and the government policy makers need to convince higher education authorities to allow co-education because that instil confidence among nationals (Al-Ahmadi 2011). Other Muslim nations have co-education and governments need to prevent religious fundamentalists and nationalists from dictating their family laws because of differences in interpretations of religious practices. In some Muslim countries, women are not allowed to study Science subjects and are not allowed to work (Al-Jazeera 2014). Women can enrol in religious studies to become religious teachers and scholars. Religious authorities did not consider that as work. Such interpretations in countries with fundamentalists in control of powerful positions focused their energy on interpreting religious practices, teachings and values to support their patriarchal motives. Law makers in higher education and the labour market have to address the issues of female youth unemployment by identifying the factors that hinder employment and act accordingly to eliminate the bottlenecks that restrict the transition of women into the labour market. The education that is provided has to transform mindsets of individuals and apply fairness in their actions.

Youth unemployment is the name of the bomb in the making, a ticking

time bomb, social dynamite, boiling-over frustrations, pent-up anger, violent conflicts, political insurrection and instability. (Sukarieh and Tannock 2008:301)

The above statement (Sukarieh and Tannock 2008) was written before the Arab uprising. If the work by Sukarieh and Tannock (2008) had been valued by governments that were affected by the Arab uprising, they could have avoided the instability that destroyed the region.

To introduce change, law makers have to understand the causes of the restrictions, and since the restrictions are social practices, norms and values, the law makers need to transform the communities. The transformation of these communities can be achieved only if members of the communities are allowed to discuss their problems freely.

Sheikh Nahayan, the then Minister of Education was quoted by Williams et al. (2013) as saying,

national women in the UAE now constitute a majority of our graduates. That fact alone will not lead to their becoming a majority in the labor market. Obviously, we must work to change unfavorable attitudes and mindsets. We must remove social and economic barriers to women employment and advancement.

The results of this research (Table 5.1) showed that some of the research participants were no longer searching for employment. This reaction of the respondents demonstrated a lack of hope in their career development yet the results (Table 5.8) show that the majority of female respondents wanted to develop careers and giving up such hope reflected levels of hopelessness and desperation. Given the political instability in the Arab and Middle Eastern region, policy makers have to engage the youths to prevent them from joining organisations that promise false hope in life.

The results (See Tables 5.8 and 5.7) show that female respondents have desire to develop professional careers and work outside the home. The concern is that the working environment (See Table ??) is not suitable for female workers. There is a need for clear policies that allow companies to provide working environment that accommodate men and women. The working environment force families to restrict their female job-seekers from seeking employment (See details in Table 5.10) in working environment that is not suitable for married women. The research results (Table 5.12) show that women are not in favour of home based businesses because they want to work for companies and develop careers. The results from this research are of value to government policy makers to improve female transition into the labour market. Women are required to be home-bound where they are exposed to the latest technologies with internet access that exposes them to different on-line groupings. The availability of internet technologies in communities should be viewed as exposing a border-less world to global citizens. Policy makers in restrictive societies should understand that people have access to the world through internet connectivity from their homes.

6.2.3 Implications for United Nations Development Goals Task Force

The final report (United-Nations 2015) documenting the achievements of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals for 2015 was published and the results are concerning. This research focus on the third goal of the United nations Millennium Development Goals that focus on promoting gender equality and empower women. It is interesting that the Middle Eastern region is not reported in the United-Nations (2015) Millennium Development Goals report.

Another observation of concern from the report shows a slow development in

regional achievement of goal three with 75% of developing countries achieving gender equality at primary school level. The report acknowledges that 50% of working age women are not participating in the labour market. This confirms the importance of this research on college-to-work female transition. The report shows that paid women in other industries other than agriculture have increased by 6% in the past 25 years from 1990 to 2015. The UNMDG reports show results that demonstrate lack of commitment from different countries.

The results of the UNMDG that emphasised the achievements of gender equality at primary education level create a drawback in achieving the expected goals. The understanding is that achieving a 100% female enrolment into primary education was supposed to have been achieved 10 years before 2015. That should have been targeted for midpoint of the 20 year period required to achieve the goal. The report reveals the difficulties in trying to achieve the UNMDGs because countries are not at the same level of commitment to achieve the goals. The countries that committed and signed the UN Millennium Development goals were expected to set achievable national goals based on their situations. The UNMDG initiative created an unnecessary competitive environment where regional countries viewed themselves as in competition. Countries competed to have primary and secondary schooling for their nationals and not covering all areas that require gender equality. The point of concern is that some countries with potential of fulfilling gender equality view other prominent countries as lagging behind and consider that as a norm. Female employees are paid less in other developed countries and developing countries find no reason to correct that inequality.

The results of this research reveal some of the barriers that prevent the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals. The results (See Tables 5.9 and 5.10) show family minimal support for married female employment yet

gender equality will be achieved when women are working in organisations. The results (See Table 5.11) show that families strongly encourage men to work and not women. The research results (Tables 5.10 and 5.12) provide evidence that women are not encouraged to mix with men because women are encouraged to stay at home and run home-based businesses. The United-Nations (2015:8) report acknowledged that vulnerable people were left out and this is concerning because that shows lack of commitment from other countries. The results from the (United-Nations 2015) report fail to show the situation of each country at the start and at the end of project. The report reported regional achievements and that demonstrated a weakness because countries committed to the initiative by choice and should account for their national achievements. The UNMDG initiative was not a regional commitment but rather a country commitment, therefore the reporting of results was expected to be country based.

6.3 Contribution to Knowledge

The lack of literature on college-to-work youth transitions in the Middle East suggested that this research work can contribute to debates on youth labour transition. The documented experiences and interpretations of the social realities (Section 5.5) contribute to the debates on youth transitions. The research outcome that show that the majority of the male research respondents want their women to stay at home (See Tables 5.10 and 5.18) contribute to knowledge on patriarchal restrictions that restrict women from entering the labour market. The research results show that male respondents wanted their women to run home-based businesses (Table 5.12), against the wishes of the female members of society. That was a contribution to the debates on youth transition because restricting women to their houses is a means of reducing their public space interactions. The

success of home-based entrepreneurial initiatives serve multiple purposes, especially as restrictive mechanisms as well as economic benefit.

The existing literature (Farrell 2008; Wentling and Waight 2001) focus on the concept of youth transition into the labour market from different perspectives compared to this research. This research focus on exploring the factors through mixed methods research design that reveal some insights that add value to knowledge on youth transition.

The restrictions on female employment are based on interpretations of the religious fundamental ideologies that leave Islamic followers with no choice but to abide by these restrictions. The patriarchal power structures capitalise on the premise that individuals, especially Muslims, never question the evidence documented in *The Holy Qur'an*. The interpretations of Islam as a way of life further strengthen the achievement of having people accept any interpretations of religious teachings.

The effectiveness and ineffectiveness of the research methods provide insight for future research to apply or not apply the used research methods in this study, contribute to knowledge for future researchers.

This research is based on the premise that college-to-work youths are career focused and the transition to work starts when graduates enter the institutions of higher learning and choose programs of study that facilitate their transition into the labour market.

Treating all youth unemployment problems the same as youths with compulsory school certificates fail to acknowledge the college-to-work transition experiences as a complex process. College-to-work transitions are different to school-to-work transitions because of the focus, experiences, inputs and outputs of the transition process. Results from this research study suggest that societies that

fail to acknowledge the concept of gender equality and its application demonstrate patriarchal tendencies.

Emirati family laws promote patriarchal tendencies that restrict women from entering public labour markets. Emirati family laws are connected to religious interpretations and affect government initiatives that attempt to eliminate gender inequality.

6.4 Recommendations of this Research Study

Educating citizens without providing employment opportunities through economic planning can result in counter productive efforts, as experienced in Tunisia and Egypt where unemployed youths revolted against their governments. The experiences of the Arab Spring in Libya, Tunisia, Syria and Egypt (Herrera and Mayo 2012) demonstrate the need to address youth unemployment problems. It is important for policy makers to be accountable of the actions they take and recognise that educating youths is not the end product. The lessons from other Middle Eastern countries show that education that is not of high quality does not serve the intended purpose of improving lives of the citizens. The Gulf region has to work on a strategy that provide education and employment for all those who qualify, regardless of gender. The governments should encourage its citizens not to shun professions and careers that are done by other nationalities, and they also need to improve work conditions to attract locals to participate. The UAE has many expatriate labourers and yet it experience youth unemployment because the nationals do not want to work in some sectors due to poor remuneration and working conditions (Al-Ahmadi 2011; Williams et al. 2013).

The emiratization strategy need to focus on a number of issues, firstly the transfer

of skills at all levels and in all sectors of the economy. The current situation in the UAE is that most locals prefer to work as managers. This is documented in Table 5.6 item 10, where 67% of respondents prefer to work as managers. Emiratis are appointed to positions of management with little or no experience, frustrating many skilled expatriates who now report to inexperienced managers. The best strategy is to encourage Emiratis to work in all the areas, starting from the bottom and to gain experience through skills transfer activities from experienced expatriates. The use of contractual agreements could easily facilitate that strategy by not renewing contracts until locals are ready for management positions. Secondly, Emiratis should be engaged in all levels and in all sectors because that broaden their experience in different areas. In other G.C.C. countries locals work in all positions including sectors that are shunned in the UAE. Involving locals in all sectors improve the working conditions and created a need for people to work in those sectors and professions.

A key recommendation to policy makers is to improve working conditions of all working environments regardless of who does the job, as that promote employment equity for the locals. A good example is the police service. A few years ago employment in the UAE police service was poorly remunerated compared to other professions (Sikora and Pokropek 2011). Currently the UAE police service is highly regarded because the government increased the salaries and improved the working conditions for the police force. Now many locals prefer work in the police force. Improving all sectors and professions that are shunned by the locals can attract the locals to work in these sectors.

The United Nations Millennium Development Goals were accepted by different nations in 1995. The fulfilment of the pledges by signatory countries was never revealed openly. The failure to clearly show the outcomes of nation involvement

in the fulfilment of their pledges discourages future involvement. The results were expected to demonstrate the outcomes and the fulfilment of goals of each country by region. While some achievements were a result of natural social development, some were deliberate efforts of governments to achieve their pledges. The United Nations encouraged countries to report openly on the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in an open forum in an effort to encourage those who pledged and fulfilled their promises. If that approach had been considered, the results of this research might have been influenced by that action. The pledges were made after the Beijing Women conference and the results on country commitments and achievements were never made public. Hence this research still dwells on issues that could have been resolved by countries fulfilling the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, especially goal number three.

This research recommends that policy makers should focus on addressing female restrictions because the current physical home-bound restrictions encourage excessive internet navigation by female youths while restricted in the home and exposing them to on-line threats.

6.5 Future Research

There is a need to further carry out similar research studies at national level on a regular basis to gather information from currently employed males and females. This is needed to develop a longitudinal database of labour market transition experiences. Such information can assist stakeholders in understanding youth transition problems and assist them to plan accordingly.

There is also a need for further research on the implication of the family laws in Muslim societies and how they affect the transition of youths into the labour market.

It is important to understand the preferences and choices of undergraduates as they enter institutions of higher learning and document their experiences for the first three years after graduation. The approach help understand the fulfilment of the choices, dreams and the characteristics of the labour market transitions. There is a need to determine acceptable inactive time after graduation.

6.6 Conclusion

This research identified a number of factors that affect the transition of female graduates from college into the labour market. The lack of good working environment hinder the transition of women from college into the labour market. Ethnicity and religious factors are too sensitive to address directly in this research but, through critical analysis, all the interpretations were based on the religion of Islam. The government does not take a clear position on gender equality because the responsibilities of men and women are clearly stated in *The Holy Qur'an*. The interpretations and considerations of gender equality are relegated to family laws and religious leadership to interpret according to *The Holy Qur'an*. A number of female youth who were sponsored by the government, but not employed, was huge. Although the emiratization initiative is not categorically designed for men, its benefit on women employment is minimal.

The manifestation of religious factors is involved in all aspects of society in a Muslim country. The focus in this research is on religious interpretations of all Muslims. The interpretations of religious teachings in relation to female labour market participation varied from country to country in all Muslim countries.

The differences in interpretations of religious teachings and beliefs negatively affect the mobility and participation of women in the open space. That also affect

the transition into the labour market because of restrictions of association in public. The restrictions on women from interacting with men resulted in the need for women-only working sections and that also hindered their transition into the labour market. Some conservative Muslim families do not allow their females to work in mixed gender work environments.

The availability of employment opportunities in distant Emirates required relocation or commuting from different locations and female job seekers could not take advantage of these opportunities because of mobility restrictions, especially on married females (See details in Table 5.20). Other families do not allow their female members to drive, fearing the dangers on the roads and because of the need of a male family member to be with a female at all times. As a result, female graduates face difficulties in commuting to work on their own.

