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EXPLORING INTERGENERATIONAL VALUE CHANGES ACROSS THREE
GENERATIONS OF EMIRATI WOMEN USING FOCUSED ETHNOGRAPHY

by

Ebtesam Ali Alteneiji

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

May 2020

Dissertation Committee

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TITLE OF DISSERTATION: EXPLORING INTERGENERATIONAL VALUE
CHANGES ACROSS THREE GENERATIONS OF EMIRATI WOMEN USING
FOCUSED ETHNOGRAPHY

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ABSTRACT

Intergenerational value change, influenced by technological advancements, economic development, formal education, and urbanization, becomes especially complex when it occurs in times of rapid changes, as in the case of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Through the lens of social change and human development theory, heavily constructed in the Gemeinschaft/Gesellschaft paradigm, this focused ethnography explored the push and pull of traditional boundaries within a collectivist society and the necessary navigation of infused Westernized philosophies promoting individualism and autonomy. Participants in this study ($N = 24$) were members of 8 family triads of grandmothers, mothers, and daughters who represented 8 different Emirati tribes from 4 cities in the Emirates. Data were collected during semi-structured interviews using prompts and vignettes and through observation and the generation of field notes. Thematic analysis revealed 3 themes that described the Emirati women's unique cultural experiences: (a) cultural value change (gender equity and roles, family connectedness and relatedness) is evident across generations; (b) change in cultural values is the result of multiple factors (e.g., wealth, education, heterogeneity, independence, need for and acceptance of change, negotiation); and (c) resistance to change (e.g., gender roles, respect, connectedness, relatedness) slows the changing of values. The findings underscore the need to support young Emirati women as they navigate value change and try to rectify often conflicting role expectations. Insight gained from this study informs the field of cross-cultural leadership and female leadership development in the Gulf region.

DEDICATION

I remember when I was 5 years old and dreaming of pursuing a PhD in the United States although I had no idea what that entailed. All I knew was what my mother explained to me in simple terms: I will teach adult people at the university. This passion was inspired by my mother's close friend who broke out of the traditional pattern and decided to fly to the United States in the mid-1990s to pursue her PhD in education. This was not the norm back then, but she challenged her surroundings and her Bedouin family to follow her passion and she did! I remember the stories she used to share with my mother about her journey in the United States every time she came home to visit. The stories were truly inspirational and constantly shaped my passion to dream big and aim high as a female. I am so grateful for this early exposure that inspired me to study culture and change and that drove me to realize my dream at the young age of 30. I am equally as grateful to my father, mother, grandmother, and siblings, in particular my sister Nouf, for always being huge supporters of my PhD journey and personal growth. I dedicate this dissertation to them.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my dissertation committee: Dr. Afsaneh Nahavandi, Dr. Robert Donmoyer, and Dr. Christopher Newman. To my chair, Afsaneh Nahavandi, you have been a true inspiration to me. Thank you for introducing me to the field of cross-cultural leadership and for your continuous support through my master thesis and now my doctoral dissertation. Dr. Robert Donmoyer, this dissertation topic was born out of your class. I am grateful for your feedback and continuous support that helped shaped this dissertation. Dr. Christopher Newman, thank you for believing in me, for pushing me to realize opportunities beyond the USD campus, and for engaging me as the collaborative lead in a study abroad course to the United Arab Emirates.

I could not have produced this research without the grandmothers, mothers, and daughters who participated in this study. I truly appreciate and am grateful for your willingness to welcome me into your private residences, for unconditionally sharing your personal life experiences, and for your kind hospitality. Indeed, my fieldwork was the most enjoyable part of my PhD journey.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Rapid demographic, economic, and political changes in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have brought about changes in the value systems held by Emirati women across generations. These intergenerational value changes represent changes in core value systems guiding developmental tasks in the adult life of Emirati women and revolve around gender equity, roles, cross-sex relationships, marriage, professional life, and familial relations. As a result of intergenerational value change among Emirati women, the family, paradoxically, has found itself in heightened tension between traditional and modern cultural values.

Traditional cultural values are those held by ancestors of a particular cultural group; they are held to be true and considered of great importance in life because of their long-standing history and popularity (Greenfield, 2009). Traditional cultural values tend to emphasize interdependence encouraged by self-submissiveness, strong family solidarity, and preservations of traditional practices (Greenfield, 2009). In contrast, modern cultural values, precipitated by higher levels of urbanization, education, and technology, are characterized by increased autonomy and self-expression (Greenfield, 2009). The shift from traditional cultural values to modern cultural values has accompanied a shift (Greenfield, 2009) from “Gemeinschaft,” or tight-knit, homogeneous, rural communities characterized by informal education, subsistence economies, and low levels of technology, to “Gesellschafts,” or societies characterized by accumulation of wealth, higher levels of formal education and technology, commerce, and competition in the global economy (Tönnies, 1887/2011). In a Gemeinschaft, the

individuals within the small community share a group consciousness and collectivist mindset; they place value on interdependence and perceive themselves to be interrelated (Tönnies, 1887/2011). Conversely, in a *Gesellschaft*, individuals function from a perspective of a larger society that emphasizes personal pleasure, autonomy, and self-expression (Tönnies, 1887/2011).

It is the connection between societal change and changes in cultural values across generations of Emirati women associated with the shift from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft* that is the focus of this study. Of particular interest are the changes associated with connectedness/relatedness and autonomy. This study, as an exploration of intergenerational value change across generations of Emirati women, is dependent on an understanding of collectivism, modernism, family change, and social change and human behavior. These concepts are discussed in the Conceptual Framework section in this chapter. This chapter also includes discussions of the study problem and purpose. Additionally, research questions are presented, and important definitions are provided.

Problem Statement

To fully understand (a) the continuous flux of transformation between traditional and modern life experiences in collective societies (Gandolfi, 2015), (b) the dilemma of value change, and (c) the tensions that arise out of social change and competing cultural influences in traditional collectivistic societies (Manago, 2014), it is necessary to fully investigate the “in-betweenness” that exists in cultural spaces. There is a growing body of literature on patterns of social change and human development in Western countries, and a number of researchers have explored patterns of social change and human development in relation to technological advancements, economic development, formal education, and

urbanization (e.g., Cho, Sandel, Miller, & Wang 2005; Greenfield, 2004; Keller & Lamm 2005). However, Akyil, Prouty, Blanchard and Lyness (2014) argued that the transmission process gets more complicated and presents a paradox in the life of the family when it takes place in times of rapid changes, as grandmothers and mothers need to negotiate new boundaries between the past and the opportunities provided for their daughters. As a result, grandmothers and mothers from rapidly changing societies face unique challenges in balancing the paradoxical values among their daughters, the traditional collectivistic family values, and emerging values that promote more autonomy and independence (Akyil et al., 2014).

I theorized that Emirati grandmothers' and mothers' perceptions of the role of women in Emirati society would clash with their daughters' experiences and aspirations and, given the UAE's history of tribalism and rapid societal changes, that stories about intergenerational social value change among generations of Emiratis would differ from those emerging from Western countries. However, at the time of this study, research in which the differences in living experiences of older and younger Emiratis was scarce. It was the scarcity of research about intergenerational social value change among Emirati women that prompted this study.

Statement of Purpose

The main objective of this study was to advance the understanding of intergenerational value change across generations of Emirati women (RQ1). Specifically, the aim of this study was to describe and explore specific changes in beliefs, attitudes, and experiences of three generations of Emirati women—grandmothers, mothers, and daughters—regarding gender equity; gender roles; cross-sex relationships; marriage;

professional life; and familial relations among grandmothers, mothers, and daughters (RQ1a) during the first 2 decades of the 21st century (RQ1b). Of particular interest were (a) the factors involved in inducing cultural value changes (RQ2), including cultural factors (RQ2a), education, and empowerment (RQ2b); (b) how intergenerational value changes are associated with a move toward individualism and autonomy characterized by simultaneous connectedness with family and relatedness to traditional culture (RQ3); (c) the roles of grandmothers and mothers in maintaining connectedness and transmitting values of the Bedouin culture to their daughters as part of that cultural relatedness (RQ3a); and (d) how each generation of Emirati women understand and negotiate these changes within their existing family structure and relationships paying particular attention to the daughters' generation (RQ4).

To sufficiently capture changes in beliefs, attitudes, experiences, and the process of value transmission across the three generations of Emirati women inside the family and to provide a more comprehensive analysis of intergenerational value change in the sociocultural context of the UAE, this study was conducted using qualitative methods. The collection of qualitative data about intergenerational value change among Emirati women provided insight that not only helped fill a gap in the literature but that also can be used to inform the field of cross-cultural leadership and female leadership development in the Gulf region. Knowing that differences in cultural values influence attitudes toward female leadership development, it is possible that data from this study can be used to develop indigenous conceptions of women's leadership that are relevant to the lived experiences in the Emirati family and thus promote growth in women's leadership in terms of career advancements, mentorship, and empowerment.

Research Questions

Four research questions guided this study:

Four main research questions, along with their associated subquestions, guided this study:

- 1) What intergenerational value changes are identified by three generations of Emirati women?
 - a. What specific changes in beliefs, attitudes, and experiences emerge regarding gender equity, gender roles, cross-sex relationships, marriage, professional life, and familial relations?
 - b. What changes have occurred in the socialization of young Emirati women during the first 2 decades of the 21st century?
- 2) What have been the main factors involved in inducing cultural value changes across three generations in modern UAE?
 - a. What contextual cultural factors have influenced intergenerational value changes?
 - b. How has the education and empowerment of women influenced intergenerational value changes?
- 3) To what extent do intergenerational value changes represent the younger generation's movement away from the interdependence and shared group consciousness of a collectivist society (i.e., *Gemeinschaft*) and towards new forms of non-Western individualism and autonomy (i.e., *Gesellschaft*) characterized by familial connectedness and a sense of maintained sociocultural relatedness?

- 4) How do the women in intergenerational families negotiate differences in their cultural values?

Conceptual Framework of Social Change and Human Development: A Lens for Exploring Intergenerational Change in the UAE

As social change has occurred in the UAE, a modernizing narrative about gender roles (Allagui & Alnajjar, 2018; Pinto, 2012, 2019) and personal relationships (Sabban & Mohammad, 2014) has emerged, and an increased agency among Emirati youth in terms of prioritizing personal choice over parental obedience has become evident (Schvaneveldt, Kerpelman, & Schvaneveldt, 2005). However, despite systematic value changes at the societal, familial, and individual levels (Allagui & Alnajjar, 2018; Pinto, 2012, 2019), family relations are still an important reference in the life of Emirati family (Sonleitner & Wooldridge, 2014) and daughters' retain connectedness with family (Akyil et al., 2014) and a sense of relatedness to traditional values despite the sense of autonomy inherent in daughters' modern value systems (Bristol-Rhys, 2010; Crabtree, 2007).

Thus, the UAE's transition from a collectivist tribal settlement with subsistence economies and informal education to a more individualistic knowledge-based economy with high levels of education and technological advancements (Allagui & Alnajjar, 2018; Pinto, 2012, 2019) has been complex. Gandoifi (2015) suggested studying the family unit and its intergenerational relations as places of ongoing renegotiation of cultural values and traditional horizons. The lens of social change and human development provides an exceptional perspective for considering the socialization of the UAE, in particular intergenerational changes across multiple attributes of social change, and for capturing the unique experiences of women in that changing society. As such, the theory has been

useful in exploring sociodemographic change and value shifts in Arabs (e.g., Abu Aleon, Weinstock, Manago, & Greenfield, 2019; Weinstock, Ganayiem, Igbaryia, Manago, & Greenfield, 2014) and Mexican (e.g., Manago, 2014) populations. The underlying concepts of this study's conceptual framework are discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The main objective of this study was to advance the understanding of intergenerational value change across generations of Emirati women. To fully understand changes in cultural values across generations, it is important to have an understanding of social change associated with modernization. Social change from the perspective of human development was introduced in the Conceptual Framework section of Chapter 1. That discussion is continued here in more detail. Additionally, social change from an historical perspective is explored.

As research on intergenerational value change across generations of Emirati women is scarce, the discussions in this literature review are typically general in nature. Sources were drawn from the Emerald, JSTOR, ProQuest Central, SAGE Journals, and Science Direct (Elsevier) databases and include books, articles in peer-reviewed and scholarly journals, and government and organization websites. Key search terms used were *UAE*, *rapid social changes*, *generational differences*, *cultural changes*, *family life*, *family changes*, and *Emirati women*.

Social Change and Human Development

Inherently associated with the concept of intergenerational value change at the center of this study is culture. Variations between cultures can be distinguished by differences in the attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms shared by a particular group of people and the way that group defines and understands themselves and their social roles (Triandis, 1996). In comparison to modern cultures that tend to be heterogeneous, traditional cultures tend to be “relatively homogeneous because of their relative isolation

from other contrasting cultures in the same country” (Greenfield, 2009, p. 416). These varied cultural elements contribute to the development of cultural values, which are broadly defined as widely accepted psychological beliefs of individuals within a society concerning right and wrong actions and desirable social behaviors (de Mooij, 2015, Hofstede, 2001; Rokeach, 1973).

To fully understand changes in cultural values across generations, it is important to have an understanding of social change and human development associated with modernization. To fully understand social change and human behavior among Emirati women in particular, it is critical to have an understanding of the value systems associated with collectivist societies as well as family change within those structures. These concepts are discussed in this section.

Origins of the Modernization Paradigm

Proponents of modernization theory, within the field cultural psychology (Greenfield, 2009), purport that the modernization is a linear process of social change whereas nations evolve from characteristically traditional or underdeveloped nations to modern ones based on a Western societal model inclusive of cultural value systems (Greenfield, 2009; Tipps, 1973). The model includes multiple attributes that are assumed to shift simultaneously; the shift follows a set trajectory and represents a dichotomy between nations that are progressive/modern/Westernized and those that are not (Tipps, 1973). During this shift, cultural change occurs over time in response to external forces in the environment (Hofstede, 2001; Twenge & Kasser, 2013) such as ecological (Greenfield, 2009), social, political, and economic systems and structures (Inglehart & Baker, 2001; Tipps, 1973). The construct of modernization is based on the fundamental

elements of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft (Inglehart & Baker, 2001), a perspective that sets up a dichotomous relationship between two social contexts where the modern context is assumed to be a goal for which societies should strive to achieve (Tipps, 1973).

Criticism of the Modernization Paradigm

Societal attributes and processes of change do not necessarily occur at the same time and some don't occur at all (Tipps, 1973). Because societal attributes and processes of change do not occur in the same way in every context, and in some cases not at all, the dichotomous and systematic nature of the model proposed by modernization theory is inadequate for explaining social change (Tipps, 1973). According to Tipps (1973), modernization theory is "little more than a classificatory device distinguishing processes of social change deemed 'progressive' from those which are not (p. 222). Modernization theory is not reflective of how all societies change but rather is limited in that. It is reflective only of how the United States changed during the post-World War II era (Tipps, 1973).

Beyond the Modernization Paradigm

The shift from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft represents a shift in sociodemographic conditions (e.g., ecological, economic, and social) within environments (Greenfield, 2009). However, the shift from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft only describes changes in sociodemographic conditions; it does not explain changes in cultural values, learning environments, or human development and cognition (Greenfield, 2009). Social adaptations that occur in response to changing sociodemographic conditions (i.e., Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft) within environments represent a shift in value systems from collectivism to individualism (Greenfield, 2009). In this sense, values

are not a part of the sociodemographic conditions that make up a culture but rather separate attributes of their own derived from “social institutions and other macrolevel variables” (Fischer & Schwartz , 2011, p. 1137). Examples of social adaptations for Gemeinschaft environments include interdependence (Keller, 2007) and the expectation that adult children will help take care of their parents in old age (LeVine et al., 1991).

Differences in cultures occur on a continuum, so that nested Gemeinschaft communities can exist within larger overall Gesellschaft societies (Greenfield, 2009) and middle-class Gesellschaft communities can exist within Gemeinschaft societies (Keller, 2007). It is the separation of values from culture (Fischer & Schwartz , 2011) and the continuum of intermediate values between the two dichotomous sets of values evident in Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft environments that produces observable differences in values within and between cultures (Greenfield, 2009). However, an understanding of how cultural values change from collectivism to individualism as the result of changing Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft environments is insufficient for understanding differences in cognitive adaptations and human development among and between cultures (Greenfield, 2009). What does explain differences in cognitive adaptations and human development among and between cultures is that sociodemographic conditions, either directly or mediated by cultural values, influence learning environments, which subsequently influence cognitive adaptations and human development (Greenfield, 2009)

Sociodemographic attributes, learning environments, and cognition.

Sociodemographic conditions can directly influence learning environments (Chavajay & Rogoff, 2002; LeVine et al., 1991) and subsequently human cognition (Schliemann & Acioly, 1989). For example, in Gemeinschaft environments where members of the

community are less educated, they function as equals with their children (Chavajay & Rogoff, 2002) and have a decreased understanding of child development (LeVine et al., 1991). Subsequently they are less capable at decontextualizing change (Schliemann & Acioly, 1989). In contrast, in Gesellschaft environments where members of the community are more educated, the reverse is true (Greenfield, 2009).

Sociodemographic attributes, learning environments mediated by culture, and human development. Cultural values can mediate the relationship between sociodemographic conditions and learning environments (Greenfield, 2009). Cultural values of Gemeinschaft environments promote learning environments for infants that are interdependent in nature and include increased body contact and stimulation via social interactions (Keller, 2007). In comparison, cultural values of Gesellschaft environments promote learning environments that are independent in nature and include increased face-to-face contact and stimulation via interactions with objects (Keller, 2007). With regard to human development, Gemeinschaft learning environments promote earlier self-recognition and later self-regulation whereas Gesellschaft learning environments promote the reverse conditions (Keller, 2007).

Bidirectionality of Socialization

Despite the tendency for social change to move from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft environments, the reverse also may occur (Greenfield, 2009). For example, particular groups may choose to leave established communities to develop communes where they can practice family structures outside of the expected family and community structure (Weisner, Bausano, & Kornfein, 1983). It also is possible that large-scale economic changes that reduce families' financial means of support may push members of

a society to adaptations more typically associated with *Gemeinschaft* environments (Greenfield, 2009). Additionally, some communities in *Gemeinschaft* environments may intentionally try to remain homogeneous to retain specific social practices, as is the case with Orthodox Jewish communities (Greenfield, 2009). These examples demonstrate that the movement from one social environment to another may be motivated by forces internal or external to any community, family, or individual (Greenfield, 2009). Regardless of the direction of change, an understanding of the various and multi-directional pathways of socialization provides a predictive model whereas sociodemographic conditions will influence learning environments, either directly or mediated by cultural values, and subsequently influence human cognition and development (Greenfield, 2009).

The UAE Today

The UAE is a federation of seven Emirates located on the southeastern tip of the Arabian Gulf, bordering Oman on the East and Saudi Arabia on the Southwest (UAE Government Portal, 2020a). Combined, the seven Emirates (i.e., Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ras Al Khaimah, Ajman, Umm Al-Quwain, and Fujairah) cover 83,600 square kilometers (UAE Government Portal, 2020a). Although much of the UAE is sandy desert, the inland areas are more varied with not only desert but also oases, coastal plains, and the Hajar Mountains (AlMarri & Caielli, 2018). Abu Dhabi is the capital of the UAE and is the largest Emirate geographically, covering 87% of the UAE's total land area (Sarbu, 2014).

In 2020, 9,839,502 people lived in the UAE, with nationals representing 11% of the total population (Worldometer, 2020). This number represents a significant increase

during the last 50 years (Daleure, 2017). The population of the UAE represents an intriguing variety of religious, social, and ethnic minorities (Peterson, 2009).

True to its tradition of being “number one in everything, [Dubai is home to] . . . the biggest, the tallest, and the best” (Al Marri & Caielli, 2018, p. 31). It is known for its modern architecture, upscale resorts, and luxury shopping centers and is a recognized hub of innovation (Al Marri & Caielli, 2018). In 2014, at 97.8 billion barrels, the UAE had the seventh largest proven oil reserves worldwide (Sarbu, 2014). Combined, Dubai—with approximately 4 billion barrels of oil reserves—Sharjah, Ras Al Khaimah, and Fujairah account for 6% of the UAE’s oil reserves (Sarbu, 2014). In comparison, Abu Dhabi has 94% of the UAE’s oil reserves, a condition that has helped make it the richest city in the world (Sarbu, 2014). Although previously reliant on oil revenues for its wealth, in 2018, the oil sector accounted for only 29% of the UAE’s total gross domestic product (Ministry of Economy, 2018). In 2019, the UAE was ranked fifth globally, up from seventh in 2018, in world competitiveness (IMD World Competitiveness Center, 2019a). The ranking is a measure of a country’s predicted capacity to overcome economic challenges associated with rapid advancements worldwide (IMD World Competitiveness Center, 2019b). Today, the UAE is a largely economically developed society that functions in a competitive knowledge-based economy with sophisticated connectivity, excellent infrastructure, and long-term national visions focused on fostering innovation and scientific discoveries (UAE Vision 2021, 2018).

Before the UAE

Prior to the federation of the UAE in 1971 (UAE Government Portal, 2020a), the UAE was known as the Trucial States (Onley & Khalaf 2006). The community

settlements in the area (Rugh, 2007) were populated by semi-nomadic Bedouins (Wang & Kassam 2016). The economy was substantially based on sea trade, fishing, pearling, boat-building, date harvesting, and animal husbandry (Morton, 2016; Rugh, 2007; Sarbu, 2014) although maritime activities were limited (Rugh, 2007).

Life for the seminomadic Bedouins was “short, brutal, and harsh” (Morton, 2016, p. 3). Daily activities were focused on survival; they had no access to fresh water, health care, or jobs beyond their subsistence activities (Drozd, 2018). In the book *Through the Eyes of a Child*, Al Fahim described his childhood:

Simple lives we lived. Food was scarce, and it was often difficult to get enough to feed families. . . . Fresh clean water was still unavailable. . . . We ate with our extended families, all from same plate. . . . Clothing was simple, men usually had a single Kandoura and women two, which they would wash and wear over and over. . . . We all walked barefoot. . . . Next to the shops, women sitting on the sand sold fish. . . . Camels had a clear advantage over the cars. (Drozd, 2018, pp. 242-245)

Because there was no formal education available (Rugh, 2007), the Bedouins were largely illiterate (Heard-Bey, 2005).

In comparison to those of Western Anglo backgrounds who are individualistic, prioritizing personal desires and referring to themselves as “I,” people of Middle Eastern heritage typically viewed themselves as part of a “we” group (Hofstede, 2001; Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010; House, Javidan, Hanges, Dorfman, & Dastmalchian, 2012; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1988) with value systems highly centered on family connectedness (Akyil et al., 2014) and interrelatedness, and strong preferences

for a tightly knit framework (Hofstede, 1980). This collectivist culture of interdependence and cohesiveness enabled the Bedouins to survive the harsh conditions of their daily lives (Heard-Bey, 2005). As Bedouins wandered the desert in search of water and food; three-generation households were of great value in finding a way not only to survive in the desert but to accumulate wealth (Heard-Bey, 2005). As a Bedouin society in the Middle East, it is not surprising that the UAE has been widely recognized for its collectivist culture (Hofstede, 1980).

The Formation of the UAE

In 1968, with the British announcement of its withdrawal from the Arabian Gulf, Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan, known as the father of the nation for his role in forming the UAE, stepped into action to call for a collective unity in the interest of the people (Morton, 2016). Together with Sheikh Rashid Bin Saeed, Sheikh Zayed called for a federation that would include not only the seven Emirates that together made up the Trucial States, but also Qatar and Bahrain. On December 2, 1971, after an agreement was reached between the rulers of six of the seven Trucial States (Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm Al-Quwain, Fujairah), the federation known as the UAE was formally established (UAE Government Portal, 2020a). The following year, the seventh Emirate, Ras Al Khaimah, joined the federation (UAE Government Portal, 2020a).

Rapid Change in the UAE

The transformation of tribal settlements into a knowledge-based federation with national visions of increased investments in science, technology, space, innovation (Ahmed & Alfaki, 2015), and high-quality education (Schilirò, 2013) took place over a period of approximately 50 years (Ahmed & Alfaki, 2015). In the early 1960s, Sheikh

Rashid Bin Saeed Al Maktoum began expanding the regional commercial port of Dubai (Rugh, 2007). However, the greatest transformation became evident after the establishment of the federation in 1971 through the direct deployment of oil wealth to boost the economic and social infrastructures of the UAE (O'Sullivan, 2008; Sarbu, 2014) in part through the direction of a focused national agenda (UAE Vision 2021, 2018). These conscious efforts, supported by financial means, enabled the UAE to bypass the lengthy process of economic development and advance rapidly (O'Sullivan, 2008).

