

# **Cross-Cultural Studies Among Saudi Students in the United Kingdom**

The role of original cultural values and ethnic identity on collective self-esteem,  
acculturative stress, acculturation strategies, and attitudes towards seeking  
psychological help and an evaluation of interventional counselling services in  
facilitating students' adjustment

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**Abstract:**

This is a multi-method research which consists of four studies. The first examined the influence of cultural values and ethnic identity on collective self-esteem, acculturative stress and attitudes toward seeking psychological help among 117 Saudi students living and studying in the UK, 20 of them were interviewed in the second part of the study in order to examine their acculturation strategies and their attitude toward seeking psychological help. The measures used were: Asian Values Scale (AVS), Male Arab Acculturation Scale (MAAS), Male Arabic Ethnic Identity Measure (MAEIM), Attitudes toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help-Short Form (ATSPPH-SF), and Collective Self-Esteem (CSE-R). The study sample was divided into two groups: 49 (Junior) newly arrived students and 68 (senior) students who had spent more than one year in the UK. Also, gender and marital status were considered as variables. Interviews were conducted to examine the questionnaire's findings in depth. Results supported the hypothesis that adherence to original cultural values is a positive predictor of collective self-esteem. Also it was found that there was a difference between new and senior students in the scores on the following scales: AVS, CSE, SAFE, ATSP, and MAAS Int. Results also supported the hypothesis that ethnic identity is a positive predictor of collective self-esteem. However, no relation was observed between adherence to original cultural values and students' attitudes towards seeking psychological help, acculturative stress, and communication styles. Also, ethnic identity did not correlate with acculturative stress. Regarding gender and marital status, findings suggest that they are not significant predictors of the research's dependent variables.

In the third part of the study: the researcher examined and measured the effect of providing counselling sessions for a sample of 12 Saudi students during their stay in the UK using a pre-

and post- Culture Shock Questionnaire, and results were compared with a control group of 12 Saudi participants who were not engaged in the counselling sessions. Results were statistically significant for the experimental group which indicated a positive effect of providing counseling services for Saudi students.

In the fourth part of the study: the researcher measured the effect of reverse culture shock on students who returned home using a modified version of the Home-comer Culture Shock Scales (HCSS) and inviting view participants to take part in un formal interview.

The thesis will be concluded with an explanatory conclusion which might lead to further studies.

**Keywords:** Acculturative stress, Acculturative strategies, Original cultural values, Collective self-esteem, Communication style, Collectivism, Individualism, Social support, Group commitment, Ethnic identity and Senior student (level 2 more than one year), Junior student (Level 1 first year).

## Chapter 1

### Introduction:

Acculturative stress and homesickness are more often experienced by international students who come from cultures that are distinctly different from the host culture (Ye, 2005; Kegel, 2009).

A possible explanation was added by Ye (2005), who indicated that international students coming from a collective society and speaking a different language would be required to exert more effort in order to adapt to a new and more individualistic culture. Specifically, international students from cultures that are more group-oriented, such as those found in Asia, Africa, southern Europe, and Latin America, may experience severe adjustment problems in the U.S. as a result of belonging to a more individualistic culture in the host country, or generally, as Popadiuk and Arthur (2004, p. 127) stated, “The greater the difference between home and host cultures, the greater the adjustment demands faced by international students”.

The individualistic versus collectivist distinction underlies a number of differences between the two cultures. In collectivist societies, a large emphasis is placed on other members of the society, especially family and elders (Gilton, 2007). The accepted norms and behaviours are expected to be followed at all times. Self-sacrifice, participation in collective events and obedience are reinforced and appreciated. This is in contrast to individualistic societies in which each person is seen as separate from the group and encouraged to pursue own personal goals. Although rules exist and are enforced by either the law or societal norms, these rules are often focused on avoiding causing harm to others as opposed to serving/helping others. There is no strong obligation to be an active member of one’s group or family (Kim, Triandis, Kâğitçibaşı, Choi, & Yoon, 1994). It is easy to see how a transition from a very structured society with clear

rules and emphasis on the collective good to a society that does not have the same underlying cultural foundation may be difficult. Collective-individualistic distinction underlies differences in almost every aspect of life and thus has to be somehow acknowledged and responded to by all migrants, and especially by students for whom adapting to a new culture is only one of many unfamiliar and stressful challenges they have to face.

This process of adoption of some or all components of a foreign culture – *acculturation* – is sometimes mistakenly equated with *assimilation* (International Organization for Migration, 2004). The main difference between the two processes is the change in the attitude towards *original cultural values*, i.e. values that are usually connected to the religion, tradition or social obligations of the home country. Adherence to original cultural values can be understood as a result of individuals being brought up in a certain environment which supports and enforces certain traditional and religious beliefs and behaviors that are connected to daily activities and life achievements. Unlike acculturation, where the original values are not compromised, assimilation involves rejection of the original cultural identity and fully adopting the values of the host society (Sam and Berry, 2006). Assimilation may result from *perceived discrimination*, which is a perspective adopted by immigrants who reject or resist integrating with the new culture (Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2008). Alternatively, individuals who perceive themselves as being discriminated against may seek to select a certain group that is relatively acknowledged and supports the same cultural values of the immigrant.

Regardless of the eventual outcome, the experience of foreign culture may be a stressful and alienating experience. As Aprahamian, Kaplan, Windham, Sutter, and Viss (2011, p.81) noted, the link between acculturation and mental health issues has already been explored in immigrant populations. In the same study which examined the mental health of Arab Americans, they found that the acculturation process and its challenges may cause stress, which

in turn might lead to serious mental health problems. The experience of significant cultural differences between home and host country can lead to substantial *acculturative stress*, which may be expressed in confused/depressed mood, anxiety, experience of isolation and generally increased mental health issues (Kim & Omizo, 2005). Additionally, Hamboyan and Bryan (1995) explained that overseas students may suffer from what they called uprooting disorder symptoms, because of poor adjustment to the new culture which might include “disorientation, nostalgic-depressive reaction, and feelings of isolation, alienation, powerlessness, hypochondriasis, paranoia, and hostility” (Hamboyan & Bryan, 1995, p. 1714). Other factors can have a buffering effect on transition shock; for example, as Redmond and Bunyi (1993) concluded, social integration and friendships are factors that reduce stress and promote psychological adjustment.

International students arriving in the UK thus may be in dire need of social support due to the changing environment and the unfamiliar atmosphere, which is not at all similar to their original cultural environment, so that they can adapt to this new society.

## **Study Rationale**

The Saudi government started a large program offering scholarships to young Saudi graduate and undergraduate students to continue their studies outside Saudi Arabia. This decision was made to give students a chance to get degrees and experiences from well-known Western or Eastern academic institutions; also, it was anticipated that studying abroad would be a chance to interact with new modern cultures, which might be reflected in Saudi students' attitudes, norms and beliefs when they return home.

There is little or no previously published work on the adjustment of Saudi students studying abroad, although Akhtarkhvari (1994), in an unpublished PhD thesis, examined the educational perceptions of 123 male Saudi graduates from American or Saudi universities, and reported that 36% of the study sample acknowledged that their studies in the USA had a great effect on their values. These Saudi graduates believed that their education in United States affected their personalities by making them: "honest, objective, respect work, value money, and be flexible and fair in their interaction with others" Akhtarkhvari, (1994, p. 138). The Saudi government is aware of possible issues arising from the study abroad program, but has limited research evidence on which to base policy decisions.

However, Al-Musa, general supervisor of the general administration for scholarship programs in the Ministry of Higher Education in Saudi Arabia Al-Musa (2008) stated in a press release that we should acknowledge the increase of the divorce cases among Saudi couples studying abroad; which comprised, according to figures from the Ministry of Higher Education, only eight divorce cases in 2007. Furthermore, Al-Musa also stated that "1573 scholarships, which represented less than 2% of the total student population, had been revoked in the past four years, out of which only 117 were due to moral or legal misconduct and the rest were mainly due to absenteeism and low grades". Al-Musa (2009) considered it as a breakthrough

that over 80,000 Saudi students were enabled to study abroad during the previous five years and that Saudi Arabia registered as number four, after China, India and Korea, in mobility of students and cultural exchange, as acknowledged by UNISCO standards, and he concluded that these statistics show that the program is successful. Despite the Minister's overall positive conclusion, concerns about cultural norms and moral concerns during study abroad were expressed by Saudi students in the USA, as revealed by Akhtarkhavari, (1994, p.150) thus, although education in American universities, which reflects "the American society and its simplicity, creativity, and freedom", had a positive influence on some of her study sample, others believed that their experience "had some negative effect on their moral standards". Furthermore, the everyday stresses and difficulties experienced by Saudi students studying abroad have not been thoroughly assessed, and may be under-emphasized in the overall positive conclusions of government reports. Considerable research extending over several decades supports the view that experience of a new and unfamiliar culture almost invariably gives rise to psychological distress. To give one influential example, Thomson and English (1964) conducted interviews with returning peace corps volunteers, interviewing 3,805 American volunteers (1461 of them were females and 2344 were males) of different educational and social backgrounds who set out to live and work outside USA for the sake of peaceful and productive world. They concluded that one of the most critical stages of adjustment occurred after the first few weeks, when high levels of anxiety may be reported. In a more recent example, a qualitative study by McLachlan and Justice (2009), using Grounded Theory, explored the experiences of forty volunteer international students and the process they used to survive and thrive during their sojourn of studying and living in the U.S.A. The accounts of these international students indicated that they faced challenges in adjustment to a different education system as well as to a host culture. Thus, Saudi students might not only suffer from cultural change difficulties, but they might also face different educational system challenges.

It is particularly important to understand the reasons for negative as well as positive consequences of studying abroad for Saudi students, because of the numbers of students involved. The number of Saudi students studying abroad according to Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) was 17,500 in 2005/06 and a recent press release by Al-Saif (2013), Deputy Minister of Higher Education, to the Saudi Gazette indicated that the number of Saudi students studying abroad has reached 130,000 students spread over 46 countries and that the number is still rising.

Although the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education offers short guidance workshops as an orientation program at home to prepare Saudi students for understanding the culture of their host country, this orientation program is insufficient to support students after they leave their home country simply because cultural adaptation goes through several phases. Many educationalists have expressed the view that students need continuous counseling and guidance to overcome difficulties experienced during these phases. As Ali and Graham (2000, p. 1) state, “Guidance is not a once-in-lifetime injection of wisdom which orients a person in a particular time but guidance should be recognized as a process to be worked through by the client over time with support and the encouragement from the advisor.” Similarly, the Council of the European Union (2008, p.2) has emphasized in a report from its Education, Youth and Culture committee, that “guidance is a continuous process that enables citizens at any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competencies and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which those capacities and competencies are learned and/or used. Guidance covers a range of individual and collective activities relating to information-giving, counseling, competence assessment, support, and the teaching of decision-making and career management skills”.



To date, the Saudi Cultural Affairs Office in London offers only administrative and financial supervision for students, and their services are performed by non-specialist employees, while UK universities offer general counseling services that are not specifically geared to Saudi students. Counseling is especially important in relation to acculturative stress as it is aimed at enabling the individuals to improve their understanding of their identity and to provide strategies which can help to overcome challenges such as adapting to new cultural norms (Alhashemi & Abdulhamid, 1986). This emphasizes the importance of providing counseling and support services for Saudi students during their studies in the UK. As Alhashemi and Abdulhamid (1986) suggested, in order for an individual to adopt successful strategies, counseling programs should be provided to help in overcoming new social and academic challenges. Barker (1990, p.56) recommended that a formal follow-up program for returning students would provide an opportunity to build upon and review the orientation program and to identify the areas which present continuing problems to overseas students. The implementation of follow-up programs might help to explain the successful growth of overseas students' numbers in Australia which according to Australian Bureau of Statistics, ABS, (2007) had grown by 123% since 1996.

Another issue resulting from being exposed to a new culture and adopting, accepting or rejecting the new cultural values manifests itself once the stay in the host culture is finished and the individual returns to his or her homeland. This in itself can be a stressful experience that may lead to a *reverse cultural shock*. Reverse cultural shock occurs when one struggles to re-adjust to one's own culture as a result of having experienced a foreign culture (Barletta and Kobayashi, 2007). This issue is as important as the original transition shock and may have a profound impact on the affected individuals and the way they perceive themselves as

individuals and as members of a wider social group. The current thesis will explore this process in an attempt to enhance our understanding of the consequences of living and studying abroad.

This brief overview indicates the need for further research into the experiences and effects of cultural adjustment and re-adjustment of Saudi students studying in the UK, and for the design and evaluation of counselling support services that could be provided to assist in this process.

## **Chapter 2**

### **The combination of radical Islam and collectivist culture in Saudi Arabia**

Saudi culture is influenced by two all-important factors: Islam, and the close or extended family (tribe).

*THE BASIC LAW OF SAUDI GOVERNANCE (1992). Chapter 3:*

*THE VALUES OF SAUDI SOCIETY*

*Article*

*10*

*The State shall aspire to promote family bonds and Arab-Islamic values. It shall take care of all individuals and provide the right conditions for the growth of their talents and skills.*

*Article*

*11*

*Saudi society is based on full adherence to God's guidance. Members of this society shall cooperate amongst themselves in charity, piety and cohesion.*

The following points would facilitate our understanding of the importance of Islam in shaping Saudi culture which would eventually be distinctive when compared to other cultures: Only Islamic rituals may be performed in Saudi Arabia, which means any religious activities other than Islamic ones are prohibited. Even if a person is not Muslim, he or she must avoid any offensive behavior, or behavior which contradicts Islamic obligations, especially in public places. This means, for example, fasting during the month of Ramadan, not drinking alcohol, stopping regular activities like buying and selling, etc., and even closing all commercial places during the daily five prayers. All courts follow the rules and codes of Islam, which are found in the Quran and Sunna of the Prophet Mohammed, in every aspect of everyday life activities. In other words, in Saudi Arabia, religion dominates, prioritizes and organizes all activities of people's everyday life (Al-Amry, Bakr, Hashim, & Waheed, 1989; Albanyan & Abdullah, 1980). Sword executions, stoning individuals to death when adultery is committed, and physical punishments like cutting off hands in theft crimes are performed in public places to be witnessed by everybody including young children. A person is considered responsible for his behavior as an adult as soon as he or she reaches puberty which might occur between the ages 12 and 14. This is according to Quran and Sunna. A 10 years old girl could be forced to marry 70 years old man according to the current Saudi interpretation of Islam and supported by Saudi law.

A female is not allowed to travel abroad (for pleasure, social, educational or medical purposes) without being accompanied by her husband, father or an adult brother, even if he has to leave his job for this purpose; for example, the researcher had to leave his job to accompany his wife, who had a scholarship to gain a degree from a UK university. Also, males and females are not allowed to mix in educational institutions, with the exception of medical schools or in exceptional cases, as in King Abdullah University, which is built in a secured compound. Also, single males are not allowed to mix with females or families in public places like restaurants,

sea shores or parks. Also females are not allowed to exercise sports like jogging or playing football in public areas. Females are only permitted to practice these activities inside covered and guarded places where men are not allowed to enter. Also females are not allowed to drive cars or even bicycles. It is important to note here that although the distinction between men/women (social categories) and males/females (biological categories) is important in both research and real-life outcomes (Lorber, 1993), this thesis is not interested in distinguishing between the two types of categories and instead assumes that the combination of both underlie the cognitive and affective processes investigated in the current study. Therefore, the terminology will be used here interchangeably.

Although it is more a tradition than a part of religion, a dress code is enforced socially. It includes a certain black dress for females which is designed in such a way to cover all of their body, hair, and face. Even men are not allowed to wear pants or suits in public, especially in official ceremonies and in governmental work places.



*Picture 1.* Saudi traditional female formal dress in Saudi Arabia.

The Saudi government does not allow any foreign cultural activities to be performed inside Saudi Arabia if these activities contradict with Islamic instructions, like practicing foreign traditional festivals in public or having mixed parties; non-Muslims are not allowed to perform their religious activities in public places. Public churches and synagogues or any other religious temples are not allowed to be built in Saudi Arabia. In order to enforce the religious and traditional values, the late King Abdul-Aziz appointed officials to practice such responsibilities in the early stage of country foundation in early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Subsequently, in 1980, the Saudi government approved the responsibilities of the General Presidency for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vices (CPVPV) (2013) is responsible for achieving the following objectives:

- To Guide and encourage people to perform good deeds through positive enforcement.
- To Inform and warn people about how crucial it is not to be involved in vices.
- To make sure to prevent people from committing or supporting taboo and forbidden religious actions.
- To make sure that people will not follow bad traditions and non-original Islamic instructions.
- To force Saudi people and other Muslims living in Saudi Arabia to perform religious obligations like praying in mosques and fasting during Ramadan.
- To make sure that the image of Saudi Arabia represents her role and importance as the heart of the Islamic world.

These officials are referred to by observers as the religious police which is an accurate indication of their enforcement of ideas and beliefs and behavior by any available

means, which might include physical or verbal threats or punishment. Any person who resists their orders or guidance will be jailed or otherwise punished.

Secondly, the family is of utmost importance in shaping cultural values. Being a traditional and collective society, Saudi people consider parents and elderly members of the extended family or tribe as a source of authority, second only to Islam, which guides them to acceptable and productive behaviors. It was a precept inherited through hundreds of years and supported by religion, that parents should be obeyed all the time, as long as they do not guide him or her to be disbeliever of God or polytheist. Also, religion emphasized that the parents' blessing, especially the mother's, might increase anybody's chance to have a happy life and to enter heaven after death.

### **Cultural comparisons between Saudi Arabia and the UK**

Understanding of the processes of acculturation and assimilation has to be grounded in the wider context of social categorization. The eventual outcome of being exposed to a foreign culture may depend largely on an individual's perception of own identity within a framework of group membership. The type of discrimination between one's in- or out-groups may affect how foreign values are perceived and whether they are accepted or rejected. This 'us' versus 'them' distinction is a basis of Social Identity Theory (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which explains how the sense of belonging to a group affects our sense of self-esteem, pride and duty. SIT will be explored in more detail in Chapter 3; however, this influential theory provides the framework within which the other key constructs introduced in this chapter can be anchored when thinking of transition shock and acculturation strategies. SIT, as will be shown later, can underlie processes such as in-group bias and favoritism, prejudice, own self-perception and more. This section will focus on some aspects of Saudi and UK culture which may influence the social identity one adopts within each culture.

Saudi Arabia is distinctly different in culture, norms and language compared to the UK. The accepted norms and behaviours are heavily influenced by the *Asian cultural values* which emphasize the values of collective and conformist society, hierarchy within family and community social order, as well as virtues of humility, emotional control and filial piety (Kim and Omizo, 2005). In order to understand the differences between UK culture and Saudi Arabian culture, it would be useful to refer to studies done by Hofstede (2001) and by At-Twajjry and Al-Muhaiza (1996), who proposed four value dimensions (*Power Distance Index, PDI; Individualism, IDV; Masculinity, MAS; Uncertainty Avoidance Index, UAI*) to characterize the value profiles of different countries around the world. Figure 1 shows cultural value differences between the UK and Saudi Arabia in those dimensions:

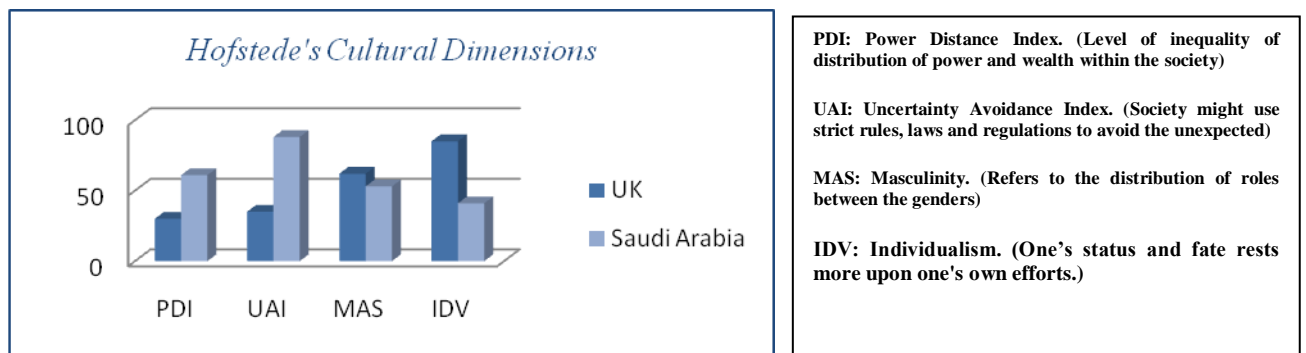


Figure 1. Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions for the UK and Saudi Arabia (from Hofstede, 2001; At-Twajjri, & Al-Muhaiza, 1996).

Figure 1 Terms explanations:

- *Individualism (IDV)*. On this dimension Saudi Arabia scored 41, compared to 85 for the UK. The Saudi low score indicates that the Saudi culture is a collective one, while the UK high score shows that the UK culture is an individualistic one.
- *Masculinity (MAS)*. On this dimension Saudi Arabia scored 54, compared to 59 for the UK, this score for Saudi indicate that Saudi Masculinity percent close to some extent from UK.

- *Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)*. On this dimension Saudi score 90, which is very high in comparison with UK score 35 which reflect the deep extensive use of use strict rules, laws and regulations to avoid the unexpected in Saudi.
- *Power Distance Index (PDI)*. In this dimension Saudi score was 55 and UK score was 25, and this reflects that distribution of power and wealth within UK society is fairer than in Saudi.

In the Saudi culture, both religion and Arabic traditions strongly emphasize that every person should care for others as much as he cares for himself, especially close family members and neighbors. Belonging to a united family and tribe is a very critical issue with Saudis. The importance of own social group to an individual, referred to as *collective self-esteem* (Kim & Omizo, 2005) indicates the judgment of a person's role as a member of a social group, the worthiness of his or her social group, others' evaluation of his or her social group and the importance of his or her social group membership to his or her self-concept (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). As Gilton, (2007, p. 428) has said, "In a collective society, one's status and fate rests largely on one's family, tribe, ethnicity, or community". As a result, "in such a society, individuals avoid failing or getting into trouble for fear of bringing shame to their families or communities.". These social obligations exist for Saudi males or females even when traveling abroad, and especially apply to students, who are expected by their families to continue to behave in accordance with Saudi cultural norms and to return home after earning their academic degrees.