The competition between men and women for good employment opportunities in government departments force the application of patriarchal restrictions where men are given priority (Al-Ahmadi 2011; Williams et al. 2013). The results of factor analysis (See details in Table 5.35) show two components that are strongly correlated to patriarchal factors. The difficulties faced by females in their transition into the labour market are controlled by male members of their society who are in control of all private and public organisations. The results from this research (Tables 5.18 and 5.19) show strong support for not allowing women to work because men prefer the women not to work but to stay at home. There was some resistance from men who are not supportive of employing females, especially married females. The current situation in the UAE is a double-sided sword, where men are in control and were encouraging the emiratisation process, and yet their family laws discourage women to work. Strong strategies from the government are required to change the mindset of most conservative Muslim men who view female employment as unacceptable.

Women have to understand that shunning of jobs that are less attractive result in a lack of work experience. When searching for employment, most companies request job seekers to have several years of work experience knowing that women are not exposed to any form of employment. That becomes a restrictive contributing factor to the transition of women into the labour market. Women should focus on jobs that are traditionally regarded as female jobs in female-only companies such as hospitals and schools for females. Once they occupy these jobs, the perception about female employment will change. The restrictive conservative men are uncomfortable with women working because of their interpretations of gender equality (Al-Jazeera 2014).

Female graduates demonstrate preparedness for labour market transition by doing what was in their power to be involved in job searching and to make online job applications. Male respondents indicated that some of them did not even apply for jobs and did not send curriculum vitae to their employers, as compared to their female research respondents (See details in Tables 5.2 and 5.3). That shows that male members of UAE society get help from other members, especially when it comes to employment. Wasta plays a very important role in youth transition into the labour market, with male members benefiting the most as they are given priority when it comes to employment opportunities (See details in Table 5.35).

Emirati families have expatriate maids, family drivers and chefs. There is a clear division of labour in Emirati society, with women considered to be home-bound and men as bread winners. The availability of domestic helpers elevate the role of women to be domestic managers, and since their responsibilities are to manage the domestic workers, the intention is to make them focus on home-based activities. The availability of domestic workers did not allow women to go into the labour market and work, instead it elevated women's domestic positions to include management

responsibilities.

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Appendix A

A.1 Participant Information Sheet

Thank you for attending the focus group research activity . I would appreciate if you can complete the following demographic data that will help the researcher to understand the respondents.

You are participant _____

			Tick		Tick
1	Gender	Female		Male	
2	Marital Status	Married		Single	
		Divorced		Widow	
3	Age	20-22		23-25	
		26-28		29+	
4	Highest Qualification	Bachelor		Higher Diploma	
		Diploma		Certificate	
5	Specialisation	IT		Business	
6	Duration after graduation from college in months	6 months		12 months	
		24 months		36 months	
7	Do you have children	Yes		No	
8	Number of Children	Not applicable		One	
		More than one			

Thank you very much for answering the questionnaire.

Figure A.1: Participant Information Sheet

A.2 Informed Consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

College to Work Transition: An Exploration of the impact of factors affecting the transition of Emirati female graduates into the labour market in the United Arab Emirates.

I agree to take part in an interview/questionnaire as part of the above-named project. The research has been clearly explained to me and I have read and understood the participant informed consent letter. I understand that by signing the consent form I am agreeing to participate in this research and that I can withdraw from the research at any time. I understand that any information I provide during the research is confidential and will not be used for any purpose other than the research project outlined above. The data will not be shared with any other organisations.

If applicable: I agree that the data collection process can be audio taped by voice/tape recorder: YES/NO

Name: (Please Print)

Signature..... Date

Figure A.2: Informed Consent Form

A.3 Focus Group Interview Questions

Focus Group Interviews

Date: 7 February 2013

The Moderator's Guide

The focus group interviews consist of five members and each participating member will be given a pseudo name, just as Participant A, B, C, D and E. The interview process will consist of four main questions will have Main Questions, Follow up questions, probing questions and Prompted questions. The interviews will take two hours because the participants are not very fluent in English language and as a result the speed should be accommodative for those who are fluent and those who might have communication difficulties. It is necessary to have the participants identify their ages, gender, marital status and qualifications when given an informed consent form to sign before doing the interview. The other questions following the main questions are dependent on the responses, hence they cannot predetermined and fixed but they follow the format below.

1. Main questions (on average it will take 10 minutes on a question)

- 1.1. What is the biggest problem with employing Emirati females?
- 1.2. What causes the problems faced by women when they search for employment?
- 1.3. What will you say when people say Emirati women are spoiled and they do not want to work?
- 1.4. What will you say when people say Emirati men are jealous to find their female counterparts get employed?
- 1.5. What will you say when people say Emirati women prefer staying at home and care for the family than going to work?
- 1.6. What will you say when people say Emirati women misbehave if they get employed?
- 1.7. What other reasons do you think cause unemployment among women in the UAE?

2. Follow up questions

- 2.1. Why do you say so?
- 2.2. Who is to blame?

3. Probing questions

- 3.1. How serious are those problems?
- 3.2. Clarify why you say that?

4. Prompted questions

- 4.1. What needs to be done?
- 4.2. What do you think is the best solution?

Figure A.3: Focus Group Interview Questions

Appendix B

Questionnaire Template

Dear Participant

Thank you for volunteering to complete this very important questionnaire. Results of the study will be used to understand labour market participation in the United Arab Emirates and will be used in my doctoral thesis at the University of Leicester. This survey is voluntary (you can stop at any point) and confidential so please do not answer with any form of personal identification. Thank you very much for your cooperation. (Key: SD-Strongly disagree, D-disagree, N-Neutral, A-Agree, SA-Strongly Agree)

Research participant agrees to participate

Item	Your decision is required	Tick
1	I agree to participate in this research	Continue
2	I do not agree to participate	Exit

Table B.1: Confirmation to Participate in Research

Question 2: Choose the institution where you completed your highest qualification and in which year?

Item	Institution	Tick	Year Graduated
1	Higher Colleges of Technology		
2	Zayed University		
3	UAE University		
4	Al Ain University		
5	University of Sharjah		
6	Other, Specify		

Table B.2: Institution Attended

Question 3: What is your age?

Item	Age range	Tick
1	Less than 20	
2	20-22	
3	23-24	
4	25-34	
5	35+	

Table B.3: Age

Question 4: What is your gender?

Item	Gender	Tick
1	Male	
2	Female	

Table B.4: Gender

Question 5: What is your marital status?

Item	Marital status	Tick
1	Single	
2	Married	
3	Divorced	
4	Widow	
5	Widower	

Table B.5: Marital Status

Question 6: How best can you categorise your location?

Item	Your Location	Emirate	Distance	Circle your answer
1	My location is in	Abu Dhabi	Within city	Out of city
2	My location is in	Dubai	Within city	Out of city
3	My location is in	Sharjah	Within city	Out of city
4	My location is in	Ajman	Within city	Out of city
5	My location is in	Fujairah	Within city	Out of city
6	My location is in	Umm Al Quwain	Within city	Out of city
7	My location is in	Ras Al Khaima	Within city	Out of city

Table B.6: Participant's Location

Question 7: What is your parents' highest level of education? Tick for each parent.

Item	Level	Father	Mother
1	High school certificate		
2	Diploma		
3	Higher diploma		
4	Bachelor degree		
5	Honours degree		
6	Master's degree		
7	Doctorate		
8	None		

Table B.7: Parents' Educational level

Question 8: Which of the following categories best describe your employment status?

Item	Employment status	Tick
1	Unemployed	
2	Employed, working for 1-39 hours per week	
3	Employed, working for 40+ hours per week	

Table B.8: Employment Status

Question 9: How far do you agree with the following statements?

Item	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	Got my 1st job in 3 months after graduation	1	2	3	4	5
2	I am working in my 1st job after graduation	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am doing my dream career job	1	2	3	4	5
4	I am doing this job because no suitable job	1	2	3	4	5
5	I am working here because I have no options	1	2	3	4	5
6	I really enjoy working at this company	1	2	3	4	5
7	I am looking for another good job	1	2	3	4	5
8	I will stay here for if they want me.	1	2	3	4	5

Table B.9: Current Employment

Question 10: How best do you characterise your experience of finding your first job?

Item	Statement	Tick
1	I am still searching	
2	It was easy, I got my job easily	
3	It was hard, I took long to get a job	

Table B.10: First Job Experience

Question 11: Who influenced you in choosing your studies? Rank them starting with the highest.

Item	Influencer	Rank(0-5)
1	Self	
2	Mother	
3	Father	
4	Brother	
5	Sister	
6	Uncle	
7	Aunt	
8	Cousin	
9	Nephew	
10	Niece	
11	Husband	
12	Teacher	
13	Grandmother	
14	Grandfather	
15	Other	

Table B.11: Career Influencers

Question 12: How far do you agree with the following statements?

Item	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	I have a desire to work for a company	1	2	3	4	5
2	I have a desire to develop a career	1	2	3	4	5
3	I applied for on-line jobs	1	2	3	4	5
4	I sent my CV to many companies	1	2	3	4	5
5	I visited career job fairs	1	2	3	4	5
6	I attended interviews for jobs	1	2	3	4	5
7	I was offered job offers	1	2	3	4	5
8	I looked forward to my first job	1	2	3	4	5
9	If I get a job offer will accept	1	2	3	4	5
10	I am getting support from family	1	2	3	4	5

Table B.12: Transition to Work

Question 13: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Item	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	I considered my studied program	1	2	3	4	5
2	I considered my studied degree	1	2	3	4	5
3	I attended career counselling	1	2	3	4	5
4	I buy news papers with job adverts	1	2	3	4	5
5	I visited on-line career sites	1	2	3	4	5
6	I was offered job offers	1	2	3	4	5
7	I declined job offers	1	2	3	4	5

Table B.13: Transition to Work (Cont.)

Question 14: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Item	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	I prefer working in my community	1	2	3	4	5
2	I prefer to work with Emirati men	1	2	3	4	5
3	I prefer to work with expatriates	1	2	3	4	5
4	I prefer to work in female-only environment	1	2	3	4	5
5	I prefer to work for a well-paying job	1	2	3	4	5
6	I prefer to stay at home	1	2	3	4	5
7	I prefer to work for government	1	2	3	4	5
8	I prefer to work for 40hrs or less.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I prefer to work for 5 days a week	1	2	3	4	5
10	I prefer to work as a manager	1	2	3	4	5

Table B.14: Personal Factors

Question 15: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Item	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	My family helps me choose a career	1	2	3	4	5
2	My family helps me find a job	1	2	3	4	5
3	My family should drive me to work	1	2	3	4	5
4	My family allows me to work	1	2	3	4	5
5	My family feels I am safe at home	1	2	3	4	5
6	My family feels employment is for men	1	2	3	4	5
7	My family wants me work in female environment	1	2	3	4	5
8	My family feels female unemployment is a problem	1	2	3	4	5
9	My family only encourages men get employed	1	2	3	4	5
10	My family prefers I run home business	1	2	3	4	5
11	My family encourages me get a driving license	1	2	3	4	5

Table B.15: Family Support

Question 16: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Item	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	Getting a good job requires university education	1	2	3	4	5
2	My qualification is strongly respected in UAE	1	2	3	4	5
3	My college reputation adds value	1	2	3	4	5
4	My program of study adds value	1	2	3	4	5
5	I can go to the same college to study	1	2	3	4	5
6	I can go in the same department to study	1	2	3	4	5
7	My college results meet job requirements	1	2	3	4	5
8	The quality of my education is appreciated	1	2	3	4	5
9	My qualifications give me confidence	1	2	3	4	5

Table B.16: Education Factors

Question 17: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Item	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	I want to work to support my family	1	2	3	4	5
2	Jobs in my area are suitable for men	1	2	3	4	5
3	The working environment is suitable for men	1	2	3	4	5
4	Women should be mothers and not working	1	2	3	4	5
5	Women should concentrate on family duties	1	2	3	4	5
6	Women should only work near their homes	1	2	3	4	5
7	Women should be allowed to work if poor	1	2	3	4	5
8	Embarrassing if a husband earns less than a wife	1	2	3	4	5
9	The husband is responsible to support the wife	1	2	3	4	5

Table B.17: Socio-Economic Factors

Question 18: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Item	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	There are good jobs in my community	1	2	3	4	5
2	Many jobs are only suitable for men	1	2	3	4	5
3	I can commute and work in other locations	1	2	3	4	5
4	I can stay alone in other Emirates	1	2	3	4	5
5	I can relocate to other emirates for work	1	2	3	4	5
6	My home is close to many employing companies	1	2	3	4	5
7	My home location is a problem for me to work	1	2	3	4	5
8	My family members commute daily for work	1	2	3	4	5