Contribution of Oil

Oil was discovered first in Abu Dhabi's desert in 1958 and then later in Dubai in 1966 (Sarbu, 2014). However, the discovery of oil did not instantaneously change the lived experiences of the Emirati people (Sarbu, 2014). In the early years of oil deposit discoveries, the people of the Trucial States "still lived hand to mouth" (Drozd, 2018, p. 269). In his book, *From Rags to Riches*, Al Fahim (1995) described life in Abu Dhabi in the 1960s:

We lived in the 18th century while the rest of the world, even the rest of our neighbors, had advanced into the 20th. We had nothing to offer visitors, we had nothing to export, and we had no importance to the outside world whatsoever.

Poverty, illiteracy, poor health, a high rate of mortality all plagued us well into in the 1960s. (p. 88)

Despite the hardships of life in the Trucial States, as rumors about the oil started circulating among the tribes, the people did become hopeful that life would improve and in the year to come, it did (Al Fahim, 1995).

As the ruler of Abu Dhabi in 1966, then First President of the UAE from 1971 to 2004, Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan believed that oil revenues should be used for the greater benefits of the people and to build a modern nation (Heard-Bey, 2005). The Sheikh's priorities included forming schools and building hospitals, houses, and roads (Al Fahim, 1995; Rugh, 2007). Under his visionary leadership, semi-nomadic Bedouins started moving from tent life into modern homes with electricity and fresh water supply; they benefited from medical services and they started receiving formal education (Rugh, 2007).

Vision 2021

In 2010, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, launched the UAE Vision 2021 (2018). The Vision 2021 agenda included national indicators in eight sectors: “education, healthcare, economy, police and security, justice, society, housing, [and] infrastructure and government services” (UAE Vision 2021, 2018, National Agenda section, para. 2). One of the four essential visions of change called for all Emiratis to be united in prosperity so that each has the opportunity to obtain a first rate education, live long and healthy lives, appreciate well-rounded lifestyles, and live in a well-preserved natural environment (UAE Vision 2021, 2018). The second vision for change called for all Emiratis to be united in knowledge so that the full potential of human capital could be harness to drive a sustainable, diversified, knowledge-based, and productive economy (UAE Vision 2021, 2018). The third vision for change called for all Emiratis to be united in destiny so that the UAE could enhance its international standing, ensure a safe and secure nation, and uphold the legacy of those who founded the nation (UAE Vision 2021,

2018). The fourth vision for change called for all Emiratis to be united in responsibility to be confident and responsible members of society who promote strong and active communities and function as cohesive and prosperous members of families all in support of a vibrant culture that celebrates its Emirati heritage (UAE Vision 2021, 2018). By placing national priority on developing world-class healthcare, a competitive knowledge economy, a safe public and fair judiciary, a cohesive society with preserved identity, first-rate education, and a sustainable environment and infrastructure, the UAE paved a deliberate path to economic and social success (UAE Vision 2021, 2018).

Sociodemographic Change

In roughly two generations, rapid urbanization and the shift from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft* in the UAE has affected every aspect of Emirati culture and society and forced a rupture in the patterns of the local way of living (Bristol-Rhys, 2010). It is these differing sociodemographic conditions that create the intergenerational tensions apparent in the UAE today. Parents and grandparents still (a) are guided by tribalism and strong kinship ties (Wang & Kassam 2016), (b) share a homogeneous worldview limited to that of their extended families and tribes (Heard-Bey, 2005); and clearly remember the harsh environments in which they were reared (Bristol-Rhys, 2010; Crabtree, 2007; Schvaneveldt et al., 2005; Simadi, 2006). Supported by the government's efforts to empower women (Hasso, 2010; Moghadam, 2013), daughters are growing up under different sociodemographic conditions (Bristol-Rhys, 2010; Crabtree, 2007; Schvaneveldt et al., 2005; Simadi, 2006).

Empowerment

Recent policies, such as The National Strategy for Empowerment of Emirati Women (2015 – 2022), have called for the empowerment of Emirati women and the establishment of the UAE Gender Balance Council not only to place the UAE on the top 25 countries for gender equality by 2021 but to ensure that Emirati women continue to play a leading role in the development of the country (UAE Government Portal, 2020a) both through governance and participation in administrative roles (Baki, 2004; Mills, 2003; Moghadam, 2013). Indeed, women have become a growing influence in UAE's rapid transformation (El Saj & Saraff, 2014). The education of women has played a significant role in this process.

Education

Initiatives for educating girls began in the 1930s, including classes for girls at Al Islah School in Sharjah (Embassy of the United Arab Emirates [EUAE], 2020). However, before the 1950s, most girls and boys were taught through private classes sponsored by the wealthiest person in the neighborhood, and education was limited mostly to Arabic and religious studies (EUAE, 2020). The first school for girls was established in 1954 in Sharjah, Al Zahra (Alhebsi, Pettaway, & Waller, 2015). Others were built in Dubai in 1958 and in Ras Al Khaimah in 1959 (EUAE, 2020). Despite opportunities for learning, before the 1960s, most Emirati women were illiterate (Maestri, 2011). During the 1960s, schools for girls opened in Umm Al-Quwain (1963), Fujairah (1965), Abu Dhabi (1966), and Ajman (1967; EUAE, 2020). By 1975, 54% of men and 31% of Emirati women had become literate (EUAE, 2020). In 1976, the late Shiekh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan founded the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU, 2020).

Since the 1970s, women in the UAE have benefited from advancements in education, and enrollment in institutes of higher education and literacy rates have increased substantially (AbouZeid, 2010). In large part as the result of government initiatives, norms about women's enrollment in higher education are changing (Baki, 2004; Mills, 2003; Moghadam, 2013) so that women's participation in higher education is normative (Hasso, 2010). Currently, Emirati women make up 81% of the student body at UAEU (2020) and 70% of students in federal higher education institutions overall, in comparison to 11% in 1971 (EUAE, 2020). Additionally, almost 95% of women are literate, surpassing men by 3% in 2016 (EUAE, 2020).

Employment

Before the 60s, most women in the UAE were housewives (Maestri, 2011). However, in large part as the result of government initiatives, norms about women's participation in the labor market are changing (Baki, 2004; Mills, 2003; Moghadam, 2013) such that women's participation in the workforce is normative (Hasso, 2010). Emirati women now regularly participate in the workforce (Wang & Kassam, 2016), including the government sector (EUAE, 2020). Currently, women represent almost 66% percent of the government sector workforce, and 30% of the UAE Cabinet members (EUAE, 2020). Five of the nine cabinet positions held by women are the Ministries of Youth Affairs, Happiness, Federal National Council, General Education and Community Development, and Social Affairs (Allagui & Alnajjar, 2018).

Family Life

Undoubtedly, the pace of rapid transformation of the Emirati society has serious implications for the re-composition of the Emirati family and re-negotiation of cultural

values in intergenerational relations inside the family unit. While grandmothers who were raised and who raised children in the pre-oil period kept herds of goats and cows on large family compounds and managed household chores (e.g., child care, cleaning, cooking, collecting wood, making fresh butter), middle-aged women (i.e., mothers) who were children in the 1960s and 1970s moved into large homes with imported servants to take care of basic household needs and nannies to look after the children (Bristol-Rhys, 2010). Daughters were born into and raised in wealth; they are the current university students, fluent in foreign languages and obsessed with Western music and the latest fashion trends from Europe (Bristol-Rhys, 2010; Rugh, 2007).

Additionally, the construction of professional roles for women has moved women away from the private family sphere and into public life and the labor market; this shift has driven a simultaneous shift in their cultural values (Hasso, 2010; Moghadam, 2013; Samier, 2015). Consequently, young women have developed an increased desire for education and employment and, unlike their mothers and grandmothers, no longer perceive the family as an institution on which they need to depend (Olmsted, 2005).

As Emirati daughters have become more aware of their rights and status in the UAE society; a sense of emancipation has led them to pursue education and a professional career (Hasso, 2010). As a result, when compared to their mothers' and grandmothers' generations, young Emirati women are opting out of traditional marriage or getting married later in life (Bristol-Rhys, 2010; Hurriez, 2013; Wang & Kassam, 2016) and subsequently are having their first child when they are significantly older (Green & Smith, 2007). Additionally, although daughters are choosing to give birth in hospitals, use medication during birth, include the father in the birthing process, accept

social support following birth, and breastfeed for shorter lengths of time (Green & Smith, 2007), they also are having fewer children (Green & Smith, 2007; Wang & Kassam, 2016).

Changes in the Emirati family structure also are apparent (Bristol-Rhys, 2010; El-Haddad, 2003). Whereas in the past the family structure was based on the extended-family model of the three-generation household, Emirati families of today are more likely to be nuclear families that include only parents and children (El-Haddad, 2003). Nuclear families in the Arab Gulf are similar to those in Western nations; however, in the Arab regions, nuclear families still retain traditional kinship ties to the extended family, both at the relational and the ideological levels (El-Haddad, 2003). It is this juxtaposition of new family structures and values with traditional ones that generates the intergenerational tensions apparent in the social fabric of the UAE today (Schvaneveldt et al., 2005).

The Need to Better Understand Intergenerational Tensions

The prominence of Emirati women as partners in the development process of the UAE has become an influential driver of social change in the family system and intergenerational relations (El Saj & Saraff 2014; Samier, 2015). However, having built and advanced most of its social institutions in the last 30 years, the UAE is a young country still in the process of rapid transformation (Samier, 2015). As UAE Vision 2021 (2018) approaches its goal date, the UAE continues to look toward its future with plans not only to be the national leader in modern technologies and advanced sciences by 2031 (see National Advanced Sciences Agenda 2031, UAE Government Portal, 2020b) but also to be the world's leading nation and pioneers of world change by 2071 (see Area 2071, 2020).

Rapid social transformations of the Emirati society and the UAE's vision for future change have created great tension in the life of Emiratis, especially among members of the older generation who struggle to maintain traditions and Islamic values in a rapidly changing society (Wang & Kassam, 2016). Mothers too struggle to transition to modern life and adapt their traditional values to new social norms (Bristol-Rhys, 2010; Schvaneveldt et al., 2005). Daughters try to reconcile expectations of the older generation with their everyday experiences in the face of globalization and in a largely Westernized society characterized by empowerment and advanced technologies (Schvaneveldt et al., 2005; Wang & Kassam, 2016). The unique challenges of each generation collectively represent a social dilemma that urges deeper understanding of the transitional processes of the Emirati family within the sociocultural context of national developments (El-Haddad, 2003; Schvaneveldt et al., 2005; Wang & Kassam, 2016).

Specifically, Crabtree (2007) stressed the importance of in-depth examination of the complex ongoing recomposition of the Emirati family in terms of its relations and functions. Greenfield (2009) suggested that the focus should be placed on intergenerational value change and the associated tensions those changes evoke. This kind of tension can be explained in terms of changes in the composition of the family; its roles and relationships; changes in traditional gender roles, especially for women; persistence of traditional values among older generations; and changes in life histories and narratives of generations growing up in different sociodemographic environments (Crabtree, 2007; El-Haddad, 2003; Schvaneveldt et al., 2005; Simadi, 2006). Furthermore, Gandolfi (2015) notes that the transmission of cultural values, loss of cultural heritage, and convergence on Western values are critical windows through which one can discern

manifestations of sociocultural change, value differences, and generational tensions as societies choose to interact with modernity and utilize technological advancements. In the Emirates, this manifestation of rapid changes seems to be experienced through a sense of loss and a struggle as well as efforts to preserve the Bedouin traditional values (Abdul-Rauf, 2000).

Summary

Emirati society in general and the Emirati family in particular have been largely influenced by the dramatic sociodemographic changes in the country. The discovery of oil in combination with the current orientations of the UAE government to compete globally and industrialize the country has replaced patterns of early family life in the UAE. Previously characterized by extended households that lived and socialized closely together to survive the harsh desert conditions, families now struggle with weakened communal solidarity as interdependence and family support are no longer needed in the face of expanded employment opportunities and advanced education in the life of younger generation. Grandmothers and mothers must adapt to changing socioeconomic and cultural realities while daughters struggle to maintain connectedness and relatedness in theirs. Understanding the lived experiences of these generations could provide insight into how best to support Emirati families as the nation continues on its trajectory of rapid sociodemographic change.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The main objective of this study was to advance the understanding of intergenerational value change across generations of Emirati women. Qualitative methods were used to promote that understanding. Details of the study methods are described in this chapter. First, the study's research questions are revisited.

Research Questions

Four main research questions and four subquestions guided this study:

- 1) What intergenerational value changes are identified by three generations of Emirati women?
 - a. What specific changes in beliefs, attitudes, and experiences emerge regarding gender equity, gender roles, cross-sex relationships, marriage, professional life, and familial relations?
 - b. What changes have occurred in the socialization of young Emirati women during the first 2 decades of the 21st century?
- 2) What have been the main factors involved in inducing cultural value changes across three generations in modern UAE?
 - a. What contextual cultural factors have influenced intergenerational value changes?
 - b. How has the education and empowerment of women influenced intergenerational value changes?
- 3) To what extent do intergenerational value changes represent the younger generation's movement away from the interdependence and shared group

consciousness of a collectivist society (i.e., *Gemeinschaft*) and towards new forms of non-Western individualism and autonomy (i.e., *Gesellschaft*) characterized by familial connectedness and a sense of maintained sociocultural relatedness?

- 4) How do the women in intergenerational families negotiate differences in their cultural values?

Research Design

This study was qualitative in nature. In qualitative research, context is essential for understanding human behavior and attitudes; it takes place in real-world settings where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2002). Because qualitative methods facilitate the in-depth and detailed study of issues, they allow for rich understanding of a phenomenon using a small sample (Patton, 2002). Qualitative research was appropriate for this study because the purpose was to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon (i.e., intergenerational value changes) across a small group of participants (i.e., three generations of Emirati women, $N = 24$).

This study was designed following the ethnographic tradition. Traditional ethnography can generally be understood as research used to explore social and cultural practices of a particular group (Geertz, 1973) as a pathway for generating meaning (Miller, Hengst & Wang, 2003). Researchers conducting ethnographic studies focus on a culture's use of symbols, the way the people understand themselves and their surroundings, and their "ways of being" (Miller et al., 2003, p. 219). When conducting ethnographic research, it is critical that while researchers are focused on generating insight about the perspectives of the study participants, the researchers remain aware of their influence on the interpretation of data (Wolcott, 2008). An ethnographic approach to

data collection was suitable for this study because the focus was to explore changes in social and cultural practices among three generations of Emirati women to generate an understanding of intergenerational value change among this population.

Although this study clearly followed the ethnographic tradition, it more specifically can be described as a focused ethnography, which, as first introduced by Knoblauch (2005), is implemented to explore specific social phenomena as they occur in everyday life. Inherently rooted in ethnography as a way of understanding norms and values of a cultural group, focused ethnography facilitates the examination of a specific or narrow area of inquiry (White, 2009) through part-time immersion in the population of interest (Knoblauch, 2005). Researchers conducting focused ethnographies typically have an interest in answering specific research questions and revealing common elements of the culture such as values, beliefs, attitudes, and power dynamics (Knoblauch, 2005). Because focused ethnography is naturalistic, the researcher focuses on the participants' perceptions and is personally involved in the research; commonly, researchers enter the field with insider or background knowledge of the cultural group (Knoblauch, 2005). This study was well-described as a focused ethnography because I collected data during short-term field visits and answered specific research questions. Additionally, I was particularly interested in the values, beliefs, and attitudes of the Emirati participants as they related to intergenerational value change and entered into the research with insider knowledge of the cultural group and associated value systems.

Setting

The setting for this study was the UAE, a federation of seven emirates covering 71,023 square kilometers of land (UAE Government Portal, 2020a). The country is

populated by approximately nine million people of diverse cultures (Worldometer, 2020), including the local Emiratis who make up about 11% of the total population (Worldometer, 2020). Through (a) contact with foreign laborers; (b) exposure to social media; (c) ample opportunities travel abroad; and (d) comprehensive access to higher education, government initiatives, and empowerment programs, the Northern Emirates and three major metropolitan areas, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Sharjah, have experienced rapid urban growth (Peterson, 2009; Rugh, 2007). The UAE in general has become an example of rapid and successful development in the Middle East in terms of infrastructure, economy, and the progress of women (UAE Ministry of State for Federal National Council Affairs, 2008). The culturally diverse population of the UAE combined with its fast-paced socioeconomic development and advancement of women has produced a dynamic society (El Saj & Saraff, 2014; Samier, 2015) in which women of successive generations find themselves trying to reconcile divergences in their personal value systems (Green & Smith, 2006; Schvaneveldt et al., 2005; Wange & Kassam, 2016). Therefore, this setting was ideal for exploring intergenerational value changes among women.

Participants

This section begins with a description of the demographic characteristics of the women who participated in this study. This description is followed by an explanation of the study's inclusion criteria. Processes for recruiting participants and the sampling strategy also are explained.

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Participants in this study ($N = 24$) were members of eight family triads of grandmothers ($n = 8$), mothers ($n = 8$), and daughters ($n = 8$) who represented eight different Emirati tribes from four cities in the Emirati. To maintain participant confidentiality, the cities in which the participants lived are not identified here.

The participants' ages, and educational and occupational backgrounds varied. Grandmothers were born between 1942 and 1957; their ages ranged from 63 to 78. Mothers were born between 1957 and 1973; their ages ranged from 46 to 63. Daughters were born between 1989 and 2002; their ages ranged from 20 to 30. Of the grandmothers, only two were literate. All of the mothers were literate with at least some level of formal education; three of the mothers had bachelor's degrees. Because the daughters were recruited based on their status as either a postsecondary student or graduate, all of the daughters either were enrolled in or an alumna of a postsecondary institution. The demographic characteristics of participants by family triad are presented in Table 1.

Inclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria varied for each generation in the family triad. Some criteria applied only to daughters, only to mothers, or only to grandmothers. The criteria were

1. Daughters were students or alumnae of the United Arab Emirates University.
2. Daughters were born between 1985 and early 2000 (i.e., third generation).
3. Daughters had both living mothers and grandmothers willing to participate.
4. Mothers were born between late 1950 and 1975 (i.e., second generation).
5. Grandmothers were born between 1935 and late 1950 (i.e., first generation).
6. Participants were citizens of the UAE.

Table 1*Demographic Characteristics of Participants by Family Triad*

Family	Generation	Age	Level of education	Occupation/college major
A	Grandmother	63	Illiterate	Housewife
	Mother	51	Grade 6	Housewife
	Daughter	30	Master's degree	Engineer
B	Grandmother	78	Illiterate	Housewife
	Mother	63	Grade 6	Housewife
	Daughter	24	Undergraduate student	Childhood education
C	Grandmother	72	Illiterate	Housewife
	Mother	50	Bachelor's degree	Retired teacher
	Daughter	22	Undergraduate student	Political science
D	Grandmother	67	Illiterate	Housewife
	Mother	49	Adult education ^a	Housewife
	Daughter	24	Bachelor's degree	Political science
E	Grandmother	73	Illiterate	Housewife
	Mother	49	Adult education	Housewife
	Daughter	26	Bachelor's degree	Economics
F	Grandmother	64	Basic education ^b	Housewife
	Mother	51	Bachelor's degree	Retired school principle
	Daughter	27	Master's degree	Diplomat
G	Grandmother	65	Basic education	Housewife
	Mother	48	Bachelor's degree	School teacher
	Daughter	21	Undergraduate student	Medicine
H	Grandmother	73	Illiterate	Housewife
	Mother	46	Diploma ^c	Housewife
	Daughter	20	Undergraduate student	Finance

^aExtra-occupational studies for adults in place of general or technical education.

^bEducation (e.g., Islamic teachings, reading, writing) provided to girls in neighborhood learning circles.

^cThree years of college, between an associate's degree and a bachelor's degree.

Because of the unique nature of the participants in this study as family triads, all of the participants in each family triad had to meet the inclusion criteria in order for any of the women to participate. The particular birth year ranges chosen for this study were intended to coincide with three distinct historical periods. The characteristics of those periods are discussed in a subsequent section.

Participant gender. The focus of this study was intergenerational value change among Emirati women. Because women are considered the keepers of culture and the primary vessels for transmitting values to the next generation (Moghadam, 2013; Olmsted, 2005), the study of Emirati women was a natural choice for this study. In order to collect accurate data about the perceptions of women regarding intergenerational value change, it was necessary to collect data directly from women. Collecting data from men would have been illogical given that men would only be able to provide their perceptions of women's perceptions and thus function as secondary sources. Therefore, only women were invited to participate in this study.

Generations. To make comparisons between generations of women, it was necessary to include women from various historical periods. Each of the three generations chosen for this study represented a different historical period. Simultaneously, each group represented political, economic, and educational differences between traditional and modern Emirati societies.

The first generation, the grandmothers, represented the nomadic/traditional generation born between 1935 and the late 1950s, where traditional beliefs and practices guided the population's mindset and where modernity was not necessarily highly welcomed with respect to new female behaviors. Women in this group grew up in a harsh

desert environment and were socialized with traditional Bedouins beliefs and familial roles, including taking care of kids, cleaning, cooking, collecting wood, and making fresh butter for the family. This generation provided insight into intergenerational value change associated with sociodemographic changes in the UAE since the time of British colonialism.

The second generation, the mothers, represented the generation born between the late 1950s and 1975, a period marked by the withdrawal of Great Britain in 1968 followed by the formation of the UAE as an independent country in 1971. During this time, formal education for females was introduced and oil was discovered in Abu Dhabi. Women in this generation spent their childhood and teenage years growing up in traditional households experiencing tribal traditions; they were largely socialized by the traditional values of their mothers. However, this generation also grew into adulthood in modern UAE. These middle-aged women started families during the years that experienced rapid socioeconomic growth in the UAE; they were the first to move into big houses and employ imported maids and drivers to take care of basic household needs and look after children. Now, as mothers of university-educated students and teenagers who attend public and private schools, they must manage the forces of change and the daily stresses those force inflict upon their relationships with their children. As such, this generation provided insight into intergenerational value change associated with the modern adaptation of traditional norms.

The third generation, the daughters, represented the generation born between 1985 and the early 2000s. It was during this time that the socioeconomic impact of the discovery of oil became apparent. This period is characterized by an economic surge,

broad introduction of higher education, women's participation in the workforce, foreign influx, and technological advancements. Women in this generation were born into wealth and are regarded as a modern generation with fluency in foreign languages, such as English, and an obsession with the social media and the latest fashion trends worldwide. They are seen by the UAE government as the pioneers of social change and leaders of new professions in different industries across the country. As such, they are expected to hold different voices and mindsets from the previous two generations given their unique upbringings in a rapidly changing environment. Unlike their parents and grandparents, this younger generation of Emirati women has grown up with a narrative of empowerment. If not married, most of these daughters live with their parents or with extended family. This generation provided insight into modern generational beliefs and attitudes as well as the generational tensions between daughters, mothers, and grandmothers in every aspect of the society.

Recruitment

Grandmothers and mothers in this study were recruited via the daughters. Each daughter contacted her respective mother and grandmother to explain to them the details of the study and invite them, along with her, to participate in the study. I recruited the daughters through the United Arab Emirates University.

The first four daughters, the undergraduates, were recruited in person. Upon approval from the Institutional Review Boards (IRB) of the University of San Diego and United Arab Emirates University (see Appendix B), I contacted the Department of Sociology to seek permission to advertise for my study in several sections of Emirates Studies, a core general education course for all students at the university. After gaining

access to five sections of the Emirates Studies courses, I made arrangements with the instructors to speak to the students. During my presentation, I introduced myself, explained the purpose of the study, and talked about the voluntary nature of participation, the confidentiality of the interviews and collected data, the length of each interview and observation visit, and how the data were going to be kept and used. I also provided the students with my phone number and email address so they could contact me if they were willing to participate in the study. Following the presentation, daughters emailed, called, and texted me to express interest in participating in the study on behalf of themselves and their mothers and grandmothers. At that time, I scheduled dates and times for the interviews. Observations were scheduled at the time of the interviews.

The second four daughters, the alumnae, were recruited via text message. To gain access to the alumnae, I used my network of colleagues on the university campus and asked for referrals. I received 12 referrals and contacted each of them directly via text message. Two of the 12 alumnae I contacted responded to my initial texts. Both met the inclusion criteria. I recruited the other two alumnae through my personal network. After the four alumnae were identified, I met with each to fully explain the purpose of the study and talk about the voluntary nature of participation, the confidentiality of the interviews and collected data, the length of each interview and observation visit, and how the data were going to be kept and used. The meeting also served as a way to establish a personal relationship with participants. During the meetings, the participants agreed to dates and times for the interviews. Observations were scheduled at the time of the interviews.