The high value placed on the society, family and community reflects the collectivism of Saudi culture. *Collectivism* as discussed by Wagner and Moch, (1986), refers to the extent to



which cultures focus on the group's interests and goals rather than personal interests and goals. Such cultures are characterised by interdependency of their members, giving priority to the group's interest over one's own desires and reinforcing behaviour which serves common good (Hofstede, 2001). Collectivism is usually contrasted with individualism which represents an opposite attitude and emphasises one's uniqueness and importance of fulfilling one's own needs (Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2008).

In the UK, which is considered an individualistic culture, the balance between meeting individual and collective needs is shifted towards the individual. As Gilton, (2007) explained, in an individualistic culture, "One's status and fate rests more upon one's own efforts. How well or poorly individuals do reflects less on their family, village, tribe, or nation. Individuals can succeed or fail without reflecting as much on their points of origin."

One of the main differences between the two cultures is therefore the importance of *ethnic identity*. Ethnic identity is described as a feeling of belonging to one's ethnic in-group, expressed in high commitment and duty towards the group (Sam & Berry, 2006), shared values, attitudes and behavioural conventions (Utsy, Chae, Brown, & Kelly, 2002) as well as feeling of inclusion and alignment with one's group (Smith and Silva, 2011). As shown in Figure 1, the high Power Distance (PDI), ranking 61 for Saudi Arabia, is indicative of a high level of inequality of power and wealth within the society. The Masculinity (MAS) vs. Femininity index refers to the distribution of roles between the genders. The Masculinity index (MAS) for Saudi Arabia, the third highest Hofstede Dimension, is 53. This would indicate that women are limited in their rights. The Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) "deals with a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity". Hofstede (2001). The UAI ranking of 88 for Saudi Arabia indicates that the society might use strict rules laws and regulation to avoid the unexpected.

These cultural values, in turn, affect the process of *social identification*, i.e. defining oneself and others within the social categorization system (Tajfel, 1982). The attempt to locate oneself in new social circumstances is a challenge an immigrant would need to overcome when trying to find a place in a desired social or cultural network. The group(s) with which one eventually identifies will affect an individual's behavior, attitudes and own self-esteem; *group membership*, as discussed by Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje (2002), is partly responsible for developing *self-image*, and the more specific group norms control members' behaviours, the more commitment to the influential group is shown, which might lead to group categorization to justify bias and misbehavior.

Thus, Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom differ substantially on fundamental cultural dimensions.

Collectivism is adapted, enforced and supported through tradition, religion and law in Saudi Arabia. In practice, family obligations take the precedence over all others. Almost everything written or said in the form of advice, in public or private, encourages adoption of the collective approach in almost every aspect of life. Justification for this collective ordering of life is sought from the text of the holy Quran.

It is not an exaggeration to indicate that it is rare to find a phrase in the holy Quran which does not preach that any individual, normal or even handicapped, should attend and participate in social religious or only social events and to take part in their organization and the financial preparations. Attending the five prayers a day in the mosque, which is a place for worshiping God, is an unavoidable obligation for every Muslim who could hear the call to prayer almost anywhere with the newly developed magnetic phones.

And you will find a frequent reminder in the Quran about emphasizing the importance of groups and the benefit of sacrificing personal goals for the sake of the group.

The following are some of the Holy Quran and Prophet Mohammad's (PBUH) sayings and guidance which should be adopted by and followed by every Muslim. Examples for each construct will be given in text while a more complete list of selected relevant quotes is included in the Appendix 1 for reference. Most of them are modification for Guidance of Jahiliyyah (an Islamic concept for ignorance which represents old Arabic traditions). These guiding texts in addition to tribal, families' traditions and some misinterpretation of the these sayings are discussed in this thesis as they represent some of the core values of Saudi students studying in UK:

Reverence towards the sanctity of the Muslims (Collectivism):

222 - "*The relationship of the believer with another believer is like (the bricks of) a building, each strengthens the other.*" He (PBUH) illustrated this by interlacing the fingers of both his hands. Al-Nawawi (2006, p. 77).

The researcher himself donated half of his money when he was 6 years old because he was taught that such a deed would guarantee a reward which would last in this life and the other life.

Selflessness and sympathy:

Allah the Almighty said "*And give them (Emigrants) preference over themselves, even though they were in need of that*" Al-Nawawi (2006, p. 157).

### Husband's Rights concerning his wife:

285-*"If I were to order anyone to prostrate himself before another, I would order a woman to prostrate herself before her husband"* Al-Nawawi (2006, p. 91).

### Prohibition of meeting a non-Mahram woman in seclusion:

1629- *"No one of you should meet a woman in privacy unless she is accompanied by a Mahram (i.e., a relative within the prohibited degree)"* Al-Nawawi (2006, p. 368).

### Forbidding Picturing Prophets or their Companions:

The Islamic Fiqh Council of the Muslim World League (2010) issued the following statement:

*"Confirmation of the decision of the compound at its eighth session, held in 1405, issued in this regard, the prohibition contained portrayal of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him and the other apostles and prophets and companions, God bless them, and the need to prevent it"*.

## **Characteristics of the educational systems in Saudi Arabia**

*THE BASIC LAW OF SAUDI GOVERNANCE (1992). Chapter 3:*

*Article 13:*

*"The aim of education is to implant the Islamic Creed in the hearts of all youths, to help them acquire knowledge and skills, to qualify them to become useful members of their society, to love their homeland and take pride in its history"*.

Although the Saudi government is serious in the process of developing the current education system, Fatany (2009) pointed out that tradition and deference to authority in Saudi Arabia lead to a closed society in which critical thinking and open debate are not allowed, and

this introduces a sharp distinction with Western educational systems, where critical thinking and open debate are explicitly encouraged. These attitudes might be due to being exposed since early childhood to religious guidance performed by traditionalists, either parents, teachers or religious advisors, who genuinely believe that the way religion and behavior has been taught over the last 1440 years should be remain exactly the same. They would not expect their audiences to argue or disagree and also they would adhere to another authoritarian tradition which gives the right to anyone who is older than the other to speak and express his or her thoughts and the younger person has only the right to listen and to obey. Traditionally, disagreement is considered a sin or impolite behavior.

Girls' education did not exist and was not permitted at all in Saudi Arabia till the late '50s and early '60s of the last century. Traditionalists believed, and a very few of them still believe, that knowledge would give women the power to ask for more rights, which in their opinion would bring shame and disgrace to their families and their society (Alwashmi, 2009). Only a few scientific fields are available to women, like teaching and medicine, and females are taught separately to prevent them as much as possible from socializing and interacting with men. Each university has two separate compounds for males and for females, and just recently the Ministry of Higher Education established Princess Nora Bint Abdul Rahman University for females and appointed a female chancellor there. This gender segregation may add more obstacles to Saudi students' adjustment while studying abroad. Alhazmi (2010) examined, in a qualitative study, Saudi students' experience of being in a mixed gender environment during their studies in Australian universities. Alhazmi (2010, p. 9) added "It showed how the Saudi culture of extreme gender segregation has impacted on the experience of these students, particularly in their ability to relate to members of the opposite gender in a mixed gender environment".

The relations between students and their supervisors are more dependent than interdependent in Saudi universities. Saudi students depend totally on their supervisors in providing all the necessary information or guidance to complete their assignments. Students are expected not to be argumentative; instead, they are expected to be followers as a sign of politeness and respect.

### **Chapter 3**

#### **Theoretical Constructs:**

The main theoretical constructs that will be applied in this thesis are set out below.

#### **Acculturation strategies**

Berry (2001) was one of the pioneers who identified the strategies used by immigrants in their acculturation process and his fourfold theory has been influential in research into acculturation.

(1) *Integration* occurs when an immigrant successfully meets the demands of home and host cultures. Moreover, a person who is performing multiple roles may be considered to be more integrated with the society than a person who has limited roles to perform (Judge, 2005, p. 77). Another definition of integration, which might be referred to as biculturalism, is the ability and flexibility of an immigrant or sojourner to fulfil the social and behavioural requirements of two different cultures (Hong, Morris, Chiu & Benet-Martinez, 2000).

(2) *Assimilation*, sometimes wrongly referred as integration, is the adaptation to the host culture while rejecting the original or home culture (Kim & Omizo, 2005).

(3) *Separation* occurs when immigrants adhere to the original culture and when ethnic identity is more emphasized than the dominant host culture's identity. This occurs when an

individual is not interested in learning the culture of the host culture and wants only to maintain his or her original culture and values.

(4) *Marginalization* occurs when an immigrant rejects both the home and host country's cultures and fails to cope with changes (Kim & Omizo, 2005).

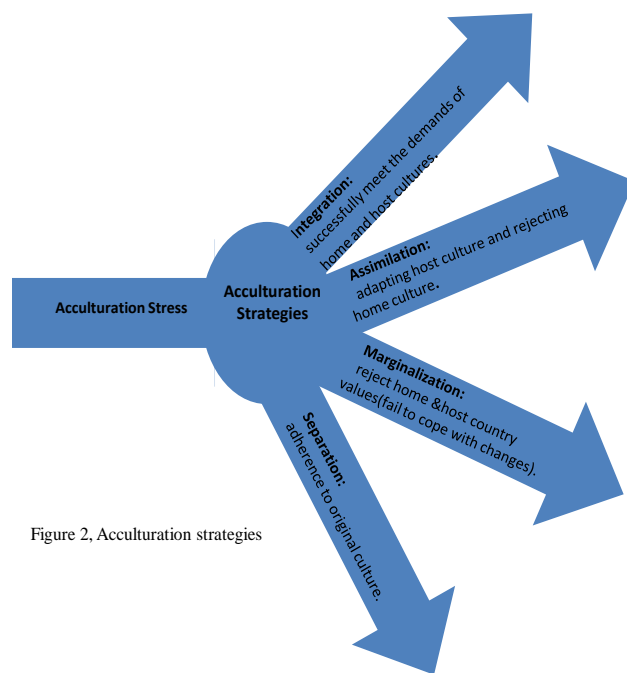


Figure 2, Acculturation strategies

*Figure 2.* This figure shows the four main acculturation strategies used by immigrants, as generated from the Berry (2001) Model.

Although Rudmin (2003b) in a correction subsequently admitted that Berry's (2003) explanations of the fourfold theory answered most of his criticisms, Rudmin (2003a) has conducted a critical analysis of Berry's model. In his argument, which reflected his own observations and those of other scholars of acculturation psychology, he indicated that Berry's

study lacked validity and was composed only of response bias artifacts. It was also noted that it focused only on minority groups instead of including the influences of both dominant and minority group on each other. Rudmin (2003a) claimed that Berry's classification of integration as being the most successful type of acculturation lacked strong justification. Additionally, those respondents to Berry's questionnaire, as a result of confusion, may choose two, three or four types of acculturation strategies. He added that differences between groups or between individuals need more adequate explanation. Rudmin advanced several criticisms of the fourfold theory, including lack of confirmation in factor analysis and lack of evidence for any protective effect of assimilation against marginality and stress (Rudmin, 2003a).

Rudmin (2003a, p. 5) also criticized the paradigm for “poor psychometrics, incorrect statistical analyses and an excessive focus on minorities”. However, in the same review, Rudmin did confirm that separation, in many studies, correlated with stress; an exception was found in a study by Berry, Kim, Power, Young, and Bujaki (1989) of French-Canadians who belong to international community of high prestige where separation reduced stress.

More recently, Schwartz and Zamboanga (2008) tested the Berry's model, by examining the extent to which Berry's (1997) acculturation orientation categories (assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization) would emerge in a latent class analysis. Six latent classes (rather than Berry's four) emerged from their analysis. Their findings partially supported Berry's model. Considering that measures of psychosocial adjustment were not included in their study, two of these latent classes expressed variants of integration (full and partial biculturalism); two expressed, respectively, “a combination of assimilation and biculturalism (in second-generation immigrants), and a combination of separation and biculturalism (first-generation immigrants)” whereas “Marginalization did not emerge as a cluster” (p.281). However, an undifferentiated cluster emerged, which represented cultural identity confusion, rather than avoiding original or



host cultural identity. Their findings were consistent with Berry's model in that assimilation implies low levels of ethnic identity, but not consistent in that Separation did not imply high levels of ethnic identity. Separation emerged in their study as a latent factor which represented those who adhered to their original cultural heritage.

Schwartz et al. (2011) concluded in another study that a bidimensional (named earlier by Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, (2010) as a multidimensional) model of acculturation, which was used to examine how effective is retaining original cultural values (heritage) and adopting host cultural values, practices and identification, appears to be important in protecting immigrants against health risk behaviors. They suggested that immigrant students who are receiving counseling interventions should be encouraged to retain their original heritage in addition to adopting host cultural values. They also suggested that immigrant students should be encouraged to join groups that are formed by people from their own ethnicity.

Despite Rudmin's and Schwartz and Zamboanga's criticisms, Berry's fourfold theory is still useful and plausible; for instance Leong, Wagner, and Kim (1995, p. 217) found that Berry's theory was very successful in interpreting the influence of loss of face and acculturation on the group psychotherapy expectations of 134 Asian American students. "This study found that gender and loss of face were not significant predictors of positive attitudes toward group counseling"; on the other hand Kim's (1988) study proved that acculturation was a significant predictor, and this measure was based on Berry's (1980) model. Also the integrationist strategy significantly predicted "positive attitudes toward group counseling" (p.220).

## **Social Identity Theory.**

Social Identity Theory (SIT), already briefly introduced in the previous chapter, was developed by Tajfel and Turner in 1979, and it has come, above all, to provide a deeper comprehension and wider realization of the psychological core of social categorization and discrimination (Hogg & Reid, 2006). People have an essential as well as a vital need for positive self-esteem and self-perception; SIT explored such concepts and also investigated other concepts such as the effect of social categorization and social comparison on creating social identity. For example, when a person is engaged in a group, he/she would define himself/herself in terms of the group membership itself, which includes an adaptation of that group's norms and self-reference. While engaging with a group, he or she will try positively to value their own group relative to other groups in general. For example, if someone would like to define himself/herself in terms of his/her nationality or ethnicity, then there is no doubt in saying that this person will work hard to make his/her country or ethnicity seem and appears distinctive, in a positive way, compared to other groups or ethnicities.

SIT also assumes that individuals would prefer to see themselves as positive and productive rather than negative and non-productive (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). This assumption would encourage them continuously to achieve positive social identity that includes membership of a group which fulfills their desire of belonging and productivity. These individuals would prefer to acknowledge, even through in-group bias and irrational justification that their group is more positive and successful than other groups which they do not belong to. This desire would lead these individuals to make social comparisons between in-group and out-group, in order to achieve distinctive social rank, which favor the in-group. These social comparisons would eventually affect the individual's self-esteem and self-perception.

The model of Social Identity Theory may be considered as a flexible theory for interpretation of data as well as a useful guiding principle in relation to the present research. It can be represented as follows: In the first place, there are the independent variables - cultural values and ethnic identity (which may be taken to represent in-group favoritism and in-group bias). SIT proposes a close relationship between group identity and self-esteem, therefore it is predicted that ethnic identity, and the social values that are congruent with this identity, will be positively correlated with self-esteem. In terms of SIT, acculturative stress may be a sign of conflict between the values of the in-group (own cultural group) and out-group (host culture). It is difficult to derive a directional prediction from SIT because acculturation is a dynamic process. Initially a strong adherence to ethnic identity and cultural values of the in-group may be protective against acculturative stress, but later, acculturative stress may depend on the acculturation strategy adopted (Berry, 2001). Likewise, initially, attitude towards seeking psychological help may be negatively correlated with ethnic identity and cultural values, because it is associated with out-group rather than in-group values. Later, attitude toward seeking psychological help may be taken to indicate adjustment and adoption of successful acculturation strategies when dealing with the out-group and the surrounding environment. Adding to that, marital status, gender, and length of stay, could potentially be significant moderating factors which affect both students' studies and their social adjustment at various levels. Furthermore, the aim of the counseling part of the research is to help individuals (clients) to achieve positive and better understanding of themselves; or, as Carl Rogers (1996, p.136) defined those aims: "better perceptions of one's characteristics and abilities, better understanding of the self in relation to others and to the environment, and the value qualities which are perceived as associated with experiences and objects". SIT provides a useful framework for the client group because cultural values and ethnic identity are intrinsic to the concerns that they face, and therefore can be addressed in counseling to achieve positive

identity and eventually positive self-esteem. Such a result will improve their acculturation strategies.

SIT has generated considerable influence on ethnic identity research as it involves a mutual involvement in feeling of attachment and belonging to a group and to the attitude associated with that sense of belonging (Robert & Joyce, 1999).

### **Studies of Social Identity Theory in relation to acculturation strategies**

Ward et al. (2008, p. 112) remarked that although “SIT proposes that individuals would prefer a strategy of social categorization, comparison and in-group favouritism to achieve positive social identity”, integration, which is one of Berry’s (1980) acculturation strategies, was preferred by immigrants. Peeters and Oerlemans (2009) have also discussed the relationship between Berry’s (2001) theory and SIT, whereby identification with the original culture is associated with a separation strategy, identification with both host and original culture is associated with integration, identification solely with the host culture is associated with assimilation, and identification with neither is associated with marginalization. Peeters and Oerlemans (2009) investigated how acculturation orientations (assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization) related to well-being, targeting a sample of 79 ethnic minority, and 124 ethnic majority employees who worked in two distinct organizations. Their predictions were based on both social identity theory and the acculturative stress paradigm. The results revealed that an integration orientation correlated positively with work-related well-being, and on the other hand, a marginalization attitude correlated negatively to well-being. Furthermore, the relationship between acculturation orientations and work-related well-being was stronger for ethnic minority employees than ethnic majority employees. As Peters and Oerlmans noted, this result showed the importance of taking into account cultural issues when studying well-being in

culturally-diverse organisations – which indeed is one of the main guiding principles of the present research. As Ward et al. (2008, p. 98) explained, “Ethnic and cultural identity forms the core of the social identification theories’ conceptual frameworks”. Thus, foreign students who belong to different ethnicities and hold different values and norms and self-identities may suffer difficulties and stressors in their temptations to cope and integrate with the new culture and to overcome cultural distances in addition to their academic learning challenges.

A related concept of ethnic identity has been explored by Jean Phinney in relation to acculturation. According to her research, ethnic identity (the extent to which one perceives him/herself as a member of one’s ethnic group) interacts with the cultural norms of the host country to determine the adaptation to the new culture (Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001). In particular, characteristics such as pluralism, hostility towards immigrants, immigration policies and expectations towards the host culture may affect the process of acculturation (Phinney et al., 2011). Within this framework, ethnic identity is seen as ever-changing, dynamic construct and thus is highly affected by the situational and personal factors (Phinney & Ong, 2007). According to Phinney (2003), a decline in the strength and valence of own ethnic identity is generally observed in immigrants, especially in later generation, although some may attempt to preserve the link to one’s ethnic group by associating with people from the same group (Keefe & Padilla, 1987). The sense of belonging to a group that one finds important affects wellbeing and self-esteem (Phinney, 1989), and so it is particularly important to create a positive image of one’s ethnicity because unlike social or occupational identity, it cannot be altered. An individual’s attitudes toward own and other ethnic group may therefore determine the acculturative processes and outcomes.

### **Relationship between cultural values, collective self-esteem, acculturative stress, and attitude toward seeking help**

This section will provide more information about the relationship between cultural values and the variables that will form the basis of the thesis research. This section will begin by a review of how previous studies explored the relationship between these variables, and then it will end by identifying the scales and research approaches that will be used in the present study.

### **Relationship between cultural values and acculturative stress:**

Kim and Omizo (2005) examined the relationship between adherence to original cultural values and acculturative stress. Their participants were 156 (96 women, 60 men) Asian American college students at a West Coast university. To assess original cultural values, Kim and Omizo relied on the AVS (Asian Values Scale), and for acculturative stress, on the Situational, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturation Stress Scale-Short Form. Contrary to the authors' hypothesis, the study did not find a significant relationship between adherence to original cultural values and acculturative stress. Then it was suggested by Kim and Omizo (2005) that the sample was biased towards successful students and therefore may have not been representative of general population.

However, another study by Hovey, Kim and Seligman (2006) was carried out among 133 Korean American college students in the United States (88 women, 45 men; 18-29 years old), using the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory and Asian Values Scale. This study revealed that "higher levels of adherence to Asian cultural values were strongly associated with lower self-esteem, higher state anxiety and greater depression, (p. 508).

There are several sources of stress which might be related to miscommunication like: Competence in the host culture's language. Cultural language is, language which only could be understood by locals, either verbal or non-verbal.

It may be hypothesized that a relationship between adherence to original cultural values and acculturative stress would be found in other samples, including Saudi students studying in the UK, but as previous research is contradictory, the nature of the relationship may depend on additional variables.

### **Relationship between cultural values and attitudes to seeking psychological help**

Kim and Omizo (2003) found that adherence to Asian values did significantly predict Asian American students' negative attitudes towards seeking psychological help (ATSPPH-SH; Fischer & Farina, 1995). They explained that "The values encourage Asian Americans to withhold their pain, suffering, and anger rather than to express them. Also, traditional values encourage individuals to conform to family and social norms. Deviating from the norms by admitting psychological problems can be easily perceived as a violation of Asian cultural values, resulting in shame to the family" (p. 327).

If, as seems likely, the original cultural values of Saudi students in the UK include similar attitudes towards psychological problems, these findings may be replicable in a Saudi sample.

### **Cultural values, cognitive flexibility and communication skills**

Kim and Omizo (2005) found that adherence to original cultural values was negatively associated with scores on the Cognitive Flexibility Scale (CFS; Martin & Rubin, 1995), which is a self-report questionnaire used to measure cognitive flexibility using the three components of communication, rigidity of attitudes, and personal habits. Cognitive flexibility refers to the awareness that in any situation there are options and alternatives available, the willingness to be flexible and adapt to the situation, and having the competence to be flexible.

The researcher noted that items of the Male Arab Acculturation Scale (MAAS; Barry 2005) measure very relevant social interaction and communication styles in various settings. As a result, the researcher could generate a hypothesis which relates to Kim and Omizo (2005) findings on cognitive flexibility.