Table B.18: Location Factors

Question 19: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Item	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	A husband's career should always be considered first	1	2	3	4	5
2	My father has greater authority than my mother	1	2	3	4	5
3	Whatever is said by males at home is followed	1	2	3	4	5
4	Male members of the family make decisions	1	2	3	4	5
5	Men manipulate our culture to their advantage	1	2	3	4	5
6	A male job seeker should be given a job first	1	2	3	4	5
7	It is embarrassing for men to ask money from wives	1	2	3	4	5
8	It is easy for men to get employed in UAE	1	2	3	4	5
9	A good husband should be able to support a family	1	2	3	4	5
10	A good husband should have higher qualifications	1	2	3	4	5
11	A good husband should pay for marriage costs	1	2	3	4	5

Table B.19: Men (Patriarchal Factors)

Question 20: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Item	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	Some women are irresponsible when employed	1	2	3	4	5
2	In life it is important for women to be a wife and mother	1	2	3	4	5
3	Working female children should support their parents	1	2	3	4	5
4	Women will be powerful if they work and get a salary	1	2	3	4	5
5	Married women are less committed to their work	1	2	3	4	5
6	A working wife must still get money from her husband	1	2	3	4	5
7	It is embarrassing for a wife to seek employment	1	2	3	4	5
8	Women should stay at home and take care of children	1	2	3	4	5
9	Women feel frustrated if staying at home without a job	1	2	3	4	5
10	Married wives should share their salaries with husbands	1	2	3	4	5

Table B.20: Women (Patriarchal Factors)

Question 21: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Item	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	Getting a good job is about who you know	1	2	3	4	5
2	Helping others to get employed is normal	1	2	3	4	5
3	Helping to get a job is done for men	1	2	3	4	5
4	It is better to hire singles than married females	1	2	3	4	5
5	Women must have less working hours than men	1	2	3	4	5
6	There are few working women than men in UAE	1	2	3	4	5

Table B.21: Helping Others (Wasta)

Question 22: What are some of the reasons that have led to high Emirati female unemployment?

Table B.22: Possible Reasons for Unemployment

Question 23: What do you think could be done to increase Emirati female employment?

Table B.23: Possible Suggestions

Question 24: What were your job expectations or experiences after graduation from college?

Table B.24: Job Expectations

Question 25: What advice will you give to policy makers in your community about female unemployment problems?

Table B.25: Advice to Policy-Makers

Appendix C

C.1 Female Focus group Interview Transcripts

Introduction

Researcher: *Good morning ladies, my name is Robson Chiambiro. I am going to do this research and which is about transitions of women from college to work. As you can see we are going to do this research and I don't want you to mention any names. You are going to keep your names anonymous, so you , you are going to be called MZWC-C and you ,you are going to be called MZWC-B and you, you are going to be called MZWC-E and finally you will be called RUWC-H. We were supposed to be 5 students unfortunately some of you did not turn up. So I really want to thank you for participating in this research. My research here, I want to find out the problems that most women encounter, especially what the Emirati women encounter when they want to search for employment. The first question that I want to ask, you are free to express your views remember we don't want to identify you, please do not identify yourself and do not call your names. If you call your name please let me know I can delete from my system so that I don't identify you and you can be honest enough to tell us what are the reasons because this is very important even for policy makers if they want to read my research and see how they can improve*

the employment in your region, and my first question which I will ask MZWC-B, starting with you B:

Question 1: What is the biggest problem with employing Emirati females?

MZWC-B Ehhh actually ehh the biggest problem is the environment of the work, I need ehh or we need ehh a private section for women to work ehh there in the job

Researcher: *What do you mean by private?*

MZWC-B ehh to have a ehh we want to ehh the section all the employee is ehh the women, ehh we can contact the employee ehh men by phone so we want to work in private section, here the women to be there. because we can't work with men in the same section.

Researcher: *What is the problem that causes...*

MZWC-B This is our tradition our culture and tradition that we cannot work women sorry with men in the same section.

Researcher: But there are other, right now there are other women who are working with men in the same section.

Researcher: *is it culture then, if it is culture why are those other working?*

MZWC-B every family have ehh every family they have their thinking , their culture.so my husband he will not let me go to work with women he told me , sorry with men, he told me if you go to work you should go to school, why school, because all the employment ehh employee there is women, so he think that I will work with woman and no men there.

Researcher: Ok , eh hh

Researcher:*Participant C*

MZWC-C Yes

Researcher Question 1: *What is the biggest problem with employing Emirati females?*

MZWC-C Social pressure

Researcher: *What do you mean?*

MZWC-C I mean eeehhhh As ehhh my eehhh B said, ehhh its eehhh there is a pressure from eeehhh our family to work in specific places, was there ehhh, were there are less men and ehhh female environment but eeehh I think about myself ehhh its a ehhh special ehhh pressure to take care of my children circumstances that I have in my house, so this is also build up ehhh very strong pressure on me ehhh to just put my view to my family not to ehhh to work you didn't work ehhh why you work eeehhh, many things like this.

Researcher: *So you are now saying even if you wanted to work , you are no longer focusing on work because know the social problems or social pressure are too much that you won't succeed in trying to negotiate and convince them, is that what you are saying?*

MZWC-C Yes, Yes, right! That is what I say

Researcher: *is that correct. So what is the best solution to the problem given that you want to work?*

MZWC-C Recently now I am trying this ehhh time to focus on my family for a while ehh but later I will work.

Researcher: *OK*

Researcher :*eehh Candidate E*

Researcher Question 1: *What is the biggest problem with employing Emirati females in in your views?*

MZWC-E I think the language ehhh I mean the English language everywhere you works and also ehhh when we do the interview they ask about me if I have ehhh

any idea about job ehhh or work ehhh before I work in , in any company, and they ask ehhh me to know about the job.

Researcher: *What are your plans to improve on the language?*

MZWC-E eeehhh I took lessons about the language also ehh when will be in the college ehhh I learn about the English language, is good in English, They ask me about ehhh they ask me about ehhh ICDL aslo ehhh about in English and also the IELTS.

Researcher: *OK , so the employers they now look for IELTSs. Do you also have like what B and C had just said about family pressures that do not allow you to work in other areas and for you you do not have such problems so you you can work anywhere , so for you it is ok that you can work anywhere and mix with men when you are working. Why do you think your families are allowing you to do that are they different from B and C families?*

MZWC-E Yeah, I can work with men, its OK with me.

Researcher: *Are you married or single?*

MZWC-E I am single.

RUWC-H

Researcher: *Question 1: What is the biggest problem with employing Emirati females?*

RUWC-H As I know, my situation as graduated from college, I feel tired and I think I need more months to rest and to focus on my children. They are teenagers and I need to focus on them more. I have teenagers and want to see how they are working in school but then when I decided to work I applied in different companies but until now I am waiting I don't know that it take a long time to find a job in UAE and in the Western Region.

Researcher *Question 1.2 Do you think you are not finding a job because you*

are a female?

RUWC-H Here in Western region the limited of jobs, the graduating people are many and there are few job opportunities for women.

Researcher *What was your dream job?*

RUWC-H My dream job to work in my eeehhh major as an HR department and in administration kind of company.

Researcher *What is the problem that you have graduated and you had good GPA and yet your are not working?*

RUWC-H I think that when I applied and when I come to the college and eehh I do my studies they think I want to work but in my eehh I think that the experience I get from my studies is important for my real life not only for working.

RUWC-H When I decide to complete my studies I decide to have, gain some knowledge extra knowledge that will help me in the real life and not only to work exactly.

RUWC-H The other graduates are afraid from mixing between men and women, our culture we are not working together with mens and women and with me I am covering it not easy to work in the factory I need to remove my cover because of the safety for the factory and the company here we have a big company, they ask for like for me I am covering , I need to remove the cover this is the first one because you need to have a securing pass to go to their plants.

RUWC-H They will start to make it and remove the cover , I will not be able to work for such a company and I will decide to move out of that company.

RUWC-H I understand that because some of the job you need to be without cover because you are dealing with customer and they must know you they must be feel be safe to give you and share with them their information and even in the factory and the plant they need to work and to follow the safety procedure and some

of the safety procedure and the covering is not the safety procedure you must wear the safety clothes so it will affect that.

RUWC-H The limited of the covering people eehh job is little for that I am waiting for a long time.

Researcher *Is this covering your family requirement or personal requirement and why is it important?*

RUWC-H This is my personal requirement, it depends on your religion yani! You have more religion you follow your religion more than the different.

Researcher *Question 2: What causes the problems faced by women when they search for employment?*

MZWC-B for me eehh is both, yes he told me eehh I should cover my face , no no no where women eehh are working I can remove my cover but when be with men I should cover my face.

Researcher: *OK, Are you willing to do that?*

MZWC-B For me its ok , if the company eehh if the company tell me that no you should remove my cover , I told them that I can't, I will not work for you.

Researcher: *Ok for You B you said you can work with men who are not Emirati you have to cover and with Emirati you have to cover?*

MZWC-B Yes,

Researcher: *If the company says you must not cover then you will not work with that company?*

MZWC-B Yes , I told them I can't this is my condition if you will be comfortable with it I will work if you will not let me cover my face I will not work for you. They told us they know all the men here in Madinat Zayed, and eehh if go to that company I know there is that men A, B, C, D I know them they know you, you are my wife and you work there and you will be eehh eehh maybe they will be observe me and

she is ehhh wife she we want to see what she will do, ehhh she will cover her face or not and we will see her face and sometimes they chat together if they sat together so may be he will hear something and he will not be very happy to that.

MZWC-C

Researcher Question 2: *What causes the problems faced by women when they search for employment? Apart from now permission what are the problems you might be facing?*

MZWC-C Yeah when I will search for ehhh a job I will eehhhh put many things as a condition from my husband and my family ehhh for specific jobs because he will not allowed me to work ehhh with men in pure men company or whatever so eehhhh there is more condition that I will search ehhh depending on that condition ehhh like ehhh more as B said eehhhh more female ehhh in the ehhh in the work and ehhh ehhh I think private ehhh private place.

Researcher: *If you get a job in an international company with only expatriates, are your family members allow you to work?*

MZWC-C Eehhhh there is no red line over other female from ehhh other ehhh other international countries. its ehh the red line is just for the local Emirati men.

Researcher: *Participant C, my question is, if for example, you work in a company where all men are foreigners, will your husband allow you to work there?*

MZWC-C Now I understand your question, this where eehhh, what is the difference? Depend on my the deal on my family or husband he said no for working men whatever international or nationality, but but they are afraid, they said we know the men , we know the men, they mean...

Researcher: *What do they mean by that?*

MZWC-C hahahaha(laughing), they know how they looking to us, they will not mention the positive things they will see about us, they will just looking for

negative thing, they just something we do inappropriate way, they just focus on that they put all the pressure on us.

Researcher Question 2: *What will you say when people say Emirati women are spoiled and they do not want to work?*

MZWC-E I am not spoiled, I support my mother.

Researcher: Question 2: *What causes the problems faced by women when they search for employment?*

RUWC-H Either here before 2 or 3 years there is no work here for a womens here in the Western region if you are speaking of the Western Region there are no work for women, they start to put the womens with the mens and to find the place for them in the work so the culture, the culture here in the western region the work only for men the mens search the money to bring for the family, the womens taking care of their ehhh kids and like that this one the main major it was in the Western Region but now they start to know that the working for women and mens are equal, So they are start to put the womens in the business and in the working environment.

RUWC-H I feel sad that I have more opportunity, chance to be in this position and cannot get the job because I am woman, but the mens with high school work there but I will more qualified and I will be more ehhh work hard and I understand the job criteria and job description.

RUWC-H They have limited work because you know the administration departments are limited work and they have already the mens they occupied already. The chances to work with my cover are limited.

RUWC-H There are other Emirati females covered and working and the vacancies are not enough for women.

RUWC-H There are less opportunities for covered women .

Researcher *OK , let us move on*

Researcher Question3: *What will you say when people say Emirati women are spoiled and they do not want to work?*

MZWC-B Who said spoild, I disagree with that.

Researcher: *Why do you say so B?*

MZWC-B eehh Because they eehh have a think that eehh the women should sit at home she don't eehh want to work. Also they told that no women go to work you are , if you are married you sit at home you take care of your home, husband your children. They don't want to you work, what do you don't have, your husband already work, he give you money, you have something to eat, you have something to wear, you can do anything, you can go to anywhere with your husband so why you want to have a job even if my husband salary is 5000 they told eehhh, you should not work your husband is already at work and you should sit at home.