At the time I recruited the student participants, I emailed the consent form to three of the daughters who returned the signed consent forms to me via email. The other one

daughter requested to sign the consent form in person at the time of their interview. All four of the alumnae daughters signed their consent forms at the time I met with them to explain the details of the study. Prior to conducting interviews with the mothers and grandmothers, I read the consent forms to them. Two of the mothers signed the consent forms, and six gave consent orally. All eight of the grandmothers gave consent orally.

Sampling Strategy

Purposeful sampling (see Glesne, 2006; Patton, 2002) was used to generate the sample for this study. First, I purposefully recruited family triads of grandmothers, mothers, and daughters who met the predetermined criterion for participation in this study. Second, I employed maximum variation sampling (see Patton, 2002) by purposely recruiting participants from different parts of the country (e.g., Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Northern Emirates).

Data Collection

Data in this study were collected using semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and fieldwork notes. The data were collected from March 2019 to September 2019. Each of the eight participating families allowed me access to them for data collection purposes between three and five times. The processes associated with these field visits and data collection are discussed in this section. A detailed description of the interview protocol is provided in the next section.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Interviews with family triads took place in various locations. For the convenience of the participants given their age, health, and level of comfort being in their usual environments (Glesne, 2006), interviews with the grandmothers and mothers were

conducted in their primary places of residence. Because of the collectivist nature of Emirati society, women of the grandmothers' generation are not used to individualism in conception or practice. To be culturally appropriate and respectful, participating daughters facilitated access to their grandmothers and were always present while the grandmothers were being interviewed. Interviews with the grandmothers were conducted over *Fuwala host*, food that is offered to guests usually consisting of Arabic coffee, *Halwa* (a type of local sweet), and fruit. During the interviews, the daughters functioned solely as companions for their grandmothers; there was no interruption to the interview process.

Interviews with the daughters took place in locations of their choosing. Some interviews took place in their private rooms and others took place outside of their homes; one interview, for example, was conducted in an open trailer park environment in a central area of the city. Locations outside of the home provided additional privacy for the participants to express their voices without concern of being overheard by their families.

Interviews with grandmothers were conducted in the Emirati dialect using Arabic vernacular. Some mothers used random English words such as *weekend*, *modern*, and *college*. Daughters used Arabic and English simultaneously.

Interviews lasted between 45 minutes and 4 hours. Given their age and health, the shortest interviews occurred with grandmothers. The longest interviews occurred with mothers. With permission of the participants, all interview responses were recorded using an iPad and a free voice capture software application called Voice Recorder.

To debrief the participants, check the accuracy of the collected data, conduct member checking (Glesne, 2006), and offer the participants an opportunity to share

additional insight, all grandmothers, mothers, and daughters were invited to participate in a follow-up interview. For the convenience of study participants, the follow-up interviews were conducted over the phone or during fieldwork visits. No follow-up interview lasted more than 20 minutes.

Observations

During visits with participant families, time not spent interviewing grandmothers, mothers, and daughters was spent engaging in family activities. For example, during Ramadan, I participated in an Iftar gathering—an evening meal with which Muslims end their daily fast at sunset. I also was invited to a family wedding and to visit a family farm. Participation in family gatherings such as this allowed me to observe relationships among family members and the discussion of issues from various generational perspectives. Observations were used as a means of confirming data collected during the interviews and allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of changing norms and values inside the Emirati family.

Focused ethnographies are typically conducted during short-term field visits (Knobaugh, 2005), and there is no one agreed upon amount of time researchers should spend observing in the field (Roper & Shapira, 2000). To promote the organic collection of data in this study, I allowed the time I spent observing in the field to be dictated by the natural chronology of the events in which I participated. Typically, the events in which I participated and observed lasted between 2 hours and 7 hours. The relatively short duration of field observations conducted in focused ethnographies—compared to observations conducted during full immersion with populations during typical ethnographic studies— can be counterbalanced through intense data collection during in-

depth, semi-structured, audio-recorded interviews (Knoblauch, 2005). As such, the data collected in this study using observations complemented the data collected using semi-structured, audio-recorded interviews.

Field Notes

The taking of notes in the field is an integral part of ethnographic study (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). In this study, I recorded field notes during interviews and while observing participants in family settings. During interviews, I took rough notes on my iPad to document of the duration of the interview, the presence of other members of the family during the interview, and participant behaviors. During observations in family settings, I documented what was happening and reflected on what I was seeing and hearing to capture my impressions and acknowledge prejudices.

Additionally, immediately after each interview and observation, I sat in my car and began recording my initial feelings, reactions, questions, and thoughts on emerging themes. After all of the interviews and observations were complete, I summarized all of the individual field notes in one comprehensive record to which I referred during the coding and analysis of the transcribed interview data.

Data Collection Instrument

Data in this study were collected using semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and fieldwork notes. No predesigned instruments were used to conduct the observations or to record notes in the field. Therefore, this section includes only a description of the protocol used to facilitate the collection of data during interviews. The interview protocol was developed specifically for this study.

Although an unstructured interview would have allowed for the collection of

more varied data that potentially could have provided a deeper understanding of sociodemographic and value changes among the study participants, to promote consistency in the collection of data across the three generations of participants, semi-structured interviews were used instead (see Appendix A). The interviews were conducted in two phases. The first phase involved the use of semi-structured interview prompts, and the second phase involved the use of vignettes.

Semi-Structured Interview Prompts

The 41 semi-structured interview prompts were designed using a broad funneling approach and grouped into eight domains. The six prompts in Domain 1, six prompts in Domain 2, and three prompts in Domain 3, “about you and your family,” “earlier life,” and “schooling and college education,” respectively, were designed to inspire participants to provide an overview of their family life and upbringing in the UAE. The six prompts in Domain 4, “your description of good enough,” were focused on the social changes the participants and their families experienced across generations. The prompts were intended to encourage participants to share their subjective experiences and observations of societal changes in the country and their influences on the family value system and the emerging roles and responsibilities of Emirati men and women. The four items in Domain 5, “relatedness and interconnectedness;” four items in Domain 6, “technology;” one item in Domain 7, “familial expectations;” and for items in Domain 8, “UAE vision and the flourishing status of Emirati women” were focused on eliciting information about changes in family structure and functions given the new non-traditional roles of females, national policies, access to and use of technology, and the opposing forces of traditions and modernity.

Vignettes

The seven vignettes used in the second phase of the interview were dilemma tasks designed to uncover changes in participants' values across generations in conjunction with the evident shift from a collectivist and *Gemeinschaft* society to one better described as an independent and more *Gesellschaft* one. To make this shift apparent, in each vignette, one character articulated *Gemeinschaft*-adapted values arguing for the importance of gender hierarchy, ascribed gender roles, family obligation, restricted social interaction, parental authority, and family unity and the other character articulated *Gesellschaft*-adapted values arguing for the importance of gender equality, equivalent and chosen gender roles, individual choice, unrestricted social interaction, independence, and individual achievement. Participants are asked which character in the story they agree with more and why.

The vignettes used in this study were based on vignettes developed by Manago (2014) during her study of generational differences in the Maya community in Mexico. The vignettes were revised to depict culturally sensitive social issues regarding gender roles and relations, specifically customs associated with respectful public behavior, parenting roles, socializing between genders, arranged marriages, studying abroad, women in professional roles, and social behaviors of young women. Pilot interviews were conducted with four Emirati families representing three generations of Emirati women to test the vignettes and determine if they produced realistic points of tension and evoked a range of responses.

Data Analysis

Data in this study were analyzed thematically following general steps for conducting thematic analysis in qualitative research (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Percy, Kostere, & Kostere, 2015). A hybrid deductive-inductive approach to coding (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Percy et al., 2015) was used following methods suggested by Saldaña (2016). The details of this analysis process are discussed in this section. First, an explanation of how the raw data were transcribed and translated is provided.

Transcription and Translation

After each interview, I transcribed the recordings in Arabic using the vernacular spoken by the participants (rather than the formal written style, which is quite dissimilar). I saved the transcripts in Microsoft Word documents. For consistency, I also translated any English spoken by the mothers and daughters into Arabic using the common vernacular. During data analysis, I wrote codes in both Arabic and English. When entering the codes and associated participant quotes from the transcripts into an Excel spreadsheet for record keeping purposes and ease of further analysis, I translated the Arabic transcript quotes into English so that I had a record of the codes and participants quotes in both Arabic and English. To confirm the accuracy of my translations, I employed the services of a translator who is fluent in English and Arabic and aware of the cultural contexts of the UAE, an awareness necessary to fully understand the nuances of the language and underlying contextual meanings intended by the participants. After discussing minor discrepancies with the translator, I made three minor adjustments to my translations based on the translator's feedback.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis “ involves the searching across a data set—be that a number of interviews or focus groups, or a range of texts—to find repeated patterns of meaning” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 86) and is appropriate for data analysis in focused ethnographic research (Gerritse et al., 2018). The general steps involved in conducting thematic analysis are (a) review of and familiarization with the data; (b) identification of initial codes; (c) generation of categories, patterns, and themes; (d) arrangement of patterns and themes into a typology; and (e) synthesis of the themes and presentation of a final report (see Braun & Clarke, 2006; Harding, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Percy et al., 2015). The process of thematic analysis is recursive rather than linear (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and involves a constant back and forth examination of the data across sources (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Percy et al., 2015). In this study, I followed the general guidelines for thematic analysis of qualitative data, constantly comparing the data across participants.

Coding. A hybrid deductive-inductive approach (see Braun & Clarke, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Percy et al., 2015) was employed to code the data. When analyzing data inductively, researchers allow the categories, schemes, and/or themes emerge from the data (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Percy et al., 2015). When analyzing data deductively, researchers generate categories and/or themes a priori based the study’s instrument (i.e., interview questions; Glesne, 2006), research questions, and theoretical foundations (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Percy et al., 2015). The development of schemes such as these prior to collecting data can be especially useful to

researchers conducting studies on cultures and societies (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Preestablished lists of coding schemes, including up to 80 categories, have been developed for studying cultures and societies (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). However, in this study, I generated 32 of my own codes and categories based on my study's unique interview questions, research questions, and aspects of the conceptual framework, specifically attributes of sociodemographic and cultural value changes. This process allowed me to purposely connect my analysis with the concepts of interest in my study by facilitating a clear path for responding to the study's research questions and drawing conclusions from the data as the culminating activities in this study.

I coded the study data manually using Microsoft Word as qualitative data analysis software offered little assistance with the main analytical work. Throughout the coding process, I referred to the comprehensive record of field notes I had previously generated. To code the study data, I used a variety of coding methods.

In each transcript, I color coded the data line by line using an Apple Pencil to highlight important quotes and write codes in the margins using both the predetermined deductive codes and the inductive codes that emerged organically while examining the data. This method of coding represented the process of structural coding described by Saldaña (2016) whereby researchers label lines with terms related to their research questions and interview guides as a means of gaining a general understanding of the data. Simultaneously, I used In Vivo coding to capture authentic language and descriptive coding to convey particularities of the participants (see Saldaña, 2016). After labeling the data with initial codes, I began identifying categories based on patterns of codes I observed in the initial analysis.

Next, I exported the coded and categorized data into three Excel spreadsheets, one for each generation, and displayed them in charts. This typography allowed me to simplify the data for further analysis. Harding (2013) referred to this typographical process of summarizing and comparing data in a spread sheet as *code charting*. Others (e.g., Braun & Clarke, 2006; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) have referred to this process as *mapping*. On each spreadsheet, the codes and pattern labels served as column headings, and participants' identifiers served as row headings so that responses to every code were summarized in matrix form. I then generated a fourth spreadsheet to compare the generations.

Member checking. Once bigger themes began to emerge and before proceeding to the interpretative phase of analysis, I conducted member checking to ensure my initial interpretations accurately reflected participants' experiences. Member checking was accomplished during follow-up interviews with participants in their homes. The follow-up interviews lasted approximately 15-20 minutes. During the follow-up interviews with the grandmothers and mothers, I read my findings to them. Daughters reviewed the findings on their own. I also relied on peer debriefing during social gatherings and online posts on social media to challenge my subjectivity and potential biases that possibly could have shaped the data or findings.

Role of the Researcher

An outsider can never be as full of a member of a society as someone who has grown up in it (Peil, 1982). As a woman who has spent most of her life in the UAE—living between my grandmother's circle of friends and my family—I have witnessed intergenerational tension first hand, observed this social dynamic in private residences in

which I have frequented, and listened to numerous women share similar personal narratives in this regard. By participating in my grandmother's open *Majlis*—a social gathering where people of all generations discuss familial and community issues—I became more aware of the cultural milieus in which families live and the familial milieus in which women live. Additionally, I speak the local dialect of the Emirates and can fully communicate with the grandmothers' generation given my close relationship with my grandmother and her friends. These combined experiences afforded me the unique opportunity to be closer to the research informants, more familiar with the issues raised, sensitive toward the feelings and judgements of multiple generations of Emirati women, and, subsequently, my capacity to negotiate issues and manage relationship tensions raised by the diversity of the study sample in terms of their age, knowledge, and life experiences and perspectives. As such, I was an ideal candidate for conducting this study and was able to connect with the participants and data on a deeply personal level.

Although I was especially qualified to conduct this study, my life experiences and connectedness with the culture of the UAE made me susceptible to researcher bias. To avoid bias in the development of the study's data collection instrument, and the collection and analysis of data, I actively engaged in reflexive thinking while developing and implementing this study. Fonow and Cook (1991) suggested that adopting reflexivity is important because it allows the researcher to reflect upon, examine critically, and to critique him/herself not only as an object of the inquiry but also in relation to the way the researcher analyzes the data. Indeed, demographics, educational attainment mismatches, and power relationships between the interviewer and the informants, cannot be neglected

in qualitative research as they influence the quantity and depth of the data shared with the researcher (Karnieli-Miller, Strier, & Pessach, 2009).

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

Data collected in this study showed that value change was evident across three generations of Emirati women who participated in this study. Additionally, factors that prompted and prohibited value change emerged. These concepts, expressed as themes, are presented in this chapter. When applicable, subthemes are introduced and supporting quotes are provided.

Theme 1: Cultural Value Change is Evident Across Generations

Changes in cultural values were evident across the grandmother, mother, and daughters' generations. The value changes that emerged from the data fell into four main categories: gender equity, gender roles, family connectedness, and family relatedness. Gender equity refers to equal social status between the genders and is indicative of perceived value and the empowerment of women. Gender roles refers to expectations of behaviors for women. Family connectedness demonstrates a desire to maintain a sense of community and connectedness with family. Finally, family relatedness demonstrates a need for maintaining relatedness to cultural traditions.

Gender Equity

Traditionally, Bedouins “had a unique life in the desert. . . . [The] social structure was based on a hierarchical tribal division more than gender division” (Grandmother A). However, despite women’s economic value in their tribes, women still were not perceived to be as valuable as men. The birth of a boy brought so much more face whiteness [pride] and happiness than a girl’s” (Grandmother A). Grandmother B shared that “when Mohammed [her son] was born, my husband shot three rifle ammo packs. . . .

Back then, when someone gets a baby boy, it is as if we are in a war. Oh my! Oh my!”

Grandmothers A and G both suggested that one reason they celebrated the birth of boys more than the birth of girls is because boys were easier to raise and the risk of harm to the family honor was much less than with girls. Mother C also mentioned the risk of misconduct associated with raising a girl.

With the movement from *Gemeinschaft* Bedouin settlements to a *Gesellschaft* society prompted by oil wealth, grandmothers gradually lost their active economic roles and began to take on strictly domestic roles maintaining households. When this shift occurred, women lost their earlier status in what had become a social structure of gender hierarchies. Within this new gender hierarchy and physical separateness between men and women, women were deemed to be of a lower social class and thus expected not only to separate themselves from men but to demonstrate this separateness and new status by walking behind men. In addition, as Daughter A explained, “There is unspoken tradition or learnt assumption I was socialized with where males and females in our culture should keep a distance when interacting with each other: appropriate behavior.” She then gave an example of her experiences in the workplace: “As the only female engineer in the team, . . . I am always walking behind the men to create a personal distance between myself and them.”

Outside of the workplace, the tradition of women walking behind men is less common. Both mothers and daughters clearly stated their perceptions in this regard:

They [i.e., husband and wife] are partners. . . . A woman should not create a distance between herself and her husband by walking behind him. . . . Time changed. . . . Girls are as equally celebrated as boys nowadays. (Mother D)

Men and women should walk side by side. . . . We are treated equally by the government, and we are partners in nation building. . . . I am aware . . . this is not a sign of disrespect but a definition of who I am as an Emirati woman in our present society. (Daughter C)

However, mothers did indicate that they may change their behavior depending on the circumstances. For example, Mother F said, “My husband walks too fast. . . . I sometimes ask him to walk ahead of me because I get busy with the kids or I want to walk slowly and not rush myself.” Mother D indicated that she typically walks beside her husband; however, “if my husband runs into one of his friends, I walk away till they finish their short conversation.”

Like the shift in gender equity regarding women walking behind men, perceptions of the perceived value of one gender child over the other appeared to be in transition. While Grandmother B said that “now there is no difference between having a boy or a girl,” Daughter C expressed that it is necessary to continue “to advance ourselves as women, and be equals with our partners.”

Daughters also stressed the importance of having men support their efforts to empower themselves. Daughter G claimed that “young men are getting more educated around this matter than the previous generations.” However, Daughter F said,

We are still a long way from being a gender egalitarian society. We need to empower men to catch up with these changes. . . . The shifting nature of women’s role in the UAE that comes alongside women’s empowerment, access to higher education, and integration into the job market is what is pushing value change in our generation away from traditional tribal consciousness to a self-expressive one.

In conjunction with these statements about gender equality, all of the daughters referenced opportunities to empower themselves offered by the UAE government. For example, Daughter H said, “The leadership’s vision of the UAE is pushing these traditional roles to modernize as they call for gender equality and opportunities for all.” Daughter G emphasized the importance of women being conscious about their roles in the society and at home.

Gender Roles

Shifts in gender roles were evident in four domains: domestic responsibilities, marriage, dress, and women outside the home. The discussion of the domain women outside the home is broken down according to the purposes for which women leave the house: social visits, education, and employment. Because women cannot avoid encounters with men when out in public, the discussion of women outside the home inherently includes a discussion of cross-sex relations.

Domestic responsibilities. During the time in which grandmothers were born and raised, women were responsible for all aspects of “day to day subsistence activity” (Grandmother H). Another grandmother noted:

The women did everything. They built their houses, took care of the livestock, they cooked the meals [from whatever they owned], and had their meals at their houses. In the morning, the women took care of their livestock. They took care of everything. (Grandmother C)

Because “women were treated as adults as young as 9 years old” (Grandmother, E), “back in the day, girls worked very hard when their fathers and brothers were not around (Grandmother C). They became responsible for everything “right after marriage”

(Grandmother E). Because the girls married young, the women of the grandmothers' generation typically had 13-15 children, which increased their workload tremendously.

Grandmother A perceived a sense of equality between men and women during this time. She said, "Women back then used to be like men in terms of their responsibility, especially the eldest daughters; they used to take care of the whole household. Women back then were leaders." Grandmother A gave another example of women's capacity for leadership when she spoke of her sister who "used to lead a . . . women's [camel] caravan from Abu Dhabi to Al Ain and vice versa in the summer."

As noted previously, "time changed" (Grandmother A), and a shift in responsibilities occurred following the discovery of oil whereas grandmothers lost their active roles in their tribes: "men now are the breadwinners, and we are mainly home" (Grandmother A). All of the mothers in one way or another indicated they were socialized to understand that their place was in the home: "we as women are expected to take care of our kids, teach them, and follow up with their teachers on their performance" (Mother D). Grandmother H appeared to be the exception in this regard. She said, "I always ask my in-laws to look after their kids and discipline them as they learn better from their fathers."

In the post-oil UAE, homes include drivers, cooks, maids, and nannies, all of whom required oversight. During interviews, I witnessed housemaids approaching mothers to ask if the mothers needed anything or for permission to go outside to go grocery shopping. During my interview with Mother B, she called out to her Filipino maid in broken English to take the milk off the stove: "Maria. Milk . . . oven off." However, management of the staff was not limited to mothers. During my interview with

Daughter E, she asked the maid to make tea for us and clean the coffee table. I observed the same pattern when interviewing Daughters A, B, C, F, and H. So although women have been “limited . . . to household managements” (Grandmother H), I clearly observed women functioning as the decision-makers in their homes. Mother C expressed a similar perspective on the encompassing nature of her domestic role: “My husband works in Abu Dhabi and he only comes home for the weekends, so I do everything from A to Z.”

Grandmother B did not appear to approve of mothers’ managerial roles with respect to domestic responsibilities, criticizing the behaviors of mothers and suggested that mothers no longer interact with their husbands and children. About mothers’ lack of interaction with their husbands, she said, “I doubt women appear to their husbands [any more]. They keep asking the maids to bring this and that and present this to the man.” About mothers’ lack of interaction with their children, she said, “It frustrates me when I see the kids spending most of their times with nannies, and their mother are . . . playing with their phones.”

Unlike Grandmother B who expressed a preference for women to take more direct responsibility for caring for their families and domestic responsibilities, Daughter E was of the opposite mindset and indicated a shift in values. Regarding domestic responsibilities, she said,

Fifty years ago, it was only women [managing the house and children], but my generation is acting on life differently. I have witnessed a lot of changes in the present time where men and women are considered partners in family life and at work. . . . My grandmother and my mother accepted this reality [women managing domestic responsibilities] but never for us. . . . Now is the time for

more egalitarian gender roles.

Daughter G agreed that younger men are becoming more open minded with regard to women's roles in society and at home.

Marriage. As is characteristic of kinship marriage, which is typical in the UAE, all of the grandmothers and mothers in this study married their cousins. All of the grandmothers married early in life, between the ages of 11 and 15. Grandmother H, who was married when she was 13 years old, explained that “back in the day, girls married young as soon as they hit puberty. . . That was the norm back in the days.”

Marriages were typically arranged by the patriarchal authority, and neither the girls nor their mothers were consulted prior to arrangements being made. Grandmother H had such an experience: “My father married me off fast and did not ask for my opinion.” Mothers had this experience too. For example, Mother A said, “I got married when I was 14 years old . . . as soon as I finished Grade 6,” and Mother B said, “No one asked for my opinion.” Four other mothers were married as soon as they finished Grade 6, between the ages of 14 and 16. Only three mothers got married when they were studying at college, around the ages of 19 or 20. Mother F got married after she finished her “first year at university.”

Despite a long history of kinship marriage at young ages, “these practices [i.e., forced and arranged marriages] are becoming a memory of the past, and today's girls have a louder voice more than ever before” (Grandmother B). Now, in response to marriage offers, “girls call whoever ask for their hands and tell them directly we are not interested” (Mother B).

Some grandmothers showed their support of the changing values regarding

marriage. Grandmother H recognized that early marriage for girls robs them of their childhood. In that regard, she said, “They did not let me grow!” Grandmother H also indicated that the “high incidence of divorce in our surroundings is pushing this tradition away.” She went on to say that her “granddaughters are university educated, working women, and they deserve a choice.” Daughter H recognized this shift in her grandmother’s attitude toward traditional marriage. She said, “And so now more than ever, I am experiencing a change . . . [in] my grandmother’s [attitude toward marriage. She] . . . is pushing this practice to change by encouraging a choice rather than a force.” Like Grandmother H, Grandmother A expressed a particularly strong concern about arranged marriages and the potential for divorce: “I am so against marrying our offsprings by force. This often results in divorce after the honeymoon . . . it’s becoming a pattern now.”

Like grandmothers, mothers demonstrated a shift in values around marriage. Mothers specifically expressed that the traditional marriage model is no longer a healthy one for their children because it often results in divorce and subsequent family instability. Mother E spoke deeply about this issue and gave an example of how her first daughter’s divorce 8 years ago was a learning experience that shifted her values on marriage:

I mean, this practice is no longer healthy. We are losing our connection with the larger family because of divorce. . . . This is a nightmare in my current life. . . . I am living this sad reality with my daughter. . . . Her husband was my nephew, the son of my favorite brother. When they got divorced, I could not say a word because I did not want to hurt my brother’s feelings. . . . This was a good learning experience.

Mothers are not only experiencing personal revelations about traditional gender roles in marriage but also are acting on their new values. A comment made by Mother C exemplifies this practice:

My generation accepted this practice [forced marriages to cousins] because we had no choice. . . . My husband still holds a traditional mindset, but I will not let his traditional mindset determine the future life of my kids. I once stood up for my daughter.

Daughter H confirmed the movement away from traditional marriage values among mothers when she said she recognized “a change . . . in my mother’s attitude” toward marriage.