### **Relationships between cultural values and collective self-esteem**

Kim and Omizo (2005) also investigated Asian American college students' adherence to Asian and European American cultural values and their relations to collective self-esteem. They examined 156 (96 women, 60 men) Asian American college students at a West Coast university. Results supported the hypothesis that adherence to Asian and European American values are positive predictors of both the group membership and the private dimensions of collective self-esteem. This result is consistent with the predictions of Social Identity Theory, and could be further tested by studying Saudi students in the UK.

### **Relationship between acculturation, collective self-esteem and self-concept**

Barry (2005) invited 115 male Arab immigrants living in USA, aged 18 to 54 years, to participate in a research study using The Male Arab Acculturation Scale (MAAS) and the Collective Self-Esteem Measure (CSE), in addition to other scales, to examine the relation between separation, assimilation, integration and marginalization as acculturative strategies. Barry (2005) found that Arabs who separated had higher collective self-esteem compared to Arabs who integrated. Out-group favoritism is related positively with underprivileged groups as Tajfel (1982) emphasized the role of social support in minimizing the side effects of experiencing acculturative physical and mental stress.



### **Relationships between ethnic identity and self-esteem**

There were no significant relationships between Ethnic Identity and self-esteem among the groups in a study by Phelps, Taylor, and Gerard, (2001) who examined cultural mistrust, ethnic identity, racial identity, and self-esteem, targeting a sample consisting of 26 African, 110 African American, and 24 West Indian/Caribbean university students in USA. The scores of the African American students' were statistically different from African and West Indian/Caribbean students' scores on cultural mistrust, racial identity, and ethnic identity measures. However, across the three groups there were no statistically significant differences regarding self-esteem. Results showed that the cultural mistrust, ethnic identity, and racial identity accounted for 37% of variance in self-esteem of African American students. Similarly, Lee (2008) confirmed the importance of ethnic identity on minority youth's global self-esteem in his study examining the interrelated issues of private and public domains of self-esteem, ethnic identity formation, and bilingual confidence. This study was conducted among youth of a minority group in Canada, in a sample of 110 Chinese students ages 11 to 18. In addition to other factors which could influence and affect the respect and appreciation of the self and the self-concept, including body image and mental capacity, family is considered as the most effective factor in building or destroying self-esteem.

### **Relationship between ethnic identity and acculturative stress.**

A quantitative study by Utsy, Chae, Brown, and Kelly (2002) examined the effect of ethnic group membership on ethnic identity, race-related stress, and quality of life for 160 male and female participants from three ethnic groups in the U.S.A. (African American, Asian

American, and Latino American). Ethnic group membership had a significant effect on the Multi-Group Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM): African American participants had significantly higher MEIM ethnic identity scores than did Asian American and Latino American participants, moreover, analysis revealed that ethnic identity and cultural racism were significant predictors of quality of life and race-related stress and accounted for 16% of the total variance for the entire sample. Similar results were obtained in a quantitative study by Walker, Wingate, Obasi and Thomas (2008) aimed at exploring the relationships of acculturative stress and ethnic identity to depressive symptomatology and suicidal ideation in college students, The SAFE Acculturative Stress Scale, Multi-Group Ethnic Identity Measure, Beck Depression Inventory, and Beck Suicide Scale were administered to 452 African American and European American college students. The authors found that acculturative stress and ethnic identity moderated the relationship between depression and suicidal ideation for African American but not for European American college students. Vulnerability toward suicidal thoughts was increased for those African American college students who reported symptoms of depression accompanied by either high acculturative stress or poor group identity.

Moreover, Mena, Padilla and Maldonado (1987) used SAFE Acculturative stress measure when they assessed acculturative stress and specific coping strategies among 214 multicultural college undergraduates of both male and female, who were divided into four generational status groups: early immigrants (immigrated before 12 years of age) and late immigrants (immigrated after age 12), second-generation and third-generation. Also in this study, the relationship of acculturative stress to self-esteem was investigated, as well as its relationship with locus of control and loyalty to American culture. The results of the study showed that late immigrant students experienced greater acculturative stress than the other groups, in addition they reported a greater ability to cope with stress through taking a direct,

planned action approach, whereas second and third-generation groups used to cope by talking to others and consulting them about the problems.

Saldana (1994) examined the process of acculturative stress. His sample consisted of 177 Hispanic and 93 Anglo freshman college students using survey methods. The study proposed a multivariate predictive model of psychological distress that contained social class (SES index), gender, and ethnicity as precursor variables; alongside demographic and psychological indexes of acculturation. It was found that SES and ethnicity but not gender contributed substantially to college-level stresses and minority stresses. Minority stresses contributed to psychological distress for Hispanics. Level of acculturation did not account significantly for minority stresses or psychological distress in this cross-sectional study. Overall, research indicates that ethnic identity is an important factor in acculturative stress.

### **Relationship between ethnic identity and attitudes to seeking psychological help.**

In examining the role of stigma (the perception that a person who seeks treatment is undesirable or socially unacceptable), Shechtman, Vogel, and Maman (2009) studied two ethnic populations which comprised of 307 undergraduate Arab and Jewish male and female students. Ages ranged from 18 to 42 years. According to ethnicity, Arabs' results revealed that they are more concerned than Jewish students about their social image which affected their desire to seek mental help. This result is expected since Arabic students belong to collective societies.

Another study by Moran (2007) on a sample of 15-year-old black and white Asian students revealed that ethnicity did not predict attitudes towards seeking help which might include educational or psychological concerns. Also here the age of participants might have a great influence in the research results because teenagers might share almost the same concerns

and goals regardless of ethnicity or skin color. Also for those in full-time education, teachers may become role models for students and might urge them to adapt positive attitudes towards seeking psychological help. Indeed, that is what Hall and Tucker (1985) found in their study which revealed similar positive attitudes towards seeking psychological help among a sample of 513 black and white teachers. The relationship between ethnicity and attitudes to seeking psychological help thus seems to depend on the specific cultural environment of the sample.

### **Length of Stay and acculturation**

Length of residence can play a major role in immigrants' adjustments. Although there are few published studies of the effects of length of stay on Saudi students studying abroad, in a PhD dissertation, Al-Shedokhi, (1986) investigated problems reported by 379 male and 51 female Saudi students encountered while studying in the USA and examined differences in perceptions of problems among various subgroups, reporting that Saudi doctoral students experienced significantly fewer problems than did undergraduates.

Al-Shedokhi's results were supported by a quantitative study (Ward & Kennedy, 1992) on a sample of 49 male and 35 female New Zealand adults living in Singapore, using the Social Readjustment Rating Questionnaire. Their results indicated that social difficulties were predicted by length of residence in the host culture, among other variables like cultural distance, cultural identity, and mood disturbance.

Overall, the period of time in which the students stay abroad plays a major role in influencing a lot of related cultural variables; furthermore, it is considered to be a significant dimension in the process of adjustment for sojourners. Thus, the previous studies and literature reviews illustrated the degree of impact of length of stay over the long-term. In other words, at the level in which a participatory lifestyle starts to be formed within the host culture and

community, for instance, among worldwide students, then anxiety will usually reduce in the same way as the new culture begins to be more familiar. A study by Saggar, Somerville, Ford, and Sobolewska (2012) showed that when we want to measure immigrants' integration we should not only consider length of stay but also the distance between host and home cultures, and the extent of social interaction. Thus the influence of length of stay on acculturation depends on its interaction with cultural factors and may also depend on the acculturation strategy adopted.

### **Social support**

Social support is defined as the way by which people give assistance to each other during times of stress. This support could be emotional, financial assistance, advice, creating a sense of belonging, etc.). It could be provided by family members, friends, pets, neighbors, and, private or public (governmental) organizations.

Researchers have found that social support is likely to be linked to health and happiness, and that its absence is associated with increased anxiety, illness and grief (Hefner & Eisenberg 2009; Dalgard, Bjorkn & Tambs,1995).

A study by Naidoo (1985) measured cultural stress among 219 women from South Asian and Anglo-Celtic backgrounds in Canada and confirmed that a helpful and supportive husband significantly correlated with experiencing less stress. In relation to Saudi students, Al-Banyan and Abdullah (1980) examined 117 Saudi male married and single students, ages 20-30, studying in the USA. He designed a questionnaire that measures adjustment and compared results of both married and single students. His findings indicated that married respondents were slightly better adjusted than single respondents, with 62 percent of the married respondent

having high adjustment scores as compared to 53 percent of the single correspondents. This could be due to having a family as a social support group.

These findings apparently are not similar to those of another study by Al-Shedokhi, (1986) which included 273 married and 151 single students, and which found that there was no significant difference between married and unmarried students in their perception of the problems they experienced while studying in U.S. colleges and universities. Thus the influence of marriage as a source of social support in Saudi students studying abroad remains to be clarified.

### **Gender and acculturative stress.**

As a result of having different social roles in different cultures between males and females, gender might be expected to be an effective factor in acculturation and acculturative stress. The previously cited study by Al-Shedokhi, (1986), however, found no significant difference between male and female Saudi students in their perception of the problems they experienced while studying in U.S. colleges and universities. A study by Otlu (2010) investigated the role of gender, acculturative stress, coping skills, cultural distance, and perceived social support in predicting the college adjustment of 170 international students (135 males and 35 females). This study also found no gender differences in terms of college adjustment of international students. The matter of gender, at the first glance, thus seems to be a secondary one, but it is considered as a vital issue in the international communication among students abroad, where those who are from traditions with a modest quantity of gender separation, may perhaps feel somewhat inadequate in meeting one-on-one with a lecturer of the opposite gender, or with the opposite gender students. In previous studies it was revealed by Otlu (2010) that male and female students could have diverse points of view. In terms of adjustment and the related stress regarding interaction with host cultures and other colleagues'

backgrounds, some female students showed a tendency to own high stress levels, compared with males, moreover, had poorer adaptation and strategy to deal directly with the other gender. In addition to that, it was observed that cultural and community dissimilarity with the country of origin was able to affect the influence of gender on college adjustment (Otlu, 2010).

### **Aims and structure of the thesis**

This research will be the first attempt to measure the process of acculturation which is experienced by Saudi male and female students using both questionnaires and interviews and it is the first research which will examine Saudi student acculturation strategies and discuss their preferences through questionnaires and interviews, especially Saudi females who did not participate before in a similar research. Also it is the first time for a Saudi researcher to measure the effect of offering counseling and guidance sessions for Saudi students through Saudi Culture Office in London offered by a Saudi Counselor. It is an attempt to gain a more complete understanding of acculturation, which this research might accomplish through measuring the effect of reverse cultural shock on returned students using a questionnaire and informal interviews. The research will try to include females as participants, which Barry could not accomplish when he developed the Male Arab Acculturation Scale (MAAS) (Barry, et al. 2000), and Male Arabic Ethnic Identity Measure (MAEIM) (Barry, 2005), because of lack of resources as he explained in his research. Additionally, it was very interesting to examine the differences in gender reactions to the acculturation experience and strategies by Saudis. As a result, the research objectives would be to achieve and find new answers addressing new Saudi students' social concerns and trying to understand their use of Berry's strategies using SIT. Also, more generally, this research results and discussions might give some answers to one of the most serious problems which face politicians when dealing with different people who reflect

and represent different cultures, norms, and values. Although it is an advantage to have this kind of cultural diversity, it might be an equally strong reason to stimulate and urge cross-cultural conflicts, and misunderstandings of each ethnicity's norms and traditions and results could lead to serious consequences. Also the research might help decision makers in public or private organizations to understand and appreciate choosing an appropriate reaction when dealing with different acculturation strategies used by immigrants; in order to help building a harmonious environment between original residents and immigrants and for immigrants to be accepted by others and to be part of this new society.

Finally, researchers should be reflective about their aims and motives. I would like to emphasize that the researcher is very concerned to give Saudi females a chance to express their concerns and struggles while being abroad. The following paragraph will discuss this attempt and explain its importance to the reader.

Generally speaking, as Al-Saif (2003) explained, although many norms are not written in Saudi Arabia, they are strong enough to weaken habits: and one of these norms considers consulting women or females as a wrong choice. Even in courts, women are considered sentimental and passionate rather than rational and reasonable so their testimony should be supported by two women to equal one man testimony; and even in marriage proposal, females are not expected to express or say their opinion verbally, so that if a woman keeps silent when asked to agree to marry someone, her silence means that she is accepting him. Women in Saudi society have a limited degree of freedom in their private or public choices and are expected to obey family male members' wishes and choices regardless of the consequences, and even in religion an obedient wife (who obeys every command and request from her husband) will be guaranteed to enter Heaven. The point here is that Saudi females are brought up to be passive, dependent, and followers, and the males of their family (their father or brother) are



responsible for making their choices. Being brought up in such an environment, and suddenly being offered scholarships to live abroad for several years is a big shift in Saudi women's life and they therefore have to work harder than men to adapt and integrate in the new culture. The researcher noticed that they generally form female Saudi support groups in order to overcome this sudden cultural shift. When the researcher was conducting interviews, the female participants kept waiting for each other to finish the interview in order to leave together. Although the majority of Saudi males and religion authorities support the restrictive view of women's roles, many families are now more open to accept the new proactive and effective role of their daughters either in Saudi Arabia or abroad.

### **Study overview**

After going deeply through previous studies and exploring their view of research independent and dependent variables, it is worthwhile to specify the scales and measures that will be used throughout this study, which build upon most used and probable scales.

First, the influence of cultural values and ethnic identity on acculturative stress and likelihood of seeking psychological help will be investigated. The study will use the following measures: Asian Values Scale (AVS), Male Arab Acculturation Scale (MAAS), Male Arabic Ethnic Identity Measure (MAEIM), and Attitudes toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help-Short Form (ATSPPH-SF), Collective Self-Esteem (CSE-R). More explanation of these scales will be added in the research methodology. Subsequently, a qualitative approach (semi-structured interviews) will be used to expand and validate the quantitative findings from the previous sub-study. This mixed method approach (i.e. a research technique in which both quantitative and qualitative data are gathered and integrated; Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007) was

selected due to the nature of the current research questions. The present study investigates issues that are sensitive and require careful interpretation. The quantitative data often lack the depth and flexibility to investigate fine-grained individual differences in attitudes and behaviours while the quantitative data may suffer from lack of objectivity. Both approaches can be therefore combined to be ‘mutually illuminating (Bryman, 2007). By integrating the two approaches, the research will benefit from an access to a wider perspective and greater understanding of issues at hand.

Using a coding method, some of the data available in both quantitative and qualitative form from the same sub-group of participants will be analysed. This method will demonstrate the extent to which participants’ attitudes are consistent across the two approaches. This will provide a test of validity of the constructs measured in the study. Additionally, the mixed-methods approach will enrich the interpretation of the quantitative data by elaborating and clarifying some of the findings. This integration of methods will provide a comprehensive overview of the current issue and allow to be more confident in the inferences drawn from the results.

Next, a novel approach will be used to investigate whether the ethnicity of the counsellor would affect the successful outcome of counselling services. In particular, the adjustment of Saudi students will be monitored over multiple counselling sessions with a Saudi counsellor in order to compare pre- and post-intervention measures of culture shock. This provided additional quantitative and qualitative data to elaborate on the previous conclusions. This part of the study is particularly important in terms of application in the real world as it explores the impact of provision of relevant psychological services to foreign students who may find it difficult to seek help or, once they have found someone from the host culture to help them, may reject the help due to language or cultural barriers.

Lastly, the reverse (re-entry) cultural shock will be investigated. This study will provide insight into the ways people re-adjust to their original culture after living in a host culture for some time. Both qualitative and quantitative (interviews) data will be collected and themes in the attitudes and beliefs will be described. Again, the conclusions from both approaches will be integrated in the interpretation of findings.

Overall, the current study aims to offer rich insight into the processes involved in adjusting to a new as well as original culture and their consequences. The use of mixed methods will allow to assess the consistency of the investigated constructs and see how the quantitative measures relate to the individual's social reality as constructed through the use of language (Tulloch, 2003). Additionally, mixed method approach may be a suitable method for the potential readers of this thesis (e.g. academics, policy-makers) as it has been suggested that different audiences tend to prefer either quantitative or qualitative evidence (Bryman, 2007); combining them both may therefore provide a more convincing and comprehensive argument. In the final discussion of this thesis, the emerging conclusions will be summarised and evaluated.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Study 1**

The influence of cultural values and ethnic identity on collective self-esteem, acculturative stress and attitudes toward seeking psychological help among Saudi students living and studying in the UK

## **Introduction**

The first study in this research explored acculturation strategies used by Saudi students who live and study in UK in their attempts to achieve adjustment and define their identity. The research studies and theories reviewed in the introductory chapters were a resource to formulate study hypothesis and to choose appropriate tools to measure this phenomena. Also the attitude towards seeking psychological help was added to be assessed and examined, being an important factor in the acculturation process and one of Saudi students' main concerns. The sample was divided into two categories: seniors and juniors according to their length of stay in UK. As a result, juniors were defined as first year students and seniors are students who spent more than one year in UK. Data were acquired in two batches, first for juniors, and second for seniors.

The researcher used Male Arabic Ethnic Identity Measure (MAEIM) and Male Arab Acculturation Scale (MAAS) which were developed by Barry, Elliott, and Evans, (2000) and Barry (2005) respectively. The scale was used on both male and female students and interviews were conducted also with females, overcoming a limitation according of Barry (2005, p. 183) who explained that "several attempts to solicit the participation of female Arab immigrants proved unsuccessful".

A multivariate, questionnaire-based approach will be adopted for the first study.

## **Methodology**

### **Research instruments**

- 1- Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help – Short Form (ATSPPH-SF).

The Attitudes toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale – Shortened Form (ATSPPH-SF) (Fischer & Farina, 1995), measures attitudes toward seeking professional mental

health services. The version used in the present study was a 10-item shortened version of Fischer and Turner's (1970) 29-item instrument (ATSPPH), which was developed to measure attitudes to psychological treatment in a mental health context. In the present study, the Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help–Shortened Form (ATSPPH-SF) (1995) had an internal reliability coefficient or Cronbach's alpha of 0.537 (49 junior participants), 0.472 (68 senior participants). See Appendix 2.

## 2- Asian Values Scale (AVS).

The AVS was developed to measure adherence to Asian Cultural Values by Kim, Atkinson, and Yang (1999). Research reviewed in the introductory chapters of this thesis indicates that it is relevant to Arab populations. In their original study, Kim et al. (1999) reported that AVS has adequate internal and 2-week test–retest reliability. Also, factor analysis and comparisons of AVS scores to scores on the Individualism–Collectivism scale (Triandis & Gelfand 1998) and the Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (Suinn, Rickard-Figueroa, Lew & Vigil, 1987) provided evidence of convergent and divergent validity for the AVS. In the present study, the Asian Values Scale (AVS) (Kim et al., 1999) had an internal reliability coefficient or Cronbach's alpha of 0.620 (49 junior participants), 0.929 (68 senior participants). See Appendix (3)

## 3- Collective Self-Esteem (CSE & CSE-R) Scale.

Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) developed the Collective Self-Esteem Scale in response to Tajfel and Turner's (1979) proposal that identity has two distinct aspects: personal identity and social identity. The scale sets out specifically to measure collective self-esteem as indicating positive social identity. Robust reliability and validity was demonstrated on a sample of 1,200 introductory psychology students. Factor analysis derived four factors measured by the scale: membership, public, private and identity (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). In the present study, the

Collective Self-Esteem Scale (CSES) had an internal reliability coefficient or Cronbach's alpha of 0.744 (49 junior participants), 0.968 (68 senior participants). See Appendix 4.

#### 4-Male (Female) Arabic Ethnic Identity Measure (MAEIM).

It was developed by Barry, Elliott, and Evans, (2000) as a self-report inventory exploring cultural identity among Arab immigrants to the USA. The items were selected from an original set of 59 items generated as a result of semi-structured in-depth interviews. Factor analysis in the validation sample of 115 gave 4 principal factors representing: religious/family values; sense of belonging / ethnic pride; friendship; and ethnic Arab practices. Items with factor loadings less than 0.3 were discarded leaving a 33-item inventory. The four subscales were positively correlated with each other and with the overall scale ( $r = 0.46 - 0.87$ ) and had reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha) between 0.67 and 0.89. In the present study, Cronbach's alpha for the overall MAEIM score is 0.796 (49 junior participants) and 0.969 (68 senior participants). See Appendix 5.

#### 5- Male (Female) Arab Acculturation Scale (MAAS).

MAAS was developed by Barry (2005) to address the lack of an acculturation scale suitable for use with adult Arab immigrants to the USA. It is based on Berry's (2001) fourfold model of acculturation and consists of eight-item analytically derived self-report inventory; MAAS items measure participants' social interaction and communication styles. In Barry's original study, the separation/assimilation and integration/marginalization scales had internal reliability coefficients or Cronbach alphas of .71 and .73, respectively. In the present study, the separation/assimilation and integration/marginalization scales had internal reliability coefficients or Cronbach's alphas of 0.455 (49 junior participants), 0.946 (68 senior

participants), and 0.484 (49 junior participants), 0.639 (68 senior participants), respectively. See Appendix 6.

#### 6-SAFE (Social, Attitudinal, Familial and Environmental)

To assess levels of acculturation stress a modified short version of the original 60-items SAFE scale (Padilla, Wagatsuma & Lindholm, 1985) was used. This 17-item version of the SAFE scale measures acculturative stress in context. (SAFE-Short) comprised those items that correlated most strongly with the overall scale and it was subsequently tested on a sample of 214 multicultural college students with alpha reliability of 0.89 (Mena et al., 1987). The 17-item scale was able to discriminate different levels of stress in different generations of immigrants. In the present study, there was an internal reliability coefficient or Cronbach's alpha of 0.818 (49 junior participants), 0.856 (68 senior participants). See Appendix 7.

#### **Hypotheses:**

H1: Adherence to the original cultural values (AVS) correlates positively with students' Collective self Esteem (CSE).

H2: Adherence to the original cultural values (AVS) correlates negatively with students' acculturative stress (SAFE).

H3: Adherence to the original cultural values (AVS) correlates negatively with students' attitudes toward seeking psychological help or seeing a counsellor (ATSPPH)

H4: There is a correlation between adherence to students' original cultural values (AVS) and social interaction and communication styles in various settings (MAAS).

H5: Ethnic Identity (MAEIM) correlates positively with collective self-esteem (CSE).

H6: Ethnic Identity (MAEIM) negatively correlates with Acculturative stress (SAFE).