Researcher: *But Do you agree with that? Why ? Why do you want to work?*

MZWC-B It's not true eehh, first of thing I want to eehh, I used to sit at home and sleep and I do not like that eehhh way I want to always wake up in the morning. I want to have a job, I want be successful in my job, I want to be popular, not very popular, I want to be a good mother and worker eehhh. I want when I come back to my home I feel that I do something to the society to my country I already work and I then come home and I take my children eehh also I need eehh money, because sometimes I want to buy something for me maybe is very expensive or I want to keep something for my future. My husband he didn't see that eehh, he didn't have that vision like my vision so he told me why you need to have eehh job, I will give you money if you want but not that much you have limit money for me.

MZWC-B About this point? So you say they should give us money

Researcher Question 3: *What will you say when people say Emirati women are spoiled and they do not want to work?*

MZWC-C How am I spoiled? I am working at 6 o'clock morning I sleep till 2 o'clock night. I am working and my husband maybe he has ten times, how I am spoiled?

Researcher:*May be your husband has got a lot of money so because you have got..*

MZWC-C because he sits on a desk and brings the salary.

Researcher:*Yes so you are spoiled.*

MZWC-C I am spoiled ? I work harder than them, than my husband, yeah, I told you its just conditions that put by them, I mean in our society, a woman who have a husband should sit in home, you don't need a salary, you don't need to build your self, you don't no no no, so this also that pressure I, I tell you , honestly its ehhh very hard because its is not just my husband, its my mother, my sister, my sister in law, everybody say you have to stay, you did need money, stay [her name] stay see [laughing]

Researcher:*Ok let me ask participant E*

Researcher Question3:*Let me ask candidate, participant E. What will say when someone comes to you and say, Emirati women are rich and they are married to rich men and they don't want to work? What will you say to people who say that?*

MZWC-E I am think, I have same ide, idea, with my friends, also I didn't have, I am not from rich family, ehhh, and I didn't have ehhh my family to work on my brothers, I have one brothers only. and I need work for my families and I have also I do housework with my mother.

Researcher:*So why is it that you don't get employment, why are you not getting a job?*

MZWC-E I don't know. but ehhh I think they need to ehhh when I get the job they ask about my family, if you have any brothers ehhh, how many brothers

do you have and do you have any relatives you know and any relatives who work in this company..

Researcher:*and if you say no, what do they do?*

MZWC-E yeah, they did not answer me,

Researcher:*and how many interviews did you attend?*

MZWC-E maybe two.

Researcher: *Two interview?*

MZWC-E Yeah I did the interview and they did not come back to me.

Researcher Question 3: *What will you say when people say Emirati women are spoiled and they do not want to work?*

RUWC-H I feel no the Emirati women they are not spoiled, ehhh I am one of the Emirati people , I was in the house and I completed my bachelor, I think, If I am spoiled I will not complete and I will not think about my education level, and I finish first the higher diploma and then completed my bachelor and I now am waiting for a job to work in my ehhh what I gained in my experience I gained from my work I will put in the workplace. To raise your children is a big job and it is not easy to raise the people and to raise your kids to be a part of this community you are working a big hard to rise ehhh to put your community and you country to become better and better when you put your time in rising your children to finish their high school and to finish their degree and to be a good person in UAE is a big job for you yeah its a big challenge, so you are not spoiled.

Researcher *Why do you want to work?*

RUWC-H I like to work I have an experience and I like ehhh I am a challenging person and like to use what I ehhh study for it and my country and paying for me and I want to work to pay back to my country. My children are now in schools already now and in the morning I don't want to put my time in something good for

my country.

Researcher Question 4: *What will you say when people say Emirati men are jealous to find their female counterparts get employed?*

MZWC-B I agree with that eehhh, because my husband he did finish his eehhh, when he finished his eehhh high school he already got a job, so he didn't have eehh any eehh certificate for diploma eeehhh but me I already complete my studying. I already graduate with bachelor human resource, so when he know that I get a job my salary will be higher than his salary, he is jealous and he didn't let me go to work. I don't know why but he told me not work. I think he is thinking different than me, I told him I don't care whether my salary is higher than yours or I don't care I have a eehh a bachelor certificate its ok for me but he say no I will not let you go to work. I told him my salary it will be eehh 'yani'. I will do what I want to let him know what I want and try to tell him it's ok I will go to work in a female eehh environment in the same section with females. I also said eeehh I will tell them, sorry tell him I will help you in my salary pay my eeehh phone eehh bills also I will give my house maid her salary. He will think about I am paying something with my salary. Sometimes he will let me go to work. He will tell me ok, you should pay for eehh something. I will not pay everything. I will for somethings, my telephone bills and when we go shopping to Abu Dhabi or Dubai but for anything at home no because he is the father and he is responsible to pay for everything at home. He should go to study and get certificate, higher diploma and get higher salary.

MZWC-B I did not study in front of him at all and I did not say eehh oh I don't like studying eehh I am tired of study, help me in my studying because If I told him he will say stop studying why are you tired why do you want to study, don't say you are tired, stay at home. When my husband come home eehh I hide my papers, my notebook until he go I will complete my study.

MZWC-B My brother has a wife and she is not working. My husband has a sister and she is not working. Some of the sisters did not complete their studies in college and some of have graduate at high school and they have no good English and they cannot continue in college.

MZWC-B When I asked my husband, look the aunt is working, he said ok if she will go to the hell you will go with her? So I should not see anybody I should see myself if I want to work. He should have to have a good reason to let me to work.

Researcher Question 4: *What will you say when people say Emirati men are jealous to find their female counterparts get employed?*

MZWC-C I think this is wrong because they are not jealous from us because we have bigger salary than theirs, from my husband view, he take ehhh this is a care, why you working and making yourself tired, and you have a lot of work in home , you do double job do your work at home and take care of my children ,eehh our children because they are still young and he said how much do they give you because whatever I do I will not get his salary because eeehhh he have ehhh very high position so even I say they will give me Dh30000 he says stay home I will give you Dh40000 , that's what he said so it is not money issue or jealous because of money issue. I will give you clue about that, now we are going through a pressure, we have a new house and we spend all what we had on that new house and now I need work , this time I need a salary but he said no, we don't need, we will not need, just do not make yourself tired just stay in home. Our house is not just like any house, there are many social events. We get boring and we stay and see what you see everyday in the same house. I will wait for two years or three years until my ehhh my daughter grows up until going to grade one. The two maids , one she cooks and one she is eeehhh is a big villa and is a big house. I used to spend 6 hours

in college. I insisted to study and I get tired and he knows that I get tired from studies doing projects and everything he now see me happy and he says stay home and you do not get tired.

MZWC-C My husband is different he stay at home all the time and he sees me when I spend of my time studying. I have five children and of course I complained when it was hard to study as a mother.

Researcher Question 4: *What will you say when people say Emirati men are jealous to find their female counterparts get employed?*

MZWC-E My brothers say if I have good salary I must find ways to support the house. After that my brothers and their wives decided to complete their studies. my brother wives are working and they take diplomas.

Researcher Question 4: *What will you say when people say Emirati men are jealous to find their female counterparts get employed?*

RUWC-H No no, It depends, in each country you have different thing, different ehhh mind in each country you have the men have different mind they have different thinking ehhh so some of them they thinking that they didn't understand, they did know how their family when their female go to work they think that she can not ehh compromise between her house and her work. They think that if she left her house to go to work the children she will not ehhh then children will not ehhh be good children. You can not trust the maid because the maids are not the same.

RUWC-H I have a maid and for me I graduate from the high school in 94 then I get married and I have my children I stopped from 94 until 2007 ehhh 94 then I complete my school and get married 97 I stop my study , I did not complete my HCT study I get married then I have my children , I start rise my children in 2007 the three of my children they were in the school so I do not have anything in the morning then I think that I can leave the house safely even if I have a good maid I

cannot trust her in my children. For that I have 10 years stopped and stayed in my house, I finished my job the real life job to rise my children to check my children then I have the biggest opportunity to complete my study then I complete my study by studying in the morning as a student and in the afternoon I start as a mother so I was working 24 hours. I compromise between my house and my eeehhhh study and then my health start to collapse (laugh).

RUWC-H My husband's position allows him to find me a job in his company. I don't want him to help me, I want to get by my certificate, by my degree. He said he can speak with the people in other departments there and I try to force them to put you there but I told him no, let me work alone and see what will happen.

Researcher *Question 5: What will you say when people say Emirati women prefer staying at home and care for the family than going to work?*

MZWC-B This is unfair, I don't agree with that statement, this is a family problem.

Researcher *Question 5: What will you say when people say Emirati women prefer staying at home and care for the family than going to work?*

MZWC-C It depends on the circumstances, like my circumstances when I have a little child ,yes I need to stay in home and take care of my child. Even in Europe when I travelled to Belgium three years a woman have to stay with her child until she put her in a kindercare or preschool, so this is a good rules they must focus on that. If they make the mothers more relieved to have work when she have a child she stay three years with salary paid and go back to work, yeah this is will be good , we are a rich country why they didn't do so.

Researcher *Question 5: What will you say when people say Emirati women prefer staying at home and care for the family than going to work?*

MZWC-E I do not agree

Researcher: Question 5: *What will you say when people say Emirati women prefer staying at home and care for the family than going to work?*

RUWC-H Correct, because the Emirati people , the Emirati women , they are all thinking the first thing for them are their children and their family, if they are satisfy and their family satisfy and they are good in condition so they can move to work but men big job for them to raise their children to take care of their children.

RUWC-H It is not that a big problem it depends on the women if she want to work and take care of her children depends on her. Do you want to work and to take care of her children she can do it but if she think only for her family it depends in her critical thinking or how she think yani! For me I feel that I rise my children and they are grow up and I choose that I will stop my study for a while then , to complete that this my big job in life.

RUWC-H Then start to think about myself now I complete my certificate its even help me to deal with my children then now I am thinking why I am wasting my learning tine. I need to work and to eehhh I need to eeehhh work in eehh yeah.

Researcher: Question 5.1: *Do you agree that home based business is there to prohibit women from interacting with men?*

RUWC-H Yes , I am not agree but I think it happen in real life.

Researcher Question 6: *What will you say when people say Emirati women misbehave if they get employed?*

MZWC-B I am eehh, if it is his money that is all right but this is my money now, I can go an buy a very expensive bag and when he saw that I bought that bag he is very angry he told me you paid AED5000 or 6000 , what will you do with this expensive bag, so he think I will not save my money. I should spend my money in something good because in his view if I bought something very expensive like a bag, or shoes, or abaya, or anything he will think no. He did not let me to have a job so

if he give me money is like my salary so I will do what I want with that money.

MZWC-B May be she she feels she is now free she has a job and she is responsibility for herself and a husband will not say anything that is my responsibility I will do what I want to do, I will go and come back to anywhere and maybe that is a problem to men.

MZWC-B Men do not like that way , they feel they are eehh because they are responsible for the home and if I give him the money, this is not good. It is humiliating to get support from the woman. If I get a job I will not tell him my true salary, I will tell him I get a new employment and they give me 10000 or 15000 and then I will tell something, he will not ask me a payslip because when I ask him his salary he tell me I do not have more salary because he does not want to give me more money. He did not tell me his true salary so I will not tell him my true salary as well.

Researcher Question 6: *What will you say when people say Emirati women misbehave if they get employed?*

MZWC-C I do not agree and I think this is a social problem because it is not just the view of my husband the whole family, my family, his family are looking to the working of the woman in that position. Sometimes I am thinking why are they having their wives or sisters working and he said I do not have responsibility on them but I have responsibility on you so you can't work.

MZWC-C I disagree, because I have a good mind, I am a balanced , I know how to deal with the money or even how to eehh and I have been here through experience here in college for five years do I have eehh misbehave one day no, of course no I know my rules I know my the redline I know what eehh my looking at eeehhh a woman here and this sentence is very wrong.

MZWC-C I consider misbehaviour when spending money on very eehh unnn

unimportant issue, like she said shopping, my relatives when they work, their behaviour is different when they deal with men. before they had cover, they then a little bit and they then have their hair out and it decreased. Many problems arise between a wives and husbands.They eehh maybe get fighting about the issue of working of women and her spending.

MZWC-C Both the taking care of the family even the taking care of the child will be left with the maid.

MZWC-C Through observation yes, some women misbehave yes, because I observed just recently many divorce just because they fight about misbehaviour of the women and eeehh her working environment eeehhh sometimes on the money issue because they get fight about eehh the money eeehhh she get more salary than him and he need help to help him eehh because he build the house or something and she refuse eehh sometimes I also I observed a changing in a behaviour of women, many women are strict. No this is not affecting because every man know very well his wife, if she is easy and she will eehh misbehaviour in the environment he must not let her work.

Researcher Question 6: *What will you say when people say Emirati women misbehave if they get employed?*

MZWC-E I eh hh this is wrong because everyone has good mind and we are now grow up. We can decide what right and we can decide to help without my brother tell me.