All the daughters in this study, seven of whom were not married, were college-educated working women who demonstrated an egalitarian attitude toward marriage. First, the daughters expressed a strong nontraditional preference for achieving higher education and economic independence before getting married, a scenario that inevitably delays marriage. Daughter A explained, “I am getting married at 30 years old today because I wanted to realize my personal ambitions. Now, I work as an engineer. I have a master’s degree, and I own a business.”

Daughters also reported nontraditional attitudes toward selecting their future husbands and low tolerance for family role in arranging their marriage. Daughter C said, “What was accepted by my mother and grandmother no longer define the narrative of how I want to marry today. I am marrying a man of my choice in a few months.” In the context of gender roles and marriage, Daughter F spoke more globally. She said,

The role of Emirati women today is totally different than what it was in the past

two generations. Today, we are conscious about our rights. . . . We are empowered with higher education and greater access to the job market. Other daughters expressed similar mindsets with regard to marriage and women's empowerment.

Dress. That gender roles in the UAE have shifted was most easily detected through observation of the differences in women's dress. Over their faces, grandmothers wore traditional Burqa'a (a traditional handcrafted accessory designed to protect a woman's face from the hot sun and dust, and to hide her beauty from male nonrelatives); over their shoulders, they wore a Makhawarah (a traditional Emirati embroidered dress); and over their heads, they wore a Shila (a traditional light headscarf).

All of the mothers also dressed in Makhawarah. Unlike the relatively plain dresses of the grandmothers, however, the mothers wore brightly colored dresses decorated with embroidery around the neckline and hands. None of the mothers wore traditional Burqa'a over the face although they did wear Shila. When out in public, some of the mothers also wore a veil. When growing up, the mothers experienced a change in dress when they attended school. Mother G explained, "School uniform was different than our traditional dress. This is in itself a big change."

Although the mothers "knew no dresses other than Makhawarah when [they] were kids" (Mother C), none of the daughters in this study wore Makhawarah. Rather, all of the daughters, when I observed them in their homes, were dressed in more modern and fashionable clothing. Five were wearing couture dresses, two were wearing long skirts, and one was wearing a New York University hoodie. None of the daughters wore head covers. Additionally, I observed the youngest of the children dressed in jeans or other

types of pants. Outside of the home, daughters wore Abayas (fashionable, full-length gowns suitable for wearing in public). They did not fully cover their hair with Shila. At social occasions, such as the wedding and Iftar celebration I attended, I observed young women and girls dressed in short fashionable dresses.

Daughters' style of dress was not always approved of by older generations. Grandmother F specifically expressed disapproval the daughters for not "wear[ing] a hijab." The lack of approval from older generations has placed strain on the daughters who try to reconcile their personal desires with family expectations and social norms. As Daughter G explained:

I'm living a double life with my family. . . . I'm in peace with myself now. . . .

These restrictions are placed upon me because I'm still living in my father's house and he is still paying my bills. . . . I am forced to follow these rules when I am at the house or around them. . . . When I go outside with my aunt to Dubai, I do not cover. . . . No one knows about this except my aunt and I who holds a similar mentality to mine, but faces the same restrictions at home.

Many daughters shared a similar mindset with regard to the tensions between traditional and modern values associated with how women dress in the UAE, especially in public. These tensions are inherently linked to traditional values associated with women outside the home.

Females outside the home. Grandmothers' experiences living in Bedouin communities were unique with respect to the acceptance of women outside the home because families lived in tent communities. However, as families moved into neighborhood homes and women took on domestic roles, separation of genders became

the norm. To facilitate this separation, girls were expected to stay within the home, the family compound, or immediate neighborhood. Grandmother F “never allowed . . . [her] daughters to visit their friends. They only played in front of the neighborhood houses.” Grandmother H stopped her daughters from “playing in front of the house when they started developing into women.”

Some mothers maintained a similar protectiveness with their daughters. Daughter G explained:

I realized I am no longer a child when my mother gradually stopped me from playing with boys in the neighborhood when I was in Grade 5. As a kid, I used to bike around the neighborhood freely, but this gradually changed around puberty time. . . . Traditionally, it is about maintaining the honor of the girl and her family.

I was honored that Mother A made an exception for me so that I could interview her daughter outside of the home upon her daughter’s insistence. When I arrived at their home to pick up Daughter A, her mother said, “Only you Ebtasam because we know you so well by this time. I don’t normally allow my daughters to socialize outside with friends.” Later, after Mother A joined Daughter A and me at the park where we were conducting the interview, she repeated herself several times: “I don’t normally allow my daughters to socialize with friends or strangers outside of home. We truly appreciate your friendship and we trust you.” Despite such traditional watchfulness and constraints on girls and women, “these strict rules are gradually changing with [the] increasing stretch of boundaries of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behavior for young

women given their increased mobility in today's society such as education [and] employment" (Daughter G).

Education. A shift in traditional values regarding women outside the home has become evident with regard to women's education. During the grandmothers' generation, "there were not any female teachers; they were all either Egyptian or Levantine men" (Grandmother G). Because "it was not acceptable for girls to go to school to mingle with men" (Grandmother G), education for girls "was Mngood [taboo]" (Grandmother A). Most grandmothers did not go to school even though "we really wanted to go to school and leave the Mutawa'a" (volunteer teacher of religion; Grandmother G). Grandmother G was the one exception to this rule: "Yes, I went to school, Alhamdulillah [praise to God], and learned how to read and write."

During the interviews, the grandmothers repeatedly made statements like "I hope this is helpful" (Grandmother B) and "I don't know if I answered your question correctly" (Grandmother H). I interpreted their comments to mean that they sometimes did not understand the academic language I used when asking questions. Although I did rephrase my questions using simple language, and the grandmothers did provide valuable information, I sensed a possible degree of embarrassment on the part of the grandmothers. I also got the feeling that they may have felt inadequate with regard to their lack of education.

Like the grandmothers, many mothers did not go to school when they were young. Reminiscing, Mother A mused:

I still remember that moment when I was sitting on the dunes with my sister and a school bus full of girls passed by us. I used to dream a lot about going to school,

but it was far from happening because my father said no education for girls.

However, after 5 years of strong resistance, Mother A experienced a change in her father's fixed mindset when he allowed her to attend school for the first time. Mother A recalled the influence of an old Omani lady sent by the government as a messenger to convince Bedouin men such as her father to send their daughters to school:

I would never forget that female messenger who knocked our door once a month to change my father's fixed mindsets around girls' education. She used to tell him, 'Teach them so they can read for you and write on your behalf.' I attended school for the first time when I was 9 years old.

For some women, "our first time out of home and away from our parents" (Mother A) was during our "first week at the university" (Daughter H). Mother G remembered:

We were too shy to interact with male professors because we only knew female teachers throughout our educational journey. We mixed with girls from other Emirates. The majority were conservative and only a few were opened minded. I mean city girls like Dubai and Sharjah.

Now, it is becoming more common for daughters to participate in study-abroad programs. As a matter of fact, six of the daughters in this study reported recent participation in a study-abroad program in the past two years. Three young women participated in *Our Ambassadors Program* in the United States at the University of Massachusetts Amherst during the summer. This program is an initiative launched by The Ministry of Education in 2016 that targets over 1000 male and female pupils in public schools and undergraduate students yearly to participate in an exchange program

in 10 countries around the world (Ministry of Education, 2020). For Daughter E, this opportunity was her “first study abroad experience.” Daughter F’s “first study-abroad trip was with New York University Abu Dhabi [as] part of Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Scholar Program. . . . Part of the leadership development program was a trip to NYU in New York City.” She went on to explain that “it was my first experience without my family. . . . I interacted with males.”

Some mothers encouraged their daughters’ short-term participation in study-abroad programs offered by the government. Mother D said, “We are now more open-minded around this issue as a family. Two of my daughters participated in *Our Ambassadors Program* offered by the government. . . . I prefer short-term study-abroad programs over studying abroad for a college degree.” When I asked what promoted this value shift, Mother E said, “We trust governmental-led programs. We feel our daughters are safe and is being watched.” Mother C, whose daughter has participated in several exchange programs, had a different reason for supporting her daughter’s involvement in study-abroad programs. She explained that “their international exposure has a value for the society. . . . My daughter convinced me that she is going there for a purpose, which is education or work.”

Professional roles. As reported by the mothers in this study, after graduating from university in the past, women had been expected to work as teachers and in schools close to home, approximately 10 minutes’ drive. However, as six of the eight mothers agreed, the expectation that women stay home to tend to domestic chores is no longer the norm in today’s UAE society as women’s roles have evolved and are now centered on materialistic life and employment in professional roles.

Daughters too are now engaging in other professional endeavors. For example, two daughters work in offices, one works as an engineer, one works in an investment company, and one is a diplomat. Although some work locally, others work away from home and internationally. For example, Grandmother B's daughter, works in Abu Dhabi away from the family home. When asked why she supports her daughter's (and son's) interest in professional roles, Mother F said, "They worked hard on themselves and I did not want to restrict their mobility or personal desires."

In these roles, women interact with men. Grandmother F noted, "There are women who shake hands with men." Although not technically in a professional setting, I did shake hands with Grandfather A after my interview with Grandmother A had concluded. He, rather than I, initiated the contact.

Independent travel. Some daughters are being allowed to travel independently. For example, Daughter A recently traveled to present her research project at an international conference, Daughter E volunteered at an international exposition representing the UAE, and Daughter F, the diplomat, traveled internationally as part of official delegations with her job. Additionally, I noted that when interviewing Mother B, two of her daughters called her from a trip to Kuwait to inform her of their safe arrival. Although these daughters were not participants in the study, I did note the relevance of their interjection.

Socializing. Daughters also interact outside the home in social settings. In particular, "a coffee culture [has] started developing among Emirati youth. It is the new trend now" (Daughter G). Daughter F said that she "socialize[s] with my friends at coffee shops, and we sometime go shopping together." As Daughter G expressed, "You look

old-fashioned to others if you don't socialize outside." Daughter F said, "I am okay with being friends with boys. . . . [However,] I do not think my parents will get this."

Government sponsored youth opportunities also provide daughters opportunities for socializing. Daughter F has taken advantage of numerous opportunities. She said, "I attended so many events at the Youth x Hub, Dubai. . . . [and] I participated in youth circles initiated by Ministry of Youth. . . . [They] are offered everywhere, even in our workplace." Daughter G also appreciated the opportunities she has had to participate in youth initiatives in her local area: "In the past, these youth centers were limited to Dubai and Sharjah, but now they are everywhere. . . . I am so happy that we have one nearby home and youth initiatives are coming to our community." Daughter H specifically was grateful to no longer be "limited to my family and our school environments . . . [and to] have access to greater opportunities [to] volunteer [and] participate in events.

Some daughters who take advantage of opportunities to socialize do so without permission. For example, Daughter C said,

My father is so traditional in his thinking. . . . He still views going to movie theatre a taboo. My mother always covers for us when we go. . . . We do not tell him at all. . . . My mother will get in a big trouble if he knew.

Daughter C also socializes with her cousin without her father's knowledge:

My cousin and I go to coffee shops, but my father is not aware of this since he comes home only for the weekend. . . . I view this as normal, but my father would be like, 'What? You are sharing a social space with men.' . . . He does not like the idea of socializing in coffee shops. . . . He is traditional in his thinking.

Although the daughters are clearly socializing in public without their fathers' permission, they did not express concern for being disciplined.

Family Connectedness

Shifts in family connectedness were evident in the data. Grandmothers remembered a time when it was customary to visit with neighbors; the visits typically included coffee and dates. "Later in the evening, we gathered as women for coffee to exchange talks, sew clothes and make tents woven from goats and camel hair for our newly married kids" (Grandmother H). Not only were neighbors welcome, but strangers as well. As Grandmother A commented, "In the past the passers/travelers would choose a good spot and settle down while their neighbors are near them. They would make a fire and prepare some coffee and put some dates." She went on to explain that "Arabs used to have open homes. They used to drink coffee and eat with you. Welcome, welcome. . . . Come in, have some coffee" (Grandmother A). They served guests fresh milk with sufficient froth and ensured it was served at a temperature of the guest's liking (Grandmother A). Daughter C remembered her "grandmother sitting in front of her house and her friends would gather for coffee hour early evening. Unfortunately, this changed now."

But now things have changed, . . . and even though you know that the doors are open, no one would come to you. No one would visit, even though my coffee and tea are ready for any visitor, but I do not see any of my relatives unless there is an occasion. (Grandmother A)

When I joined Grandmother, Mother, and Daughter H during a traditional Friday gathering, the young daughter told me that three families were missing because they

alternate weekends between Abu Dhabi and Fujairah. Also, all of the young daughters were on their phones rather than socializing with family members. These examples demonstrate a loss of connectedness between the members of the families.

Family Relatedness

Shifts in family relatedness were evident in the data showing changes in traditions. For example, when I was invited by Mother and Daughter F for Iftar during Ramadan, the family served me vegan food with healthy Western desserts such as chia seed pudding. Over the Iftar, the family shared how their food changed dramatically in the past 2 years moving from fatty Arabic food to more healthy options. Daughter F had prepared the menu for my visit. She explained, “Ebtesam, we are trying to experience SoCal vibes with you.” Grandmothers were not typically impressed with these changes in food preferences, as demonstrated by Grandmother A. During her interview, Daughter A handed me a plate of pastries and then asked her grandmother if she wanted some. Her grandmother replied, “I don’t like this food. I had Emirati regag [thin, crispy crepe-like bread] with cheese and honey after I took my medications.” While I was eating, she said, “I asked them to get you some regag food but . . . [Granddaughter A] said that you may not like regag bread.” Shortly after she added, “Now kids don’t like our food. . . . They just want junk food and pastries for breakfast.”

The presentation of the dates during my visit appeared to be especially important to Grandmother A and representative of the traditions of her generation. Back then, she said, “dates only were set in a bowl. . . . They did not used to put it in a covered plate like this.” (Grandmother A). After repeating her sentiment, she added, “When men/visitors come and they [the younger generations] present the dates in this small plate, I feel

ashamed” (Grandmother A). When Daughter A explained, “Grandma, it is better to offer it in a covered small bowl. It’s cleaner and keeps the date from drying,” Grandmother A replied, “Different point of view. [It is] face loss [embarrassment] among the older generations” (Grandmother A). Daughter G explained that the younger generation has different types of traditions now. “Pool parties, bridal showers, baby showers, [and] big birthday parties are new trendy cultures.” (Daughter F).

Theme 2: Factors that Contribute to Changes in Cultural Values

Various factors of intergenerational value change from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft values emerged through data analysis. With the exclusion of the recognized need for change, acceptance of change, and negotiation, Greenfield’s (2009) theory of social change and human development was useful for categorizing the factors that have contributed to intergenerational value change in the UAE. Although most of the data collected from participants indirectly pertained to acceptance of change and to the social, economic, and ecological shifts from a Gemeinschaft environment to a Gesellschaft environment in the UAE, some participants did speak directly about the factors that have contributed to value change. For example, Grandmother G said, “With continuous urban changes, people’s beliefs change.” She went on to describe greed as a mediating factor between urbanized society and changes in beliefs; people “are never satisfied with less. They want the pricier and the fancier.” Grandmother G also alluded to the influence of diversity as a factor of change when she said, “because of their mingling with people from other backgrounds and becoming influenced by them; it’s becoming more open that has caused the changes in our culture.” All eight of the daughters referenced social media’s role in exposing them to the Western world and driving changes in behavior.

The remainder of this section is devoted to the presentation of data that demonstrated a shift in the UAE from one more characteristically *Gemeinschaft* in nature to one more *Gesellschaft* in nature. The recognized need for change, acceptance of change, and negotiation as factors of intergenerational value change also are discussed. In cases where government initiatives served to mediate the shift from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft* perspectives, those initiatives are mentioned.

Poverty Versus Wealth

The rapid changes that have occurred in the UAE have unarguably been driven by the discovery of oil and subsequent wealth associated with the sale of that commodity. The initial outcome and most obvious change to occur in the post-oil era was the shift from a poor nation to a wealthy one. Before the discovery of oil, one person noted, “We lived in poverty” (Grandmother E). Examples of that poverty are evident in the lifestyle in which the Emiratis’ lived, one that was characterized by subsistence living, poor housing, and low technology. Because of the oil and Sheikh Zayed’s political vision, now “the world [has] changed and is developed” (Grandmother H). “We jumped into the unknown. . . . [and] life has truly changed” (Grandma A). Families now have access to good medical care (Grandmothers B, G, & G) They have “steady incomes, homes, and cars” (Grandmother G) and have money to spend summers travelling outside of the UAE (Daughters A, B, E, F and H).

Subsistence living. Life in the UAE during the grandmother era was simple but challenging. “We didn’t know combs, and we didn’t wear sandals” (Grandmother A). “Men would make the coal [for us to use and to sell] . . . in Dubai, Ras Al Khaima, and

Sharjah” (Grandmother H). Other than dates, “food wasn’t available” (Grandmother C). We didn’t have meat nor chicken (Grandmother H).

In “those old days, we had it all as women from taking care of kids to active enrollment in day to day subsistence activity” (Grandmother H). “In the morning, we wandered in the open desert, moving in big groups to bring water from distant wells for our tribe” (Grandmother H). We “would carry back, on our heads, pots of water for washing or drinking (Grandmother D). “In the afternoon, we took care of our kids and livestock” (Grandmother H) and milked the animals (Grandmother A). Afterwards, “we would shake the leather bag till we make yogurt” (Grandma H). “We would bake bread if we had flour” (Grandmother H).

Now, Emirati families are not reliant on subsistence living. There are “luxurious shopping malls” (Mother C) and the majority of the population enjoys all the creature comforts of modern day society.

Housing. During the grandmothers’ generation, there “were no houses; there were tents and we lived in them” (Grandma B). The mothers’ generation was fortunate to grow up in houses. Although Mother C admitted that her generation “did not witness the poverty that our parents lived,” their houses were small (Grandmothers C, F, Mother C) “with open doors [and] in small neighborhoods” (Grandmother F). Small houses typically translated to lack of space to accommodate everyone. Mother F commented, “Back then, I shared one room with all my siblings” (Mother F). Mother C recalled that “in the past, we only had souks” (markets), and Daughter E recalled that when she “was a kid, we did not have malls nearby.”

Now, “there are buildings everywhere” (Grandmother B). “Look how big the houses have become!” exclaimed Grandmother A. “We live in big villas” (Mother F) “in different neighborhoods” (Grandmother F). All the “houses have walls and doors” (Grandmother H), and everyone has their private room” (Mother F).

Families also now have help to manage the domestic responsibilities. Mother A said, “My family hired our first maid back in the 80s.” She now has “two maids . . . , one male chef . . . , [and] two drivers.” Similarly, Mother C has “two maids who take care of cleaning [and] cooking . . . , one nanny watching my youngest child, [and] one driver who takes the kids to school.” Mother F indicated that it is common to see children with their nannies at “the playground or shopping malls.”

Technology. During the pre-oil era, technology was virtually nonexistent. “There were no cars, and camels were the only means of transport” (Grandmother E). Several of the grandmothers shared the challenges of lacking transportation. Grandmother H spoke of her husband “Abdullah [who] used to bring the fish. He would ride a camel or walk from Dibba, and it would take him 2 days.” It took the men in Grandmother H’s neighborhood “nearly 12 days to go from Fujairah to Dubai and back” and the men of Grandmother E’s “neighborhood used to travel on camels from 7 to 8 days to Dubai . . . [to] exchanged our goats/ sheep for goods such as coffee, flour, salt, rice, and garments” (Grandmother E). Because they did not have refrigeration, “we would put water in bottles of clay and hang them to cool (Grandmother D) and “pour cold water on . . . [the fresh yogurt we made so] it will melt in the heat” (Grandmother H). “There were no hospitals and we delivered our first kids at home” (Grandmother B). During childbirth, women experienced pain and some women “died, and their eyes would pop out” (Grandmother

B). “Now there are hospitals” (Grandmother B) with interiors that look like a “palace [and are] fully equipped” (Grandmother G). They have “top notch doctors . . . [at] the hospital [that] was built from stone” (Grandma F). “I have heart medication, and I have done an operation. . . . This is science” (Grandmother H)!

Beginning in the post-oil era, people also “started moving into air-conditioned houses” (Grandmother B), and Mother C shared that she grew up with “TV and satellite.” When I observed the families during data collection, I noticed that each family had several cars. Daughter F noted, “We are living a tech exposure that was not available for my mother and grandmother.” Indeed, during my interviews, I learned that all of the daughters were given a personal laptop sometime between Grades 6 and 10.

Mobile phones also were ubiquitous among the daughters’ generation. Daughter G said she “owned my first phone when I was 14 years old.” During my interviews, I observed that all of the daughters had mobile phones with access to Netflix and Apple TV and were active on social media. However, mobile phones also were popular with the mothers. Although the mothers first started to own mobile phones when they got married, now, all the mothers own phones and use them to keep in touch with people. “Now we use snapchat and WhatsApp to stay connected with our sisters, brothers, and friends” (Mother C). Daughter G said, “My aunt is 30 years old now. . . . She owned her first phone when she graduated from high school.”

Grandmothers too have mobile phones although they use them less and are less dependent on them than the mothers and daughters. Grandmother G, who is 65 years old, appeared to be the most tech savvy of the grandmothers. She has an iPhone, uses WhatsApp to send voice messages, and uses Instagram and Snapchat to keep in touch

with her family; her daughter and grandchildren created the Instagram and Snapchat accounts for her. Two of the grandmothers also have smart phones but only use them to make phone calls. The other five grandmothers have phones but do not know how to use them. Grandmother A said, “I have a phone now . . . though I do not know what’s my number. [She laughed.] . . . They taught me the number, but I can’t remember. It rings and I pick up” (Grandmother A). Similar comments were made by other grandmothers, such as Grandmother H who said, “I don’t know . . . [how to use it.] I only hit this button.”

Education Inside the Home Versus Education Outside the Home

Grandmother and daughters’ generations. As indicated previously, during the grandmother era, women did not attend school for secular education and most were not afforded opportunities for religious education. This was the case for Grandmother C who “didn’t go to school and didn’t learn the Quran.” However, some grandmothers did participate in religious education. For example, Grandmother G said she used to “read the Quran with the Mutawa’a,” and Grandmother B said she “only read during my prayers.” This religious education was informal, not government sponsored, and allowed only with the approval of the grandmothers’ parents or husbands. Grandmother F shared the story of how she was able to participate in religious educational opportunities as a child and secular education as an adult married woman:

One day, I was running around the neighborhood with my friends, and we saw a circle of small girls and boys reciting Quran loudly after the Mutawa’a and I asked if we can join. Then I begged my parents and they allowed me to go for a few months. Later when I had my fifth kid, my husband allowed me to pursue

adult education.

Grandmother G also was allowed to attend adult education with the permission of her husband. Some mothers too were allowed to engage in educational opportunities with permission of their parents or husbands. Mother H has been allowed to attend school when she was a little girl. However, when she “finished Grade 6, my father told me I am a woman now and I have to take care of the house and my little siblings. After 1 year, he married me off when I was 14 years old.” Five other mothers (Mother A, B, D, E, & H) also dropped out of school after finishing Grade 6 because their traditional roles as adult women continued to be highly valued and the women were expected to fulfill those roles.

With the exception of Mother B, all the mothers were supported by their husbands to complete their education at adult education schools in the evenings. However, not all mothers were permitted to attend university. As Mother F explained,

My father and many families refused to send their daughters for university education because it was not easy for them to let their daughters live in dorms for 5 days and in another city. This changed with Sheikh Zayed messages to our families.

Mother C explained,

I would never forget the echo of Sheikh Zayed’s voice in our house encouraging us as women to take a lead in the country’s progress by advancing our education, and also pushing our parents to change their attitudes toward university education. . . . He supported us with monthly stipends, and university buses picked us from our neighborhoods.

After Sheikh Zayed expressed his support of women attending university, three mothers (Mothers C, F, & H) were encouraged by their fathers to continue their education at the university level.

Today, Grandmother A explained, “Who doesn’t complete high school or does not study English [it] is as if he/she is an illiterate. This is how it has become with the Arabs now.” As such, all of the daughters have received a formal secular education.

Daughters’ generation. Seven daughters attended public high schools, and one attended an applied technology high school. All of the daughters attended or were still attending UAE University at the time of this study. Two of the daughters had master’s degrees. Of those daughters, one daughter’s degree was in diplomacy, and the other daughter’s degree was in engineering. Two of the daughters had bachelor’s degrees. Of those daughters, one daughter’s degree was in economics, and the other daughter’s degree was in politics. The four daughters who were undergraduate students at the time of this study were majoring in politics, finance, childhood education, and medicine, respectively. During the interviews, Daughters A, F, and H responded to questions in English mixed with only some Arabic words, a reflection of the highly Westernized nature of the flagship university that is UAE University.