H7: Ethnic Identity (MAEIM) negatively correlates with students attitudes toward seeking psychological help or seeing a counsellor (ATSPPH).

H8: Gender, Length of stay (Junior, first year, or Senior, second or third year), and Marital Status significantly influence the scores of AVS, CSE, SAFE, MAAS, MAEIM, and ATSPPH.

### **Procedures and Participants**

Approval from the Brunel University Psychology Research Ethics Committee was obtained prior to data collection. Also, permission was obtained from the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education to use their Saudi students' database and to provide counselling support services and awareness workshops through the Saudi Culture Bureau in London. A purposive volunteer sampling was used; i.e. participants were selected based on their specific characteristics (Saudi students in the UK) but only a sample from this population was used. No other selection criteria were used and therefore it can be assumed that the current sample is representative of Saudi student population in UK; however, since volunteer (self-selecting) sampling was used, it is possible that students who responded differ in some way from remaining students thus introducing bias. However, due to expected low response rate, fully random sampling was not viable.

Questionnaires and permissions to use them were obtained from the original authors, who were contacted through email to request their approval. All questionnaires were back-translated. First, questionnaires were translated from English to Arabic by the researcher, whose mother tongue is Arabic, then the researcher asked an Arabic Ph.D. student to translate the new Arabic version to English; then the researcher compared the final English translated version with the original version of the questionnaires. The result was very satisfactory. The online link to the questionnaires was sent through an online survey (speedsurvey.com) on March 2011 to 500 male and female first year Saudi students (later called first level) who started their studies in the UK in October 2010, using the database of e-mail addresses held by the Saudi Culture Office in London. Another invitation for a sample of senior students, who are second and third



year students, was sent to 200 Second year students (later called second level students), asking them to complete the same online questionnaire on September 2011. All participants were informed at the beginning of the questionnaire that they should indicate their agreement to participate in this study and that the questionnaire was designed to ensure their anonymity. The researcher received 49 new and 68 senior students' responses. The response rate of 10% and 34%, respectively, is comparable to other response rates to questionnaires sent via email (e.g. 10-30% depending on the questionnaire characteristics; Deutskens, De Ruyter, Wetzels, & Oosterveld, 2004). Although a higher response rate would be desirable, the topic of current research may be highly sensitive, especially for junior students, which would decrease the likelihood of completing the survey.

Additionally, 20 students were interviewed in Study 2 (presented in Chapter 5) to further examine in-depth students' acculturation strategies. They were invited by email through the Brunel International office, by personal invitation inside the University library, and using snowball sampling (i.e. referral by already recruited participants).

Statistical analysis will take following procedures:

- 1- Factor analysis to identify number of underlying latent constructs for each scale
- 2- Reliability through calculating of Cronbach alpha to evaluate the consistency of the study instruments.
- 3- Descriptive Statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation of the Study Variables).
- 3- Correlation between the study variables examining Hypothesis 1-7.
- 4- MANOVA to examine the influence of the study variables: gender, length of stay, and marital status regarding the scores of AVS, CSE, SAFE, MAAS, MAEIM, and ATSPPH.

## Results

### Factor Analysis

In order to see whether each questionnaire measured a uniform construct, a series of factor analyses using Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) was conducted on each measure. In order to decide how many factors to retain, the eigenvalues, scree-plots and the pattern ('themes') of factor loadings were explored. All solutions were rotated using an orthogonal rotation Varimax to allow for easier interpretation of factors. All measures were first assessed for their suitability for factor analysis using Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The KMO is recommended to have a value above 0.50 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013), while a significant Bartlett's test ( $p < .05$ ) suggests that there is a detectable structure within the correlation matrix and thus the data is suitable for FA. For the relevant FA output of the analyses described in the sub-sections below, including eigenvalues, scree-plots and factor loadings, please see Appendix 13.

#### MAEIM

For the MAEIM scale, the data was adequate for FA. Its KMO value (.91) is considered superb (Keiser, 1974) and the Bartlett's test was highly significant,  $\chi^2(528) = 2718.20$ ,  $p < .001$ .

According to the Kaiser's recommendation (eigenvalues  $> 1$ ), there were six factors. However, the scree plot was inconsistent with this solution and instead suggested either one- or two-factor solution as the curve becomes relatively flat after first or possibly second factor.

In the two-factor solution, the first factor accounted for substantially higher variance than the second factor (42.07% vs. 6.77%). A few items were cross-loaded on both factors with absolute loadings' values above .4. Additionally, the investigation of the type of items that loaded on either factor did not reveal any obvious 'themes' that the factors may correspond to; both seemed to capture the importance of Arabic values and culture (see Table 4.1a). Based on these considerations, the two-factor solution was not found suitable and instead a one-factor structure was retained. The MAEIM measure was therefore considered to underlie a largely uniform construct (Arabic ethnic identity).

#### Table 4.1a

*Factor loadings for a two-factor solution for MAEIM measure. This solution was rejected in*

*favour of a one-factor solution. Loadings below .3 are suppressed.*

**Rotated Factor Matrix<sup>a</sup>**

	Factor	
	1	2
When I meet a husband and wife who are living away from their extended families (e.g., parents, cousins), I feel sorry for them.	<b>.869</b>	
I have considerable respect for my father, grandfather(s), uncles, and older brothers.	<b>.830</b>	
It is important for me to continue the reputation or “good name” of my family.	<b>.823</b>	<b>.385</b>
Older people deserve more respect than younger people.	<b>.803</b>	
I would never shout at my father even if he were to insult me badly.	<b>.797</b>	
I always obey my father’s orders.	<b>.773</b>	<b>.341</b>
Good things only happen to me when God wills them.	<b>.766</b>	
My parents taught me to be hospitable to foreigners.	<b>.727</b>	
I shall always be faithful to the religion of my fathers.	<b>.718</b>	<b>.316</b>
I would never allow my wife to have an abortion/ I would never have an abortion.	<b>.716</b>	
I am very proud of my Arabic background.	<b>.708</b>	
I consider it an honor to help strangers.	<b>.696</b>	<b>.346</b>
Growing up, I learned a lot about my grandparents and great-grandparents.	<b>.661</b>	<b>.321</b>
I believe that women should place their family before their career.	<b>.653</b>	
I speak Arabic every day.	<b>.635</b>	<b>.437</b>

Arabs all over the world are my “family.”	<b>.621</b>	
I place little emphasis on my “family name.” (r)	<b>.561</b>	
I find that many of my friendships only last a short time. (r)	<b>.547</b>	
I have never doubted that God exists.	<b>.500</b>	
It is important for me to know that I come from a family of “clean descent.”	<b>.487</b>	
I would risk dying for my close friends.	<b>.455</b>	
I eat Arabic food every week.	<b>.413</b>	
I would be reluctant to get divorced as it would give my family a bad name.	<b>.341</b>	<b>.325</b>
I express my feelings better in English than in Arabic. (r)		
I listen to Arabic music at least once a week.		<b>.671</b>
I have an obligation to my group of friends.	<b>.342</b>	<b>.629</b>
Being an Arab plays an important part in my life.	<b>.579</b>	<b>.625</b>
When an important newspaper praises the Arabs, I feel that it is praising me.	<b>.543</b>	<b>.617</b>
I would immediately stop my work or study to help out a friend (e.g., if his or her car broke down).	<b>.420</b>	<b>.598</b>
I rarely write in Arabic. (r)		<b>.588</b>
If one of my friends had borrowed money from me but had not paid me back, I would not ask him or her to return the money.	<b>.534</b>	<b>.543</b>
A man is not a man if he hurts his mother’s feelings.		<b>.415</b>

Being an Arab is more important to me than my religion. (r)

**-.412**

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Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

## AVS

The ATSPPH scale was found adequate for FA with KMO = .88 and significant Bartlett's test,  $\chi^2(630) = 2642.12, p < .001$ .

The initial FA extracted eight factors with eigenvalues > 1. However, the curve of the scree plot suggested a one-, two-, or –three-factor solution. The three-factor solution accounted for 48.85% of variance. The first factor explained substantially more variance than the other two (35.76% vs. 8.46% and 4.61%). Majority of items loaded onto Factor 1, which encompassed a broad range of characteristics reflecting respect for the elders, one's family and society (e.g. 'Following familial and social expectations are important.'). Factor 2 reflected the virtues of modesty and humbleness (e.g. 'Modesty is an important quality for a person.'). Factor 3 consisted of items focused on either the importance of educational achievement (e.g. 'One need not focus all energies on one's studies. (reversed)') and on tranquility (e.g. 'One need not remain reserved and tranquil. (reversed)'). However, some of the 'themes' were present across factors; for example, the values of modesty and tranquility/emotional control was represented by all factors, duty towards one's parents was reflected in both Factor 1 and Factor 2 (see Table 4.1b). The two-factor solution was therefore attempted. The pattern of factor loadings again was not very clear, with the first factor again accounting for much higher variance (35.66% vs. 8.30%) and reflecting both respect for family/values/society as well as modesty, while only five items loaded onto the second factor and represented a mixture of tranquility and educational achievement (see Appendix 13). Since there were no clear emergent 'themes' and the first factor accounted for substantially more variance than others, it was decided to treat the AVS scale as

representing a single construct. This was additionally supported by the recommendation of the authors of this scale (Kim, Atkinson, & Yang, 1999) that the latent factors should not be treated as subscales due to their lower reliability, as compared to the full scale.

Table 4.1b

*Factor loadings for a two-factor solution for AVS measure. This solution (and a two-factor solution; see Appendix 13) was rejected in favour of a one-factor solution. Loadings below .3 are suppressed.*

**Rotated Factor Matrix<sup>a</sup>**

	Factor		
	1	2	3
Occupational failure does not bring shame to the family. (r)	<b>.857</b>		
One need not follow the role expectations (gender, family hierarchy) of one's family. (r)	<b>.828</b>		
Younger persons should be able to confront their elders. (r)	<b>-.769</b>		
One should consider the needs of others before considering one's own needs.	<b>.750</b>		
Following familial and social expectations are important.	<b>.735</b>		
One should think about one's group before oneself.	<b>.732</b>		
One's achievements should be viewed as family's achievements.	<b>.728</b>	<b>.475</b>	

One need not achieve academically in order to make one's parents proud. (r)	<b>.728</b>	
One need not follow one's family's and the society's norms. (r)	<b>.716</b>	
One should be discouraged from talking about one's accomplishments.	<b>.700</b>	
Educational failure does not bring shame to the family. (r)	<b>.696</b>	
One should not deviate from familial and social norms.	<b>.679</b>	<b>.488</b>
When one receives a gift, one should reciprocate with a gift of equal or greater value.	<b>.651</b>	
The worst thing one can do is to bring disgrace to one's family reputation.	<b>.638</b>	<b>.468</b>
Elders may not have more wisdom than younger persons. (r)	<b>.619</b>	
One should avoid bringing displeasure to one's ancestors.	<b>.614</b>	<b>.493</b>
One need not minimize or depreciate one's own achievements. (r)	<b>.607</b>	
One should not be boastful.	<b>.561</b>	<b>.524</b>
Family's reputation is not the primary social concern. (r)	<b>.552</b>	<b>.335</b>
One need not conform to one's family's and the society's expectations. (r)	<b>.518</b>	
One should be able to question a person in an authority position. (r)	<b>.487</b>	
Children should not place their parents in retirement homes.	<b>.432</b>	
One's family need not be the main source of trust and dependence. (r)		

One should not inconvenience others.		<b>.670</b>
One should be humble and modest.	<b>.515</b>	<b>.662</b>
One should not make waves.		<b>.639</b>
Modesty is an important quality for a person.	<b>.600</b>	<b>.633</b>
Children need not take care of their parents when the parents become unable to take care of themselves. (r)		<b>.506</b>
Parental love should be implicitly understood and not openly expressed.	<b>-.358</b>	<b>-.454</b>
One need not control one's expression of emotions. (r)		<b>.440</b>
One need not be able to resolve psychological problems on one's own. (r)		
One need not focus all energies on one's studies. (r)		<b>.634</b>
One need not remain reserved and tranquil. (r)		<b>.558</b>
Educational and career achievements need not be one's top priority. (r)		<b>.579</b>
The ability to control one's emotions is a sign of strength.		<b>-.423</b>
One should have sufficient inner resources to resolve emotional problems.		

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Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.



## MAAS

The MAAS scale was also suitable for FA as suggested by an adequate KMO = .62 and significant Bartlett's test  $\chi^2(28) = 277.35, p < .001$ .

Three factors had eigenvalues above 1. However, a three-factor solution was invalid as some communalities exceeded the value of 1 when extracting the factors (so-called 'Heywood case'; Kolenikov & Bollen, 2012). A two-factor solution was therefore attempted. This explained 44.08% of variance and provided two factors that were easy to interpret. Factor 1 included items that reflected a preference for the Arab culture (e.g. 'I would much prefer to live in an Arab country') while Factor 2 consisted of items reflecting an ease of interaction with a Western culture / lack of preference (e.g. 'I am equally at ease socializing with Arabs and Americans.')

(see Table 4.1c). The two factors corresponded to the original factors from Barry's (2001) study: separation and integration. Therefore, the two sub-scales were analysed separately in subsequent analyses.

Table Table 4.1c

*Factor loadings for a two-factor solution for MAAS measure. This solution was retained. Loadings below .3 are suppressed.*

	Rotated Factor Matrix <sup>a</sup>	
	1	2
Generally, I feel more comfortable around Americans than I do around Arabs. (r)	<b>.940</b>	
Most of my friends are Arabs.	<b>.692</b>	
I would much prefer to live in an Arab country.	<b>.614</b>	
I behave like an American in many ways. (r)	<b>.590</b>	
I have a lot of difficulty making friends. (r)		

I am equally at ease socializing with Arabs and Americans.	<b>.714</b>
I have many Arab and American friends.	<b>.667</b>
I mix equally well with Americans and Arabs.	<b>.575</b>

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Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

## CSE

The CSE scale had KMO = .94 ('superb'; Kaiser, 1974) and highly significant Bartlett's results,  $\chi^2(120) = 1379.46, p < .001$ . Therefore it was deemed suitable for FA.

There were three factors with eigenvalues above 1 that accounted for 64.35% of variance. However, the third factor made a relatively small contribution (3.81% vs. 50.62% and 9.92%). Scree plot suggested a one- or two-factor solution as the curve was almost flat after the second factor. The two-factor structure accounted for 59.96% of variance and produced factors with interpretable 'themes'; the first factor seemed to represent the perception of one's in-group in terms of its worth (e.g. 'In general, others respect the social groups that I am a member of.') and the second in terms of the affective importance and own self-image (e.g. 'The social groups I belong to are an important reflection of who I am.'). However, some items which seemed to reflect a similar construct loaded on different factors (e.g. 'I feel I don't have much to offer to the social groups I belong to. (reversed)' loaded on Factor 1, while 'I am a cooperative participant in the social groups I belong to.' on Factor 2), and some items seemed to load onto the 'inappropriate' factor, e.g. 'I feel good about the social groups I belong to.' loaded on Factor 1 even though it was Factor 2 that better captured the affective component of group

membership. Moreover, this and several other items cross-loaded highly on both factors (loadings > .5), which made it difficult to discern a clear structure (see Table 4.1d). This solution was therefore not deemed suitable and instead a one-factor solution was retained. This decision was additionally supported by the substantially higher proportion of variance explained by Factor 1 (50.39%) compared to Factor 2 (9.57%).

Table 4.1d

*Factor loadings for a two-factor solution for CSE measure. This solution was rejected in favour of a one-factor solution. Loadings below .3 are suppressed. **Rotated Factor Matrix<sup>a</sup>***

	Factor	
	1	2
In general, others think that the social groups I am a member of are unworthy. (r)	<b>.834</b>	
In general, others respect the social groups that I am a member of.	<b>.813</b>	
I often regret that I belong to some of the social groups I do. (r)	<b>.698</b>	<b>.401</b>
Most people consider my social groups, on the average, to be more ineffective than other social groups. (r)	<b>.689</b>	
I feel good about the social groups I belong to.	<b>.659</b>	<b>.591</b>
Overall, I often feel that the social groups of which I am a member are not worthwhile. (r)	<b>.640</b>	<b>.383</b>
Overall, my social groups are considered good by others.	<b>.638</b>	
I feel I don't have much to offer to the social groups I belong to. (r)	<b>.491</b>	<b>.397</b>
The social groups I belong to are an important reflection of who I am.		<b>.831</b>
In general, belonging to social groups is an important part of my self image.		<b>.800</b>

I am a cooperative participant in the social groups I belong to.		<b>.777</b>
In general, I'm glad to be a member of the social groups I belong to.	<b>.559</b>	<b>.758</b>
I am a worthy member of the social groups I belong to.	<b>.509</b>	<b>.580</b>
I often feel I'm a useless member of my social groups. (r)	<b>.548</b>	<b>.559</b>
Overall, my group memberships have very little to do with how I feel about myself. (r)		<b>.545</b>
The social groups I belong to are unimportant to my sense of what kind of a person I am. (r)	<b>.428</b>	<b>.464</b>

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Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

## SAFE

The SAFE scale was suitable for FA as suggested by its KMO = .85 and significant Bartlett's test,  $\chi^2(276) = 1565.74, p < .001$ .

There were five factors with eigenvalues above 1, however the scree plot suggested a two-factor structure. This solution accounted for 49.30% of variance (Factor 1: 30.35% and Factor 2: 18.95%). The two factors were readily interpretable; the first factor corresponded to stress due to feeling 'different' as a result of linguistic or cultural barriers, e.g. 'People think I am unsociable when in fact I have trouble communicating in English' and 'Because I am different I do not get enough credit for the work I do'. Factor 2, on the other hand, reflected stress due to conflict with family members (e.g. 'It bothers me that family members I am close to do not understand my new values') as well as lack of stress due to the new culture (negative loadings of items like 'Losing ties with my country is difficult' or 'It bothers me to think that so many people use drugs'). Interestingly, item 'I often think about my cultural background' loaded positively on Factor 1 and negatively on Factor 2, suggesting that the type of experienced stress may be related to the active maintenance of connection to one's cultural background (see Table 4.1e). However, for the purpose of this thesis a total SAFE score was used.

Table 4.1e

*Factor loadings for a two-factor solution for SAFE measure. This solution was rejected in favour of a one-factor solution. Loadings below .3 are suppressed.*

<b>Rotated Factor Matrix<sup>a</sup></b>		
	Factor	
	1	2
Because I am different I do not get enough credit for the work I do	<b>.773</b>	
I often feel ignored by people who are supposed to assist me	<b>.771</b>	<b>.303</b>
It bothers me that I have an accent.	<b>.767</b>	

Many people have stereotypes about my culture, ethnic group, or race and treat me as if they are true.	<b>.745</b>	
I have trouble understanding others when they speak	<b>.705</b>	
In looking for a good job, I sometimes feel that my ethnicity or race is a limitation.	<b>.704</b>	
People think I am unsociable when in fact I have trouble communicating in English	<b>.681</b>	
I have more barriers to overcome than most people.	<b>.627</b>	
I feel uncomfortable when others make jokes about or put down people of my same background	<b>.603</b>	<b>-.405</b>
Because of my ethnic background, I feel that others exclude me from participating in their activities	<b>.595</b>	
I often feel that people actively try to stop me from advancing.	<b>.586</b>	
It is hard to express to my friends how I really feel.	<b>.563</b>	
People look down on me if I practice customs of my home culture.	<b>.527</b>	<b>.508</b>
It is difficult for me to “show off” my family.	<b>.451</b>	<b>.423</b>
My family does not want me to move away but I would like to.		<b>.767</b>
It bothers me that I cannot be with my family		<b>-.743</b>
Losing ties with my country is difficult.	<b>.300</b>	<b>-.722</b>
I don't feel at home.		<b>-.693</b>
It bothers me to think that so many people use drugs.		<b>-.602</b>
It bothers me that family members I am close to do not understand my new values.	<b>.473</b>	<b>.583</b>

Close family members and I have conflicting expectations about my future	<b>.410</b>	<b>.560</b>
It bothers me when people pressure me to assimilate	<b>.441</b>	<b>.502</b>
I often think about my cultural background.	<b>.480</b>	<b>-.482</b>
I don't have any close friends.	<b>.348</b>	<b>.367</b>

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

### ATSPPH

The ATSPPH scale was found adequate with KMO = .88 and significant Bartlett's test,  $\chi^2(45) 509.10, p < .001$ ).

Two factors had eigenvalues above 1. However, the scree plot was more consistent with a one-factor solution. Additionally, the first factor accounted for substantially more variance than the second factor (45.60% vs. 7.83%) and there were no clear 'themes' as both factors seem to reflect a belief that counseling is useful and advisable to people who struggle with emotional troubles (see Table 4.1f). One-factor solution still accounted for considerable variance (44.78%), and the smallest factor loading was .485 (see Appendix 13). Therefore, the entire scale was averaged in the subsequent analyses.

Table 4.1f

*Factor loadings for a two-factor solution for MAEIM measure. This solution was rejected in favour of a one-factor solution. Loadings below .3 are suppressed.*

#### Rotated Factor Matrix<sup>a</sup>

	Factor	
	1	2
If I were experiencing a serious emotional crisis at this point in my life, I would be confident that I could find relief in psychotherapy.	<b>.790</b>	

I would want to get psychological help if I were worried or upset for a long period of time.	<b>.773</b>	
I might want to have psychological counseling in the future.	<b>.687</b>	<b>.336</b>
A person with an emotional problem is not likely to solve it alone; he or she is likely to solve it with professional help.	<b>.546</b>	<b>.420</b>
The idea of talking about problems with a psychologist strikes me as a poor way to get rid of emotional conflicts (r)	<b>.521</b>	<b>.486</b>
If I believed I was having a mental breakdown, my first inclination would be to get professional attention.	<b>.470</b>	
Personal and emotional troubles, like many things, tend to work out by themselves. (r)		<b>.737</b>
A person should work out his or her own problems; getting psychological counseling would be a last resort. (r)	<b>.460</b>	<b>.688</b>
There is something admirable in the attitude of a person who is willing to cope with his or her conflicts and fears without resorting to professional help. (r)		<b>.686</b>
Considering the time and expense involved in psychotherapy, it would have doubtful value for a person like me. (r)	<b>.308</b>	<b>.587</b>

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Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

### **Reliability testing**

The reliability of each scale is presented in Table 4.1. The reliability of each scale used is satisfactory, especially when MAAS is treated as two sub-scales: MAAS(sep) and MAS(int).