Researcher: Question 6: *What will you say when people say Emirati women misbehave if they get employed?*

RUWC-H No how they will misbehave? What is the meaning of misbehave? No no I do not agree , we have different women, some of them they are think like this when they work they have their money and they are independent and not all

mens like this. Like what you said, they will not listen to them (men), they will do what they want want, they will not take of their family, they will not take care of their children. They will think only to their money, to their money, to their money and to be successful in different way instead of taking care of their children.

RUWC-H Misbaviour is maybe she did not take care of her husband, take of their children, she didn't look about her children, how they are in the school, how they are working, how they are behaviour in the night, she didn't take care about her house, about her maid and she throw all these away, that is what I understand by misbehaviour and that depends of the women. For my experience, I have some of my sister-in-law some of my friends are working but they are good. but some for me, I think when I work at least if I want something to buy and something expensive, you cannot ask your husband to buy it for them, you will think first no this money you need it for your family , your house. My money I feel that I will spend in my complementary for my satisfying or something like jewellery or something like this.

RUWC-H Which I am shy to ask from my husband, yes, I mean independent for me.

Researcher: Question 6.1:*How much of your salary are you willing to share with your husband?*

RUWC-H I am prepared to pay 50 percent of it because I have responsibilities I take my time from my house to work. So I need to , to do it yani , to balance this , and to rise my children, we need to share between us and the life is too much expensive, even to build our house it is too much expensive and I need to share it with my husband. I feel women and men are equal and even I think my husband will not accept that I will put my money. He will not even ask for the money. I feel that I should share with my husband to share with him. In UAE is different, women to work they have fight about the money but to start from the beginning I feel with

my husband we sharing in everything we are thinking in everything together and even now I have salary from my husband from each month he pay me money for me and even I did not use it in the house I use it for myself and even he pays for things for the house. He pay everything but this kind of money he put in my bank account and he say its for you.

RUWC-H I am a modern Emirati. My background, my parents rised me like this. When I get married with my husband he had the same thing , we are always balancing everything, we are thinking about each other and even we get married we think that we are two parts together.No one is higher than the other one, even towards our children we have discussion to think about it. To move from Dubai to Ruwais, we think we about it, he did not take his eehh his decision alone , he ask me before what did you think, can you live with me, he ask me like that, it depend on my life.

RUWC-H I think the people of the Western region think like in the past, men are more powerful and the womens are less. Men are powerful like a father, they will not allow their daughter to go out to come out , to work , to even to go here in the school, they will monitor her, like a husband even with her , with the married women, if they do anything, they will ask their husbands in the beginning and some of the husbands will not allow them (wives) to work or complete their studies.

RUWC-H The local women do not accept it but they just accept it as it is.

RUWC-H When we discuss something, we eehh are, I am disappoint how they are thinking, they didn't open their mind when I ask them like when I will do something. They think I must ask my husband to see if it is ok for him I will work with them, like this, like this, like this when we will take decision to move from home, they no, our family they said if we want to move hals (done) they will say halas (done), they just tell them that next month we will move, I told them no, my

husband if he had a chance or a promote or something he asked me in the beginning, what do you think, you can live with me in South ehhh , Western region or what, it depend on the area. If they want to travel they didn't allowed, when they want from the Western region to go to Abu Dhabi they didn't allow them with their friends or somebody we can respect yani then, but with me it's different I tell him why they are thinking like that?

Researcher: Question 6.2: *Why do you want to work?*

RUWC-H Some of them yes some of them no they will not work, when they come to college when they are studying , they feel they are free, than the house and to do something different to do something.

Researcher: Question 6.2.1: *Do you feel not valuable now after graduation?*

RUWC-H Yes, yes I feel because I am active and I like to work. I feel I lying in the house without doing anything I don't want, now I am working some of the village here in the community I am working with them. I feel satisfied, I feel that I do something, I feel that I can help, I can work, and I can do something for my country and gives me the experience.

Researcher: Question 6.3: *Do you feel bored and old if you stay at home doing nothing?*

RUWC-H Not that much but I feel bored when I am in the house but when I do voluntary work I feel satisfied. So I am searching even the helper is trying to help in different way with my children school with my eehhh committee here in the Ruwais housing and like to find something you can be useful or to be more helpful and ehhh.

Researcher: Question 6.4: *Some said they feel frustrated and how do you feel?*

RUWC-H We were not expect what we expect before, I agree with them and it affect me like now before when I did not think about studying, I didn't about

working but now when I study , when I ehhh complete my certificate now I feel that I want to do something more and more and more. I feel too much stress if I do not do what I want. If I working outside like what I talk about voluntary work the stress will go away. Not mean jealous , they are afraid more than jealous, jealous they will not let her 100 percent if the men he jealous from a woman he will not let her go to do anything but they are afraid they think like this. They are afraid of to increase the demand of woman. The power, the thing how she think if even if they negotiate something before she come down quickly and now she can negotiate for long time like that. With my husband we are 50:50 in power and everything but in UAE men are more powerful than women. I believe the men must be powerful than women, I believe that because I was raised like that, i don't know , I believe the men come to work, come to do hard things for the people and come to take care of the women, like this. For me I told you my lifestyle is I buy everythings, I am in the high standard and I have everything now without working, and my husband give me everything. So I am satisfying with this but I told you that I need now, before he think that alas (done) I will study and you will stay in the house but now when he saw me that I am working , and I am volunteering this one and everybody they are ehhh my reputation is becoming now better, he think that, he told me now he start to think that I must work and he is forcing me to go somewhere and do something in my life.

Researcher: Question 6.5: *What are the effects of dowry on marriage?*

RUWC-H I agree that dowry is becoming expensive and women start to educate and the demands increase. When they start to open their mind , they thinking how their wedding must be, the layout of their wedding, the presentation of their wedding, the dressing of their wedding, the name of the brand, like this they are thinking about that, before they will accept anything, now they are open mind with

outside world. The men must pay everything for the wedding. We are open mind now, we are educated now everything is open now we are open country now. Before they didn't know, they didn't understand what is the meaning of everything now our, even our car we accept the normal and the low quality, I am not a low quality, low brand of the car and now we are thinking of the higher brand. They start to be more open, more thinking, more ehhh intelligent and the men cannot power them now. Here in UAE the man he must give the woman the money, even in Islam, the money for the woman is for her even if she is working, its for her only, but the man must pay for children, he must pay for the house or build the house, rent the house, he must rent the car for the lady. He must pay for the maid, he must educate the children, he must pay for the tutoring, the real life, the real life he must pay for it and if the girl is educated the high of standard is up and up so too many thing and it will be very difficult for men. Even if the lady is educated and she get some salary she still gets some money from the husband. Her money is for her but some of the men manipulate that, I told you my husband give some money for me and he still pay for everything. My husband said we are equal, he said I am working with him, you are working to raise my children.

Researcher: Question 6.6 *Is it true that there is child gender preference in the U.A.E?*

RUWC-H I told you we have different point, some of them are thinking like this, some of them, like my brother-in-law he have 5 boys and he didn't have ehhh ehhh they tried first and second and they want a girl but still they do get. The boys are more favourable, the boy can ehhh take care of their family, can take care of their father when their father become old if businessman, the son will take care of the family ehhh for the family business. Even now, sorry, like my ehhh my mother, she is traveling with my father to Germany and we have ehhh, an operation there,

my husband think that they need money there , he give me a certain big number of money, he tell me this one for your family, take it and give them and tell them from you and not from me, not from my husband from me , they need it, they travel far away even my family have high standard but he still think that he must help them in a different way because they will stay a long time , they will have operation they will, yani like this, he is thinking like this. I told you the men and women are the same, I was raised like this, my cousins think like this, they think men and women are the same. Same I have a big family, even my husband have the same thinking he does not think the boys are more powerful. From Dubai and Abu Dhabi it is different thinking. The culture affect the people.

Researcher Question 7: *What other reasons do you think cause unemployment among women in the UAE?*

MZWC-B Some company they call and they want graduates from high school maybe because they do not have high position from colleges to maybe sit in the reception. So they have ehhh it depend on ehhh if they have a high position.

MZWC-B I want add another reason is wasta, have someone have high position to let me work in any company.

MZWC-B A name plays a very important role in the family because I have real case that if I want to work in company A, and I already finished my paper my CV and ehhh I have my certificates and I told them I wanted to work in Company B and I waited and they did not call me and they had called someone and had interview with her. When I called them I know wasta played a role. Company A told them why I am not working there now and they told me that there is no more job there and like company B so we can't let you work now.

MZWC-B Also another reason is the hours of work, I ehhh went to some companies, I went to work there, also they need employees to have employees in

that company but the hours from 7:30 to 5 o'clock so this is a very eehhh long time you spend at work this is not good for me because I am a mother I want to be maximum at 3 O'clock at home.

MZWC-B Yes, I can't go and work there, they need me to work there they want employee and I can't work there.

MZWC-B Boys and girls are treated equally. You call my father and give permission and even my brothers if they young they call and get permission from my father until they are 18 because my mother tell them I can't give you permission and you should take permission from your father.

The Impact of female unemployment

MZWC-B Yes I will be sad, and then I will try ehh to change the idea to my husband I will try ehhh let him see that the world is changing so we should change, we should change. Yeah I am very sad. I stay at home even when I go to my mother's house or my family house I tend to always do that because all family have their work. The whole week at my home , so I am very sad and feel that sometimes my mind is closed and I can't think about anything. I always think I am an old woman and I want to ehhh, I feel that I am very old and I am not young my age is not twenty ehhh. I feel nervous angry, sometimes I do not feel , I am not happy when my husband come and sometimes we are fighting and I am really not happy. He said why are you not happy you have a lot of things.

MZWC-B No no Brother, my husband, they don't want their sisters eeehh have a job or they drive their father its ok. They do not want their sister to do that maybe they saw some men drive and misbehave and do something like that and they do not want their sister like that.

Researcher Question 7: *What other reasons do you think cause unemployment among women in the UAE?*

MZWC-C From my view, experience most of job, they need experience and most companies need experience, this is an important issue now because most of fresh graduate from college or university ehhh its a big problem ehh social contact.

MZWC-C A vision of a husband who has a his own view about my life (laugh) . I think some of the solution for unemployment for women it's volunteer. Why they didn't bring plans for for fresh graduates and let them to volunteer for a while until they see how their personality, how their attitude in the work and then they will gain experience and the company or whatever they will see if she has ability to work.

MZWC-C And the right way they want it, so volunteering its very good solution for unemployment other thing is changing the view here in the society need awareness. Now what we start now its showing that we have our personality. It will not be affected by anywhere, ehhh anything,ehh we increase awareness through, I increase awareness through my children, boys especially boys, because eeehhh what they grow up they say men woman its like this, I said to them no, my daughter will work similar to you.

MZWC-C They have view, I said I ehhh she ehhh I raise her in very good way and she have a very good behaviour, you must trust her, so increasing trust in girls and decrease the problem of unemployment. You know go ehhh, now I go, now through maybe 6 months I star, they must give mothers a time before they go to work because half of our homes if they go to work their children screem at house maids while they are in the work morning before going to school.

MZWC-C I do not blame my husband but its my view to work while kids are grown up. It is slowly changing yeah many things are very strict for maybe 5 years they were very strict like no phone for girls, they resist that idea and now now they start to agree , to change and say yes. The boys yes they do some cleaning.

MZWC-C As you know I have ehhh a teenager, 17 years old this year, boy so I think there is a difference between how I treat boys and girls, the difference is the society, my vision only the society can said boy can do anything they will not say that what he do but girls no they will said a blacklist, so there is many reasons for restrictions for girls.

The Impact of female unemployment

MZWC-C Pressure, because, really I get depressed, when I stay home for a long time doing the work for a long time and seeing the same face for a long time, so this depressed me, it affects my personality.

MZWC-C You know you will not grow up, your personality will not grow up, you will stay the same level, you will show the same behaviour, you will show, so, this is what I resist yes eehhh he convinced me now to ehhh to focus on my family for a while but later I will convince him , I will work, I can't stay the for all my life sitting in the same home doing the same job this is killing by slowly, and you know when will I get my independent , I need it.

MZWC-C I need independence because I need to show my personality. I have ehhh many thing I want ehhh to do it ehhh in my life, its not my family only.

MZWC-C So ehhh really I have view for later, its not something that depend on his view, no no I an very ehhh ehh I am very ehhh I know what I want, I will do it and I will do it by my way.

MZWC-C When you are tied to certain things for a long time you will get depression, of course, anybody , so God create us to do something it's not just to stay in home and looking towards ehhh ok.

MZWC-C When my children grow up and I have less responsibility in the house why I am not work? I will work ! even if I am not working in public or private sector I will do my own business , I will not tie myself to walls no I will do something.