Participation in university education has provides daughters with world experience. For Daughter H, the “first time out of my family house was my first week at the university.” Additionally, all of the young daughters have participated in at least one study-abroad program either as part of their university experience or as part of a government sponsored initiative or program.

Value of education. Even when the women of the grandmother and mothers' generations had not been allowed to go to school, they clearly had a personal interest in education. "We really wanted to go school" said Grandmother G, and Mother A said she "used to dream a lot about going to school." When encouraged by the government to pursue continued education at the university level, women of the mother's generation were ecstatic.

Statements made by the women of the grandmother and mothers' generations clearly indicated they understood the value of education if not only for themselves but especially for others. As Grandmother G explained, "Knowledge takes you places, and an educated person can be put at any place and at any situation he or she would be able to handle whatever comes to him/her." She extrapolated: "In addition to that, I do not like uneducated people because they cannot handle themselves. Knowledge helps people think right." Grandmother G also expressed the importance of children bettering themselves. She said,

I did not complete my education, and I did not want my children to be like me. A mother always wants her children to be better than her. If I were deprived from a thing, I would not want to do the same to my children.

Despite the general support for the education of daughters in the UAE, education at the high school level is limiting. As Daughter E said, "Teachers are very traditional in their thinking. Daughter B agreed: "School was a homogenous community. . . . [It was] very traditional in thinking. . . . You are always being watched because there is a direct connection between school and home." Daughter H made a similar statement: "I went to a homogenous school in our neighborhood . . . [with the] same environment, same

thought process, [and] same cohort from Grade 1 to Grade 12. . . . [It was a] very close minded environment.”

Self-Contained, Homogeneous, Semi-Nomadic Bedouin Neighborhood Versus Diversity and Regular Contact with the Outside World

A notable change indicated in the data was a structural shift from bounded neighborhoods, and later family compounds, to communities that foster regular interaction with others and provide experience with diversity. Change also has become evident in opportunities to attend university, study abroad, and participate in programs. Additionally, it is now common for women to attend events outside the home and to travel. Access to digital and social media has become pervasive and has accelerated these changes. The women in this study described opportunities to experience diversity as factors of personal growth.

Homogeneous neighborhoods and family compounds. During the grandmothers’ generation, families “used to live in the same typical [neighborhood] environment” (Grandmother, F). “There was no difference between us; there was no difference between our house and someone else’s house” (Grandmother A). We were “homogeneous [with] no diversity” (Grandma E). Mothers too remembered the homogeneity of the typical neighborhood. For example, Mother E said, “We were homogenous. We looked similar and had a common shared experience” (Mother E). Although Daughter E grew up in a luxury villa in a family compound, she remembers the sense of “community. . . . All [the] homes were similar in their beliefs, traditions— simply one mindset (Daughter E).

When families lived in these homogeneous neighborhoods, they spent all of their time together, closed off from the outside world. “Everyone was around us. We used to drink coffee together, wake up together,” (Grandmother A), do chores, and “drink and eat together” (Grandmother D). “We knew every single person in the neighborhood” (Mother H), and “people were good neighbors” (Grandmother C). Grandmother E described the neighborhood life as one of solidarity characterized by safety and a sense of “community cohesion.” Despite the seemingly positive nature of this sense of cohesiveness, women spoke of the limiting nature of the neighborhoods. Mother E said, “We were limited to our neighborhood, and we did not know any world beyond our small communities” (Mother E). Daughter H made a similar statement when she said, “I was so limited to my family and our school environments.”

Diverse communities. With the discovery of oil, people started moving out of the small neighborhoods and into luxury villas in family compounds. Family A and B still reside in their family’s compound. Gesturing with her arm, Daughter B said, “This is our family compound since 1991. . . . This is my grandmother’s villa. [There is] my uncle’s villa, and this is our villa. . . . I only lived in this community.” The other families in this study moved into luxury villas in diverse communities. In these communities, neighbors are not necessarily related and may not know each other. Mother F explained, “The architecture of *Freej* [neighborhood] changed dramatically in the last 10 years . . . [going] from knowing our neighbors so well to living next to a very diverse group.” Some of this diversity has come from an influx of foreigners moving into the UAE. As Grandmother F described, “Now from one side the doors opened upon them, and in the other hand people from different backgrounds and families entered the country (Grandmother, F).

Diversity through education and programming. Women also have begun to have other experiences outside of the home. Education, for example, has provided opportunity in this regard. Of her school experiences mixing with her Egyptian and Syrian teachers, Mother A said,

Mixing with different nationalities was a big transitional factor in my life. . . .

Different dialects . . . different languages . . . they were different than us in their dressing, beliefs, and food.

For Daughter D, “university experience . . . connected me with heterogeneous Emirati students who dress and talk differently. . . . [My] point of view is valued, and the discussion is open. University professors are way more open-minded than school teachers.” Daughters E and F also have traveled abroad for study.

Through government sponsored programs, daughters now have “access to greater opportunities with all of these youth initiatives” (Daughter H). Daughters D, F, and G spoke specifically about the number of opportunities in which youth can participate to interact with other youth, including boys, outside their immediate families, schools, and communities.

Travel and events. It has become common for women in the UAE to travel outside the home for noneducational purposes and to attend events. For example, Daughters A, B, E, F, and H travel outside the UAE with their family every summer. During her childhood, Daughter B spent most of her summer in Europe with her family. Daughters E and F have been to concerts, and Mother C said she “always take[s] my kids to Dubai Mall and Citywalk during school breaks. . . . Dubai is our leisure place.”

Access to digital and social media. Access to digital and social media has become ubiquitous among the mother and daughters' generations. Mother C said that it is typically for mothers to "use snapchat and whatsapp to stay connected with our . . . friends." All of the mothers in this study made similar statements. When I joined Daughter B at a family gathering, I observed that all of the mothers and daughters were busy on their phones while talking to me. Children as young as 2 years old were playing on iPads listening to children's songs or watching cartoons. Additionally, all the daughters have Netflix, Apple TV, and Apple Music subscriptions through which they watch movies and listen to music in English. All of the daughters acknowledged that social media had exposed them to the Western world.

Growing from experiences with diversity. Although Daughter C said that her family's "relationship with our neighbors was weakened when we moved to our new independent villa," other women talked about how the changes provided opportunities and experiences for positive growth. Daughter E indicated that after moving into diverse communities, "gradually, people started changing, opening up." Grandmother F also noted that "people became more open after being closed eyed." Mother C also talked about a new sense of awareness. She said, "Mixing up with other girls who came in up from different neighborhoods opened my eyes to new realities and some differences in our beliefs and values, especially [among the] non-local girls. Mother A said, "Mixing with . . . [women from other neighborhoods] made me feel modern, and now I feel modern."

The opportunity to attend university also helped women grow. As Mother C said, her "university experience opened my eyes to new world of opportunities." Daughters

made similar statements about their participation in study abroad programs. During her experience, Daughter F “did lots of reflection and debating. . . . It was my door to the international world.” She went on to say that it not only did it help her grow but that “it pushed my family to change around short-term study abroad/ traveling . . . [which] opened doors for my sisters and other girls in the family.”

Access to digital and social media has provided opportunities to experience diversity as a factor of personal growth. Mother C explained that television “opened our eyes to new world. . . . We started watching Egyptian and Kuwaiti drama.” All of the daughters recognized that exposure to the Western world through social media bloggers has driven behavior change among Emirati women, in particular, the daughters’ generation.

Interdependence Versus Independence

The data indicated a change from interdependence among families to independence among individuals. For example, when grandmothers were growing up and raising their families in traditional neighborhoods, “We, along with our neighbors, moved from one spot to another” (Grandmother A). Families were open with one another, so that “wondering around your own house will allow you to know whatever is going on at your neighbor’s house” (Grandmother A). “We were involved with each other. Back then neighbors disciplined their neighbors’ children . . . , and whenever there is something missing, your neighbor would help, even though food wasn’t available (Grandmother C). The women gathered to talk and sew (Grandmother H), and there was a sense of “family cohesion and relatedness . . . [with] big family gatherings [and] extended family” (Grandmother E). Mothers’ descriptions of their upbringing were similar to those of the

grandmothers. Mother A explained, “We grew up in small, tight-knit neighborhood called Freej. We lived in extended families in small homes. . . . Our neighbors were our big family always cared and looked for each other.

When families began moving out of the neighborhoods, “at first they [i.e., families] continued visiting each other” (Grandmother B). “But now things have changed” (Grandmother A). “Now houses have walls and doors. Even if they were open, there are [still] doors. . . . Here is a villa, and there is another villa, and they all have doors” (Grandmother H). “It was only a few years ago when people stopped” visiting each other (Grandmother B).

Besides the obvious change in lifestyles, there also has been a shift toward independence in thinking. With this shift, grandmothers no longer contribute to raising their grandchildren. For example, Grandmother G said, “I cannot say anything because we no longer live together, and I do not know what they do. . . . I just hear them talking.” Grandmother B made a similar statement. She said, “No one listens to us [i.e., grandparents] now. It is whatever their parents decide.”

Mothers also have experienced a change in mindset. As Mother A explained, “I grew up in a very traditional authoritarian family in which I followed the rules so strictly. . . . I raised my kids differently. . . . I listen to them. . . . I encourage my kids to follow their passion.” Daughter A directly stated that she “experienced a change in myself.” As Daughter E explained, “You’re yourself at the University. No one is watching. . . . Community parental control is absent.” With a change in environment to the university setting, Daughter C

experienced a change in mindset. . . . I was limited to the socialized beliefs and

values of our home. . . . At the university, I met ladies who come from a very open-minded families, who travel solo, socialize at coffee shops, and do not cover their head.

Perhaps no comments demonstrate the shift from interdependence to independence better than those from Daughters F and G who both said they are grateful for the social change evident in the UAE as it has provided them the opportunity for “me time.”

Recognized Need for Change

The first of the three factors of change outside the theory of social change and human development is the recognized need for change. Women from all three generations agreed that in some way, there was a need for change. Grandmother G expressed the need to make conditions better for her children. More generally, she stated, “There is the good and the bad, but the person should not always stay at the same attitude. One should always evolve to become better.”

Daughters also made general statements about the need for change. For example, Daughter F said, “We are highly empowered by the UAE government, but social traditions place so many social barriers that we need to crack to drive value change inside the family.” Mothers and daughters also made statements about specific cultural traditions. For example, both mothers and daughters made reference to change regarding women walking behind men. Mother D indicated that because girls are now as celebrated as boys and because men and women are partners in marriage, there is no reason for men and women to have to maintain separateness when walking together. Daughter C suggested that the equal treatment women receive from the government is indication of gender equality and thus overrides previous expectations for separateness between

genders. For Daughter A, an engineer working in a male dominated field, required separateness hinders her capacity to do her job. She said,

As the only female engineer in the team where I am always walking behind the men to create a personal distance between myself and them, and this makes me miss some important details as I cannot hear them. . . . Going from segregated to mixed environments for the first time truly produces social ambiguity on how someone should behave.

Mothers and daughters also made reference to change regarding women taking total responsibility for child care. Mother F said, “Life has changed a lot, and kids need their father as equally as their mom.” Daughter F was more specific, she said, “I want to see Emirati men walking with baby strollers in shopping malls.”

Acceptance of Change

The second of the three factors of change outside the theory of social change and human development is acceptance of change, a condition that can be inferred through statements indicating appreciation of the current lifestyle in the UAE. Some women spoke generally about how “things now became fine” (Grandmother F) and “everything changed, and people were very happy—they were ecstatic” (Grandmother B)! Grandmother G said, “It [change] is a positive thing, Masha ‘Allah. People now live a great life. . . . The world has improved.” She specifically referred to people having “high incomes, homes, and cars.”

Grandmothers often credited Sheikh Zayed for the “many good things [that] happened (Grandmother B). As Grandmother H said, “May Allah rest Zayed’s soul. He did a lot of great things, improved so much of the people’s livelihood, which brought so

much comfort in our lifestyle since the discovery of oil.” “It was later, after Zayed’s rule, that life began” (Grandmother A). Specifically, the grandmothers referred to the building of hospitals (Grandmother B) and access to medications and medical care (Grandmother H). Grandmother A referred to schools and the basic comforts of life. She said, “Schools started [and] life began. We didn’t know combs and did not wear shoes back in those days. After his rule, everything came (Grandmother A).

Mothers also made reference to positive changes in their lives. With regard to help with domestic responsibilities, Mother A said, “Alhamdulillah, now we have nannies, helpers, and drivers.” Daughter A acknowledged that the larger houses provided them with privacy. She said, “We have more privacy now. . . . I am enjoying it.” Daughters C, E, F, G, and H made similar statements about appreciating the privacy they enjoy.

Negotiation

The third of the three factors of change outside the theory of social change and human development is negotiation. The “stretch of boundaries of what constitute acceptable and unacceptable behavior for young women [in Emirati society is a] . . . source of generational tension and stress” (Daughter G). As women continue to strive for gender equity and empowerment, they must navigate that tension and stress. In professional fields, that navigation requires “a form of intergenerational value negotiation through respecting and accepting cultural norms around appropriate female behavior in exchange for permission to work as an engineer in a male dominated field” (Daughter A).

In private settings, daughters also navigated through compromise. Daughter A, who came from a traditional Bedouin family, shared a story that exemplified this:

My professor pushed me to present my research project at an international conference in Switzerland. . . . I knew this was impossible—not an option for females in my tribe, not only my immediate family. Me going to Switzerland with a university team! What? . . . I spoke to my mom about this opportunity . . . [She] said, leave it with me. I will negotiate this with your dad. . . . I did break the norm in our extended family, but my father came with me. . . . In the beginning I was so upset. I was to cancel the whole issue because I did not want to look like a kid accompanied by her father.

Daughter A did end up attending the conference and ultimately admitted she enjoyed spending time with her father. She recognized the value of forfeiting independence in exchange for the experience of traveling and participating in the international conference.

Other daughters made similar exchanges. Daughter E exchanged having to ask permission for the opportunity to socialize at the mall. She said,

I don't go out to Dubai Mall without telling my parents because I'm always afraid that some [male] family members may spot me hanging out or socializing with others. . . . They will inform my father right away. . . . I don't want to get in a big argument with my family.

Similarly, Daughter G forfeited a degree of freedom on social media in exchange for the opportunity to interact socially through digital media. She said, "I don't post my personal photos on Instagram because if I do, not only my father will be mad at me but also my brother."

Other daughters navigated social restraints by keeping their behaviors secret from their fathers. For example, rather than asking her father for permission to go to the

movies, a request she knew would be denied, Daughter C engages the help of her mother who provides a cover story for her daughter. Daughter C also goes to the coffee shop with her cousin during the week while her father is working in another city.

Theme 3: Resistance to Change

As demonstrated in Theme 1, the data clearly showed evidence of intergenerational value change among three generations of Emirati women in the UAE. Factors contributing to those changes were identified in Theme 2. Although Greenfield (2009) has posited that the directionality between characteristics of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* environments are bidirectional so that movement can be dynamic in either direction, here the data clearly showed the potential for the inhibiting of changes in cultural values through resistance to change. Resistance to change was found to be clustered into four specific categories: gender roles, respect, maintaining connectedness, and maintaining relatedness.

Gender Roles

Distinct evidence of resistance to change was noted in the data demonstrating that Emiratis continue to cling to cultural traditions and values, especially with regard to traditional gender roles, a pattern found in other cultures as well (see Georgas, Berry, van de Vijver, Kağitçibaşı, & Poortinga, 2006; Manago, 2014). For example, girls still are not afforded the same opportunities as boys. In Grandmother A's family, the "grandsons are studying in the United States. Only boys are allowed. [It is] not an option for girls." When asked why her granddaughter was not allowed to study in the United States like her grandsons, she replied, "Because she is a girl." In a similar context regarding her

granddaughter's travels to study abroad, Grandmother D said, "Honestly, I did not like the idea of a female traveling without her family." She did not consider this appropriate.

Similar resistance was directly evident with regard to relationships between the genders. For example, when Daughter E was growing up, she was not allowed to "socialize outside, only at home. Or play with other girls in the neighborhood." Some mothers expressed a general distaste regarding relationships between unmarried young people. One of the mothers, Mother A, acknowledged that this perspective was "old fashioned." As Mother F explained, "We are more flexible now in allowing our daughters to work in mixed environments, but their interaction with male colleagues should not go beyond work boundary." Daughter G's comment that "I always fight with my mother over these [gender-based] issues" suggested that her mother does not provide her the flexibility she needs "to live [her] life by exploring new boundaries."

This continued resistance to relationships between genders clearly is rooted in concern for family honor. In the grandmother's generation, one grandmother noted, "We did not send our daughters to school at the beginning because we were afraid it would damage family honor" (Grandmother A). This concern is still evident today. All of the mothers shared a similar concern about being talked about and drawing negative attention to their families. Several mothers referred to the "gossip mill" in which they live and the fear of being "badmouthed." As Mother C explained,

As much as I allow my daughters to volunteer, participate in mixed events, and coeducational environments, I am always afraid of any misconduct with boys that may put the family to shame. . . . They cannot go whenever they want.

Mother H explained,

The exposure this generation is living is huge, nothing compares what we had when were their age. . . . We need to watch their behavior as this huge exposure puts the younger generation at a higher risk of wrongdoing [potentially] resulting in damage to family honor.

Daughter A also referred to the fear of damaging one's honor as a factor of inaction:

“Familial fear is holding young women from recognizing their leadership potentialities.

This deep-rooted fear is confusing personal independence with familial restrictions, thus, producing tensions with their familial desires to maintain female honor.”

Of the mothers, Mother F demonstrated the most mixed values regarding gender roles. For example, although she does support her daughters' interest in socializing at coffee shops, her daughters cannot go without permission. She also said, “I am aware of which coffee shop they go to and they have a time boundary. . . . I support them, but they cannot go out on a weekly basis.” Mother F also limited the freedom her daughters have to travel. Although she did allow her eldest daughters to travel, she only did so because they “always traveled with big groups or with work—never by themselves.” Therefore, when Daughter F wanted to go to New York by herself to study, “her parents were a bit hesitant.” Mother F was hesitant because she was “so afraid to send her [daughter] alone to a foreign country.” Like Mother F, Mother H expressed a need for a certain degree of some restraint. She said, “We want to be good parents by allowing them an experience, but we need to be cautious.”

The women also spoke about a general distaste for new behaviors. For example, Grandmother B complained about her daughter working because the children were spending so little time with their mother and so much time in the care of their nanny.

More often though, the women referred to a lack of support by men. Mother F spoke about her husband's mindset saying that he "is not a fan of this trendy culture." Daughter C described her father as "traditional in his thinking," and Daughter G complained about having to sneak around her father's rules in order to be her authentic self.

In general, daughters understood why their families have been and, in some cases continue to be, resistant to change. Both Daughters G and F referred to the need for time. Daughter G said that although "my mother is slowly accepting [changes in our cultural values] . . . , new norms need time. [They] . . . are not normalized yet in our surroundings." Daughter F said,

Time changed, but our families need time to comprehend these changes. . . . We are living this change because it is becoming part of our experience and narrative. For them, this is new and somewhat threatening to their socialized values. . . . I sometimes feel frustrated, but I cannot blame them for their limited view.

Respect

Women of all three generations demonstrated that their respect for others either contributed to their continued engagement in traditional behaviors or their lack of action to empower themselves to step outside those boundaries. However, the women's approaches to upholding traditional values varied. Grandmothers either spoke generally or indirectly demonstrated their respect for traditional values. One grandmother, Grandmother G, spoke directly to the topic of cultural change although she spoke generally in terms of guidance from Allah. She said, "But Allah did not say be open and change your beliefs and traditions." In comparison, Grandmother B did not speak about culture change but did chastise her granddaughter for paying so much attention to her

phone during the interview. Grandmother B warned her daughter, “Stop looking at your phone. . . . Your eyes! Your eyes are going to be damaged.”

When Mother A was growing up, she altered her behavior out of respect for the male hierarchy in her neighborhood. When she was told she was not allowed to go to school because she was a girl, she did not question the men. She explained,

I never knew why boys not girls in our family [were allowed to go to school]! I never questioned why. My father along with other men in the neighborhood said no education for our girls when formal schooling started in our neighborhood, and we had to sit with it.

Mothers also demonstrated restraint during their adult lives. For example, after her daughter and nephew divorced, Mother E held back her disapproval of arranged marriages because she was concerned about hurting her brother’s feelings.

Daughters in this study expressed concern about bringing disrespect to the family as a motivator of particular behavior. For example, Daughter G spoke about why she continues to cover her head when out in public. She said,

People are judgmental and have a big mouth. . . . People would say how . . . her mom let her daughter look like this in public. . . . They would say, ‘Where is her father?’ . . . I try to keep my family away from all of those judgmental voices of the society by respecting this. . . . I am myself but don’t want to put my family down by respecting this.

Daughter F also indicated she alters her behavior out of respect. She explained that she is “aware of what my parents like and dislike, so when I am presented with some opportunities to travel or participate in community events, I sometimes refrain from

going because I do not want to upset them with constant participation.” Daughter H altered her behavior for the same reason: “I sometimes do not feel like going to my grandmother’s house on Friday, but I go because I do not want to upset my parents or my grandmother.”

Daughter E spoke more generally about altering her behavior. She said, “I can differentiate between what is accepted and what is not accepted, so I behave accordingly out of respect for our intergenerational differences.” When facing ambiguity of gender roles in the professional setting, women tended to be respectful of traditional expectations and act according to those traditional expectations. Daughter A, an engineer, walks “behind the men to create a personal distance between myself and them” although it often hinders her ability to do her job well.

Maintaining Connectedness

Grandmothers and mothers made specific comments related to the loss of connectedness and sense of community they felt in their small neighborhoods. Mother F explained how

the architecture of Freej changed dramatically in the last 10 years . . . going from small houses with open doors in small neighborhoods to big villas in different neighborhoods. . . . from knowing our neighbors so well to living next to a very diverse group.

“Oh Freej life,” mused Mother F, “I wish I can go back. . . . I miss our open doors and our strong relationship with our neighbors.” “Now,” she said, “we enjoy great privacy in our big villas, but we feel somewhat isolated. We are surrounded by diverse people who no longer look like us.” Again she said, “I long for that tight Freej life.”

Grandmothers also spoke of past days when families were cohesive units. “Oh, those old days when we used to wake up in that tent surrounded by so many extended families in the open desert. Where is that time that has passed us and is gone”

(Grandmother A)? Grandmother H complained,

I miss the old days . . . Back then people were different. They used to visit you and you would see them, but now no one comes to you anymore. . . . Today [all] you [can] do is look at the walls that surround us. May Allah keep it away from you.

Grandmothers B and H, who repeatedly pointed to the villa walls during their interviews, appeared the most frustrated with the idea of having walls that separated them from their families.

Daughter C directly referred to loss of family connectedness. Although she referred to her paternal grandmother and not her grandmother who participated in this study, her perspective on family connectedness was evident. She said, “My grandmother [on my father’s side] passed away last year. We lost our connectedness as a family. From gathering at my grandmother house every Friday to not seeing each other except on occasions like Eid.”

Evidence of the desire to maintain this sense of community and connectedness with family was apparent in the interview and observation data from this study. For example, after interviewing Grandmother A in the family luxury Majlis, a large and elegant social space inside the villa for receiving guest, she insisted on taking me to courtyard where the family maintains a black tent, a symbol of family connectedness.

Additionally, grandmothers continue to insist on gatherings every Friday in an effort to make up for losing daily contact with extended family.

Moreover, two families, Family F and H, were willing to move to Abu Dhabi to keep their families together. Mother F explained,

It was not an easy decision. [It] took us more than 2 years. . . . My husband and I were too hesitant to leave our community behind. . . . Our daughters were the push behind our relocation to Abu Dhabi. They worked hard on themselves, and I did not want to restrict their mobility or personal desires.

Although Mother H's daughter had not yet graduated, she still expressed her willingness to move to support her daughter. She said, "Every time my daughter asks if she can work in Abu Dhabi by the time she graduates, I keep telling her that we as a family will relocate with her if she gets what she wants."

The women in this study, mostly mothers and daughters, also maintain virtual connections with their families. Mothers said they use Snapchat and Whatsapp to stay connected with their sisters, brothers, and friends. Daughters also described their use of digital technologies and media for the same purpose. Daughter H explained it this way: "Social media is our new version of relatedness. No one visits each other like in the past. . . We stay connected with our extended family through social media such as Snapchat, Instagram, and Whatsapp."