Table (4.2)

Reliability: measure, number of items and Cronbach's alpha values

AVS	36	0.901
ATSPPH	10	0.885
CSE	16	0.940
MAAS	7	0.542
MAAS(sep)	4	0.806
MAAS(Int)	3	0.697
MAEIM	33	0.951
SAFE	24	0.88

### Correlation results

**H1:** There is a positive correlation between the adherence to the original cultural values (AVS) and personal & public self-esteem (CSE). This confirms H1 and supports a prediction from SIT.

**H2:** There is a negative correlation between adherence to the original cultural values (AVS) and the acculturative stress (SAFE). This confirms H2 and is consistent with SIT.

**H3:** The adherence to the original cultural values (AVS) does not correlate with students' attitudes toward seeking psychological help, or seeing a counsellor (ATSPPH). This does not confirm H3.

**H4:** There is a positive correlation between adherence to students' original cultural values (AVS) and the Separation subscale of MAAS and there is no correlation between AVS and the Interaction subscale of MAAS. This is partially consistent with SIT.

**H5:** Ethnic Identity (MAEIM) correlates positively with collective self-esteem (CSE). This confirms H5 and is consistent with SIT.

**H6:** Ethnic Identity (MAEIM) correlates negatively with Acculturative stress (SAFE). This confirms H6 and is consistent with SIT.

**H7:** Ethnic Identity (MAEIM) does not correlate with students' attitudes toward seeking

psychological help, or see a counsellor (ATSPPH). H7 is not confirmed. A significant negative correlation is predicted by SIT or from Kim and Omizo 's (2003) study.

For the values of correlations among the study variables, see Table 4.2.

Table (4.3)

Correlations between the study variables.

Scale	AVG MAEIM	AVGAVS	AVGMAAS	AVGCSE	AVGSAFE	AVGATSPPH	AVGMAAS (SEP)	AVGMAAS (INT)
AVG MAEIM	1							
AVGAVS	.880**	1	.					
AVGMAAS	.698**	.655**	1	.				
AVGCSE	.821**	.810**	.698**	1				
AVGSAFE	-.191*	-.192*	-.177	-.073	1			
AVGATSPPH	-.054	-.136	.028	-.122	-.006	1		
AVGMAAS (SEP)	.711**	.696**	.816**	.676**	-.407**	-.029	1	
AVGMAAS (INT)	.017	-.031	.337**	.072	.366**	.098	-.268**	1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Descriptive statistics suggest that values reflect a tendency towards the positive scale values in the sample response on the questionnaires, (except SAFE, MAAS (INT), and ATSPPH). Regarding the AVS means reflects relatively strong adherence to original cultural values from the sample; also, there is one value that reach the levels of above a mean of 5 – which is related to Male Arabic Ethnic Identity Measure (MAEIM) where it is equal to 5.54,

well above the mid-point of the scale which is 4. That reflects a relatively high level of sample agreement regarding Male and Female Arabic Ethnic Identity.

More interpretations will be discussed in the following:

### **MANOVA**

**H8:** Gender, Study Level, and Marital Status significantly influence the scores of AVS, CSE, SAFE, MAAS, MAEIM, and ATSPPH.

In order to investigate H8 and test whether the measures of interest are affected by gender, level of study and marital status, a three-way MANOVA (multivariate analysis of variance) was used. The choice of MANOVA, as opposed to a series of univariate ANOVAs, was underlined by the number of advantages multivariate analysis offers; MANOVA allow to compare multiple conceptually related responses by several factors while controlling for the correlations between them. Since the current measures all reflect related constructs, they are expected to be non-independent. This is supported by the fact that most DVs were significantly correlated (Table 4.2). A series of univariate ANOVAs would substantially inflate the chance of making Type 1 error, and the interpretation of the effect of factors may be misleading. Therefore, MANOVA allows drawing conclusions about the overall effects of the independent variables and their interactions across the entire range of measures, thus improving the interpretations of which variables are of particular importance. Overall, use of a single MANOVA increases the power to detect effects of interest, provides a better control over error rate and provides additional information not given by ANOVA, i.e. how the independent variables differ on a combination of conceptually related DVs.

**Table (4.4)**

Gender	Marital Status	Study Level	MAEI	AVGAVS	AVGMAAS	AVGMAAS (sep)	AVGMAAS (int)	AVGCSE	AVGSAFE	AVGATSPPH
male	single	1	5.58 (0.601)	4.78 (0.28)	4.81 (0.56)	4.34 (1.125)	5.27 (0.84)	4.75 (0.813)	3.23 (0.636)	2.44 (0.26)
		2	4.83 (1.233)	4.27 (1.01)	4.53 (0.659)	4.79 (1.464)	4.25 (0.685)	4.19 (1.285)	2.45 (0.351)	2.81 (0.733)
		Total	5.12 (1.084)	4.47 (0.836)	4.64 (0.627)	4.62 (1.338)	4.65 (0.893)	4.41 (1.14)	2.76 (0.613)	2.67 (0.615)
	married	1	5.5 (0.575)	4.68 (0.352)	4.69 (0.622)	4.58 (0.934)	4.8 (0.936)	4.77 (0.582)	3.18 (0.401)	2.56 (0.387)
		2	5.04 (1.113)	4.35 (0.854)	4.47 (0.752)	4.93 (1.805)	4.01 (1.078)	4.25 (1.362)	2.43 (0.429)	2.89 (0.82)
		Total	5.23 (0.948)	4.49 (0.706)	4.56 (0.701)	4.79 (1.504)	4.33 (1.083)	4.47 (1.129)	2.74 (0.56)	2.75 (0.689)
	Total	1	5.53 (0.576)	4.72 (0.323)	4.74 (0.59)	4.48 (1.002)	4.99 (0.913)	4.77 (0.671)	3.21 (0.499)	2.51 (0.341)
		2	4.95 (1.155)	4.32 (0.912)	4.5 (0.706)	4.88 (1.65)	4.11 (0.928)	4.22 (1.313)	2.43 (0.393)	2.85 (0.775)
		Total	5.18 (1.001)	4.48 (0.757)	4.59 (0.667)	4.72 (1.429)	4.47 (1.013)	4.44 (1.126)	2.75 (0.578)	2.72 (0.655)
female	single	1	5.27 (0.614)	4.72 (0.529)	4.28 (0.597)	3.85 (1.081)	4.7 (0.743)	4.79 (0.846)	3.33 (0.587)	2.73 (0.89)
		2	3.78 (1.043)	3.47 (0.711)	3.63 (0.835)	3.13 (1.414)	4.14 (0.677)	2.96 (0.929)	3 (0.568)	3.13 (0.447)
		Total	4.35 (1.157)	3.95 (0.888)	3.88 (0.805)	3.4 (1.323)	4.36 (0.742)	3.66 (1.264)	3.13 (0.587)	2.98 (0.666)
	married	1	5.42 (0.288)	4.36 (0.282)	4.4 (0.769)	3.72 (1.081)	5.18 (1.163)	4.92 (0.555)	3.58 (0.461)	3.13 (0.388)
		2	4.71 (1.242)	4.23 (0.944)	4.33 (0.83)	4.35 (1.704)	4.31 (0.641)	3.58 (1.329)	2.6 (0.37)	2.75 (0.647)
		Total	4.99 (1.025)	4.28 (0.742)	4.36 (0.786)	4.1 (1.488)	4.66 (0.962)	4.12 (1.262)	2.99 (0.632)	2.9 (0.578)
	Total	1	5.34 (0.489)	4.56 (0.464)	4.33 (0.661)	3.79 (1.051)	4.91 (0.953)	4.85 (0.714)	3.44 (0.535)	2.91 (0.722)
		2	4.18 (1.205)	3.8 (0.889)	3.93 (0.89)	3.65 (1.636)	4.21 (0.655)	3.22 (1.138)	2.83 (0.525)	2.97 (0.564)
		Total	4.63 (1.136)	4.1 (0.835)	4.09 (0.824)	3.71 (1.424)	4.49 (0.848)	3.86 (1.27)	3.07 (0.604)	2.94 (0.624)
Total	single	1	5.43 (0.612)	4.76 (0.407)	4.55 (0.626)	4.11 (1.106)	5 (0.829)	4.77 (0.808)	3.28 (0.6)	2.58 (0.642)
		2	4.32 (1.246)	3.89 (0.956)	4.09 (0.866)	3.98 (1.651)	4.2 (0.672)	3.59 (1.274)	2.72 (0.54)	2.97 (0.623)
		Total	4.75 (1.175)	4.22 (0.893)	4.27 (0.807)	4.03 (1.453)	4.51 (0.83)	4.05 (1.249)	2.94 (0.624)	2.81 (0.653)
	married	1	5.47 (0.492)	4.57 (0.359)	4.59 (0.672)	4.29 (1.047)	4.92 (1.008)	4.82 (0.565)	3.32 (0.454)	2.75 (0.466)
		2	4.93 (1.151)	4.31 (0.874)	4.43 (0.77)	4.74 (1.768)	4.11 (0.952)	4.02 (1.369)	2.49 (0.413)	2.84 (0.758)
		Total	5.15 (0.972)	4.42 (0.718)	4.49 (0.73)	4.56 (1.521)	4.44 (1.046)	4.35 (1.177)	2.82 (0.592)	2.8 (0.652)
	Total	1	5.45 (0.545)	4.66 (0.389)	4.57 (0.644)	4.21 (1.066)	4.96 (0.92)	4.8 (0.682)	3.3 (0.521)	2.67 (0.555)
		2	4.63 (1.228)	4.1 (0.933)	4.26 (0.829)	4.37 (1.741)	4.15 (0.823)	3.81 (1.331)	2.6 (0.489)	2.9 (0.694)
		Total	4.96 (1.087)	4.33 (0.809)	4.39 (0.773)	4.31 (1.505)	4.47 (0.945)	4.2 (1.216)	2.88 (0.608)	2.81 (0.65)

Means and standard deviation for the study variables according to Gender, Marital Status and Study Level.

It is clear that there are differences between the means of study (dependent) variables as a function of the independent variables. To examine the statistical significance of these differences the follow MANOVA test was conducted

**Table (4.5) MANOVA of scores of study variables**

Multivariate Tests <sup>a</sup>					
Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Gender	.82	3.21	7	99	.004
maritalstatus	.96	.62	7	99	.738
LEVEL	.33	28.51	7	99	.000
Gender * maritalstatus	.93	1.09	7	99	.376
Gender * LEVEL	.88	1.87	7	99	.083
maritalstatus * LEVEL	.89	1.73	7	99	.111
Gender * maritalstatus * LEVEL	.91	1.36	7	99	.229

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	AVGMAEIM	35.004 <sup>a</sup>	7	5.001	5.390	.000
	AVGAVS	17.743 <sup>b</sup>	7	2.535	4.795	.000
	AVGMAAS	13.156 <sup>c</sup>	7	1.879	3.674	.001
	AVGMAAS(SEP)	41.524 <sup>d</sup>	7	5.932	2.934	.008
	AVGMAAS(INT)	21.028 <sup>e</sup>	7	3.004	3.988	.001
	AVGCSE	45.654 <sup>f</sup>	7	6.522	5.715	.000
	AVGSAFE	17.939 <sup>g</sup>	7	2.563	11.492	.000
	AVGATSPPH	5.163 <sup>h</sup>	7	.738	1.840	.087
Gender	AVGMAEIM	4.959	1	4.959	5.345	.023
	AVGAVS	2.737	1	2.737	5.178	.025
	AVGMAAS	5.465	1	5.465	10.684	.001
	AVGMAAS(SEP)	20.685	1	20.685	10.230	.002
	AVGMAAS(INT)	1.108E-7	1	1.108E-7	.000	1.000
	AVGCSE	4.745	1	4.745	4.158	.044
	AVGSAFE	2.384	1	2.384	10.691	.001
	AVGATSPPH	1.707	1	1.707	4.259	.041
Marital Status	AVGMAEIM	2.336	1	2.336	2.518	.116
	AVGAVS	.218	1	.218	.413	.522
	AVGMAAS	.684	1	.684	1.337	.250
	AVGMAAS(SEP)	3.476	1	3.476	1.719	.193
	AVGMAAS(INT)	.007	1	.007	.009	.924
	AVGCSE	1.121	1	1.121	.982	.324
	AVGSAFE	.083	1	.083	.373	.543
	AVGATSPPH					.671
		.073	1	.073	.181	

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Study Level	AVGMAEIM	18.557	1	18.557	20.003	.000
	AVGAVS	7.850	1	7.850	14.850	.000
	AVGMAAS	2.321	1	2.321	4.539	.035
	AVGMAAS(SEP)	.828	1	.828	.410	.524
	AVGMAAS(INT)	16.679	1	16.679	22.142	.000
	AVGCSE	28.940	1	28.940	25.360	.000
	AVGSAFE	13.021	1	13.021	58.395	.000
	AVGATSPPH	.831	1	.831	2.074	.153
Gender * Marital Status	AVGMAEIM	1.416	1	1.416	1.526	.219
	AVGAVS	.280	1	.280	.530	.468
	AVGMAAS	1.610	1	1.610	3.148	.079
	AVGMAAS(SEP)	.827	1	.827	.409	.524
	AVGMAAS(INT)	2.969	1	2.969	3.942	.051
	AVGCSE	.728	1	.728	.638	.426
	AVGSAFE	.011	1	.011	.049	.826
	AVGATSPPH	.053	1	.053	.132	.718
Gender * Study Level	AVGMAEIM	1.578	1	1.578	1.701	.195
	AVGAVS	.473	1	.473	.894	.347
	AVGMAAS	.077	1	.077	.151	.699
	AVGMAASSEP	1.291	1	1.291	.639	.426
	AVGMAAS(INT)	.236	1	.236	.314	.577
	AVGCSE	6.957	1	6.957	6.097	.015
	AVGSAFE	.089	1	.089	.400	.529
	AVGATSPPH	.724	1	.724	1.805	.182
MaritalStatus * StudyLevel	AVGMAEIM	1.876	1	1.876	2.022	.158
	AVGAVS	2.713	1	2.713	5.133	.026
	AVGMAAS	.644	1	.644	1.259	.264
	AVGMAAS(SEP)	2.549	1	2.549	1.261	.264

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Marital Status * Study Level	AVGMAAS(INT)	.007	1	.007	.010	.921
	AVGCSE	.435	1	.435	.381	.539
	AVGSAFE	.613	1	.613	2.751	.100
	AVGATSPPH	1.077	1	1.077	2.687	.104
Gender * Marital Status * Study Level	AVGMAEIM	.381	1	.381	.411	.523
	AVGAVS	1.395	1	1.395	2.638	.107
	AVGMAAS	.411	1	.411	.804	.372
	AVGMAAS(SEP)	3.388	1	3.388	1.676	.198
	AVGMAAS(INT)	.469	1	.469	.622	.432
	AVGCSE	.322	1	.322	.282	.596
	AVGSAFE	.726	1	.726	3.254	.074
	AVGATSPPH	.843	1	.843	2.104	.150
Error	AVGMAEIM	97.412	105	.928		
	AVGAVS	55.506	105	.529		
	AVGMAAS	53.705	105	.511		
	AVGMAAS(SEP)	212.317	105	2.022		
	AVGMAAS(INT)	79.095	105	.753		
	AVGCSE	119.825	105	1.141		
	AVGSAFE	23.414	105	.223		
	AVGATSPPH	42.086	105	.401		
Total	AVGMAEIM	2910.719	113			
	AVGAVS	2187.101	113			
	AVGMAAS	2242.583	113			
	AVGMAAS(SEP)	2348.375	113			
	AVGMAAS(INT)	2362.944	113			
	AVGCSE	2163.426	113			
	AVGSAFE	976.921	113			
	AVGATSPPH	938.715	113			



Corrected Total	AVGMAEIM	132.416	112		
	AVGAVS	73.248	112		
	AVGMAAS	66.861	112		
	AVGMAAS(SEP)	253.842	112		
	AVGMAAS(INT)	100.123	112		
	AVGCSE	165.478	112		
	AVGSAFE	41.353	112		
	AVGATSPPH	47.249	112		

### Multivariate results

The multivariate results showed that there was a significant effects of gender on the measures,  $F(7,99) = 3.21, p = .004$ , Wilk's  $\Lambda = 0.82$ , as well a significant effect of Study Level,  $F(7,99) = 28.52, p < .001$ , Wilk's  $\Lambda = 0.33$ . The multivariate effect of the Marital Status was not significant,  $F(7,99) = 0.62, p = .738$ , Wilk's  $\Lambda = 0.96$ . None of the interactions among the IVs were significant ( $p > .05$ ). See Table 4.4. This suggests that only gender and level of study affect the main variables of interest. Marital status, on the other hand, does not seem to play an important role.

### Univariate results

There was a significance gender difference on MAEIM, MAAS (SEP), CSE, SAFE and on ATSPPH. Males scored higher than females on MAEIM, AVS, MAAS (SEP), MAAS (INT) and on CSE. Males scored lower than females on measures of SAFE and on ATSPPH. All other comparisons between males and females were non-significant ( $p > .05$ ).

Study level had significant effects on all variables except MAAS (Sep) and ATSPPH (Table 4.4). Junior students scored higher than senior students on MAEIM, AVS, MAAS, MAAS(int), CSE, and SAFE (Table 4.3).

Consistently with the multivariate results, Marital Status had no significant effect on any of the variables ( $p > .05$ ).

There were no significant interactions between Gender and Marital Status on any of the dependent measures ( $p > .05$ ). There was a significant Gender by Study Level interaction on CSE. AVS was found to be significantly influenced by the interaction between Marital Status and Study level. The three-way interactions between the variables Gender, Marital Status, and Study level were all non-significant ( $p > .05$ ).

## **Discussion**

Regarding the relation between the research variables, there are a set of interpretations which are possible to get involved with in the range of probabilities. For instance, from SIT, the “artificial” adherence to original values (as a result of being forced to be part of a traditional group) or genuine adherence to the original cultural values, when practiced inside the in-group, may be closely tied to collective self-esteem in the manner of a direct positive correlation. In this research, combined data from junior and senior students’ results confirmed this positive correlation. However, separately, correlations were found to be significant only for seniors ( $r = .841, p < .01$ ). This finding is consistent with previous study done by Kim et al. (2005), suggesting that seniors are more attached to be part of Saudi groups who adhere to the original cultural values which would positively increase self-esteem and provide an enhancement tool

which is essential for forming a homogeneous group who could provide an acceptable level of belonging and security. On the other hand, juniors, who are mostly unmarried, may want to experience a new way of life and enjoy the freedom of choice which also might be related to being in the excitement stage of the immigration experiences.

Also, this study found that in the combined sample there is a negative correlation between the adherence to the original cultural values (AVS) and the acculturative stress (SAFE). Separately, correlations were not significant for the junior sample but there was a significant negative correlation for seniors ( $r = -.690, p < .01$ ). Although this null finding in the junior students' data is consistent with previous studies (Berry, 1988; Kim et al., 2005), Kim suggested that additional studies should be conducted with a more heterogeneous sample to examine this hypothesis. Senior students' results had a negative correlation which suggests that more than one factor affected their questionnaire answers which might be their experience and length of stay evolved their abilities to practice original values and norms in practical way and overcome culture change obstacles. Also, according to Berry et. al. (1989) the overall negative correlation is consistent with SIT, because maintaining high self-esteem through adherence to original cultural values would reduce stress. It would also tend to suggest that separation (seniors) and assimilation (juniors) as acculturative strategies could be alternative stress-avoidance strategies in some cultural groups.

Previous studies reviewed above revealed that adherence to the original cultural values might be considered as an obstacle for seeking psychological help and an individual might seek to avoid others' judgment and evaluation (especially when that help is expected to be provided by a person who is not familiar with clients' frame of references). Saudi culture considers revealing personal problems or physical, academic or emotional needs to a stranger as a shame; however this study found that adherence to the original cultural values (AVS) does not predict

students' attitudes toward seeking psychological help (ATSPPH-short). This finding is not consistent with previous findings by Kim et al. (2003), who found that AVS scores were a significant predictor of scores on ATSPHH-Short. However junior participants' results taken separately showed a significant negative correlation ( $r = -.310, p < .05$ ) and were consistent with Kim et al. (2003). SIT could explain these different attitudes result in that the group orientation to maintain a positive and productive image would prevent them from discussing their concerns with strangers in the junior case, and in senior case the reason might be that the research participants expressed a weaker relationship between cultural values and attitudes to seek psychological help because of greater awareness that the questionnaire was sent from the Saudi Culture Bureau. They might trust that the office would provide genuine help if needed through a Saudi specialist.

The hypothesis (H4) that suggested that there is a positive correlation between adherence to students' original cultural values (AVS) and (MAAS sub scale SEP&ASS), which was confirmed for the sample as a whole, and a negative correlation between AVS and (MAAS sub-scale INT&MAR), ( $r = -.265, p < .05$ ) which was not confirmed in the sample as a whole. Separately, correlations showed no significant correlations among level 1 Saudi students in this study, but level 2 Saudi student's results revealed a positive correlation between (AVS) and (MAAS sub scale SEP&ASS) ( $r = .857, p < .01$ ). Putting in mind that junior results carried less weight than the seniors as well as the smaller junior sample gives less statistical power, forming groups that fulfill their members with feeling of positive social identity and belonging would encourage adapting the separation strategy which will lead to avoiding interacting as a strategy to minimize others' judgments.

Ethnic identity (MAEIM) correlates positively with collective self-esteem (CSE) (H5) in the overall sample, and separately in the senior sample ( $r = .827$ ,  $p < .01$ ), which is consistent with previous studies (Walker et al., 2008; Lee 2008; Utsy, et al. 2002).

It could be understood in the framework of maintaining the ethnic boundaries which will protect the in-groups on the basis of racial factors. These factors will eventually enhance the self-esteem, which are consistent with SIT.