MZWC-C The biggest case I fight for is eeehhh is driving, they refused me driving and until I die they refused driving but when I said our prophet Mohammed was there all the women go over eehh (laugh) drive horses and camels, It is the same way and this is more security and more eehh I work more than my brothers.

MZWC-C I was driving while in America but have no licence.

MZWC-C I need to drive, I am able to drive, what's happened to people what happened to people, I am a grown up woman with my children, so ,what could happen they said no no no they scared me, you know they create imagination that is what I feel there is nothing reality, just it will happen like this , nothing will happen.

MZWC-C I will fight till I die

Researcher Question 7:*MZWC-E, What other reasons do you think cause unemployment among women in the UAE?*

MZWC-E Same problems, I have my classmates and when we finish college, they applied for the jobs in the same companies, I applied before them and I did not find the job, I did the interview and I am good in English better than them but they get the job. Also I do summer training in two companies and they say for me you are good in English and we give you a job, I did also interview there, after that I did not get answer from them.

The Impact of female unemployment

MZWC-E My mother has old age , she has old mind, she think my brother will do everything. She has cancer, if my brother is not there only me she thinks my brother will take her to hospital. My sister drive I will be with my mother she is sick. My mother after treatment she then allowed my sister to drive and after that she sees the need.

MZWC-E After they married the wife had a license and work they said she can

drive and work.

Researcher: Question 7: *RUWC-H, What other reasons do you think cause unemployment among women in the UAE?*

RUWC-H Women they need somewhere they can satisfied on it , they want a work not any work, they want something special that they, I study in HR , I want to work in HR , if I work in HR I feel I work better. That not that I will not be a good employee I will be, but the mens they just think of the certificate, if he work in his eeehh the same certificate or in different department he will work but the women what they study they will work in it. Skills matching is important for women. The women they like to be unique and to work with something they know , if they work in their habit or their eeehh what they know they will work more harder and more eeehh they will work, they will be more better in this job but if they will work in some place they are not good in it they will do what they will ask them they will not be more creative, like with me, I like the Business more than the IT or the Computer and I know the basic of the Computer I can deal with the normal one, but if they will tell me no, you will be not in HR you will be in the IT, I don't know how to do, you will tell me work in this work and I say OK,I will do the typing paper for you as a normal, not creative , not something different it will be, but if you think I am IT person , I need to work different layout, different eeehh thing, that what I mean, like when you ask me about coffee shop , I told you that I have this, I like this I work hard on it. I put a standard and I work until I achieve this standard and I will be more creative, creative to do it.

Researcher: Question 7.1 *What impact does the restrictions have on you?*

RUWC-H I feel that I will collapse, I feel that I will collapse, I want to work, I want to work but I don't know how to work in this eeehh job, I cannot I will do the normal think and I will stop in the middle of the eeehh work and I will say halas

(done) I will not do it, because I cannot work in this , I cannot give them more and more. For me I like to create, I like to be more doing things something unique , something special, If I do the routine things , I hate to do routine things, sometimes I will accept it, but somewhere, I like even want to do something unique , something different. I feel satisfied more but when I do the same routine, routine, routine, routine (repeated) I didn't change it I feel I will stop once halas (done).

Researcher: *Thank you very much ladies for the contribution into this research work.*

The Researcher thanked the participant and explained the research process thereafter, the creation of the questionnaire after analysing this data and produce a comprehensive questionnaire.

C.2 Male Focus Group Interview Transcripts

Introduction

My name is Robson Chiambiro, I am doing this research with the University of Leicester, I am sure you saw the request in the letter of consent that I sent to you, which you are supposed to sign and give me back, so that I can show whoever is going to question my research methods, I will give them. In this research which is about transition. What is transition? Movement from college to work into the labour market. I am doing my doctorate in Management and I want to see why are Emirate women are not moving easily from college to work and get employment? I have certain questions and I have discussed with other people and they have told me different views so I want to hear your views. I will ask you the following question.

Researcher: Question 1. *What is the biggest problem with employing Emirati females?*

Researcher:*Participant RUMC-A, are you married?*

RUMC-A Yeah

Researcher:*Is your wife working?*

RUMC-A No, well, she did not get a job basically

Researcher:*Why, is she educated?*

RUMC-A She is, well she has a bachelor

Researcher: *Why is she not getting a job, yet there are plenty jobs out there?*

(RUMC-A is vice president of a company)

RUMC-A Well , it depends basically, but you know with it's eehh, in the end it's the employer, it's the employer's perspective on how eehh to employ women. Let's say eehh its much more difficult for people to accept women, in this regio-eehh , culture basically, to be working, for various reasons for different reasons.

Researcher:*So your wife has a bachelor?*

RUMC-A yes

Researcher *Did she get the bachelor degree within the UAE or outside?*

RUMC-A Within the UAE.

Researcher *Is she confident and she can work?*

RUMC-A yes

Researcher *Did she try to look for jobs out there?* (RUMC-A stays within a working compound)

RUMC-A Well , it's the same as participant C mentioned, usually you would expect that the woman would work some place , close to home, or within an acceptable eehh standard of culture for example.

Researcher*Give us more detail what you mean, when you said within acceptable standard of culture?*

RUMC-A Well, here eehh, here is a point, now eehh it is a restriction of where should women work, but I think is question of eehh every society basically. Is a women allowed to work as eehh for example in eehh, let's say in construction, should she lift heavy equipment or heavy eehh, should she operate heavy equipment, it is the same concepts or same idea, I believe that we all see women with certain types of jobs, you know, although the jobs might not have been identified as most suitable for women but each individual of us, each person of us could imagine woman working in such and such area and not in every area. As an example I wouldn't expect to see a woman basically working eehh for example basically in sewage.

Researcher *Why, what if she wants?*

RUMC-A Well eehh, let's say eehh , well eehh it's not me that will stop her , it is basically the image itself which stop her. Sometimes you know, we limit ourselves with what, what is eehh let's say assumed from us, you know, people see women as working behind a desk, or in eehh or in a eehh let's say eehh in a more appropriate area in an area where there is basically eehh in an area where there is not much of danger or associated with it. My wife applied but she did not get a job. No she did not get a job.

Researcher *Why is she failing to get get a job?*

RUMC-A Well, let's say eehh one point in cooperation, you would not like to have eehh, I don't think this limited to our culture, you will not like to have basically married couples in the same work place because you know, if they have a family dispute then the work gets affected and you cannot have bits of emotions influencing it but I think what is the question here eehh , let's say I am the owner of a company, I want to hire men if they are more available than women.

Researcher *Why?*

RUMC-A Because you know, men they do not go on maternity leave.

Researcher *But that is segregation and you discriminate on gender?*

RUMC-A Yes but I look at how much I can benefit from each head count. I believe maternity leave is sick leave, No, no, I think the official one one is 60 days maternity leave. Can I add something there, Yes, basically the point here is that, with regard to Participant RUMC-C and Participant RUMC-D, what they said with regards to women working very far away from home, this prove basically my point here where you cannot see a woman driving long distances, having let's say exhausting working environment and basically with a lot of strain and stress. Now that is one thing which limit us from and not only us even I think most women would see that working in a very far place might affect let say, commitment , eehh their commitment to eehhh , their commitment to their society.

Researcher *What percentage of women will you hire if you are the owner of a company?*

RUMC-A let say from my point of view, I will not hire any, I am not obliged by any rule in this country to hire anyone. But then, participant RUMC-D, OK, now there is something, now if with regards to this, with the regards to maternity and to everything, your company will it be a profitable or non-profitable organisation. Answer me a second, will your company a profitable or non-profitable? 30 percent even if that will cost you more? It will cost you more, you will be paying more man hour per hour.

Could I add also one last point, here is what we are evaluating here, that you have a choice between the same standard, between womens and men, both of them have the same standard, their value in your view have the same but basically the man will always done better because you will get more out of him and, and this is how we see it, not because we are men but because you know, we do not have maternity leave or supported government rules as I mentioned it. Let us say for

example, a women has higher value and that value would need to cover for this loss, then the woman has higher value then that will be equivalent. I do believe, we are in, you know, in many countries, eehh I know that, in the US they have the same thing, women are paid less than men, working women are paid less than men. Same as here in the UAE, working women are paid less than men. The basic salary, women are less, go read the company's eehh eeehh, ehe, jobs.

Researcher: Question 4: *What will you say when people say Emirati men are jealous to find their female counterparts get employed?*

Researcher: *Women feel men are manipulative and they use religion to manipulate women Do you agree?*

RUMC-A (109) This is of a protective, more of a protective nature. (113) One second Robson, before you change our eehh words basically , the point is with the same value of people, the men will always dominate. she will need more of a risk assessment, as an example you will find a woman working more efficient and harder than men, yes this is a fact , you could find that but this is eehh not married or they do not want to go on maternity leave, but these are certain things but when you assess things, but when you assess, when you make your judgment, you will make your judgment, ok, there is a higher risk that I will have period or let say every eehh 2 or 3 years, 2 months, she is out of work and thus these 2 months period , its a long time period so I can not rely critical information with these 2 months I will depend eeehh be able to rely on her, 2 months is bit period of time, so you will not even and if you look at women the working force here of women, look at the responsibilities of women, the responsibilities they have, they are either at high level but one is for image they do not have responsibilities.

Researcher Question: *Why do you say that?*

RUMC-A(121) because I work in the industry and I see that and its very

obvious (131) The number of women who are leading high level position job, critical job , I think is less than 5 percent , you can barely count them. It is very very low. I do not believe that this is basically that women are not qualified, I have seem very qualified women. (133) But you know eehh as we mentioned early, that basically you assess your risk, you assess your judgment, and till the end and in the end is basically how the culture sees a woman as a leader.

Researcher Question 5: *What will you say when people say Emirati men prefer their wives staying at home and care for the family than going to work?*

RUMC-A (154-164) If you realised he said his wife was working four years ago and then she dropped, that means eehh is basically you have a child which is 4 or 5 years , so once that child goes to nursery then your wife will go back to work. (This means more kids more women are out of the labour market) So I think if you look at the situation, she actually left work, the job she was working in to take care of the children. (A is trying to prove that women are not productive) Yes I will believe, Ok, there this misconception that you all believe that the decisions are made by the husband or men but eehh most of the time it is actually the wives or the women who are making the choice, now there are things that we do not enforce on our eehh basically on our basically wives. If you think about it. One point is basically, we do have for example why should we stop for example a woman to work , ok, the only thing is that you know, if you have eehh, it is supported by the government , it is supported right now by the culture. There is a strong push in the culture to have women workforce, you cannot go against this because that means you will be going against the flow the culture flow, the new flow, the new trend, which is going to happen. It doesn't mean that yes I see women as getting eeehhh equal, equal job opportunities as men, no I do not see that, but yes, we are creating a new image for UAE women, this is what is happening right now.

Researcher *Why are you saying you are creating a new image now, why was it not like that before?*

RUMC-A (165) I think it is an international response, we are trying to be part of an international community, so as part of it, we need to prove that we do have equal rights between men and women, when you look deep inside what the eehh, what is basically accepted as woman job is much different in eehh having equality in eehh basically in a eehh you know in a point. (171)Of course , ehh Robson, this comes basically come to the same point, women are just given certain jobs. Not the same as men, and women are getting less paid and basically eehh to be honest some of the rules which are available here let's say to protect women's rights, are actually what are working against them, if you look at this, if women didn't have maternity leave, right and then basically did not have the 60 days marternity leave, or they did not have this early retirement or did not have this other types of bobin (175) which is all wrong, yes then of course, you know, we should judge fairly because you know, they will be on equal standing grounds.

Researcher *If a woman comes to your company and says I do not want to be married, will you give her a job?*

RUMC-A (176) I will not necessary equally.

Researcher: Question 6: *What will you say when people say Emirati women misbehave if they get employed?*

RUMC-A (181) I will believe this question is basically is related to moral eehh let say to moral issues, yes but women whilst they go to work they will be free and so on and so forth, well it was actually proven the opposite, women in house boredom is the most cause of let say moral issue while on the other hand...

Researcher: *Have you noticed any boredom on your wife with a bachelor and not working?*

RUMC-A (185) Of course, I do notice, until now I do notice some stress and ehhh the only thing I could do is basically eehhh ehhh ehhh during some periods of time if she needs to go relax with her family go and sit with her family in Abu Dhabi to keep her busy, I support her, and sometimes right now she is contuing ehhh her studies, I support that, through online education system, and basically now I do support her in getting some hobbies and some activities just to release some of that boredom, some of that stress.

Researcher: *Why don't you support her to start her own business?*

RUMC-A (188) Well, let's say since we are here in eeehhh in this Western region, which is a restricted area, it is very difficult to start her own business , lets say , and you know eeehh basically you would want her to request that , you know, you cannot basically encourage someone to start his own business because once if he fails then you will be responsible for his failure as well, you know, only support someone who is willing to do that.