Maintaining Relatedness

With regard to resistance to change, the data showed that women demonstrated a need for maintaining relatedness to their cultural traditions. Unlike the previous discussions pertaining to gender roles and respect, women's statements demonstrating the

need to maintain relatedness came across as nostalgic despite negative descriptions of traditional life. Grandmothers in this study described the days of the UAE during the pre-oil era as “harsh” (Grandmother H), “difficult” (Grandmother C), and “hard days” (Grandmother H) filled with “suffering and difficulties” (Grandmother A). “Back in the day, we didn’t sleep. It was a bit hot” (Grandmother H). Grandmother A told stories of how the men made coal and how tiring the process was. Food was scarce” (Grandmothers C, H).

Yet despite remembering such hardships, the grandmothers lamented, “Oh, where are the old days? They say it is better and easier [now], but I am not at ease” (Grandmother A). Knowing our hardships, “people ask themselves why we still cling to our traditions” (Grandmother F). “Oh those old days. We had it all as women” (Grandmother H), and we didn’t get sick and our feet didn’t hurt” (Grandmother D). In general, life was “good” (Grandmothers C, H). It “was difficult, but still our lives were better (Grandmother C). “The old days were very lovely indeed” (Grandmother A). Mothers made similar comments. For example, Mother H said she “lived a happy and safe life” and reminisced about her life as a young girl. In addition to these general statements, the women also made statements pertaining to the maintenance of specific traditions and cultural values.

Dress. All of the grandmothers and mothers in this study maintained a traditional style of dress. Although the mothers’ dresses were more brightly colored and elaborate than those of the grandmothers, an indication of material wealth of the post-oil era, the mothers’ dresses were still traditional in the sense that they were considered appropriate for maintaining modesty and female honor. Grandmothers and mothers demonstrated

various degrees of relatedness. Mother F seemed to understand that styles change but that essential traditions can be maintained through these changes. She said, “Fashion evolves over time but for our generation we inherited this dress from our mothers, and it is part of our cultural heritage that needs to be maintained while looking fashionable.”

Grandmother A was less flexible in her willingness to give up her traditional style of dressing:

Now things have changed. Even people’s style and taste in clothing is different. In the past, we used to tailor them ourselves. Nowadays, I need to remind my daughter every time she makes me dresses at the tailor to keep the same design, the simple one. I refuse to wear those with newer designs. I do not feel comfy in them.

Grandmother H appeared to be the least willing to part with traditional style of dress not only for herself, but for her daughters and granddaughters as well. She said, “We sew our own clothes and cover ourselves and cover our girls. We don’t leave girls uncovered wearing pants. We encourage them to be modest and covered.”

Food. The last domain for which there was evidence of efforts to maintain relatedness was food. Grandmothers both spoke of traditional foods and served it. Grandmother A spoke of traditional foods when she talked about the loss of connectedness with her family and neighbors from her Freej; “I always wish that someone would come have some coffee and fawala [i.e., coffee, dates, and fruit served to guests] with us and spend time.” More than half of the grandmothers actually served me traditional foods. When I visited Grandmother H, she was sitting on the floor in the middle of a big living room. In front of her, there was a big mat on which she had placed

fuwala, including fruits, Arabic coffee, dates, and Emirati regag bread. I was expected to eat with my fingers while sitting on the floor interviewing the grandmother. No spoon was offered. It should be noted that Grandmother F did not have the opportunity to serve traditional foods during her interview because her granddaughter, who was in charge of arranging the refreshments for the day, specifically chose to serve American food. It is unclear as to whether or not Grandmother F would have chosen to serve traditional foods given the opportunity.

Summary

Results of data analysis demonstrated intergenerational value change across three generations of Emirati women with regard to gender equity, gender roles, family connectedness, and family relatedness (Theme 1). The degrees to which those cultural changes have been occurring in the UAE appear to have been influenced by both the factors that drive change (Theme 2) and those that hinder it (Theme 3). A discussion of these data follows in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION: LINKING THE STUDY'S FINDINGS TO THE EXISTING LITERATURE

Emirati women are part of a unique culture experiencing changes in intergenerational values (Theme 1). A variety of factors that drive change (Theme 2) and hinder it (Theme 3) were identified in the data. In this chapter, content from the themes developed for and reported in Chapter 4 will be used to address the four research questions posed for this study.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 was, “What intergenerational value changes are identified by three generations of Emirati women?” In particular, I wondered what specific changes in beliefs, attitudes, and experiences would emerge regarding gender equity, gender roles, cross-sex relationships, marriage, professional life, and familial relations. I also wondered what changes have occurred in the socialization of young Emirati women during the first 2 decades of the 21st century. In this section, I discuss areas of change grouped into four categories: gender equity, gender roles, family connectedness, and family relatedness. I also present a summary of the changes across the generations and briefly discuss the concept of socialization of young Emirati women.

Gender Equity

Both mothers and daughters expressed preferences for gender equality in the *Gesellschaft* direction; however, daughters seemed to express more egalitarian values in their desire for egalitarian relations between men and women, and between boys and girls at both the familial and societal levels. This finding could be explained by daughters’

participation in learning environments in which values for gender equality are prominent, such as school and universities where girls and boys have access to the same environment, and are expected to fulfill the same roles and to explore their personal interests in their education and future careers. In addition, the nation's leadership's vision of gender equality is modernizing the role of women through equal access and pay (Al Orami, 2011). This finding replicates a pattern of change found among female adolescents in Arab communities in Israel (Abu Aleon et al., 2019) and in Mexico (Manago, 2014) in which younger females reported higher preferences for gender egalitarian values. Two specific areas pertaining to gender equality emerged in the data: boys are still more valued than girls and women still often walk behind men.

Boys more valued than girls. Findings from this study revealed that traditionally, boys were valued more than girls. Because the valuing of boys over girls is deep-rooted in the Arabian Gulf (Abu-Lughod, 2018; Al-Khayyat, 1990; Crabtree, 2007), I was not surprised to find this trend in the data when people talked about the past. From a sociological perspective, this traditional value was inherently situated in the predominant patriarchal structure of the culture (Crabtree, 2007) in which boys contributed to the growth, and, consequently, the perceived strength, of the tribe (Abu-Lughod, 2018). By giving birth to boys who are considered "economic investments" (Al-Khayyat, 1990), women secured their positions in the family; essentially, "sons are a woman's social security" (Abu-Lughod, 2018, p. 122). Additionally, because mothers and fathers traditionally take on the name of their eldest son (e.g., mother of "son's name," father of "son's name"), having a son was a way to ensure prestige and status for a family (Al-Khayyat, 1990). It also ensured that the family name would be carried on

(Al-Khayyat, 1990). From a practical perspective, boys have typically been valued over girls for their capacity for physical work and to protect women in the tribe (Al-Khayyat, 1990). Three women in this study, two grandmothers and a mother, indicated that the preference for boys over girls stemmed from their perception that boys were easier to raise with a lesser risk of misconduct harming the family's honor. This finding was supported by the literature (e.g., Al-Khayyat, 1990).

Findings from this study indicated boys are no longer valued over girls. Five women in the study, two grandmothers and three mothers, expressed that girls are highly valued in today's society.

Girls used to burden on the family in the past. . . . Now with education and women empowerment, girls became a source of income and a person to rely on in the family. Girls are the source of modernization in the family as well as social agents of change. (Mother A)

Of her own daughters, Mother A said, they "always surprise me with the best. . . . They push me to look better . . . , [and] they make us proud of their academic achievements. . . . My girls always make us proud."

More than just suggesting that girls are as valued as boys today, Grandmother A suggested that girls are better than boys. She said,

Girls are better than boys now. . . . They are financially independent. . . . They take good care of us. . . . They decorate home for us. . . . They take care of our hospital appointments and medicine. They are more educated than men. . . . They know better.

More than just for practical purposes, Grandmother B appreciates girls because “now your daughter is your friend.”

About their sons, mothers said, “Boys bring so much trouble” (Mother D) and create “conflict in the family nowadays” (Mother A); they “struggle at school” (Mother H), and “you need to push them to finish their high school education [and] then [seek] employment.” However, perhaps the decrease in preference for boys over girls has as much to do with the increases in women’s empowerment as it does with the decrease of preference for boys resulting from increased unwelcome behavior.

Results from a survey of 760 Nabd Al Arabs (conducted by YouGov on behalf of Al Aan TV’s Nabd Al Arab program and the online UAE newspaper The National; Ismail, 2013) support the study’s finding about the way girls/women are regarded as compared to boys/men. According to the survey, the majority of Arabs (58%) do not have a gender preference for babies (Ismail, 2013). Only 26% of respondents indicated a preference for baby boys, and 16% of respondents indicated a preference for baby girls (Ismail, 2013).

In response to the study findings, Dr. Al Oraimi, a professor of gender and development at UAE University, said, “Women are now capable of taking care of themselves. They have access to education. They can work and fulfil their potential, so they are equally valued by the society” (Ismail, 2013, para. 1). Rima Sabban, an assistant sociology professor at Zayed University, agreed; these data show that

the woman’s active role is being recognized. Society is getting modernized and women can now generate money to help the family. At the end of the day they’re making a difference, so there’s no reason why someone would choose a boy over

a girl (Ismail, 2013, para. 2).

Although literature that directly states that boys are no longer preferred over girls is scant, as Al Orami and Sabban suggested, there is a logical connection between lack of gender preference for babies and improvements in women's status in the UAE, for which there is ample support in the literature (e.g., Bristol-Rhys, 2010; Crabtree, 2007; Hasso, 2010; Moghadam, 2003; Schvaneveldt et al., 2005; Simadi, 2006).

Women walk behind men. With regard to gender equity, the data showed that grandmothers originally had social status but lost that status during the post-oil era. They were then relegated to household responsibilities. It was interesting that, in their narratives of nomadic life, grandmothers linked gender equality to survival advantage given that their active economic roles in the family were subsequently compromised by gender hierarchy. With the shift in social status, women began to be isolated and separated from men. The expectation that women walk behind men became the norm. However, another shift is occurring such that mothers, daughters, and some grandmothers no longer hold this expectation.

It is logical to assume that this value shift is a manifestation of a larger general shift in values whereas girls are now as valued as boys and adult women are making strides in gaining gender equity, a condition that is widely supported in the literature (e.g., Al Orami, 2011; Cabtree, 2007; Kemp & Zhao, 2016; Sonleitner & Wooldridge, 2014). It is logical that this shift is occurring in part because of the increased acceptance of mixed-gender sociabilities which negates the need to keep distance between unmarried young men and women (Bristol-Rhys, 2019).

Gender Roles

Domestic responsibilities. Domestic roles among the women in this study varied. In the nomadic pre-oil era, grandmothers were active economic partners in subsistence living. They not only took care of domestic responsibilities in the home but outside the home as well. They took care of livestock and worked-side-by-side with the men in the tribe to accomplish community goals. In some instances, women led camel caravans from one city to another and were regarded as leaders in the community. In this sense, grandmothers perceived a sense of equality between men and women.

With the discovery of oil, grandmothers were drawn from the open desert and into home where their responsibilities were limited to household-related domestic responsibilities such as raising children. The men became the breadwinners of the family. Grandmothers and mothers expressed similar perspectives regarding the limited nature of their domestic roles, especially in light of the help from household staff afforded by oil wealth. Daughters, however, have moved away from this gender role and now seek egalitarian gender roles for women and men with regard to domestic responsibilities.

Although these findings contradict those of Kemp and Zhao (2016) who found that in light of women's participation in the workforce, Emirati men did offer women some help with housework and childcare, they are consistent with the historical description of life in the UAE as depicted by Bristol-Rhys (2010) in her book *Emirati Women: Generations of Change*. Bristol-Rhys presents a narrative of Emirati women who have lost their power, freedom, and independence and transitioned from "strong women who worked, gave birth alone in the desert, ran farms, and sold fish in the market" (p. 81) to women who have help with all aspects of their domestic

responsibilities, feel guilt for not knowing how to cook, and fill their days with leisure activities and self-care. Despite this situation, Emirati women continue to seek gender equality in the social sphere, in particular with respect to their “traditional, unpaid, domestic role” (Al Oraithi, 2011, p. 87).

Marriage. As is characteristic of kinship marriage, which is typical in the UAE, all of the grandmothers and mothers in this study married their cousins and, with the exception of three mothers who got married in their first year of college, were typically married at a very young age. Marriages were typically arranged by the patriarchal authority in the family. Now, however, some grandmothers and all mothers and daughters expressed their support for changing values regarding marriage. The women cited the high rate of divorce, family discord, and young women’s increased education and awareness about their rights as reasons for the value shift. Some mothers are speaking out or otherwise taking action to support choice in marriage for their daughters. Daughters expressed nontraditional attitudes toward selecting their future husbands and a low tolerance for family role in arranging their marriage. They also demonstrated a strong nontraditional preference for achieving higher education and economic independence prior to getting married.

Other researchers have found similar conditions among young Emirati women. For example, Schvaneveldt et al. (2005) found that daughters were more likely than their mothers (a) to want to choose their own partner in marriage, (b) to resist marrying at a young age, and (c) to resist family intervention in the marriage process. Additionally, daughters were more likely to opt to delay marriage in favor of attending university (Schvaneveldt et al., 2005) and pursuing careers (Sonleitner & Wooldridge, 2014).

Dress. Observed differences in women's dress provides evidence that gender roles in the UAE have shifted. While grandmothers' style of dress remained almost completely traditional, daughters' dress was typically modern and fashionable. Mothers' dress represented a middle ground where more traditionally modest Makhawarah were more elaborately decorated. Mothers experienced a change in dress when they attended school. Daughters' style of dress was not always approved of by older generations, a situation that placed strain on the daughters and drove them to try to reconcile their personal desires with family expectations and social norms, especially those dictating expectations for how women should dress in public.

Bristol-Rhys (2010) also found that young women feel pressured to maintain a particular appearance in public to reflect family values and maintain the family's respect to keep them in good standing in the community. Although covered outerwear appears to have remained the norm for Gulf women, at least in public (Bristol-Rhys, 2010), young women are increasingly adopting new clothing styles (Sobh, Belk & Gressell, 2011). Unlike the traditional abaya intended to protect a women's modesty and hide her sexuality, the abaya of today is designed in haute couture fashion and intended for the opposite purpose (Sobh et al., 2011).

Females outside the home. Grandmothers' experiences living in Bedouin communities were unique with respect to the acceptance of women outside the home because families lived in tent communities with little privacy and a tribal, as opposed to patriarchal hierarchy. However, as families moved into neighborhood homes and women took on domestic roles, separation of genders became the norm. To facilitate this separation, girls were expected to stay within the home, the family compound, or

immediate neighborhood. Some grandmothers, for example, never allowed their daughters to visit friends, and some stopped allowing their daughters from playing outside when they started developing into women. Some mothers maintained a similar protectiveness with their daughters by not allowing them to play outside when they hit puberty. However, more mothers are allowing their daughters outside the home to participate in activities and events, to travel, and to socialize.

Historically, Emirati women living in the post-oil era have been discouraged from engaging in activities outside the home (Al Orami, 2011; Bristol-Rhys, 2010; Heard-Bey, 2005). However, in recent years, it has become more common for women to engage in activities outside the home when accompanied by female relatives (Sonleitner & Wooldridge, 2014). Young women attending college are exposed to female nonrelatives and entering into friendships with them as well as their male professors (Sonleitner & Wooldridge, 2014). Young women also are participating in study abroad programs (Forster, 2017) and government sponsored youth events (Bristol-Rhys, 2019). Additionally, it has become increasingly more common for young women to interact with nonfamily members in social (Bristol-Rhys, 2019) and work settings, which often including interactions with men (Al-Ali, 2008; Forster, 2017).

Education for women. Most grandmothers in this study did not go to school and seemed embarrassed by this fact and their perceived academic inadequacy. One grandmother was the exception to this rule. Loosening restrictions on women outside of the home led the way for mothers' participation in educational opportunities, although most mothers were unable to take advantage of these opportunities until they were married. For some mothers, the first week of university was their first time away from

parents. All of the daughters in this study were attending university. Some daughters participated in study abroad programs. Like their mothers, some daughters' first week of university was their first time away from parents. In all instances, grandmothers and mothers encouraged their daughters and granddaughters to pursue higher education.

This pattern of education among the women in this study is one that has been identified repeatedly in the literature (see Crabtree, 2007; Khelia, 2010; Matherly, Al Nahyan, & Amin, 2017). That grandmothers and mothers encourage their daughters and granddaughters to pursue advanced education, regardless of their own level of education, suggests that grandmothers and mothers are aware of the value an education has for women in today's UAE (Crabtree, 2007; Matherly et al., 2017). In particular, parents see education as an opportunity to empower women to participate in the workforce outside the home (Crabtree, 2007).

Professional roles. Mothers in this study reported that in the past, they had been expected to work as teachers in schools close to home after graduating from university. Almost all the mothers agreed that today the expectation that women stay home to tend to domestic chores is no longer the norm. Now, women's roles evolve around materialistic life and employment in professional roles. Daughters also are participating in the labor force. Although some work locally, others work internationally. Mothers, more than grandmothers, were likely to support daughters' participation in professional roles.

The participation of women in professional roles is a natural progression following participation in higher education (Sonleitner & Wooldridge, 2014). With the increase in women attending school—70% of Emirati university graduates are women (EUAE, 2020)—the number of women in the workforce has naturally and substantially

increased (Al Oraimi, 2013). In 2019, women held 66% of public sector jobs including 30% of senior leadership positions associated with decision-making roles. [Additionally], women occupy 75% of positions in the education and health sectors; 23,000 Emirati businesswomen run projects worth over AED50 billion and occupy 15% of the positions in the boards of chambers of commerce and industry nationwide. (United Arab Emirates Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation, 2019). Supported by government initiatives such as the National Strategy for Empowerment of Emirati Women (UAE Government Portal, 2020c), the promotion of women into professional positions is expected (Sonleitner & Wooldridge, 2014) as part of the UAE's modernizing agenda (Allagui & Al Najjar, 2018). However, family members continue to have a strong influence on women's career choices (Kemp & Zhao, 2016).

Independent travel. Some daughters in this study have been allowed to travel independently. However, none of the daughters traveled strictly for pleasure. Rather, the purposes for their travel were related to their educational pursuits or jobs. I did note that daughters who were not in this study had been allowed to travel to Kuwait on vacation. I did find that interestingly given the general concern expressed by the mothers and grandmothers over the potential for their daughters and granddaughters to bring shame and dishonor to the family through inappropriate behavior with boys or other acts of misconduct. These findings appear to be supported in the literature. For example, Forster (2017) found that Omani parents are reluctant to grant their daughters permission to participate in study abroad programs or to work overseas if they are not attended by another family member.

Socializing. Government-sponsored youth opportunities provide daughters opportunities for socializing outside the home. Daughters also socialize outside the home with female friends in casual settings including coffee shops, malls, and movie theaters. Although daughters still need permission to go outside the home, most mothers are supportive of their daughters' participation in limited activities outside the home. In some cases, daughters take advantage of opportunities to socialize with their mothers' but without their fathers' permission. Other female relatives also support daughters' activities outside the home. Parents' restriction of their daughters was focused on concern over the potential for bringing shame to the daughters and dishonoring the family's reputation.

The scenarios described by the women in this study are reflective of the general atmosphere in the current UAE. Although coffee shops, movie theaters, and restaurants now provide social spaces for Emirati youth, some young daughters continue to be restricted in their participation in these spaces (Bristol-Rhys, 2010), at least without being accompanied by a male relative (Sonleitner & Wooldridge, 2014). Other daughters are now allowed to leave the home if they accompanied by a female relative (Sonleitner & Wooldridge, 2014). Attendance at university inherently promotes women's engagement in activities outside the home (Sonleitner & Wooldridge, 2014) and is perhaps one of the only occasions where women may venture outside the home with no supervision of any kind. Restriction of women in public and in social situations continues to be a matter of fear over the reputation of the young women and their families (Reichenbach, 2015).

Interaction between genders. Growing up, mothers were not allowed to interact with male nonfamily members once puberty began. Similarly, daughters did not grow up being allowed to interact with nonfamily members. As daughters have begun to

participate in coed youth initiatives and transition to coed work environments, interaction between genders is becoming more common. However, not all purely social interactions are entirely supported by all family members and continue to be allowed only with adequate supervision and restriction. Women in professional settings receive mixed support regarding their interactions with men in the workplace. They continue to struggle to manage interactions with men necessary to fulfill their work obligations and the preservation of traditional norms requiring genders maintain physical separateness. As is the case with socializing, families' concern over women's interactions with men is focused on concern over the potential for bringing shame to the daughters and dishonoring the family's reputation.

These findings are supported in the literature. New social spaces are providing opportunities for boys and girls to interact in the public domain (Bristol-Rhys, 2019). Sometimes, as is the case with youth initiatives such as Youth and Vision 2021, Youth Hub, and Emirates Youth Council, these opportunities are sponsored by the government (see UAE Government Portal, 2020d). Concern over gossip and the potential for tarnishing one's reputation keeps young Emirati women hypervigilant in their behavior in public spaces and interactions with peers outside their gender (Reichenbach, 2015). Access to digital technologies and social media have provided a less risky alternative for cross-gender relationships among youth in the UAE (Sokol & Sisler, 2010).

Family Connectedness

Women of all three generations reported a loss of family connectedness. Grandmothers and mothers in particular felt nostalgic about the good old days when they lived in tight neighborhoods and families were connected through close physical and

emotional bonds. A desire to maintain a sense of community and connectedness with families was observed in the symbolic social spaces, such as Majlis and modern tents, maintained inside family villas. To maintain family connectedness, grandmothers host family gatherings every Friday with the expectation that all extended family members attend. That fact that some mothers are willing to relocate to other cities with their unmarried daughters to support them in their educational or professional endeavors speaks to the importance of family connectedness for these women. To maintain connectedness with their families, daughters relied primarily on virtual connections afforded by digital technologies and social media applications.

Others have reported similar findings. Bristol-Rhys (2010) reported that grandmothers in her study lamented the structural breakdown of the traditional homogeneous community and the loss of close-knit relationships with the members of the community. Sonleitner and Wooldridge (2014) reported that mothers and daughters are separating themselves from their extended families and choosing to live independently as nuclear families.

Family Relatedness

Both grandmothers and mothers demonstrated a need for maintaining relatedness to their cultural traditions. They both reminisced about early life despite the hardships. Mothers, but more particularly grandmothers, showed strong preferences to maintain specific traditions in relation to dress and food. Grandmothers were less flexible than mother in giving up their traditional style of dressing and in serving nontraditional food. Daughters, who preferred haute couture fashion and Western food, demonstrated little interest in maintaining family relatedness.

Others also have found a loss of family relatedness among youths living in times of rapid change (e.g., Khelifa, 2010; Manago, 2014). The shift in relatedness is evident not only in aspects of hospitality, including food, but also in traditional styles of dress (Al Marri & Caielli, 2018). Despite this general shift away from domestic traditions and toward Westernization, Khelifa (2010) found that women remain attached to the aspects of their culture rooted in their Islamic beliefs.

Changes Across Generations

As demonstrated in the findings, orientations to cultural values differed among the generations. A summary of the women's value orientations is presented in Table 2. Gemeinschaft value orientations indicate a preference for the importance of family unity, interdependence, and obligation; ascribed gender roles; restricted social interaction; parental authority; and traditions. Gesellschaft value orientations indicate a preference for the importance of independence, gender equality, individual choice, unrestricted social interaction, and individual achievement. Mixed value orientations indicate differences in the perceptions among women within in a particular generation.

As indicated in the table, grandmothers held traditional Gemeinschaft orientations for all values except for marriage (mixed value orientations), boys valued over girls, and education for women (Gesellschaft orientation). Mothers did not hold any Gemeinschaft values. They had mixed value orientations toward family connectedness, family relatedness, and six of the nine domains of gender roles. For the remaining three gender role values and the gender equity values, the mothers held Gesellschaft orientations. Daughters held Gesellschaft values for all values except family connectedness for which they had mixed value orientations. Although the generations did not entirely conform to

any one value orientation, overall, the grandmothers held Gemeinschaft value orientations, the mothers held mixed value orientations, and the daughters held Gesellschaft orientations. The value orientations associated with each of the three generations suggest the greatest tensions exist between grandmothers and granddaughters with mother serving as a buffer of sorts between the two. The value changes evident between the generations in this study are the result of variations in the socialization of the women in each generation.