### *Study level (Length of stay)*

Study level proved to be a significant factor in MANOVA regarding all variables except ASPPH, and MAAS1 . Juniors scored significantly higher ( $M=5.45$ ) than seniors ( $M=4.63$ ) on MAEIM (ethnic identity); on AVS (original cultural values), juniors ( $M=4.66$ ) seniors ( $M=4.10$ ); on MAAS (Int); juniors ( $M=4.96$ , seniors 4.15; on CSE (collective self-esteem), juniors ( $M=4.80$ ) seniors ( $M=3.81$ ) and on SAFE (acculturative stress) juniors ( $M=3.30$ ) seniors ( $M=2.60$ ).. It could be related to the young age and fewer experiences of the host culture that level 1 students had. Thus the decrease in ethnic identity and original cultural values between year 1 and year 2 would be consistent with the cumulative influence of the host culture. A decrease in collective self-esteem would therefore be expected from SIT. However there are some paradoxical results: acculturative stress decreased, and integration also decreased between year 1 and year 2.

*Ethnic Identity* (MAEIM) does not correlate with Attitudes toward Seeking Psychological Help ATSPPH. According to SIT and Ethnic Identity, it could be hypothesized that the process of avoiding external judgments and the opinions of external individuals might lead people to reject seeking help so as to protect the image of the individuals' ethnicity or social in-groups against other ethnicities and out-groups. On the other hand, SIT would also

suggest that ethnic identity could play as a reverse force in respect of seeking psychological help, if provided by a counselor who will acknowledge, appreciate, and understand the clients' backgrounds and ethnicities. Or as Phinney et al. (2001, p. 493) explained “ a combination of a strong ethnic identity and a strong national identity promotes the best adaptation”.

Regarding the MANOVA test, the overall effect of gender on ATSPPH was non-significant on a strict criterion since it was not significant in the overall model. The interaction between gender and study level on ATSPPH likewise was non-significant. There was an effect on the mean AVS value due to gender overall. Level of acculturative stress SAFE was significantly different in males (M=3.21) and females (M=3.44).

When the in-group fails to compete or interact successfully with out-group, signs of acculturative stress expected to emerge together with an adoption of a separation strategy. The interaction of gender and study level on acculturative stress and acculturative strategy was non-significant. However, the present study contradicts some previous studies in terms of research study outputs, for instance Otlu (2010) examined the role played by gender, acculturative stress, coping skills, cultural distance, and perceived social support in forecasting the college adjustment within a sample of 170 international students – 135 males and 35 females, but the study found no differences according to gender in terms of college adjustment of international students or related areas, unlike the present results.

Although other demographic variables were ignored as a result of being difficult to be obtained, by the researcher as a variable and because of the limitation in data resources, they are expected to play several roles in determining the score of the measures used in this study. For instance, it is expected that sub-in-groups or sub-cultures may emerge, in an effort to eliminate or minimize external and internal stresses which might affect the ability to form a homogeneous

group that could compete with the out-group. Informal observations suggest that, especially with men, sub-groups in this sample were formed based on tribal or demographical orientation. Juniors differed from seniors in the scores of Ethnic Identity (MAIEM) and collective self-esteem (CSE) with mean score above the midpoint (5.58 & 4.85, respectively). The interactive relationships which occur during religious occasions and festivals, university orientations activities or weekly pre-planned gatherings could explain new students' enhanced appreciation of their ethnicity as a resource of security and belonging which would encourage them to form or belong to a group who represent their ethnicity.

In previous studies, general agreement suggested that married international students could be delving in a higher level of acculturative stress, if they are compared with single international students, and that was because they spent a large fraction of their social time in the company of their partners or, on the other hand, lost opportunities for social communications with both other international and local students and families. In addition to that, psychological factors interact in different ways within the framework of marital status as well as social situation. However, the current results did not reveal any significant differences in dependent variables due to marital status.

There is a visible differentiation in the level of adaptation and strategies used to deal with social pressures within the study abroad environment among the students. This differentiation is affected by the size of the stability or the sense of safety, moreover the level of adherence to original cultural values. (Zhang, 2012). Social identity theory dramatized the dichotomy of "us" and "them", where "us" will work against "them" in order to enhance their entity in light of perceived "them" threats. This study confirmed that there are significant differences in the junior and senior students' scores for all study variables except for ATSPPH &

MAAS-INT due to gender and marital status. The mean score for males in MAEIM was (M=5.58) and for females was (M=5.27).

In addition to that, as the analysis of the effects of independent variables illustrated, there are for example no differences in attitude toward seeking help score due to gender, length of stay, and marital status. However there are differences in collective self esteem according to same moderating variables (gender, senior sample), and there are even differences in Arab acculturation scale, which considered gender language terms differences, score according to length of stay (junior or senior). This result extends the findings of Ward and Kennedy, (1992) who confirmed that social difficulties were predicted by length of residence in the host culture, as were other variables like cultural distance although they noted that social skills improved over time (p.188). Likewise, Noh, Anison & Kaspar (1992) looked at the relation between length of residence and depression and other issues, and illustrated that a solid relation connected them. Moreover, Pyvis and Chapman, (2005) indicated that length of stay is a major factor in acculturation, which seems compliant with the present data analysis of independent variables outcomes, where the length of stay was associated with issues of collective self-esteem, acculturative stress, Integration and separation acculturation, adherence to original cultural values, and ethnic identity.

After reviewing the present results and comparing them with previous studies as well as conducting a literature review, it would be observable that people in general are keen to make sure that their group is better and improved in several ways in comparison with other groups, as shown within the analysis of outcomes of various studies; such views enhanced and sustained the major concepts of SIT. For instance results and findings of this study which are consistent with other related studies are considered as strong justification for the application of a social



identity theory framework. Also the social identity theory enriches our understanding of the ability of individuals to engage within the group that would influence his or her self-esteem.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Study 2**

#### **An Interview study of Saudi students in the UK**

##### **Introduction**

The purpose of the interview study was to explore in greater depth some of the issues that arise from the questionnaire studies reviewed in the previous chapter. The chosen methodology was Thematic Analysis. It is not to be assumed that ratings of agreement or disagreement with questionnaire items are sufficient to reveal the meaning of cultural values in individual's lives and social groups.

There are many ways of approaching interview data, but two of the main approaches are content analysis and thematic analysis. Although Marks and Yardley (2004) believed that thematic analysis is similar to content analysis, they claimed that thematic analysis pays greater attention to details and they added that "content analysis is partially a quantitative method which determine the frequency of the occurrence of particular categories." (p.56). In lending their support to the effectiveness of thematic analysis compared to content analysis, they argued that the end result of content analysis is a quantitative statistical test while thematic analysis has the potential to go deeper to understand a better degree of research assumptions.

Most people would prefer to express their feelings and attitudes verbally than in written forms because of so many reasons most of which are related to the easiness of the flow of thinking and ignoring writing rules and grammar while they expressing their experiences.

Although the present study is a Thematic Analysis, the researcher will also compare the acculturation strategies used by Saudi male and female students who participated in the on-line questionnaire and who also participated in the interview, using a coding method. This technique would make it easier, for the researcher and the reader, to compare the two responses. A percentage and a diagram tables will illustrate these similarities and differences in students' attitudes.

### **Interview**

Interviews (specially semi-instructed) considered one of the effective tools in data collecting for research purposes. It provides a very good chance for both the interview and participants to examine the following:

- The depth of and clarity of information which was gathered and discussed using questionnaires.
- Gives the participants a chance to elaborate their answers.
- Reduce the ambiguity which occurs usually in understanding some items or expressions in the questionnaires.
- Gives the researcher a very good chance to read the body language which expressed during the participants' answers.

**Purpose:**

The researcher used this semi instructed inductive interview to achieve clear analysis which would support the questionnaires' results' themes and to add new themes to the research which might appear during the interview and these themes will facilitate thematic analysis.

In brief, the interviews were semi structured, aiming to explore participants' everyday life experience, their relationships with other nationalities (UK or other nationalities), and their adherence to their old values, their educational experiences, and their overall evaluation of their personal experiences. Also the interview investigated their attitudes towards seeking psychological help and their preference regarding the nationality of the counselor. The interviews also examined and defined strategies used by Saudi students in their process of adjustment which were based on Berry's Model of Acculturation (Integration, Assimilation, Marginalization and Separation).

**Methodology:****Sample**

Participants were recruited by the researcher who made use of students' gatherings in the library, monthly informal Saudi society members at Brunel University, Saudi Club in London meetings and the weekly Friday religious prayer gathering. Only 20 Saudi students (11 Males -9 Females) agreed to participate and claimed that they had previously taken part in the questionnaire study. Arbitrarily they represented the following groups:

- Second, third, and fourth grade male and female students from different studying fields and schools.

- First year male and female students who were studying English as a prerequisite or who had started their MA but had not studied before in UK.
- Students who were labeled according to Saudi cultural standards as religious.
- Single and married students.
- Students who were frequent visitors of the Saudi Club in London, Brunel Saudi students' society monthly gathering, Brunel Library, and weekly Friday pray gatherings. These gathering organize social, recreational, educational, and religious activities for Saudi students and their families.

### **Data collection procedures:**

In addition to brief explanation of the purpose of the meetings, all participants were given the choice to choose the place and method, time of the interviews. For example a room was reserved in the library, and a telephone number was distributed to be used at a certain time of certain days in the week. It was one to one interviews.

All participants were informed regarding the confidentiality of their identities and request their consents. Also the researcher informed them that he will write notes which indicate their responses. In order to encourage students to take part in the study, the researcher offered each participant a traditional stick tooth brushes which are not available in UK. Saudi students are cautious regarding their private life issues but the researcher used his experience as a counselor to win their trust. In addition the researcher explained all students will benefit from this study. Although the researcher was expecting Saudi female participants needed more efforts to be convinced to participate in the study, they did cooperate and expressed their appreciation regarding the need for this study.

The researcher did his best not to affect or direct participants' answers and attitudes during the interview as a result of knowing previous similar studies or the results of the questionnaires.

## Codes and Themes

After reading and revising interviews scripts by writing notes in addition to mark patterns, the following codes and themes and sub-themes emerged using inductive approach:

Codes description	Themes
<p>1-I always try to find excuses to avoid feeling guilty because of ignoring religious behavior.</p> <p>2-It is difficult to practice religious obligations here.</p> <p>3-I avoid mixing with religious groups.</p>	Religion
<p>1-I always ask myself “what would my family say if I did, react or say” when interacting with foreigners.</p> <p>2-I intentionally do my best not to mention my family or tribe name when introducing myself.</p>	Family or tribal norms
<p>1-I always search for foreigners even in public places.</p> <p>2-It is difficult to imitate their life style.</p>	Belonging
<p>1-Some time I feel that my ethnicity is an obstacle to socialize.</p> <p>2-I was mistreated by some students because of ethnicity.</p> <p>3- I am not proud of my ethnicity.</p>	Ethnicity
<p>1-I never miss parties which gather different nationalities.</p> <p>2-I do exaggerate showing others that I am not proud of nationality and ethnicity.</p> <p>3-It is difficult for me to understand why I do avoid mixing with Saudis and other nationalities.</p> <p>4-I believe that only my close group could provide me with security, emotional needs and belonging</p>	Acculturation's Strategies

**Table 5***Comparison between the results of MAAS quantitative and qualitative questionnaire's results*

Strategy	On-Line results	Interview results
Separation (MAAS#1-3)	56(48%) of the sample	10(25%) of the sample
Assimilation(MAAS#5-7)	33(28%) of the sample	6(15%) of the sample
Integration (MAAS #2-4)	34(29%) of the sample	6(15%) of the sample
Marginalization(MAAS# 6-8)	44(37%) of the sample	18(45%) of the sample

By running a chi square test on both online and interview scores, it was found that for those responding “strongly agree”,  $\chi^2(3) = 2.44$ ,  $p = .487$  (not significant); and for those responding “agree”,  $\chi^2(3) = 2.85$ ,  $p = .415$  (not significant). Combining both groups,  $\chi^2(3) = 5.47$ ,  $p = .140$  (not significant). Results revealed no significant quantitative differences between online and interview data. However in view of the small sample size for the interview, a type 2 error is possible.

## Discussion

The research used an inductive approach to generate themes using codes which aimed to represent cultural related adjustment' strategies, investigator's prior theoretical understanding of the phenomenon under study, and from literature reviews. The researcher also used an approach being Saudi and being a certified counselor and familiar with norms and values during most of his experience while living and growing in Saudi Arabia, to discussed common subjects or concerns using appropriate expressions and ways of presenting questions and culturally sensitive manner to guarantee that participants feel more free and comfortable to answer questions even personal ones which might be considered taboo subjects back home.

Also new sub-themes were emerged and discussed by the participants themselves during the interview. A model script of an interview is attached in the appendix section.

In Saudi Arabia, religion and family values are almost identical expressing the same ideas and behaviors. As a result of the intensive religious teaching at home and schools for children and adults, when culture shock side effects emerged, the answer would be expected that this might be God's punishment for former deeds or for being away from his worship. Also family issues were connected to any shock because of the close and dependent relationship between Saudi family members.

Often participants' answers expressed the difficulty of adhering to the original values by criticizing the host culture's every day practices.; for example, one student said "how could he or she be a good Muslim while living and surrounded by all evil motives (women's different way of dressing, alcohol, drugs...)" and they expressed their concerns and about the absence of religion police to stop such actions and even to stop him or her if he decides to join others in their evil deeds.

Some women explained that the absence of their mothers might explain their sufferings while living abroad. One female said “I miss my mother guidance although I don’t approve some of them but I believe that she is the only one I can trust”. Of course friends were mentioned by most participants as a strong support in staying attached to the old culture values and traditions.

Ethnicity is an important dimension of identity, and although it may concern almost most Arabs and Muslims, Saudis believe that their ethnicity is distinctive and pure and that other Arabic and Islamic ethnicities were affected while they were colonized. Male student expressed his attitude by saying “Islam and Arabic language existed first in the area of Saudi peninsula and that prove that we as Saudis are genuine when compared to other ethnicity”. That did not stop them from being engaged with other Arab and Islamic ethnicities but in a very narrow way. In women’s case this issue of Saudi ethnicity was less obvious because their concerns are almost the same in different Arab cultures, and their needs as mothers and parents would encourage their bonds.

Although discussed before, separation is a strategy which is used commonly by people who lack confidence and fear of rejection in addition to ideological or radical beliefs. One participant revealed his anger while talking about mixing with British and other nationalities and intimated that they are devils whom we should fight and avoid. Women expressed a need for more help to manage being a student, a mother and a house keeper. Another issue women tended to avoid confrontation and would agree it is wiser to compromise in order to solve problems. One female student said “I do my best to avoid parties which would force me to change my religious and traditional ways of dressing and to interact with drunk students; that would be a shame to myself and my family and I might be subjected to be punished by my partner”. This is unsurprising because Saudi young girls are brought up to be obedient and submissive most of the times. Almost all participants expressed a lack of a sense of belonging to UK culture and



they brought examples arising almost every day activities to illustrate how that affected their sense of belonging starting from language differences and ending with the type of original toilet seats which has no water supply (only toilet paper) and so on.

Qualitative analysis of themes reveals some of the behaviours and attitudes underlying those themes. Despite identifying and managing to deal with a segregated home culture, one female student explained that “I used to drink alcohol in order to socialize and share using the kitchen with other male students”. Although this statement could in other circumstances indicate assimilation strategies it should be remembered that in Saudi culture males and females are not allowed to have a similar gathering even within extended Saudi families. In fact therefore, it could be a strategy to integrate not separate from the host culture. Other female students tried to choose a certain time that most of the students, both Saudis and other nationalities, are out the resident’s or kitchen; which could be a behavioral strategy indicating marginalization. Another male student told me that he went to learn self-defense wrestling training in order to protect himself from others who hate his ethnicity because he is “Saudi” specially after the infamous 9/11 incident. His statement could indicate two attitudes: first is an attitude of separation (I could be attacked if I socialize with others so I should be ready if I was exposed to unfamiliar gatherings and I should avoid them as much as possible). Second an attitude of integration (I want to socialize but I am need to be confident that incase of being attacked, I will be ready to defend myself physically). When the researcher asked one of the participants about the shame his academic failure would bring to his family, he said “we share success and failure and everybody in the town treats us as one, not as individuals”. But he explained that “his fear would not stop him from developing his academic competence by sharing his concerns with other native students”. It is not easy to identify his strategy but it could be a separation strategy because he is forced to socialize with others as a result of his

original cultural concerns. Almost 8 out of 11 of the interview female participants would accept that her father, husband or brother would beat her in order to discipline her as a part of religious and traditional obligations and that they are allowed to control her behavior even when she is abroad. Again it is difficult to define her strategy but she is separating herself from socializing with others. Although most online answers to the question (would you leave your unfinished task to help a friend?) was (I strongly agree), one of the interviewees, who had chosen that online answer, reluctantly said (yes) for the same question during the interview and he continued, but “I need to make sure that I could see the doctor soon” which might take two to three weeks in UK. In Saudi Arabia, you could see the Physician at any time you want. His interview answer was, after an explanation by the researcher that missing a physician appointment might take two weeks or more to be re-arranged. This indicates how difficult it is for Saudi students who are attached to original cultural values to express their values in UK and I noticed that although it is easy to ask a favor from a friend while living in Saudi Arabia, it is difficult to do the same in UK. Theoretically it is easy to say yes to a request for help but practically it is difficult because of lack of resources; as a foreigner who feels insecure, and as a student who is not familiar with the culture and every-day life procedures in UK.

The two religious Saudi students criticized Arabs’ and Saudis’ attitudes toward socializing and interacting with foreign male and female students and stated that such behaviors are forbidden in Islam, and one of them brought a phrase from ALQURAN to support his argument. They also stated that other ethnicities hate Muslims, and the only reason they were allowed to be in UK is to take our money in addition to changing our values and beliefs.

Some of the interviewees expressed their annoyance from others staring at their way of dress and their gathering to perform religious practices. Females are prohibited by their husbands or brothers to mix with male students especially Arabs. Sub-cultures were also formed

as a result of different ethnic backgrounds and Saudi sub-groups were formed who would reject any one who does not belong to or support this group's ideology and traditions.

### **Highlights:**

- Most of the participants expressed concerns about having a lowered mental health status (e.g., confusion, anxiety, or depression) and identity confusion, as a result of lacking the ability to adjust and understand the new culture.
- Integration was infrequently chosen as an acculturation strategy by Junior students in the interview sample.
- Few female students expressed their desire to assimilate but some of them revealed their intention to ask for asylum.
- Frequent Saudi Clubs visitors expressed positive and confident views about their success academically and socially while being abroad.
- Some participants expressed their feelings of guilt for not being able to practice their social values and obligations as they used to do back home because of lack of resources e.g. (money, time etc.); and as a result they were trying to avoid social or one to one gatherings with Saudi students.
- Students in the interview sample who identified themselves as belonging to traditional families in Saudi Arabia, or who could be identified by name of their tribes to be members of traditional families in Saudi Arabia, were less open to accepting UK culture in their replies. Their sense of shame and families' reputation controls their attitude and behavior.

### **Study limitations:**

Saudi Arabia is a huge country with much cultural diversity and as a result of lack of resources and confidentiality concerns expressed by the Saudi students, the researcher managed only to invite 20 participants. This is considered a small interview sample and that could affect the interview results' interpretations. Also culture and religion are one in most Saudi interpretations of behaviour and attitudes which makes it difficult to discuss and analyze some cultural topics without being cautious and careful not to be misunderstood.

### **Conclusions**

The findings of the current interviews build on a growing body of evidence of psychological difficulties arising from acculturation difficulties in international students. It has been illustrated by Hamboyan and Bryan, (1995) how weak adjustments to new cultural environments could create problems in the long-term, for example some mental difficulties like confusion, loneliness, or paranoia. Such matters have emerged within the current framework of the interview results and discussion, regarding feeling threatened, or dealing with in-group and out-group interactions. Furthermore, as has been shown in the interviews, anxiety disorders may develop in students who are subjected to certain situations with people of other cultural backgrounds, also there may be problems arising from the defense mechanisms, which some students develop in order to protect themselves from direct contact with other cultures and different identities. This at least is what we have been assured by Thomson and English (1964) whose study indicated the importance of the issue of level of anxiety, and should be considered when recommendations are made for providing some preparation for living and studying abroad, or giving students the opportunity to form links with fellow students from their own and

other countries. Similar conclusions may be drawn from a study of Saudi students in the USA by Al-Banyan and Abdullah, (1980), where students' statements expressed their feelings about the other students within the group in a negative manner, indicating the consequences when religion dominates, prioritizes and organizes all activities. In the present study, many interviewees were able to acknowledge difficulties of adjustment and awareness of cultural distance. This is consistent with Akhtarkhavari, (1994) who highlighted the feedback from students who delve into the experience of study abroad, where a high percentage of them stated that such experience is considered as a negative and bad one. In other words, the students who completed their education abroad believed that negative consequences and dimensions affected significantly their general personality, which means that most of them have no intention to try it again. The interview outcomes and its analysis indicated the importance of social identity theory which lies in explaining the difficulties in dealing with cultural distortions that are caused by the shocks of differences between civilizations as they emerge across the world. Whereas the cultural legacies and the way of dealing with the conflict of modernity against fundamentalism are considered as huge challenge, social identity theory makes sense in addressing some related aspects, including the findings in this study. Thus cultural conflict could explain why many of the students experience marginalization, and at the same time why they stay away as much as possible from assimilation. Also, it is obvious that social identity theory plays a vital role in explaining the relationship between adherence to original cultural value and self-esteem, in order to maintain the balance of personality components in their normal place. SIT also suggests why psychological help is acceptable only within a specific cultural context, e.g. by the Saudi Cultural Bureau, from a Saudi national, and to help with difficulties of adjustment.

## Chapter 6

### Study 3

#### Implementation and Evaluation of a Counseling Intervention for Saudi Students in the UK.

##### Introduction

Previous literature, reviewed in Chapter 1 – 3 of this thesis, has generally supported the view that providing counselling and follow-up services are helpful in addressing the difficulties that international students face. For example, the Australian government endorsed the effectiveness of counselling in helping international students to adjust and to complete their studies. Thus the code of Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (1994, p.8) concluded as follows:

*“Institutions should develop appropriate support services, including professional counselling services, which will: promote the successful adjustment by international students to life and study in Australia; and assist students to resolve problems which could impede successful completion of their study program”.*

The efficacy of counseling as a treatment for depression and anxiety is well supported in the literature. For example, a study was conducted (Bedi et al., 2000) to determine whether counseling is as effective as antidepressants for depression in primary care on a sample of 425 primary care patients, ages 18-70, which were diagnosed as meeting the Research Diagnostic Criteria for major depression. Participants were divided into two groups. One was prescribed anti-depression medication; the other was provided with counseling. Results confirmed that

there were no significant differences between the two groups' treatment score results and that both treatments were equally effective after eight weeks.