(195-200) I disagree, but if I could give my justification why I will disagree, in today's society, in today's, let say, with today's technology,ok, things are more eehhhh with you bascallyyou, there, not out of reach anymore, so with regards to people influencing her, I am sure there will be still many people to influence any woman , it depends basically on eeehhh a female to misbehave or let's say to ehhh, ehhh to not be responsible , ok , that will be basically a person who is doing because they want to do it, it's not because of the area, or of the region, or such and such, so yes that statement is 100 percent false because it can be.

(201-202)There is no relationship between misbehaviour and work, because it doesn't do anything, in fact, if it does anything it will only keep women , let's say engaged at work hence ehhh more focused. (203-209)Well , I wish that my wife comes and ask me for money first of all, you know, whatever she wants she takes, ok, that

point , if that happens and she does come and ask me for money I will be very happy, but the main point is that if she does get her own income, is her responsible to take, is not my responsibility to take care, there are 13 duties expected in our culture and these duties are that men should provide for the family, men should eeehh basically provide a reliable house or accommodation for the family and should be able to support their family . It is not the woman responsibility for for that, then it is her responsibility since she does not have any attached duty, it is her responsibility of how she will use that money.

Researcher: *If a woman gets money and you do not have control of that money is there any need for her to work?*

RUMC-A (227) Now here comes the response basically, how many women do you see working at home. (233-235) Look you could do whatever you want in today eeehhh, with today's facilities. So misbehaving is not a restriction, ok there might be there might be that there are some people are misled, who believe that, you know, you need to tell them to learn to do some research, you know.

Researcher: *The emirati men are less qualified and are married to women with bachelor's degree and are jealous. Do you agree and why?*

RUMC-A (239-245) That's eeehhh, well, one point is statistically yes the number of educated women percentage of qualifications is higher this is true, statistically, but then you know eeehh if you talk about well basically, you know women are basically they become the man of the house and which will cause some family disruptance. I would say it would depend because that will not related to working that is related to family dispute, well you could have a family dispute with regards the woman as working or let's say the man didn't eeehh for example didn't do the correct shopping or for whatever, this is non of the reason where you have disputes but you cannot generalise that every woman that works and earns more

than her counterpart is eehh is basically getting eehhh let say divorce or is getting into a relationship issue.

Researcher: *Do you agree now that the rate of divorce has increased because of women who are educated?*

RUMC-A (250-258) Let me tell you something, education does not play a factor in the amount of divorces, divorces will increase. It's a common eehhhh, its a common phenomenon of the world.

Researcher: *Why do you say that?*

RUMC-A Because you know things are more open, they are more, eehh let's say they are eehh more ability , and that is not basically about more of options, people are more aware of themselves and people have created a type of individualism, so you know, and if this individualism doesn't say harmonise with their counterpart then of course you will find divorces, but I think the what, the amount of divorces which is increasing basically will show that eehh what is it called eehh eehh improvement let's say, or people are getting better educated. It means that you are allow the women to attain her individual choice , which is a good thing, a positive thing that women have their individualism, because then what happens is, ok, there might be a clash between personalities but then that is bound to happen , and it happen between friends, it happens between men, it happens between women and so why it does not happen between husband and wife.

Researcher: *Do you see female unemployment as a problem in UAE?*

RUMC-A (259-261) I do see it as a problem that you know eehh let's say in case eehh in terms of equality, in terms of equality that eehh as I mentioned before we wrap them around in bubble and we basically say Ok we need to do this (A does not believe in gender equality) we need to do that and then in the end where they expect us to treat them as equal, yes, that is the problem.

(267-271) It is a huge problem right now, you know why, because right now the labour market of UAE is ehhh lacking a lot of manpower, we have increased our packages to get expatriates and it is becoming more and more difficult. This is the main reason why as I mentioned before that the government is now pushing for women in workforce but in this push and in the way they are treating them which they are not treating them equally. It's basically these types of restrictions, maternity leave ehhh early retirement. They do not get equal balance between men and women. We take of course that is what is causing this issue. (272) Why Not any more , It never happened, *(there is screaming at each other and laughing)*

(276) Even , even if you go out, even if you forget about religion, even if you go outside the religion, this is basically since you know, man could marry a woman but you know, if that man he leaves, ok , then that woman if she has child or anything, she has to be self dependent, you know and she is some type of let's say ehhh, she has some sort of security, it's more of like a security, so , yes I do not agree that was a concept of that was a concept or understanding in some people then it's a misjudgement. It's a complete misjudgement, but that is not even a cultural norm , yes, among the Emiratis.

(285) No, I think here, is not that,its basically the wedding itself it cost a lot of money. And this is mainly because of the sign we have placed in our society here, you know, to have a wedding you have to basically invite about 500 person , and to have it in ehhh a 5 star hotel and these are many restrictions which make basically these type of weeding, because in the end, every female, every woman, every man would want their wedding to be classic.

(290-291) But then, but then you , ok if you look at it , it's consumers , we have became more and more of consumers you know and these types of things are more exploited and there is a lot of , let's say, market for this and its good market, a lot

of people are making good profit from this, so why not. This is happening but that does not stop marriage from occurring.

RUMC-B

Researcher Question 1: *What is the biggest problem with employing Emirati females?*

Researcher Participant RUMC-B, are you married or not married?

RUMC-B (20) No, I am not married, I am single.

Researcher *If you were married were you going to allow her to work?*

RUMC-B(21) Yes, I support that idea, I don't have any objection for female to work, because I believe that eehh female nowadays should participate eehh in eehh in work.

Researcher *Do you have brothers who are married?*

RUMC-B (22) No, I am the eldest.

Researcher *Do you have any relatives who are married? and are their wives working?*

RUMC-B (23) Yes.

Researcher *Ok let's hear from A*

RUMC-B soft soft place. **Researcher** *What do you mean by soft soft?*

RUMC-B(39) in an office , office work.

Researcher *Will you hire women in your private company?*

RUMC (78) Actually I agree with A, but on the other hand I believe that we need a woman in certain units such as HR, in some sections.

Researcher *What percentage of women will you allow in your private company?*

RUMC-B 30 percent, I believe we need women (A intervened) (90) I am totally against that, they get the same results. (94) I totally agree, that women must get

less, its a matter of productivity as you can said you know , they produced less, you know, if you see in a year, eehh how many times, I mean, in a year if you see the attendance, women try to go out earlier than men because she has a family, she needs to prepare eehh.

Researcher: Question 4: *What will you say when people say Emirati men are jealous to find their female counterparts get employed?*

Researcher: *Women feel men are manipulative and they use religion to manipulate women Do you agree?*

RUMC-B (111) That is an excuse

Researcher: Question 5: *What will you say when people say Emirati men prefer their wives staying at home and care for the family than going to work?*

RUMC-B I do not agree with that statement. Women should be given the opportunity to work with men.

Researcher Question 6: *What will you say when people say Emirati women misbehave if they get employed?*

RUMC-B (179) I do not think so, because she is qualified, and you know. I can say she create strong personality and she take her decisions individually.

(193-195) Because you know, once she get employed I mean, she will open her eyes, you know, she will eehehh be fixed by eehehh another, I mean eehehh by her colleagues or friends , you know maybe, some of them, because maybe she wants to try something new. It depends on the personality ok. (221-223) Actually our religion support women to work. They should work, because you know, they will gain more knowledge, more skills, you know, so there is no restriction from our religion to work. The restrictions come from the family, the husband, the brother that is related to the culture.

Researcher *Do you agree now that the rate of divorce has increased because of*

women who are educated?

RUMC-B No

Researcher *Do you think there is any solution to this female unemployment problem?*

RUMC-B (262) Actually no to be ehhh more educated about social things (Not a problem for B) that is the best idea you know. (275) He is totally wrong. You know.

Researcher *People now say dowry is treated like business, do you agree and why?*

RUMC-B(284) We can see this this is very rare. You know, we can see these cases very rarely because you know. Uneducated families will face these issues and the wedding.

Researcher *Do Emirati men prefer a boy child than a girl child?*

RUMC-B (294) I do not know.

RUMC-C

Researcher Question 1: *What is the biggest problem with employing Emirati females?*

RUMC-C (9-14) I think, overall it comes with culture, ehhh since I am married I have ehhh, a wife a working wife, for me, I don't think is like relate to my culture, its relate to the job, what we call, limitation near the area, ehhh because we face a lot of problem like for example I live in certain area, always for a female to find a job never be near by where they are living, will be always far away like is require a transportation to go that far, and its most important for me, families to live like female work to go because distance is far away.

Researcher *Will you allow your wife to work 100km away from where you stay and why?*

RUMC-C(15) No, I will not allow her to work 100km away from home because its dangerous to travel alone going on daily basis, actually if she is working here which is nearby now it is acceptable but if get an offer before in different places with around 30 minutes away from where we live now we don't accept because of the distance.

Researcher *If you have a driver who can drive her safely, will you allow her to go and work far away and Why?*

RUMC-C(17) No, I don't think so also. My opinion is like now because she is driving she already have a driving license, again to drive a lady like ehhh 30 or ehhh in this area like where we are working like in the Western region is little dangerous to ehhh like commit like somebody else ehhh.

(49) Actually I agree with A, his point, because, you see , if productivity certain things she want for maternity for 2 or 3 months, based on the country, like in in our country I believe she can get 2 months with full salary, 2 months with half salary and 2 months without salary that means 6 months. imagine she is protected , everything very good worker, hard worker a lot of like getting but 6 months she is not available so what productivity is there, nothing. (81) He (Participant RUMC-A) is changing everybody's mind. (83) I will give not more than 15 percent.

Researcher *What do you think participant RUMC-C, do you support this idea of paying women less because they are less productive?*

RUMC-C(97) I support the idea yes, for me not because of less productivity, most of the time we have also the lady more productive, but usually they are taking less because their retirement age is less than men here as per the UAE law, yeah for example if we are 20 years they only take 15 years.

Researcher Question 4: *What will you say when people say Emirati men are jealous to find their female counterparts get employed?*

RUMC-C(102-103) Jealous is a normal happening with men and women with both nobody like others to take his positions or opportunities and this is very normal happen, but to be fair ehhh, they have to involved to give the country back. (105) I am happy because she is working and not because she is getting some money. She can buy herself whatever she wants and its a matter of responsibility and the strength, she making her responsibility and personality.

Researcher Question 5: *What will you say when people say Emirati men prefer their wives staying at home and care for the family than going to work?*

RUMC-C(135) No, I do not agree with the statement, ehhh I believe nowadays the wives go outside the workforce and work and ehhh sometimes actually she come after me to home, it's ok because now she get more knowledge and experience about the life, ok previously like in the past , there was only the men was working , they don't feel how ehhh the men earn the money, now they know this responsibility is taken, actually I have good experience with my wife because she joined 6 companies ok, she joined 6 organisations and she was working four years in one organisation ,Ok that one. I think for her is to gain experience and bring more knowledge not only for me, even for my kids because she will have more knowledge now more knowledge about different cultures. This is the wife's responsibility to teach the kids so she will have more knowledge.

Researcher *Which one will you give weight; your wife working or your wife keeping your kids?*

RUMC-C(144) The wife keeping my kids.

Researcher *Will you encourage your wife to work when kids are too young?*

RUMC-C(145-150) If they are too young, this is the issue actually, you see, when the kids are too young they require somebody more to take care of them especially from language view, we need our kids to first speak our first language

for them and if keep them with a house maid or with a , we have a nanny like for example at home. I need my kids to start to learning Arabic language not from a language and they study with a nanny at home or something they will speak broken Arabic , which is definitely nobody would like his kids to have this type of accent especially like in Arabic like they talk in broken Arabic, that is why we enter the first or second year, like I have kids , she did not work for ehhh this period.

Researcher Question 6: *What will you say when people say Emirati women misbehave if they get employed?*

RUMC-C(209) I think the misbehaving, the salary-wise what they say is that she will be powerful, I do think that, because a lady if you give her 1000 she will spend it within 1 minute and you give her 1 million she will spend it in 1 minute same thing. I am still giving her as previous say, every month whatever she wants, what we agree even if she get a salary. I am still spending.

Researcher *Why will men allow women to work when they do not benefit from their salaries?*

RUMC-C(245) I think in this the same, the more the ehhh lady are educated than their husband, this is comes when most problems ehhh coming but we are seeing over here they are divorcing or more comfortably we are seeing over here. You see what is happening the more educated lady ok an getting educating man , most of them we cannot say 100 percent, 50 percent but we are hearing is becoming working family.

Researcher *Do you think there is any solution to this female unemployment problem?*

RUMC-C(265-266) Not a problem, that increase our workforce. but ehhh they have involve more in social study, which they have to go home and give them the social study, a college or school, for the team especially (not clear what C wanted

to express but clear that women must do social studies) (281) But the dowry here is cover to prepare, what they call, (disturbed by A) who said for security reasons.