Table 2

Changes in Value Orientations Across Generations

Cultural value	Orientation		
	Grandmother	Mother	Daughter
Gender equity			
Boys valued over girls	Gesellschaft	Gesellschaft	Gesellschaft
Men walk in front of women	Gemeinschaft	Gesellschaft	Gesellschaft
Gender roles			
Domestic responsibilities	Gemeinschaft	Gesellschaft	Gesellschaft
Marriage	Mixed values	Gesellschaft	Gesellschaft
Dress	Gemeinschaft	Mixed values	Gesellschaft
Females outside the home	Gemeinschaft	Mixed values	Gesellschaft
Education for women	Gesellschaft	Gesellschaft	Gesellschaft
Professional roles	Gemeinschaft	Mixed values	Gesellschaft
Independent travel	Gemeinschaft	Mixed values	Gesellschaft
Socializing	Gemeinschaft	Mixed values	Gesellschaft
Interaction between genders	Gemeinschaft	Mixed values	Gesellschaft
Family connectedness	Gemeinschaft	Mixed values	Mixed values
Family relatedness (dress/food)	Gemeinschaft	Mixed values	Gesellschaft

As indicated in the table, grandmothers held traditional *Gemeinschaft* orientations for all values except for marriage (mixed value orientations), boys valued over girls, and education for women (*Gesellschaft* orientation). Mothers did not hold any *Gemeinschaft* values. They had mixed value orientations toward family connectedness, family relatedness, and six of the nine domains of gender roles. For the remaining three gender role values and the gender equity values, the mothers held *Gesellschaft* orientations. Daughters held *Gesellschaft* values for all values except family connectedness for which they had mixed value orientations. Although the generations did not entirely conform to any one value orientation, overall, the grandmothers held *Gemeinschaft* value orientations, the mothers held mixed value orientations, and the daughters held *Gesellschaft* orientations. The value orientations associated with each of the three generations suggest the greatest tensions exist between grandmothers and granddaughters with mother serving as a buffer of sorts between the two. The value changes evident between the generations in this study are the result of variations in the socialization of the women in each generation.

Socialization of Emirati Women

Value changes from one generation to the next occur through socialization (Kuczynski, Parkin, & Pitman, 2015), a process inherently driven by traditions and social norms (Hurriez, 2013). In this way, “socialization is a mechanism of intergenerational value change” (Kuczynski et al., 2015, p. 135). Therefore, it is understandable how value changes observed among the generations of Emirati women in this study are the result of socialization to changing customs and traditions associated with the shift from a *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft* environment.

That grandmothers hold predominately *Gemeinschaft* value orientations suggests they are a generation socialized with traditional values and minimal influence of changing ecological, social, and economic conditions. That mothers hold mixed value orientations suggests they are a transitioning generation socialized with traditional values and moderate influence of changing ecological, social, and economic conditions. That daughters predominantly hold *Gesellschaft* value orientations suggests they are a generation socialized with Westernized values and highly influenced by modern ecological, social, and economic conditions.

Despite seemingly obvious distinctions between generations, actual differences in socialization may be less clear not only because socialization is not unidirectional but also because it is influenced by forces outside the family through social media and access to global knowledge (see Kuczynski et al., 2015)—families and tribes no longer function as the sole sources of socialization for youth (Bristol-Rhys, 2019). Additionally, parents enable the resocialization of their children by providing spaces for value ambiguity in which their children can maneuver to develop new and adopt altered cultural values (Gelfand, 2019). These spaces of in-betweenness provide room for youth to negotiate the tensions between cultural values associated with interdependence and the autonomy they seek (Manago, 2014) created by the conflicting social messages they receive from the traditional homes in which they live and the Westernized schools in which they study (Schvaneveldt et al., (2005). Because socialization is bidirectional and not limited to young adulthood, parents also are being resocialized to new social contexts and subsequently changing cultural norms (Kuczynski et al., 2015), a process made more vivid in the rapidly modernizing social landscape of the UAE (Oraimi, 2013).

These conditions are evident among the women in this study. On the one hand, grandmothers and mothers encourage their daughters to seek advanced degrees but then some daughters are held back from participating in study abroad opportunities or pursuing careers. Daughters who pursue careers despite resistance from their families are criticized for their lack of attention to domestic chores. Daughters who are encouraged to pursue careers in which they must interact with men must find ways to fulfill their job functions while respecting the “unspoken tradition . . . [that] males and females . . . keep a distance when interacting with each other” (Daughter A). Leaders of the UAE also place pressure on youth to be the strength of the nation (Al Maktoum, 2016c) and for advancing its future (Al Maktoum, 2016b). In this, daughters also are socialized to believe in their capacity to be leaders and drive change yet early socialization in the home perpetuates daughters’ negative perceptions of their capacity to be leaders (Al Orami, 2013).

Changes in the socialization of women in the UAE are ongoing as the nation continues to move in a *Gesellschaft* orientation and adopt Western philosophies, traditions, and behaviors. As collectivist cultures become more independent, the less they react negatively to and resist violations to cultural norms (Stamkou et al., 2019). Thereby it can be hypothesized that as the UAE continues its path in a *Gesellschaft* direction and daughters continue to act as leaders of change, resistance to change will diminish, and more modern and Westernized patterns of socialization will become the norm.

Research Question 2

Research Question 1 was focused on the intergenerational value changes among Emirati women in the UAE. The focus of Research Question 2 was the factors that have

contributed to those changes. Research Question 2 was, “What have been the main factors involved in inducing cultural value changes across three generations in modern UAE?” More specifically I wondered, “What contextual cultural factors have influenced intergenerational value changes?” (Research Question 2a) and “How has the education and empowerment of women influenced intergenerational value changes?” (Research Question 2b).

The main factors driving changes in cultural values emerged in Theme 2 as ecological, economic, and social elements of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* environments. Those factors were associated with a shift from poor subsistence living and self-contained, homogeneous, semi-nomadic Bedouin neighborhoods to a wealthy market economy and luxury living amid diversity, opportunities for education for women, and regular contact with the outside world. Three contextual cultural factors also emerged in the data as contributing factors to intergenerational value change: respect, connectedness, and relatedness. A discussion of all these factors is presented here in relation to their influence on intergenerational value changes specific to values pertaining to gender equity, gender roles, family connectedness, and family relatedness when applicable.

Ecological, Economic, and Social Factors

For the participants in this study, oil wealth contributed to the shift from subsistence living and self-contained, homogeneous, semi-nomadic Bedouin neighborhoods to a market economy and living in luxury villas amid diversity and regular contact with the outside world, substantially driven through education for women. Wealth also contributed to a shift in technology that led not only to better and healthier living

conditions but also access to digital technologies and social media that further connected Emiratis to the outside world. That contact with the outside world inherently included exposure to diverse populations and ways of thinking that have driven value change across generations of Emirati women with regard to gender equity, gender roles, family connectedness, and family relatedness.

One can look to any history of the UAE to confirm the accuracy of the historical narrative that emerged from the data in this study (e.g., Al Orami, 2011; Bristol-Rhys, 2010; Heard-Bey, 2005). Additionally, the literature supports the finding that exposure to the outside world drives value change. Market economies that require interaction between nations promote community independence (Inglehart & Norris, 2003; Manago, 2014; Manago & Greenfield, 2011). In the universities, political and university leaders promote the modernization of women through Westernization of thought (Khelifa, 2010; Schvaneveldt et al., 2005) that drives cultures toward independence (Manago, 2014). These altered cultural orientations propel women into professional careers (Kemp & Zhao, 2016). Once in Westernized organizations, women are exposed to conflicting value systems as they enter the workforce in professional positions (Samier, 2015).

Through exposure to Western thought, Emirati women have begun to adopt modern Western values (Matherly et al., 2017) that are in stark contrast to the traditional Bedouin values for gender roles, family connectedness, and family relatedness (Schvaneveldt et al., 2005; Samier, 2015). By broadening learning environments (Hansen, Postmes, Tovote, & Bos, 2014), access to modern technology further provides access to the outside world and Westernized thought, subsequently changing values and decreasing the influence and authority of the traditional patriarchal structure

(Schvaneveldt et al., 2005) in a Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft direction (Abu Aleon et al., 2019; Weinstock et al., 2014), especially with regard to interaction between genders (Manago & Pacheco, 2019). In addition to internally driven exposure to the outside world, migrants, who make up 90% of the population of the UAE, have had a considerable influence on the previously homogeneous and traditional Bedouin culture (Akinci, 2020) of the UAE and ultimately the social structures and values of the Emirati people (Al-Khoury, 2010).

Empowerment of Women

Daughters in this study identified two specific sources of empowerment. One source was support from their family: their mothers and grandmothers in particular. The other source was the government. In both cases, the greatest form of empowerment came in the form of opportunities to pursue higher education.

Support from families. Daughters stated that their grandmothers and mothers encouraged them to pursue an advanced education. Some grandmothers and most mothers encouraged the daughters to make personal choices regarding marriage, including the choice to delay marriage to complete their education and to choose their husband. Some mothers also encouraged their daughters to pursue professional careers and permitted their daughters to engage in educational and social opportunities outside the bounds of traditional expectations for women.

With the support of their grandmothers and mothers, empowered daughters are going to school, working, traveling abroad for school and work, traveling alone for social events and activities, socializing outside the home, attending and participating in events, interacting with male colleagues and friends, dressing in nontraditional styles, not

covering their heads, choosing their husbands, marrying later in life, and having fewer children. These behaviors align with modern values of gender equity and autonomy for women.

Saqr, Tennant, and Stringer (2014) also found that Emirati mothers supported their daughters' pursuit of higher education. Mothers were most likely to encourage their daughters so that they could earn incomes and be less financially dependent on their husbands (Saqr, Tennant, & Stringer, 2014). In the case of divorce, educated women also would be better able to support themselves and their children (Saqr et al., 2014).

Interestingly, Emirati women traditionally have been heavily influenced by the families (Crabtree, 2007), in particular the role models to whom they were exposed growing up. Women also predominantly make life choices based on their family roles; wives look toward their husbands for guidance and daughters look toward their families (Dubai Women's Establishment, 2018) found that. However, in this study, only three of the mothers had bachelor's degrees, a condition that demonstrates daughters were breaking boundaries and stepping away from the models to which they were exposed growing up. It is possible that encouragement from their grandmothers, their mothers, and the government helped the daughters in this study overcome this historical pattern of decision making. Additionally, increased levels of autonomy among young women may have helped motivate them to be more self-reliant in their decision-making processes (Dubai Women's Establishment, 2018; Sonleitner & Wooldridge, 2014).

Government initiatives. Government initiatives to educate women have further empowered daughters in this study who cited their education as an opportunity to interact

with diverse populations, including men, and one that opened their eyes to issues of gender inequity. This finding was not surprising.

Since the establishment of the UAE in 1971, the political leadership in the nation has removed obstacles to achieving gender equity (Ahmad, AlDarmaki, & Almutawa, 2017) and encouraged women's participation in (a) education; (b) the labor market (Al Oraimi, 2013; Crabtree, 2007; Hasso, 2010; Moghadam, 2013; Sonleitner & Wooldrige, 2014); and (c) social, economic, and political leadership roles, action that has played a substantial role in the movement away from patriarchal rule and toward the recognition of women as equivalent and valued citizens (Al Oraimi, 2011, 2013). In fact, empowerment strategies and women's access to higher education are believed to be the driving force behind changes in attitudes toward the perception of women at both the familial and societal levels (Bristol-Rhys, 2010; Crabtree, 2007; Hasso, 2010; Moghadam, 2013; Schvaneveldt et al., 2005) and changes in women's levels of personal autonomy (Sonleitner & Woolridge, 2014).

Supported by the government's efforts to empower women (Hasso, 2010; Moghadam, 2013), such as through the National Strategy for Empowerment of Emirati Women (United Arab Emirates Portal, 2020c), daughters are growing up under a rapidly changing society in which they are viewed as leaders and filling leadership positions as educators, businesswomen, ambassadors, and ministers (Bristol-Rhys, 2010; Crabtree, 2007; Schvaneveldt et al., 2005; Simadi, 2006). "We see women now, [and] their view of themselves, differently. Things are changing and changing fast" (Alibeli as quoted in Dubai Women's Establishment, 2018, p. 47). Truly, the change has been so apparent as to prompt a warning from the vice president and prime minister of United Arab Emirates,

and ruler of Dubai: “I have said it loud and clear: Beware, men, lest women deprive you of all the leadership positions in the country” (Al Maktoum, 2013). Leaders have not only recognized women’s potential for filling leadership roles in the UAE, they have acknowledged women’s roles in the overall growth and fulfillment of the nation. In that regard, the vice president and prime minister of United Arab Emirates, and ruler of Dubai said, “Behind every great community stand great women, leading each generation and raising our families and nation higher” (Al Maktoum, 2016a).

Respect

Respect for their families was evident among all three generations of women in this study and contributed to cultural continuity regarding their adherence to traditional values. Grandmothers demonstrated the most respect through their overt adherence to traditional practices and values despite obvious changes in cultural values and social norms. Mothers demonstrated a moderate level of respect through their general adherence to traditional values but acceptance of some Westernized values and social norms. As women in transition, mothers face the dilemma of having to compromise respect for the patriarchal hierarchy in their families in order to respect the wishes of their daughters. In some cases, such as with daughters socializing in coffee shops and movie theaters, mothers chose to respect their daughters’ growing sense of independence. Daughters’ demonstration of respect varied. In some cases, daughters respected their grandmothers and family traditions by attending Friday gatherings despite their lack of interest in doing so. Access to digital technologies that let daughters communicate with their friends and the outside world during these events helped them better cope with having to attend them.

However, in other cases, daughters engaged in behaviors outside the home of which they knew their fathers' would approve.

The literature supports the idea that changing cultural values toward independence challenge youth's respect for their parents and family expectations (Manago, 2014). However, through conscious negotiation of opposing value systems, youth do demonstrate a balance between respect for traditional expectations and the influences of their peers (Manago, 2014). Much of that balance is the result of young women's desires to maintain public perceptions of respectability (Reichenbach, 2015). For the daughters in this study, it appears that at least in some circumstances, the risk to their reputations is outweighed by their desires for autonomy.

Family Connectedness

As reported in a previous section, women of all three generations reported a loss of family connectedness. Grandmothers and mothers in particular were nostalgic and mourned the loss of their traditional lifestyle. Grandmothers especially demonstrated a desire to maintain a sense of community and connectedness with families and traditions. Mothers demonstrated their willingness to adapt their lifestyles to maintain connectedness with their daughters. Daughters mostly seemed satisfied to maintain virtual connectedness using digital technologies and social media applications.

Family connectedness has been conceptualized as a perceived sense of nurturing (Eisenberg, Ackard, & Resnick, 2007) and is the amalgamation of perceived support, respect, openness, and choice to be connected (Akyil et al., 2014). When children feel supported and respected, feel they can speak openly with their parents, and feel they have a choice in familial closeness, they are more likely to remain engaged with their parents

both physically and emotionally (Akyil et al., 2014). In this way, connectedness and autonomy are interrelated and complementary rather than repellent and aversive (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005) so that family connectedness can have a positive influence on the well-being of young people (Stuart & Jose, 2014). For the daughters in this study, family connectedness may be providing daughters with a sense of support that in turn is increasing their beliefs in themselves as empowered women and motivating them to continue to strive for gender equity in all areas of their lives.

Family Relatedness

As reported in a previous section, both grandmothers and mothers demonstrated a need for maintaining relatedness to their cultural traditions. Mothers, but more particularly grandmothers, showed strong preferences to maintain specific traditions in relation to dress and food. Daughters, who preferred haute couture fashion and Western food, demonstrated little interest in maintaining family relatedness.

The literature suggests a trend of diminishing relatedness among youths living in times of rapid change (e.g., Khelifa, 2010; Manago, 2014). However, Khelifa (2010) also has claimed that women still maintain a sense of relatedness with their Arab-Islamic values. These seemingly contradictory conditions make sense considering the loss of relatedness among Emiratis has been attributed to their emigration from deserts to cities and their adaptation to modern amenities (Al Marri & Caielli, 2018). Changes in physical living conditions logically and inherently precipitate changes in behavior, which lead to changes in values toward “independence, autonomy, freedom, and assertiveness” (Khelifa, 2010). However, because they do not collide with Islamic beliefs, Emirati women are able to embrace some aspects of Western culture and distance themselves

from some aspects of traditional Emirati culture while still maintain a sense of cultural relatedness in some capacity (Khelifa, 2010). Similarly, Kagitcibasi (2005) has claimed that autonomy and relatedness can occupy middle grounds between interdependence and independence during cultural value shifts in collectivistic societies.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 was, “To what extent do intergenerational value changes represent the younger generation’s movement away from the interdependence and shared group consciousness of a collectivist society (i.e., *Gemeinschaft*) and towards new forms of non-Western individualism and autonomy (i.e., *Gesellschaft*) characterized by familial connectedness and a sense of maintained sociocultural relatedness? With the exception of family connectedness, toward which daughters held mixed value orientations, the daughters in this study unanimously held *Gesellschaft* value orientations toward family relatedness and all domains of gender equity and gender roles (see Table 2). Collectively, these value orientations indicate that daughters value independence and gender equity in all aspects of their lives and that while maintaining a sense of connectedness with their families, daughters have developed a separateness with traditional Emirati culture (lack of relatedness). This finding is supported in the literature that suggests because cultural values are associated with interdependence, any move from interdependence to autonomy will inherently involve a distancing from cultural values (Manago, 2014).

Although the value orientations of the daughters strongly indicated *Gesellschaft* thinking, they reflect only a partial movement toward Western individualism and autonomy with only limited connectedness and lack of relatedness. All of the daughters were college graduates or students; however, only some had had opportunities to study

abroad or were working; participating in events/volunteering; socializing at the movies, coffee houses, and malls; interacting with men; wearing haute couture; and not covering their heads fully in public. The lack of experience of full independence and gender equality demonstrates that the daughters in this study continue to function under social constraints and are not fully autonomous. Many of the daughters made direct statements to this effect, recognizing the need to further empower themselves. Most of the daughters maintained a sense of connectedness through continued participation in Friday gatherings with extended family. They also maintained virtual connectedness with their families using their mobile phones and digital applications. However, the daughters were less interested in maintaining cultural relatedness. These findings are not surprising.

Disconnect between values and behaviors. Despite government initiatives promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, Emirati women are not always fully supported by their families, in particular by the men in their families (Alibeli, 2015). Women also continue to face the gender paradox in the workplace (Crabtree, 2007) where they are empowered to participate as valued members of a team but are excluded by the expectation of physical distance between the genders.

Connectedness. Family connectedness fosters a sense of nurturing (Eisenberg et al., 2007), support, respect, openness, and choice to be connected (Akyil et al., 2014). When children do not feel supported and respected, do not feel that they can speak openly with their parents, and do not feel they have a choice in familial closeness, they are more likely to distance themselves from their parents both physically and emotionally (Akyil et al., 2014). In this sense, it is possible that daughters in this study, who are restrained from full gender equality and autonomy, had mixed value orientations toward maintaining

connectedness with their families because they generally do not feel nurtured and specifically do not feel supported and respected with regard to their gender equal and independent mindsets and respective life goals. Additionally, because daughters' perceptions about gender equality and autonomy often clash with the perceptions of their families, daughters may not feel they can talk to their families about their feelings, concerns, and wishes. Finally, because participation in Friday gatherings is mandatory, daughters do not have a choice as to whether they remain connected. Combined, these conditions help illuminate a possible explanation for daughters mixed value orientations toward connectedness.

Relatedness. Not all forms of relatedness and autonomy thrive equally in both *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* environments (Greenfield, 2009). For example, social interaction among families is promoted in *Gemeinschaft* environments but are not well adapted to *Gesellschaft* environments where physical distance is inherent in independent living (Greenfield, 2009). Therefore, when shifts in such domains occur, accommodating behavior becomes evident (Greenfield, 2009). In this study, daughters made accommodations for their lack of physical proximity with family members using digital technologies. However, there is an inverted relationship between connectedness and relatedness whereas connectedness across physical distances, enabled through digital technologies, decreases the capacity for relatedness (Rainbow, 2014). This anomaly helps explain why daughters in this study expressed mixed orientation values for connectedness but *Gesellschaft* orientations for relatedness suggesting that although they still maintained some import to staying connected with their families, they did not find the same advantage to maintaining cultural traditions associated with dress and food.

Additionally, because feeling “related to a family or group will facilitate internalization of values and behaviors endorsed in that setting” (Deci & Ryan, 2008, p. 17), daughters’ lack of relatedness in this study may be contributing to the development of their *Gesellschaft* value orientations in other domains.

Research Question 4

Social change is a complex, dynamic, bidirectional process, dependent on a variety of interconnected factors, including options and support for change (Pinquart & Silbereisen, 2004). Therefore, coping with and navigating social change requires active participation among those experiencing the change (Pinquart & Silbereisen, 2004). For Research Question 4, I asked, “How do the women in intergenerational families negotiate differences in their cultural values?”

The data showed that with the exception of valuing boys over girls and holding moderately traditional views on marriage, grandmothers, continued to maintain traditional *Gemeinschaft* values. They preferred traditional dress and food, and longed for family connections and community engagement provided by neighborhood living. Although grandmothers were not able to avoid living in free standing villas in diverse communities, they did manage to maintain some family connectivity by continuing to expect extended family to visit every Friday. They also managed to maintain their preferred style of dress and food, at least when they were preparing meals for themselves. However, grandmothers were less able to maintain their loss of control over their daughters and granddaughters. Although grandmothers overall supported educational opportunities for women, they were less inclined to approve of women studying abroad, working, socializing, interacting with men, and compromising their modesty. Few

grandmothers demonstrated or otherwise indicated they publicly shared their distaste for the cultural changes in the midst of which they find themselves. They negotiated the loss of the past through nostalgic recollections of “the old days.”

Mothers fully embraced values associated with gender equity as well as gender role values pertaining to domestic responsibilities, marriage, and education for women. Mothers partially embraced gender role values associated with dress, females outside the home, professional roles, independent travel, socializing, and interaction between genders and the values associated with cultural traditions.

Mothers managed changes in dress styles for themselves and their daughters in different ways. For themselves, mothers wore traditional but slightly fancier dresses than the grandmothers. For their daughters, the mothers allowed a certain degree of freedom in dress. Mothers also managed the extent to which their daughters are allowed to engage in activities outside the home, including working, traveling for school or pleasure, socializing, and interacting with men. Mothers also made decisions regarding their own and their daughters’ participation in family gatherings and their consumption of traditional foods. Mothers negotiated family connectedness through digital media.

Daughters demonstrated Gesellschaft orientations to all the cultural values pertaining to gender equity and gender roles as well cultural traditions pertaining to food. Daughters had mixed values with regard to family connectedness. Some daughters negotiated with their mothers or both parents for permission to engage in activities outside the home, including working, traveling for school or pleasure, socializing, and interacting with men. They also brought their mothers to compromise regarding dress and food choices. Daughters negotiated family connectedness through digital media. In some

cases, daughters forewent their preferred behavior out of respect for their families. In other cases, daughters by-passed resistance from fathers with traditional mindsets by engaging in forbidden behaviors without their fathers' knowledge. All of the daughters indicated their commitment to further empowering themselves.

For the women in this study, the capacity to negotiate cultural differences was inherently linked to their awareness of the contextual changes in their lives as well as in the associated changes in values. Their awareness was evident in the words and phrases they used during the interviews, including "heterogeneous," "homogeneous," "gender egalitarian society," "traditional tribal consciousness" "open-minded," "urban change," "changes in our culture," "cohesion and relatedness," and "intergenerational value negotiation." Use of such language demonstrated they understood the constraints placed upon them and the need to negotiate their status and roles as women in a nation of rapidly changing cultural values.

That I found differing cultural values among the grandmothers, mothers, and daughters, differences that demonstrated a sense of nostalgia among the grandmothers in this study, was not surprising. The literature has shown that Emirati women demonstrate a sense of nostalgia for the traditional Bedouin lifestyle (e.g., Crabtree) and the coexistence of paradoxical value orientations within societies (e.g, Brannen & Salk, 2000; Fang, 2011; Teo, Graham, Yeoh & Levy, 2003). According to Fang (2011), these paradoxical values and cultural identities coexist both within societies and among members of those societies. Cultural shocks, clashes, and collisions that arise from the juxtaposition of paradoxical cultural values provide opportunities for cultural learning (Fang, 2011). When members of a society recognize cultural differences, they are better

able to constructively and creatively manage cultural change (Fang, 2011), for example by avoiding forced choice through syncretism (Sobh et al., 2010). Awareness and creativity, combined with a degree of ambivalence toward intergenerational differences (Teo, Graham, Yeoh & Levy, 2003), contributes to a “negotiated culture” (Brannen & Salk, 2000, p. 452). It is through such awareness and negotiation that multi-value oriented societies may begin to consider their cultural nearness rather than their cultural differences (Eslamieh, 2018).