Another combined qualitative and quantitative study by Sharif and Armitage (2004) confirmed the efficacy of implementation of a pre, post and follow-up interventional counselling program in reducing anxiety, increasing self esteem and improving academic performances among 100 university nursing students who were divided into experimental and control groups.

The uptake of counselling services by students varies according to their cultural background. Asian students, as a result of their cultural background, tend to avoid resorting to counselling during their studies abroad. Henderson, Milhouse and Cao (1993) in a survey of Chinese students living and studying in USA, found that 97% of the participants believed it was shameful to use a Counsellor or Psychologist for help with personal problems.

Saudi students rarely resort to their Culture Bureau for advice or guidance, as found by the previously mentioned study by Al-Shadokhi, (1986), which revealed that 42% of his Saudi students sample population would consult fellow Saudi friends in resolving problems and less than 1% would consult the Saudi Culture Bureau.

### **Counselors' ethnicity preference and the Similarity Attraction Hypothesis**

Similarity attraction hypothesis predicts that "individuals are more likely to seek out, enjoy, understand, want to work with, trust, believe, vote for, and generally prefer people with whom they share similar characteristics. These include interests, values, religion, group affiliation, skills, physical attributes, age, and language" (Ward et al., 2008, p.9).

Atkinson et al. (1998, p.118) conducted a survey consisting of a Preference for Counselor Characteristics questionnaire. Their sample was 98 male and 92 female Asian American Undergraduate students. Results confirmed that students preferred a counsellor of similar ethnicity over a counsellor of dissimilar ethnicity, but that similarity on different dimensions such as age, sex, personality, and attitude could be more important. Also Snider, (2001, p.83) found that for ethnic Chinese students, the counsellor's ethnicity plays an important role in their initial reaction but this becomes less important as personal knowledge develops positivity towards the counsellor.

Similarity attraction hypotheses are concerned with understanding why we are attracted to someone who is more similar to me and my attitudes than to others who are dissimilar. These theories are used commercially as well as scientifically, because of evidence for their effectiveness.

In the area of counselling, similarity/attraction theories are supported by a meta-analysis by Coleman et al. (1995) who, reviewing a wide range of studies, supported the conclusion that people from ethnic minorities tended to prefer counselors of similar ethnicity.

Unwillingness to seek counselling may be related to the issues identified by Kim et al. (2003), where some Asian Americans withhold their pain and annoyance rather than express them, where such issues arise through adhering to original cultural values. Also, traditional values encourage individuals to conform to family and social norms to avoid so-called family shame or violations against cultural background.

Likewise, in the present case there is a huge benefit that could be harnessed to promote students' success if a counselling service could be taken into account within Saudi students' awareness. Lewin (1946, p.45) believed that "raising the self-esteem of the minority groups



(Saudi students in this case) is one of the most strategic means for the improvement of intergroup relations”, which would encourage more social and private activities that would decrease the effect of minority feelings. Also Utsy et al. (2002) supported an approach similar to the present study, emphasising its capacity to address a lot of challenges faced by abroad study participants, whether regarding their daily lifestyle or their progression in study and academic field. Also his study emphasised identity issues and cultural values occupy a wide-range area of significance in terms of dealings with the other cultural environment of study. Lee (2008) adopted a similar counselling approach as well. Additionally, Alhashemi and Abdulhamid (1986) described the importance of creating a new approach, in order to take on successful strategies as well as plans, and underlined that counselling programs have to be provided, where it is possible to help, support and guide students and those concerned with global education in overcoming new social and academic challenges, which are related to differences in cultural backgrounds and community identities, and ethnic diversity.

### **Providing counseling by a Saudi Counselor:**

One of the research assumptions is that it is possible to help students to develop a productive and integrated strategy to acculturation, with the help of a counselling service provided by a specialist and through continuous progress evaluation. As mentioned before there are widely considered four acculturation strategies used by immigrants (Berry, 2005), and the counseling sessions will help participants to choose the appropriate strategy. A pre- and post-intervention evaluation using the Culture Shock Questionnaire (Mumford 1998, 2000) will test the efficacy of the counseling services. In the counselling intervention study, some of Saudi students expressed their preference for a consultant with Saudi cultural background rather than a foreigner. They indicated that the extent of abstention from asking for help will be high if that help is foreign, whereas they believed that counselling in terms of Saudi origins could provide

more effective assistance - because its heritage is characterized by Arab features. The results of the study questionnaire and interviews suggested that Saudi students are nevertheless convinced that counselling and seeking help may result in a positive difference, but they connect such options with a cultural environment.

Saudi students in the interview study expressed the belief that a foreign counselor or psychological advisor would not be able to provide an accurate psychological help or guidance because of his or her poor background knowledge of Saudi culture and students' individual backgrounds. This attitude was explained during the interview in which participants also assumed that a Saudi male or female psychologist or counselor would be more thoughtful and would also understand their concerns and private issues better than a foreign psychologist.

One of the research participants said "British counselor will not understand difficulties I am experiencing on a daily basis because the counselor does not have any background of the Saudi social and educational system." Their concerns were consistent with the findings of Snider (2001) who investigated the cultural and experiential influences on university students' expectations about the purposes and goals of counseling, the client's role and responsibilities in counseling, and the counselor's role and responsibilities. Snider's data were collected from 54 ethnic Chinese international students attending Australian universities, 50 Australian university students, and 77 United States university students. He concluded that for Chinese students the counsellor's ethnicity played an important role in their initial reaction to the counsellor. One of his Chinese participants said "We don't trust strangers." (p.76). "Research has demonstrated that people report greater liking for and attraction to people who are like them in the following areas as well: socioeconomic status, religious beliefs, social habits (e.g., frequency of attending parties), bad habits (e.g., drinking and smoking), ethnicity, and intelligence." Robinson (2008). Students also believed that there might be a bias in the consultation provided by a psychologist from the University

counseling centers which are run by the university, and that this might affect their objectivity. Moreover Henderson, Milhouse and Cao (1993) confirmed the idea that students usually tend to avoid resorting to counselling during their studies abroad based on the perception that consultants have different cultural backgrounds, as in their Asian students case.

Last but not least, in the present study, the English language levels were felt to be a barrier in expressing concerns and thoughts to a foreign counselor or psychologist.

The Discussion of the study described in Chapter 5 concluded that Saudi students studying in UK would appreciate and would consider making use of counseling services offered by a Saudi Counselor and that providing these services through the Saudi Culture bureau would facilitate solving their concerns which related to adjustment. They expressed unwillingness to access the UK University counseling services in that they felt that their cultural background would not be understood. They expressed that they would be more comfortable with counseling under the auspices of the Saudi cultural office and with a Saudi counselor. The purpose of the next stage of the research is to undertake and assess a small scale counseling intervention with the aim of identifying ways of assisting the adjustment of Saudi students to the UK context.

**The main goals of the Counselling novel intervention sessions:**

Helping clients (students) to explore him or herself and gradually change his or her negative feelings, attitudes which reflect present or past experiences, towards himself / herself, others, or the surrounding environment to become positive.

- Helping clients to move from generalization to more adequate new perceptions.
- Helping clients to minimize the strategy of using previous negative symbols which might affect his or her new judgment or interpretation of new experiences.

## **Methodology:**

### **Procedures and Sample:**

The aim of the evaluation part of the study was to compare the adjustment of 12 Saudi students who are receiving counselling sessions with 12 control group students who were not receiving counselling. Each sample consists of 4 females and 8 Males. 7 Students in each group were in their first year and the other 5 were in their second and third year of study. The researcher recruited students to take part in this study through Saudi students clubs in UK and through the Saudi Culture Bureau webpage and through Brunel International office who distributed emails to all Saudi students studying at Brunel University The researcher had presented awareness messages about the counselling services through a local university Arabic radio interview and a YouTube clip and a workshop during Brunel Saudi society monthly meetings. The researcher recruited 18 participants who accepted to take part in this study and to receive counselling on a regular basis and they completed the pre- Questionnaire. Only 12 students were committed to finish the study. The researcher used a lot of efforts and counselling techniques to overcome participants' defensive mechanism because Saudis are so cautious regarding their private life. Also all participants were informed regarding the confidentiality of their identities and request their consents. Overall, the concerns of the experimental group as initially expressed could be summarised under four themes: Family, Adjustment related stress, Academic progress, and General concerns.

### **Questionnaire:**

The evaluation measure is a 12 items 3 ranked Culture Shock Questionnaire which was developed by Mumford (1998, 2000). Mumford (1998, p.150) derived the six core items from Taft's (1977) six aspects of culture shock. These aspects were:

- Stress during the process of adjustment.

- Feeling loss and missing physical and emotional recourses at original home,
- Reject or feeling rejected by members of new culture.
- Confusion in role, role expectations, values, feelings and self identity.
- Cultural differences awareness which might lead to anger and anxiety.
- Feelings of importance due not being able to cope with the new environment.

The other six items which express Interpersonal Stress Items were derived from reports written by previous British volunteers during their living abroad (Mumford, 1998). If the combined 12-item version is used, it is recommended to alternate the items from sections A and B.

### **Application:**

A pre- and post- administered Culture Shock Questionnaire Mumford (2000, 1998) was used to assess the differences due to counselling. The study was based on counselling interventions with Saudi students studying in the UK. The investigator is a certified counsellor in Saudi Arabia, and is a graduate member of the BPS. The Saudi Cultural office provided him a private space to interview clients, and has approved the protocol for the study. The experimental group was assessed before and after the counselling intervention on a weekly or a fortnightly basis and had ten scheduled counselling sessions. Sessions of maximum length 45 minutes were offered.

The counselling sessions were provided at:

- Saudi Culture office in London.
- An office was provided by Brunel University to conduct counselling session two days a week for Saudi students who are not able to attend the Saudi Culture office or would prefer to have more convenient place.
- Some counselling sessions were conducted by e-mail or phone during weekends at pre-arranged times.

The control group was assessed at matched time intervals so that time could be used as a covariate in the assessment. The quantitative assessment was based on the 12-item Culture

Shock scale (Mumford, 2000), and each individual was assessed on two separate occasions (pre and post) in both intervention and control groups.

Informed consents were obtained from all participants before the start of the counselling intervention. Full anonymity and confidentiality was maintained in all records, and they were kept in a secure location. The total number of the experimental group was 12. They have all experienced more than one problem during their acculturation. The total number of sessions was ten for each participant before completing the post Cultural Shock Questionnaire. The total counselling sessions were thus 120.

### **Assessing and evaluating the progress of the therapy:**

Notes were taken of negative and positive expressions used by clients during the self-exploratory process in sessions. Notes were taken of any gradual increase in positive expressions and any gradual decrease in negative ones used by clients during the therapy process period. A chart (Appendix 2) was used for each client to record the number of times negative or positive expressions were used by clients during each session concerning: *self, others, and the new environment*. Despite the continuing debate of the efficiency of cognitive or behavioral therapy of depression, the researcher adopted the approach of McGinn (2000) who used cognitive therapy, as developed by Aaron T. Beck and colleagues, as a treatment for depression working especially in the cognitive domain. According to McGinn, “Patients learn to apply cognitive restructuring techniques so that negatively distorted thoughts underlying depression can be corrected, leading to more logical and adaptive thinking. Within the behavioral domain, techniques such as activity scheduling, social skills training, and assertiveness training are used to remediate behavioral deficits that contribute to and maintain depression (e.g., social withdrawal, loss of social reinforcement)” (McGinn, 2000, p. 2). The researcher used (-) sign for each negative expression and (+) sign for each positive expression.

The increase in positive or negative expressions' signs provided a tool to measure the progress during and after the process of therapy.

Progress report ratings by the Counselor grades from 1-10 were recorded. The higher results indicated the increase of the progress. All monitoring data were recorded on a series of data sheets (Appendix 8, Tables 6-9). These comprised a weekly checklist of concerns, a Client self-report schedule, a Counselling Sessions Progress report, and a Counselling Report for the research participants.

**Table 6**

*Counselling services Counselling awareness sessions report (1), 25<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2012- 20<sup>th</sup> March 2013*

Number of cases	Number of sessions	Method of sessions presentation					Case Description	Counselling Category
		Skype	Group	Email	Phone	Office		
2	25				X	X	Financial concerns	Family
14	20				X		Raising children in UK	
2	2				X	x	Family communication	
2	2				X		Marital issues	
11	6				X		Social interaction	
	e						Divorce	
							Parenting special child	
1	1			X			Child sexual abuse	
7	13		x	X	X	X	Home sickness	Adjustment related stress
3	3			X	X	X	Drugs, alcohol or sleeping pills	
4	4		x	X	X	X	Identity concerns	
1	1					X	Hostility	
5	7				X	X	Isolation or separation	
7	7				X	X	Paranoia, perceived discrimination.	
27	27					X	Reverse cultural shock	
9					X	X	Relationship with supervisor	Academic
12					X	X	Fear of failure	
9					E	X	Language competence	
15						X	Academic performance	
4	1					X	Guardian's concerns	General
15	1					X	Jobs opportunities	
18	1					X	Future work progress	
158	Total							



**Table 7**

*Counselling report (2) for the research participants: 25<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2012- 20<sup>th</sup> March 2013*

Number of cases experiencing same concerns	Number of sessions each	Method of sessions presentation					Case Description	Counselling Category
		Skype	Group	Email	Phone	Office		
							Financial concerns	Family
							Raising children in UK	
3					X		Family communication	
							Marital issues	
4					X	x	Social interaction	
1					X	x	Divorce	
							Parenting special child	
1				X			Child sexual abuse	
5			x	X	X	X	Home sickness	Adjustment related stress
1				X	X	X	Drugs, alcohol or sleeping pills	
3				X	X	X	Identity concerns	
2					X	X	Hostility	
5					X	X	Isolation or separation	
8					X	X	Paranoia, perceived discrimination.	
11					X	X	Reverse cultural shock	
2					X	X	Relationship with supervisor	Academic
E					X	X	Fear of failure	
8					X	X	Language competence	
2						X	Academic performance	
e							E	General
							Jobs opportunities	
							Future work progress	
12 participants	120 sessions							

The total number of the experimental group was 12. They have experienced more than one problem during their acculturation. The total number of sessions was ten for each participant before completing the post Cultural Shock Questionnaire. The total counseling sessions were 120. The goal of the questionnaire is to measure the differences in coping well in the new culture before and after an intervention counselling program.

To investigate the above argument and results, the researcher tested the following hypothesis using the appropriate statistical tests:

H1- No statistically significant differences between the results of the experimental group and the control group in the pre-test.

H2: There are statistical significant differences between the results of the experimental group and the control group in the post-test.

H3: There are statistically significant differences between the results of the experimental group in the pre and post tests.

H4: No statistically significant differences in the results of the control group in pre and post tests.

## Results

**Table 8**

*Cronbach alpha for Counselling*

Cronbach alpha	Items Numbers	Questionnaire section
0.780	7	Culture Shock
0.795	5	Interpersonal Stress
0.899	12	Total

Table 9

*The table shows the significance differences between the average ranks of experimental and control groups in the pre-test using " Mann-Whitney " results (Mann-Whitney U)*

Item	Experimental		Controlled		Z	Sig.
	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks		
Culture Shock	11.92	143.00	13.08	157.00	-0.419	0.676
Interpersonal stress	12.00	144.00	13.00	156.00	-0.357	0.721
Total	11.79	141.50	13.21	158.50	-0.501	0.617

H1: Table 9 shows averages ranks of the scores of the experimental and control groups in the pre-test and the level of significance difference between the two, where the values (  $p > .05$ ), which demonstrates equal results for both experimental and control groups in the pre-test .

H2: The next table (Table 10) shows the significance differences between the average ranks of experimental and control groups in the post-test using "Mann-Whitney " results (Mann-Whitney U).

**Table 10.** *The table shows the significance differences between the average ranks of experimental and control groups in the post-test using " Mann-Whitney " results (Mann-Whitney U)*

Item	Experimental		Controlled		Z	Sig.
	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks		
Culture Shock	18.50	222.00	6.50	78.00	-4.211	0.000
Interpersonal stress	18.50	222.00	6.50	78.00	-4.213	0.000
Total	18.50	222.00	6.50	78.00	-4.181	0.000

Table 10 shows averages ranks of the scores of the experimental and control groups in the post test and the level of significance difference between the two , where the values  $p < .05$  , and this indicates the existence of differences in favor of the experimental group.

H3: The next Table 11 shows the differences between the mean average of the experimental group arranged between pre and post tests using Wilkinson Signed Ranks Test. .

**Table 11**

*The table shows the significance differences between the mean average of the experimental group arranged between pre and post tests using Wilkinson Signed Ranks Test*

Item		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	Sig.
Culture Shock	Negative Ranks	0	0.00	0.00	3.077-	0.002
	Positive Ranks	12	6.50	78.00		
	Ties	0				
	Total	12				
Interpersonal stress	Negative Ranks	0	0.00	0.00	3.070-	0.002
	Positive Ranks	12	6.50	78.00		
	Ties	0				
	Total	12				
Total	Negative Ranks	0	0.00	0.00	3.064-	0.002
	Positive Ranks	12	6.50	78.00		
	Ties	0				
	Total	12				

The table shows that there are significant differences at level  $p < .05$  , between pre and post tests of the experimentalgroup .

H4: The next Table 12 will reveal if there are statistical significant differences in the mean scores of the controlled group in the pre and post tests using Wilkinson Signed Ranks Test.

**Table 12**

*The table shows the significance differences between the mean average of the controlled group for the pre and post tests using Wilkinson Signed Ranks Test*

Item		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	Sig.
Culture Shock	Negative Ranks	0	0.00	0.00	2.000-	0.046
	Positive Ranks	4	2.50	10.00		
	Ties	8				
	Total	12				
Interpersonal stress	Negative Ranks	1	1.00	1.00	1.000-	0.317
	Positive Ranks	0	0.00	0.00		
	Ties	11				
	Total	12				
Total	Negative Ranks	1	3.00	3.00	1.342-	0.180
	Positive Ranks	4	3.00	12.00		
	Ties	7				
	Total	12				

The table shows there are significant differences ( $p > .05$ ) in culture shock only, in favor of the post test, while there were no differences between the pre and post tests in Interpersonal stress and total material as a whole.

The progress of the counseling sessions was measured using a Client-Counsellor Feedback questionnaire (Appendix 9). All clients (100%) provided answers Strongly Agree or Somewhat Agree when evaluating the positive qualities of the working relationship with the counsellor

(e.g. 'My counsellor listened to me effectively'), results of working with the counsellor (e.g. 'The sessions with my counsellor helped me with whatever originally led me to seek counselling') and all (100%) were Very satisfied with the overall service. All participants reported they would be recommend the counsellor to others.

### **Discussion:**

The results confirmed the hypotheses. Although the experimental and control groups did not differ in the level of perceived cultural shock and stress in pre-test, only the experimental group which received counseling showed substantial improvement over time. Although the pre-post difference for the control group was marginally significant for the culture shock measure ( $p = .046$ ), this change was much smaller than the one observed in the experimental group. Importantly, there was no difference in the level of interpersonal stress in the control group, suggesting that although these students may have got slightly more used to the new culture, their perceived stress was nevertheless still high. This suggests that the observed changes due to the effects of counseling have an effect over and beyond any improvement due to simply being in the host country for a longer time. As expected, counseling sessions increased people's ability to cope with the new culture. This shows that access to counseling can be invaluable when adapting to a new society. The results are very promising as they show that only ten sessions can already lead to positive changes in students' perceived culture shock and interpersonal stress.

During the counselling intervention sessions, most of students admitted that during their studying experience, they felt they needed a professional psychological help. And although they knew that there were counseling centers in their universities, they were not confident in the centre's provided services. One junior student explained that he has language and cultural difficulties which did prevent him from approaching the university counseling center but that he felt very comfortable talking to me as a Saudi counselor. This is consistent with previous results

(Chapter 5) and supports the Similarity Attraction Hypothesis (Ward et al., 2008) in that clients felt more comfortable with someone perceived to be similar to them. Although it is unclear whether in the long-term the effects of having a Saudi (as opposed to non-Saudi) counselor would be significant, the reports of some people strongly suggest that non-Saudi services providers would not even be sought by those in need of help. This is consistent with Snyder's (2001) suggestion that the perceived similarity is especially important in the initial reaction. This issue highlights that a lack of access to a counselor from the same culture may prevent vulnerable students from trying to get psychological assistance.

Participants were experiencing different coping and interpersonal difficulties; results supported the hypothesis which indicated that intervention program would decrease the side effects of cultural shock and improve personal interactions. Results are consistent with studies by Sharif and Armitage (2004), Fischer (2004), Bedi et al., (2000) who examined the effect of counselling in reducing stress, developing interpersonal skills, and changing negative attitudes. The four themes: Family, Adjustment related stress, Academic progress, and General concerns indicated similar concerns in the Counselling sessions as those discussed by participants in the interview study. Participants in the experimental group expressed their gratitude as they experienced, by the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> session, positive change in their self-esteem and acculturation strategies. Moreover Henderson, Milhouse & Cao (1993) confirmed the idea that students usually tend to avoid resorting to counselling during their studies abroad based on the perception that consultants have different cultural backgrounds, as in his Asian students case.

This study suggests that even small-scale interventions can yield positive effects and enable students to better cope with the challenges of adapting to a new culture. Students' reports that they would appreciate access to counselling services offered by a Saudi counsellor (presented in Chapter 5) seemed to be accurate as the experimental group did improve as a



result of counselling. Although no comparison group with a Western counsellor was used, the results of the previous study suggest that Saudi students would be unlikely to appreciate and use this option. It is understandable that help with dealing with culture shock would be better received if delivered by someone who understands one's position, i.e. someone who fully appreciates the differences between the original and host cultures. An access to a Saudi counsellor may bridge the large gap between the rates of seeking help from other Saudi friends (42%) and from professional organisations (1%) (Al-Shadokhi, 1986), as people may feel more comfortable and 'at home' with a counselor perceived as similar to oneself.