Researcher *Do Emirati men prefer a boy child than a girl child?*

RUMC-C(293) As, first child, No , No, we believe that kids come from God, like we do not have any choice it's come a boy or girl, people they have prefer, but is still is, for example, for me I like my daughter, like to have a daughter first, but God gave me boys first.

RUMC-D

Researcher Question 1: *What is the biggest problem with employing Emirati females?*

Researcher *Participant RUMC-D, Are you married?*

RUMC-D(54) Yes I am married

Researcher *Is your wife educated and what is her qualification?*

RUMC-D Yes, she has a bachelor degree.

Researcher *Is she working?*

RUMC-D Yes

Researcher *Can she work many kilometres away from home?*

RUMC-D(56) She is working about 10 minutes away from house in Abu Dhabi.

Researcher *If she gets more than you, will you be happy?*

RUMC-D(57) She gets less than me but there is no difference our culture what ever she gets is hers.

Researcher *What percentage will you allocate to women if you were a company owner?*

RUMC-D(69) I will put 30 percent if productivity is right. (A intervened)

RUMC-D(72) Let me say one thing, if I am running a company and I am

owning it, I will follow your way (Participant A way) I am looking for the benefit.

Researcher *Participant D, are you changing your position not to hire any woman?*

RUMC-D(74) If it is a private company, for sure if I will not, ehhh if I have the choice and the freedom to do so. If I am working in a government company and its a government rule to involve women and to give them that benefit I will do that.

Researcher Question 4: *What will you say when people say Emirati men are jealous to find their female counterparts get employed?*

RUMC-D(107) Can I clarify here Mr. Robson, because what I think as participant C said, my opinion when the ladies say they are jealous, I don't think they mean jealous because they get the job, for me , as a husband I feel jealous that my wife she is working for 10 or 20 max, this is the jealous we are talking about here. This is not because of she ehhh like she get higher salary or position like that.

Researcher *Women feel men are manipulative and they use religion to manipulate women Do you agree?*

RUMC-D(111) I do not agree with that. They have the right to be a part of the workforce in the UAE, that was the percent I am willing to hire in my company.

Researcher Question 5: *What will you say when people say Emirati men prefer their wives staying at home and care for the family than going to work? Are your parents in your community supporting you to allow your wife work?*

RUMC-D(168) In fact they totally supporting and all our women in our family are working. (No one is earning more than the husbands) No it is not a matter of qualification, it is the matter of position that is given to women. The priorities are given to men.

Researcher *Do you think there is any solution to this female unemployment problem?* **RUMC-D(263)** More awareness , need for more awareness about female

employment

Researcher *What do you say when people men pay dowry and a wife is my asset and must do what I want?*

RUMC-D(272) Not anymore , I will eehh, (interjected by A)

RUMC-E

Researcher *Do you think there is any solution to this female unemployment problem?*

RUMC-E(288) Here comes the jealous of the ladies, the females, jealous from other wedding , that's why the cost of dowry goes more and the expenses of the wedding go more.

RUMC-E(217-218) My opinion is that they have the right to go and work because she wants to get something with her money, the amount of money that I give her which is for normal life she used to buy for her, it's not like a gift or something. She has the right to stay at home or go for a job, she has choice, whatever she is taking. In our religion also ok we are saying, we have to spend on our wives, ok, we have to do anyhow she stay at home or she goes to work.

Researcher *If she gets more than you, will you be happy?*

RUMC-E I totally disagree with what D is saying, we have to involve women in participating in productivities work along with men, along with all men.

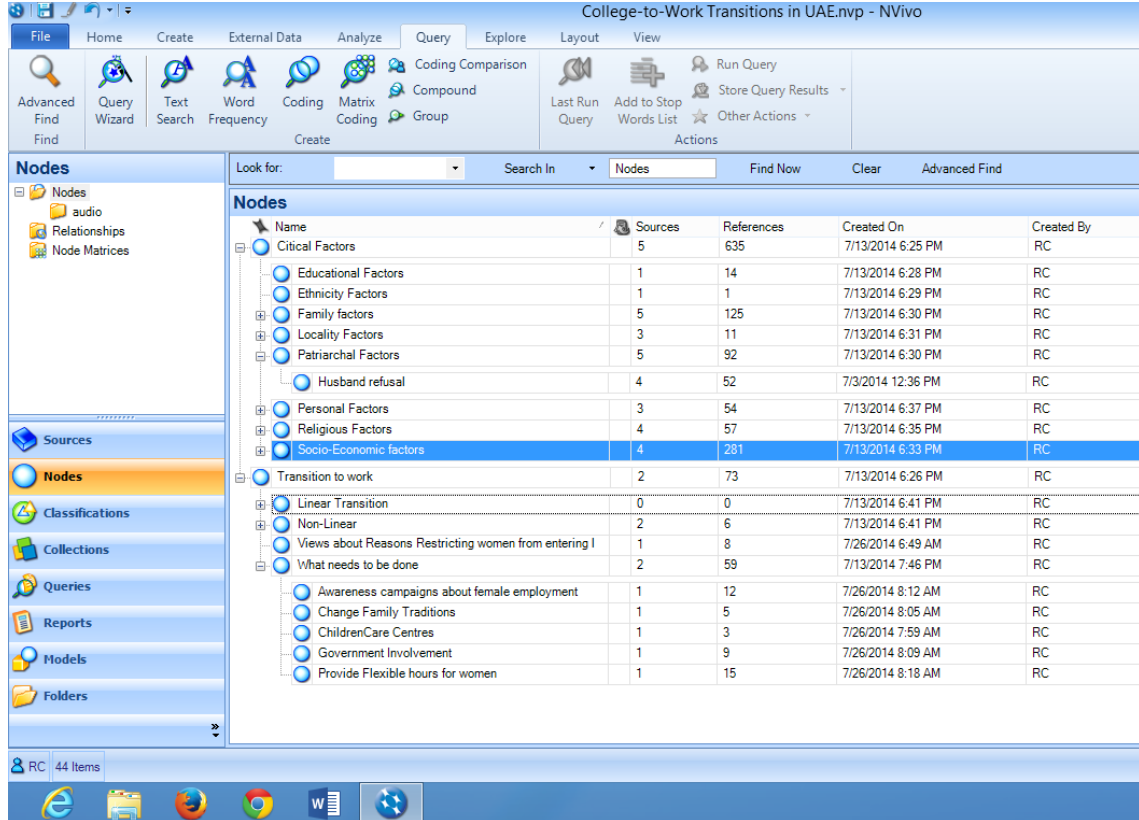
Researcher *What percentage will you allocate to women if you were a company owner?*

RUMC-E(91) Government say men and women are similar. (92) They get same salaries in government but different allowances.

Thank you for your cooperation and contribution to this research. I will use the data to develop a questionnaire for my quantitative research

(Thanked the participants and reassured them of the process of making a questionnaire from the data collected, its analysis and presentation.)

C.3 Dominating Themes in Nvivo



College-to-Work Transitions in UAE.nvp - NVivo

File Home Create External Data Analyze Query Explore Layout View

Advanced Find Find Query Wizard Text Search Word Frequency Coding Matrix Coding Compound Last Run Query Add to Stop Words List Run Query Store Query Results Other Actions

Nodes

Look for: Search In: Nodes Find Now Clear Advanced Find

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By
Critical Factors	5	635	7/13/2014 6:25 PM	RC
Educational Factors	1	14	7/13/2014 6:28 PM	RC
Ethnicity Factors	1	1	7/13/2014 6:29 PM	RC
Family factors	5	125	7/13/2014 6:30 PM	RC
Locality Factors	3	11	7/13/2014 6:31 PM	RC
Patriarchal Factors	5	92	7/13/2014 6:30 PM	RC
Husband refusal	4	52	7/3/2014 12:36 PM	RC
Personal Factors	3	54	7/13/2014 6:37 PM	RC
Religious Factors	4	57	7/13/2014 6:35 PM	RC
Socio-Economic factors	4	281	7/13/2014 6:33 PM	RC
Transition to work	2	73	7/13/2014 6:26 PM	RC
Linear Transition	0	0	7/13/2014 6:41 PM	RC
Non-Linear	2	6	7/13/2014 6:41 PM	RC
Views about Reasons Restricting women from entering I	1	8	7/26/2014 6:49 AM	RC
What needs to be done	2	59	7/13/2014 7:46 PM	RC
Awareness campaigns about female employment	1	12	7/26/2014 8:12 AM	RC
Change Family Traditions	1	5	7/26/2014 8:05 AM	RC
ChildrenCare Centres	1	3	7/26/2014 7:59 AM	RC
Government Involvement	1	9	7/26/2014 8:09 AM	RC
Provide Flexible hours for women	1	15	7/26/2014 8:18 AM	RC

RC 44 Items

Figure C.1: Nodes of Dominating Themes

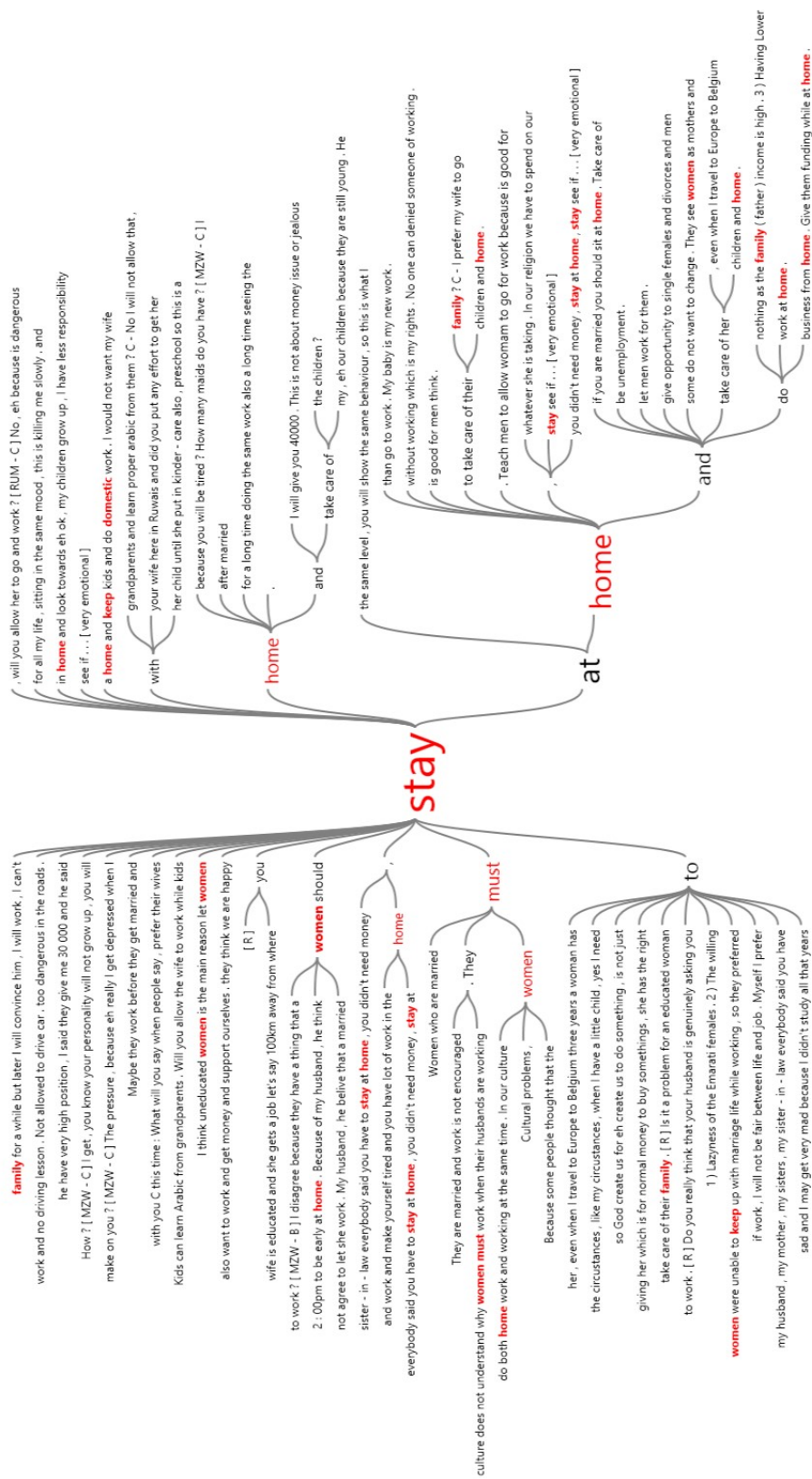


Figure C.2: Theme Tree Structure