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

Although intergenerational value changes were evident across the three generations of Emirati women who participated in this study (see Table 2), the speed at which those changes occurred varied. The speed at which value changes occurred between generations was inferred by the degree to which differences in Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft perspectives were evident across generations. The most rapid changes in values are evident for boys being valued over girls (gender equity) and support for the education of women (gender roles) whereas all three generations held Gesellschaft value orientations for these domains. The second most rapid change in value is evident for marriage where grandmothers held mixed value orientations and mothers and daughters held Gesellschaft value orientations. The third most rapid changes in values are evident for men walking in front of women (gender equity) and domestic responsibilities (gender roles) where mothers held Gesellschaft value orientations like their daughters. The fourth most rapid changes in values are evident for family relatedness and the gender role domains such as dress, women outside the home, professional roles, independent travel, socializing, and interaction between genders; where mothers held mixed value orientations for the domains. The least rapid change in value is evident for family connectedness, where daughters, like their mothers, held mixed value orientations.

The following section includes a discussion of the pulling and opposing forces contributing to intergenerational tensions that are helpful for understanding why the speeds at which value changes have occurred in the UAE differ. This chapter also

includes discussions of the study significance and implications for leadership, limitations, and future research. Final thoughts are provided in a conclusion.

The Pulling and Resisting Forces of Intergenerational Tension

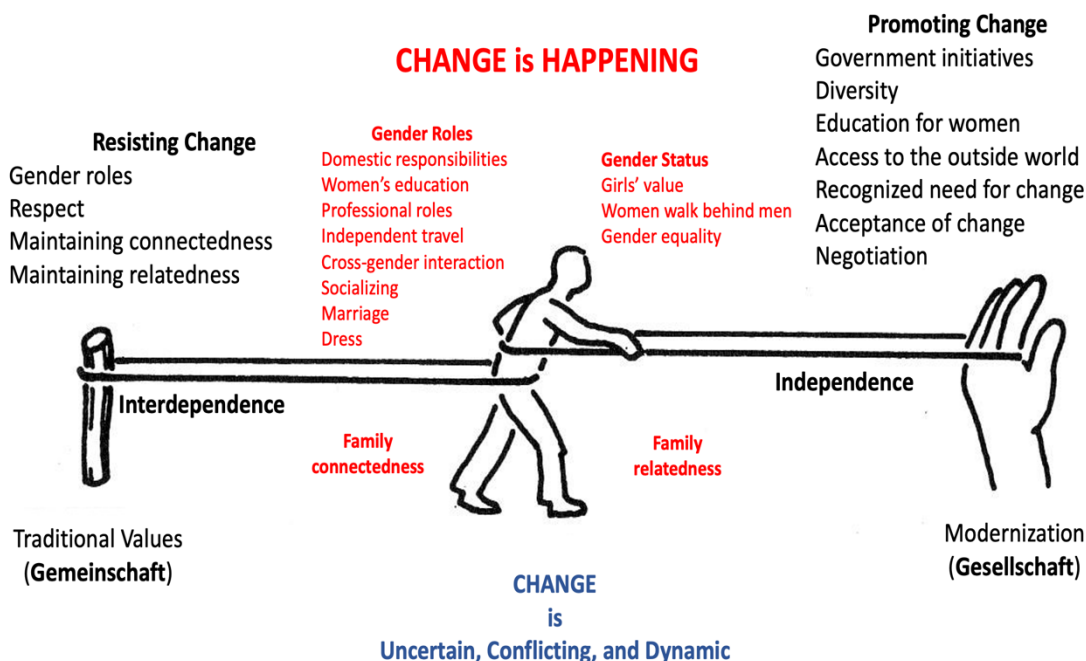
Ecological, social, and economic factors drive shifts from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft environments. Those shifts subsequently drive shifts in cultural values. Although shifts between Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft environments can occur bidirectionally, in general, they typically occur unidirectionally and, consequently, facilitate value change. Because the ecological, social, and economic factors driving the shifts in cultural values influence different members of society in different ways, at different rates, and in some cases not at all, different members of society may experience shifts in cultural values in different ways, at different rates, and in some cases not at all. Active resistance to change may slow cultural change within and across generations. Conversely, acceptance and promotion of change may propel cultural change within and across generations. These dynamic relationships commonly result in a collision between conflicting values within individuals, families, and societies.

The UAE government's orientation to the future, which has paved the way for rapid sociodemographic changes at both the national and individual levels, has produced some Gesellschaft environments, inclusive of associated cultural values, that contrast with long-held traditional values of the Emirati tribes representative of Gemeinschaft environments. The relationship between the two environments is complex. To achieve social equilibrium, the UAE Cabinet recently launched a national campaign, Cohesive Family 2021, to strengthen family ties and to preserve cultural identity while simultaneously promoting competing agendas of empowerment of youth and women.

For families in the UAE, the coexistence of opposing cultural identities has created a paradox inside the family. Pulling and resisting forces between modern Gesellschaft environments and traditional Gemeinschaft environments require daughters to engage in constant negotiation as they navigate colliding and conflicting cultural values across generations. This tension is especially obvious for daughters in leadership positions (Al Oraimi, 2013). Figure 1 is a graphic representation of these pulling and resisting forces in relation to cultural value change in the UAE using Senge's (1991) rubber band metaphor.

Figure 1

Graphic Representation of Pulling and Resisting Forces on Value Change



In the model, the elements on the left represent the characteristics of a Gemeinschaft environment, and the elements on the right represent the characteristics of a Gesellschaft environment. The rubber band represents the tension the conflicting environments put on individuals as they manage cultural change. In the context of the UAE, the daughters' values are well aligned with the forces pulling change in a forward direction, and the grandmothers' values are well-aligned with the forces resisting change. Mothers, with mostly mixed orientation values contribute to both the pulling and resisting of cultural change. Similarly, as government initiatives are put forth to pull change and empower women, hierarchal traditions of a male dominated society resist and oppose those changes. To manage the imposed tension upon their desires for gender equity and autonomy, daughters engage in value negotiation both with themselves and their families.

Significance

Little empirical research exists about intergenerational value change across generations of Emirati women. This study is significant because results from this study fill a gap in the literature in this regard. Specifically, results from this study shed light on women's perceptions about gender equity, gender roles, family connectedness, family relatedness, and the socialization of women in the UAE. They provide insight into how various factors contribute to value change across generations and how each generation of women, in particular the daughters' generation, understand and negotiate these changes within the conflicting family and social structures in which they live. Additionally, this study is unique in its examination of the topic through the lens of social change and human development (see Greenfield, 2009), including the concepts of connectedness (Akyil et al., 2014; Eisenberg et al., 2007; Rainbow, 2014), autonomy, and relatedness as

they function in cultural contexts (see Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005), to capture the unique experiences of Emirati women in a changing society.

This study also contributes to the literature on leadership. Insight gained from this study informs the field of cross-cultural leadership and female leadership development in the Gulf region. Finally, this study is significant for its potential practical implications for leadership.

Supporting current UAE leaders. Insight gained in this study can be used to support current UAE leaders in their efforts to empower women, a process that requires balancing progressive social systems, including education, employment, and social welfare, with the values and expectations of citizens of all generations and genders. A thorough understanding of the female journey negotiating the long-held values of older generations in the face of increasing opportunities offered by the UAE government may help policy makers and leadership practitioners develop programs that are more aligned with one another and thus better support women in their journey to gender equity and autonomy.

Personal leadership opportunities. During data collection for this study, I was inspired to continue taking an active leadership role in the empowerment of Emirati women. During my interview with Daughter E, she said to me,

Your research is of a great value for society. . . . Through this interview, I became aware of the factors that shaped my behavior over time. . . . I now understand why I am behaving this way, and the generational gap between myself and my parents. . . . I now understand the source of conflict in the family. . . . I now know where the obstacles and social barriers are coming from. . . . I wish you can lead this

dialogue on a larger scale.

Her words inspired me to consider opportunities for large-scale mentorship of young women. In this regard, I believe youth circles is a great venue to initiate this leadership dialogue in which young women can share a voice of value change that not only promote understanding around intergenerational value gap, but also mirror their personal journeys in balancing familial values while achieving personal agency.

During my interview with Daughter F, she said, “We need to empower Emirati men to catch up with these changes. . . . Mothers are changing, but men are still lagging behind.” Her words inspired me to consider ways to help men better understand the value of gender equity. In this regard, I propose a men’s program.

Youth circles. Findings from this study show that Emirati women face unique challenges in balancing traditional family values with emerging youth values focused on gender equity, autonomy, and greater interaction with the outside world. They also underscore daughters’ need to negotiate these conflicting values and the frustrations they feel for having to do so. Awareness of intergenerational value differences and the value change process is important to daughters’ successful navigation of the opportunities presented through government programs and resistant social values evident not only in the community at large but within their own families. Participation in youth circles can provide women an opportunity to share their experiences and thereby not only validate their own experiences but generate solidarity among the population of young women in the UAE, a condition Al Orami (2013) says is essential for elevating women empowerment through leadership education. Additionally, participation in youth circle can provide the younger generation of women with the tools they need to negotiate

intergenerational value change within their existing family structures and relationships. However, not only could youth circles help Emirati women empower themselves as individuals, they could help them become leaders of change.

The daughter generation of Emirati women is “uniquely positioned socially” (Manago, 2014) to influence family value systems and transition into modern society by challenging their early socialization, seeking out new professional roles and selves, and reevaluating power structures. However, these pioneers of value change lack the full support they need to engender older generations of men and women and their young male peers to accommodate and recognize the affordances of a Gesellschaft society characterized by gender equality and autonomy for women. Youth circles can serve as guides to initiate leadership dialogue among the participants to help them understand the emerging values of their young population as well as their personal desires and leadership aspirations so they may most effectively engender value change among resistant members of their society and achieve personal agency.

Men’s program. Among Arab Bedouins, men have been found to hold less favorable attitudes toward women (Alibeli, 2015) and toward gender equality and female independence when compared to women (Abu Aleon et al., 2019). I hypothesize that this difference may be perpetuated by differences in socialization between the genders. Not only do men and women study in segregated school environments, women graduates outnumber men in the higher education, accounting for 70% of university graduates according to the EUAE (2020). Therefore, it is likely women are exposed to differing philosophies of gender expectations when compared to men, and men are not engaged in programs or environments that challenge their attitudes and sociocultural norms that lead

to gender imbalance. It is important that men's education about gender equality should not only be understood in terms of equal access and equal pay but also in terms of shifts in personal mindsets and attitudes that function as sociocultural barriers to gender equality.

I suggest that the program include experiences for boys and men that promote reexamination of their socialization process and challenge their deep-rooted patriarchal attitudes, tribal beliefs, values, and sociocultural norms that contribute to gender inequity in both personal and professional domains of life. A men's program of this nature implemented at the high school and college levels could improve men's support of women and represents a proactive step in decreasing the gender value gap between men and women in the UAE.

Limitations

This study was limited by its size and scope. The sample was made up of 24 Emirati women—eight families of three generations each—and was focused on the unique cultural aspects of change within a particular context and at one specific historical period of rapid economic transformation. Therefore, the study's findings are not generalizable to other populations even within the UAE. However, generalizing data is not typically a goal of qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) and was not a concern in this study.

Furthermore, this study is limited because the data represented a cross-sectional comparison of generations at one historical point. I do acknowledge that the data were collected over approximately 9 months. However, according to the literature (e.g., Greenfield, 2009), shifts in cultural values are outcomes of sociodemographic changes,

and, in the general sociodemographic landscape in the UAE at the time of this study, no critical or large-scale changes occurred. Therefore, it could reasonably be assumed that the cultural values held by the grandmothers', mothers', and daughters' did not change during the course of this study. Additionally, the 9-month data collection period would have had no influence on the collected data pertaining to the participants' lived experiences prior to participating in this study.

Another limitation of the data was its potential failure to capture differences in the perceptions between the grandmothers' and mothers' generations as both generations are living similar experiences with respect to the significant social changes associated with the daughters' generation. Additionally, sociodemographic differences between families were not accounted for and thus may have translated directly to differences in generations. Finally, data collected from grandmothers and mothers during Phase 1 of the interviews were primarily retrospective in nature. It is possible that respondents may have selectively remembered, reshaped, poorly recalled, and/or exaggerated their experiences, which may lower the reliability of the data (De Vaus, 2007).

Future Research

Results of this study indicated differences in values among three generations of Emirati women. They also indicated differences in the speed at which change is occurring between generations. However, my research documenting the differences in these intergenerational value changes has mainly relied on the perceptions and experiences of the limited number of women who participated in my study. A more broad understanding of these differences could be garnered through a large-scale quantitative survey study.

Additionally, a deeper understanding of women's perceptions could be generated by including deliberately varied populations of women.

Although the study was limited to women, the findings showed that men's attitudes towards gender equality have not shifted as quickly as women's attitudes regardless of age. Further research would be beneficial for generating data to better understand the perceptions of Emirati men in this regard. As the values of young Emirati women become more independent, gender egalitarian, and future oriented, it would be interesting to examine variations in cultural values among men and women in the UAE and explore the sociocultural factors that explain these differences through quantitative and qualitative designs.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that young Emirati women are highly encouraged by their parents to pursue higher education but also that some women face social barriers in exercising their full leadership potential into and throughout their career journey, a next logical step following the completion of their educational journey. This study attempted to unpack the changing attitudes and behaviors of young Emirati women, their professional roles in contemporary society, and the way sociocultural factors impact their career advancements as well as gender relations. Further research is needed to understand the relationships between women's egalitarian values and their limited access to and support in leadership positions in the sociocultural context of the UAE.

In addition, it would be interesting to extend the application of Greenfield's theory of social change and human development to other neighboring Gulf countries, particularly Saudi Arabia given its recent economic and social reforms, to explore

whether the factors contributing to and pace of intergenerational value change are similar to what I found among women in the UAE.

Conclusion

This qualitative study revealed, yet again, that culture should not be treated as static. Rather, we need to further investigate how and why culture changes in times of rapid change, and the overt conflict between the younger and older generations who have experienced different sociodemographic conditions throughout their life. Most importantly, why intergenerational value transmission gets more complicated in collectivistic societies undergoing rapid changes in which younger and older generations are being pulled and pushed between forces of modernization and traditionalism. Indeed, the findings exhibited how the transmission of cultural values among the three generations is imperfect. Accordingly, we need to pay a particular attention to generational tension that arise when both the younger and older generation negotiate new boundaries to balance collectivistic values with emerging values that promote autonomy and independence.

Finally, an examination of value orientation among both the younger and older generations is required at the national level to adjust social systems to value variations among the citizens in order to achieve national goals and long-term vision.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Thank you very much for participating in this study. I am going to ask you some questions about you and your family, your personal journey, larger societal changes and its impact on you and your extended family, your experiences and attitudes regarding life in the UAE between past and modern timings, changes in your family structure and functions given the new non-traditional roles of females, governmental policies and initiatives toward youth and elderly, use of technology, the pull and push between traditions and modernity, and your relationships with other family members.

The interview should last around 90 minutes. I want to make sure that you are comfortable during the interview, so if there are any questions you do not wish to answer or any topics you do not want to discuss, tell me and I will move to another question. In case you would like to take a break, please do so. You are also free to stop the interview at any point if you do not want to continue the interview or want us to come some other day.

I would also like to ask your permission to record this interview since we do not want to miss details. The recording would be used only for this study and will not be shared with anyone else, and it will be deleted once the study is complete. Do you have any questions? Shall we begin the interview:

Phase 1:

About You and Your Family:

1. Please tell me about your self
Prompts: where were you born? Where did you grow up? Emirates of residence? Age? Schooling? Employment? Marital status? Kids?
2. What about your family members?
Prompts: father/mother – location of birth? Age? Work? Educational level?
Siblings: how many do you have? Ages? What do they do?
Do your grandparents live with you in the same house? Where do they reside?

3. Who is the main decision maker at home? Do you have your own thoughts or you follow what your parents tell you?
Prompts: father, brother or mother? Decisions taken by women and men? Do you get consulted? If yes, what matters/subjects?
4. How would you describe your relationship with your father?
Prompts: Distance? Friendly? Changed by time?
5. Do you express your future plans with your family? examples? (will be asked in different ways for each generation)
Prompts: what are your dreams? What do your family think of them?
6. How did you come to pick your journey? How did it impact your family relationships? Examples? (For daughters)

Earlier Life:

7. If she witnessed Freej life in the past, how would she describe it?
Prompts: People? Values? Celebrations? Neighborhoods?
8. Did you live under harsh environment? Describe?
9. What was your role as a woman, explain?
10. Did you witness any changes growing up in the UAE during your childhood/adulthood? Describe?
Prompts: size of homes, number of vehicles and housemaids, ownership of electronic devices?
11. Do you ever miss life in the past? Why? Examples?
12. Anything different from the past? Is there anything new? Examples?

Schooling and College Education:

If she has not been to school – have not received schooling?

13. What do you think was the main reason for you not going to school?
Prompts: no schooling for girls, traditions, any other reasons?
14. Have you received any religious education? if yes, when, where, what did you learn?
15. If you were provided the opportunity to go to school in your time, will you go? Explain? Did you see any benefit from girls education by your time in the past?
16. Do you like seeing your daughter/ granddaughter getting higher level of education?

If she has been to school –received schooling/ college degree?

17. Talk about your educational journey – primary, secondary, college? Type institution?
18. Reasons for dropping out of school/ college?
Prompts: marriage, traditions, distance.
19. Were there any negative feelings/ stereotypes around girls getting education? did schooling or education cause any problems or dilemmas in your family?
Examples?
20. In your perspective, what is the purpose of education? Have you ever discussed this issue with your family, friends or others? Why?

21. In your opinion and as an educated person, is it easy to get along with elderly or uneducated members of the family? Examples? Why?
22. How would you compare your schooling experience to college experience?

Your Description of Good Enough: good generation/mother/daughter:

23. How would you describe changes in generation between past to present?
Prompts: what makes a good mom, daughter? Interactions, respect for elderly?
24. Have you sensed anything different as being a daughter between your generation and your daughter/granddaughter's generation?
25. If yes, how do you explicate the disparities? If no, how would you describe this stability overtime?
26. In your perspective, how societal change impacted generational values and attitudes?
Prompts: Fridays' visits, connection with the extended family?
27. How would you describe your relationship with you grandmother/ granddaughter?
Prompts: big gap/ distance in thinking, attitudes and beliefs? Examples?
28. Do you experience some push back or pulls toward certain behaviors? any expectations from your grandmother/ granddaughter?

Relatedness and Interconnectedness:

29. How do you view traditional values/ cultural values of the Emirati society? Any changes? Examples?
Prompts: any non-traditional values/ Bedouin practices exercising in your family today?
30. How often do you spend time with your parents, siblings and grandparents/grandchildren?
Prompts: living proximity? Has it changed overtime?
31. Having meal together? Friday's visits? Shopping? If not, why don't you do things together? has it changed over time in your family?
32. Can you foresee the future of three generation household in the future? Any changes or will remain in the face big changes?

Technology:

33. How would you describe the influence of technology and social media in your daily life?
34. How did technology impact your family relationships?
35. Which social media account are you active in? Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook?
36. At what age did you have your first cellphone?

Familial Expectations:

37. What do you expect from your grandchildren/ grandparents?

UAE Vision and the Flourishing Status of Emirati Women

38. What do you think of recent government policies regarding female, 50% quota of female participation in Federal National Council?

39. Do you agree the political leadership that calls women to aspire more and enroll in different sectors and industries?
40. To what extent do you support the journey of your daughter? Do you get enough support from your family to find yourself in today's society?
41. Who is your role model as a woman?

Phase 2:

Dilemma Task Interview

To measure participants' value change in the UAE society, I adopted (Manago, 2014; Weinstock, Ganayiem, Igbaeyia, Manago, Greenfield, 2015) and adapted seven social dilemmas that capture universal adolescent developmental tasks, using my individual experience and my observations of changes happening in my family and my community. Each dilemma represents a tendency toward agreement with the Gemeinschaft-adapted viewpoint, the Gesellschaft-adapted viewpoint, or a position in between. One character in the story represents a family interdependent point of view (Gemeinschaft-adapted viewpoint), and the other character represents an individual independence point of view (Gesellschaft-adapted viewpoint). Participants are asked to endorse the character in the story with whom they most agree.

The questions that follow each dilemma are those relevant to the analysis in the study:

1. ***Men walk in front of women.*** I have a friend named Sarah, who used to live in a small village in Fujairah and now she lives in Abu Dhabi because her husband works there. She told me that when she goes to visit her parents during the weekend, they always go for a walk around the corniche. When they go for a walk, Sarah always walks behind her husband and father. Her father always urges her to walk beside them because this would never make him or her husband less "manly" in public. But Sarah does not want to walk side-by-side because she may look disrespectful. Sarah says, "it is better that I walk behind you, not at your side, because this is part of our societal traditions."

Which is better, what Sarah's father says or what Sarah says? Why?

2. ***Helping with kids' homework.*** Sarah and Saif are a married couple. They have four children. Saif is a military officer. Sarah is a housewife. Sometimes Sarah asks her husband to help the kids with their homework or read them a story before bedtime. But, Saif always refuses, and says, "this is your responsibility as a housewife."

Do you agree with Sarah or do you agree with Saif? Why?

3. ***Boys and girls talk.*** Khaled and Basmah are undergraduate students at the American University of Sharjah. They take the same courses and when there

is a break Khaled and Basmah always stay together. When Basmah returns home after school, she stays connected with Khaled via phone or social media for hours. Khaled and Basmah says they are only friends. What do you think, is it okay that they are friends? Why?

4. ***Fiancé.*** There is a girl named Hessah who is 22 years old and lives with her family in Ras Al-Khaimah. Her cousin Saeed is 23 years old and live in the same neighborhood. Saeed's grandmother asked him to marry his cousin Hessa to promote parallel-cousin marriage in the family and preserve familial wealth. So, Saeed cannot opt out of this marriage because he obliges to follow his grandmother's wishes. A few months later, Saeed asked for Hessah's hand from his uncle, but Hessah refused to marry him. She thinks he is not the right guy for her for several reasons. First, he is less educated. Second, she does not like the idea of marrying without love. Third, she is aware of genetic disease risk for children of related couple. Hessah's parents want to celebrate her soon, but Hessah does not want to marry her cousin. Hessah's parents are concerned about their daughter because they believe that Hessah is aging and no one will marry her.

Which is better, what Hessah says or what her parents say? Why?

5. ***Leave country for education.*** One day in a girl high school in Dubai, the Ministry of Education held a session to the senior students about study abroad scholarships for UAE nationals. These scholarships are available for pursuing undergraduate degree in the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan and Australia. During the session, the lecturer stresses the importance of seeking out these opportunities for the cultural experiences and economic well-being of students and communities. In contrast, the school counsellor tells the students that it is better to study in the country because they should stay close to their parents. Furthermore, the school counsellor reminds the students that girls do not travel alone, and if they study abroad, they will bring the family reputation to shame. Which is better what the lecturer says or what the school counsellor says? Why?

6. ***Professional woman.*** A young woman named Shamma is 23 years old and lives with her family in Sharjah. She is an ambitious student who majored in Political Science and graduated with a 4.0 Grade Point Average (GPA). Shamma got a job offer at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Abu Dhabi, which is three-hour drive from her family home. Shamma tells her parents, "this my dream job, I want to work and live in Abu Dhabi, I want to have my own apartment, I like being free and independent, and my hard work should pay off." Shamma wants to accept the job offer and live alone in Abu Dhabi, but her parents are concerned because she wants to work in another emirate and also wants to stay alone. They say it is not the norm in the society for a young woman to work in another emirate and live alone. She should wait until she gets married and manage that with her husband.

Which is better, what Shamma says or what her parents say? Why?

7. ***Girl has fun with friends.*** Nouf is a young woman studying at the Higher Colleges of Technology in Dubai. She likes to go out with her college friends. Her mother does not like this, she wants her daughter to stay home with her father, siblings, sister-in-law, and grandmother. Nouf is always frustrated with her mother because she does not allow her to spend the time out with her friends. Nouf says, "I always like to hang out with my friends, I get bored always being with my family." Her mother is very worried about what Nouf says.

Which is better, what Nouf says or what her mother says? Why?

APPENDIX B: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVALS

Date: 11-24-2019

IRB #: IRB-2018-384

Title: The Impact of Sociodemographic Change on Value Differences Across Generations: The Narratives of Three Generation of Emirati Women

Creation Date: 3-20-2018

End Date: 2-16-2020

Status: **Approved**

Principal Investigator: Ebtesam Alteneiji

Review Board: USD IRB

Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type	Initial	Review Type	Expedited	Decision	Approved
Submission Type	Renewal	Review Type	Expedited	Decision	Approved

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