The lack of standardisation of the counseling procedure may be seen as a limitation; however, the method used here is integrative which means the approaches are chosen during each session to suit client unstable needs. Since clients' problems are different and subject to their private circumstances, it would be impossible and not advisable to standardize the procedures. The researcher made sure that the feedback will be anonymous to the researcher by using a box to collect all the feedback forms which have no names to guarantee their accurate responses. And although the positive result of counselling could be predicted after reviewing the previous studies, the researcher made sure that his performance will not direct or affect participants attitudes and answers.

Potential future research avenues may include investigation into what other aspects of life are improved through counseling (e.g. academic achievement, university drop-out rates); what other characteristics of the counselor may affect the outcome (e.g. gender, age); and how short-term interventions such as this one compare to longer-term (but also more costly and time-consuming) solutions. It is also important to notice that the sample size was relatively small due to limited resources. To improve the power of the analyses and generalizability of findings, a larger sample would be advisable.

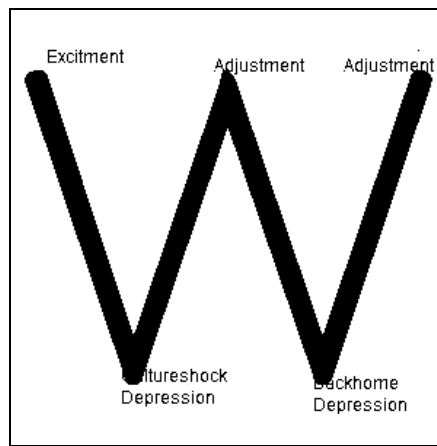
## **Chapter 7**

### **Reverse (Re-entry) cultural shock**

#### **Study 4**

##### **Introduction**

A significant phenomenon is happening in Saudi Arabia as a result of having thousands of graduate students returning home. Returners usually experience difficulties in re-adjusting to their home country's culture. According to Gaw (2000, p.83), reverse culture shock may be defined as "the adjustment process (that) focuses on the difficulties of re-adapting and re-adjusting to one's own home culture after one has sojourned or lived in another cultural environment". Sojourners usually expect to experience difficulties in the process of adjustment during their life in the host country; on the other hand, they expect smooth and successful adjustment when they return home. Also they are expected to gain very useful and practical knowledge during their study by others at home country. However, some of the returners would suffer more culture shock upon returning than when he or she was abroad and also they usually would not prefer to seek psychological help (Wang, 1997; Gaw, 2000). It is likely that the degree of adjustment will be the lowest over the first year (Ward, 2008). In describing the same phenomenon, Gullahorn & Gullahorn (1963, p.33) suggested the W shape theory to illustrate the essential similarity between host and home culture shock. They explained their theory through case studies based on "their observation of an American student in a French provincial university who expressed her adjustment difficulties, while at the same time another American student who had recently returned to the United States described her readjustment problems".



*Diagram 2. W Culture shock shape (Gullahorn & Gullahorn (1963))*

However, because of the wrong expectation of smooth re-adjustment, the re-entry phase could be more challenging than the host country's culture shock. Assimilation or successful adaptation to the host country might lead to severe reverse culture shock. As discussed earlier in this thesis and as stated by Popadiuk and Arthur (2004 p. 127) "The greater the difference between home and host cultures, the greater the adjustment demands faced by international students". The same principle could be applied to re-entry cultural shock. So returning from an individualistic and predominantly secular culture like USA or UK to Saudi Arabia would greatly increase the difficulties of re-entry adjustment. Returners would feel that their original home country is not the same. Symptoms of reverse culture shock are similar to culture shock at the host country. Gullahorn & Gullahorn (1963 p.33) added that "anomie, and rejection are frequently encountered in cross-cultural adjustment" as a result of changes in values and norms.

As discussed in the interview (Chapter 5) and counseling (Chapter 6) studies, most of the students in the sample, especially females, expressed their fears and concerns regarding returning home. They expected to face adjustment challenges because, as they said, they had changed a lot since they left the home country; and although they return home every summer

vacation during their studying abroad, they used to isolate themselves because as they explained, every time they go back home for short visits when they are at home country and socialize only with very close family members. Also during their short visits home they used to be critical about almost everything and they were attacked by family members and named as braggers, westernized and moody. During interviews, females' expressed concerns were about returning to a segregated and male-dominant society. Females said that they are used to being treated equally with men in UK and that they would therefore suffer more than men when they return home. Their fear of returning home led a few girls to suggest that they would seek asylum. These findings are not consistent with Wang (1997) who claims that re-adjustment is easier for women than for men. Nor are they supported by Rohrllich and Martin (1991, p. 175) whose results revealed a significant difference between males and females in their reentry satisfaction. Women were significantly more satisfied with their return than were men.

Saudi sojourners were questioning the real goal of being offered scholarships to study abroad and why, later, they were accused of being westernized and braggers when they initiated positive changes at home and work (Chapter 5 and 6). These observations are consistent with previous studies and explain similarities between host and returning home culture shock. Very few male students had different views; they expected a very smooth and happy home return. They believed that their study years did not change them and they missed the easy and secured life style back home. Similarities between original culture shock and reverse culture shock led the researcher to compare adjustment and coping strategies used by student regarding both culture shocks. Adler (1981) suggested four coping strategies for returning home culture shock

just as Berry (2005) had suggested four adjustment strategies for host country culture shock. Adler conducted research on American and Canadian employees returning home after several years abroad. In his study, the four coping strategies were re-socialized, alienated, rebellious and proactive. By examining strategies' definitions, Adler's coping strategies could be compared to Berry's strategies in understanding the process used by individuals to achieve his or her adjustment. For example, Adler's re-socialized coping strategy is almost the same as Berry's assimilation strategy. Both tend to describe adjustment as a process which could be accomplished through using internal knowledge to assimilate in the new environment. The rebellious coping strategy is comparable with Berry's separation strategy. Both strategies are used by sojourners to isolate themselves from external validation and seek to control their surrounding environment. Adler's Proactive strategy is almost similar to Berry's integration strategy. Both, Adler's and Berry's (proactive, integration) strategies were described as strategies used by sojourners who intended to integrate the foreign and home country experiences. Alienated coping style seems similar to the marginalization strategy in that both strategies described sojourners who tended to dissociate themselves from home and host cultures. The next diagram (Diagram 3) illustrates Adler's coping strategies.

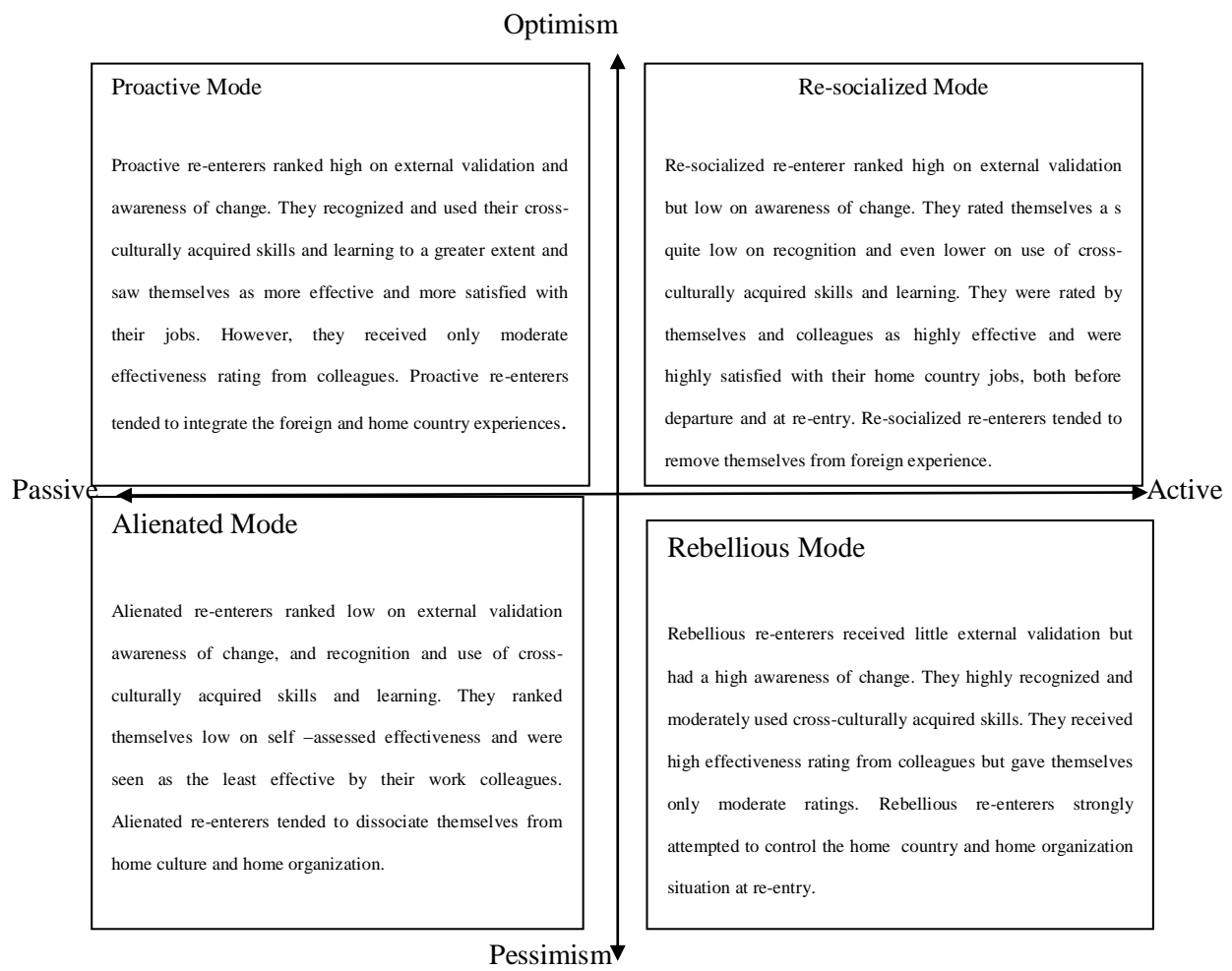


Diagram 3. Re-entry Coping Modes, Adler (1981, p. 353).

## Methodology

This study seeks to measure reverse culture shock among returned Saudi graduate students at King Abdul-Aziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, using a questionnaire and interviews to test the following hypotheses:

- H1 There are significant gender differences in culture shock scale (HCCS) scores.
- H2 There are significant differences regarding time spent at home after graduation.

- H3 There are significant differences between studying in Arabic or foreign country.
- H4 There are significant differences regarding being a frequent traveler before and after studying abroad.
- H5 There are significant differences regarding the duration of studying abroad.

## **Procedures**

The researcher contacted the Vice Chancellor for Development at King Abdul-Aziz University to request his approval to supervise this part of the study and to facilitate contacting graduate returners. Next, the researcher made a presentation to all returners as part of the welcoming ceremony conducted annually by the university. The presentation included a brief introduction about the research and its importance. Also the audience was invited to participate in this study. On-line link of modified HCCS questionnaire was distributed through email to all 75 male and female returners. After receiving 20 responses, another email was sent to invite returners to participate in the semi-structured interview part of the study.

## **Data analysis**

In order to examine study hypotheses, the following tests were conducted:

- Cronbach's Alpha to measure reliability of the scale results.
- Means and Standard Deviation for research variables
- T test between the mean results of study variables.

## **Participants**

The participants who were invited in this study were 75 male and female returned graduate students at King Abdul-Aziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Only 20 graduate students (12 females and 8 males) participated in this study. They vary in their: length of stay since they returned home, location of their host country (Arabic, Western), duration of studying abroad, and their travel experiences before studying abroad.

## **Measures**

This study used modified Home-comer Culture Shock Scales (HCSS). It consists of 27 Likert-type items originally developed by Fray (1988) to determine re-entry adjustment known as reverse culture shock during the first 12 months of sojourners' last re-entry. Other studies employing this scale include Huff (2001) who reported good reliability and validity. The scale ranges from score 1 for "Not True of Me", to score 5 for "Very True of Me". Questions in the original scale were in the present tense but this research modified scale was in the present and past tense to include participants who just returned home and who returned more than one year before and who claim to have achieved adjustment. See Appendix 10.

Interviews were conducted using questions which reflected the four themes which are covered by the original questionnaire:

- Cultural Distance (CD)
- Interpersonal Distance (ID)
- Grief (G)
- Moral Distance (MD)



## Results:

Results revealed that the only significant differences in HCCS scores were between groups who differed in the duration of studying abroad. Mean scores indicated that scores were higher for students who spent more than one year (Table 17). This indicates that the longer the time one spends in another culture, the more difficult it is to re-adjust to the original culture.

There were no differences in HCCS scores due to gender (Table 14), duration of time since returning (Table 15), the host country (Table 16) and travelling experiences (Table 18).

### Table 13

#### *Reliability for HCCS*

Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Note
27	0.90	Excellent

Reliability was tested using the Cronbach Alpha. The alpha was 0.90, which is considered adequate.

**Table 14**

*Means, SDs and T-test results for study variables segregated by gender.* (A) This table indicates the mean scores results in HCCS for male and female returners. (B) T-test results revealed that there were no significant differences in HCCS scores between males and females.

(A)

Gender	Mean	SD
Male	2.738	0.586
Female	2.867	0.580

(B)

Sig	DF	T
.634	18	0.484

**Table 15**

*Duration of time since returning home.* (A) This table indicates the mean scores in HCCS for the time since returning home (less than one year, more than one year). (B) T-test results revealed that there were no significant differences in HCCS scores between groups differing in the time spent at home after graduation.

(A)

Time since returning home	Mean	SD
less than one year	2.650	0.519
more than one year	3.017	0.595

(B)

Sig	DF	t
.158	18	-1.472

**Table 16**

Host Country. (A) This table indicates the mean scores in HCCS scores for the host country (Arabic or foreign country). (B) T-test results revealed that there were no significant differences in HCCS scores between groups studying in an Arabic or foreign country

(A)

Host Country	Mean	SD
Arabic Country	2.858	0.640
Foreign Country	2.793	0.556

(B)

Sig	DF	T
.814	18	0.238

**Table 17.** Duration of studying abroad. (A) This table indicates the mean scores in HCCS for the duration of studying abroad. (B) T-test results showing significant differences in HCCS scores between groups studying abroad for short (less than one year) and long term (more than one year).

(A)

Duration of studying abroad	Mean	SD
One year	2.110	0.194
More than one year	2.940	0.126

(B)

Sig	DF	t
.016	18	2.67

**Table 18.** Travelling experiences. (A) This table indicates the mean scores in HCCS for frequent and non frequent travelling returners.(B) Results revealed that there were no differences in HCCS scores between groups who differed in the numbers of times students travel abroad before studying.

(A)

Travelling experiences	Mean	SD
Frequent	2.789	0.607
Not frequent	2.878	0.523

(B)

Sig	DF	T
.759	18	-0.312

## **Interview results:**

Interviews encourage participants to examine their experiences through the processes of discussion to seek satisfaction. Also writing about taboo subjects like religion or sex discrimination is considered forbidden in Saudi culture; so to express themselves verbally in a confidential setting would be safer than in writing. The following are expressions used by returned participants during their interviews to summarize some of the missing aspects (themes) of life which were experienced in the host country. Four main topics were identified: 1) need for re-adjustment, 2) missing the host culture, 3) critical attitude towards Saudi culture, society, and people's behavior, and 4) feelings of being alienated and different in one's own culture. Each aspect also includes further sub-topics, as shown below. Although participants' reports can be loosely organized based on these four categories, it is important to also notice substantial overlap across themes and how majority of problems people face on re-entry seem to be underlined by previously adjusting to and getting used to a different set of norms and values in the host country.

### **1) Unexpected need for re-adjustment**

- Re-entry is more difficult than anticipated.

Participants reported unexpected difficulties with re-adjusting to the home culture.

*Although I was expecting some adjustment difficulties, it shocked me to find re-entry is more difficult than I expected".*

*"I face a lot of pressure to re-conform to home cultural sanders"*

*"I started to lose my new productive ideas I have learned abroad".*

*"I suffer a lot to learn again new rules and regulations".*

- Children and spouse adjustment difficulties.

One source of stress was the observation that the entire family struggles to re-adapt. For some, this even led to divorce from their spouse.

*"My spouse and children are facing difficulties to adjust to home life".*

*"I am seeking divorce".*

*"My wife used to be independent when we lived overseas and she used to drive, do shopping and taking care of everyday life issues by herself. Now I do every outside home task by myself".*

*"My children hate Saudi education system, weather, food and neighbours' kids".*

- Length of time since re-entry.

*"I was told that I will adjust after a while but it seems that I need ages to re-adjust"*



- Confusion about life.

Participants noticed that their life was different than it used to be.

*"I feel that I am experiencing a new strange life at home".*

*"It is not the same life I used to have in the past".*

*"Life is no more promising for me"*

## **2) Missing the host culture**

- Home-sickness for the host culture

Participants reported feeling 'home-sickness' towards their host country. This was comparable to the original feeling towards home and sometimes was a result of direct comparison between the two countries. *"I am really surprised that although I am home, I miss the host country".*

*"I experienced the same feeling I had when I left home to study abroad".*

*"I miss host country most when I make any comparison between public services at home and abroad"*

- Sad for leaving overseas home.

Some feelings of sadness and even confusion were reported. Participants seemed to miss the host country, even though they expected to feel otherwise.

*"Although it might be strange, my family and I felt sad and confused to leave the host country"*

*and return home".*

*"We are experiencing the same feelings we had when we left home to study abroad".*

*"Returning home supposed to bring joy and security however we feel the opposite".*

- 
- Some wished that they had not left overseas home

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*"I miss host country that I kept saying to myself that I should have accepted the overseas job offer".*

*"I tried to change my home design to look like my overseas home"*

- 
- Missing practicing personal and public overseas activities.

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*"I miss walking, playing football and swimming".*

*"Host country activities are difficult to be practiced at home especially for females".*

### **3) Critical attitude towards Saudi culture, society, people's behaviour**

- Unspoken customs in Saudi Arabia

Some participants reported that the customs in home country are more complex and often difficult to comprehend.

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*"Customs and social norms seem to be new to me at home country".*

*"Unspoken expressions look very complicated at home country"*

- Critical of Saudi lifestyle.

Participants became critical of their original culture to the extent that other people began to notice. Some suggested this may be due to their willingness to be more critical, which may be a result of being exposed to foreign values.

*"I cannot stop being critical of almost everything".*

*"People around me started to be annoyed from my negative attitudes even close family members"*

*"Although it was easy to find something to criticise, I kept searching for the bad side of every experience in my home culture to practice criticism"*

- Difficulty identifying with Saudi society.

Strong feelings of dislike for some elements of Saudi culture were reported. These feelings often led participants to avoid social interactions due to the feelings of alienation.

*"I feel that I have no social identity".*

*"I still keep my host country's ID card inside my wallet"*

*"I feel that my Saudi dress is the only thing that connects me with people around me".*

*"I feel Uncomfortable with day to day social interactions"*

*"I intentionally do my best to avoid attending social gatherings".*

---

*"I use stairs at work to get to my office instead of elevators to avoid interacting with others".*

*"Gatherings made my odd feelings get worse".*

*"I hate Saudi traditional way of dressing".*

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- Religious standards.

One of the emerging criticisms regarding the home culture was the emphasis on obedience to religious duties. Some were disappointed that they are not allowed to celebrate some foreign traditions that they found enjoyable when in the host country.

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*"I am very critical of religious standards practiced by society and religious police".*

*"I was criticised for celebrating Valentines' day".*

*"Flower shops are threatened by religious police to be closed and punished if they sell cards and gifts for western occasional ceremonies such New Year and birthdays".*

*"I started to question Islamic laws which seem to be very inconsiderate when compared to western laws"*

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- Pace of life in re-entry.

The differences in life style and particularly in how life is organised were found difficult to re-adjust to by many participants. Some criticism regarding how things are run in the home country was observed.

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*"I find it difficult to organise my everyday life tasks"*

*"Everything is not the same for example; working hours, public transportations, days of*

*weekends, time of sunset and sunrise weather" etc.*

*"People at home country tend to miss their appointments".*

*"Home country's government or private sectors cannot present good services"*

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- Feelings of loss.

Some people reported that their feeling of control over their life and time decreased after returning home.

*"I am not sure any more that I control my life".*

*"I used to be a very good planner when I was abroad".*

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- Saudis wealth and spending habits

*"Saudis' wealth and spending habits annoy me".*

*"Saudis spend more than they need".*

---

- Life felt unreal in re-entry.

The comparison of life and the environment between the home and host culture made it seem to some that that their original country is in some way out-dated and 'artificial'.

*"Everything around me looks artificial".*

---

---

*"It bothers me to see that my home country's life still belongs to the past"*

---

Superficiality in relationships.

- An emerging theme was that participants got used the more aloof and distant but at the same time less exaggerated way of expressing feelings. Some also expressed some negative feelings towards the habits and values of the home country.

---

*"Although we belong to a collective society and our religion and traditions demand that we care for each other, people seem to exaggerate when showing their feelings".*

*"Emotions seem to be superficial and too good to be true".*

*"Values are narrowed in forcing people to shut their business and stop daily activities five times a day for praying also".*

*"It is a shame that women are considered as the source of devilish deeds".*

---

- Job satisfaction in re-entry.

The job the participants returned to was not satisfactory either due to lack of challenges or negative attitudes of colleagues.

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*"My relationship with my work colleagues and the department chairman (chairwoman) are artificial".*

*"My colleagues seem to be sarcastic when I express my new ideas".*

*"My job description is not challenging that I started to feel bored and all my scientific*

*achievements are vanishing".*

#### **4) Feelings of being alienated and different in one's own culture**

- Rarely understood by others

Some felt that others no longer can understand them.

*"I feel that people around me find it difficult to understand me".*

*"It seems that I speak a different language".*

Closest friends had overseas experience.

*"I was only understood by friends who had overseas experiences".*

*"I kept contacting my overseas friends who share the same critical feeling I have"*

- Feelings of not fitting in, alienated and alone.

Some felt alienated from their own culture and felt that they may not fit in.

*"I believe that I spent lot of efforts to fit in".*

*"I always felt as an outsider".*

- Uncertain of others expectations.

Some participants expressed feeling stressed about not meeting the expectations of their

families.

*"My father kept reminding me of his high expectation of my future as a graduate from western university which adds more pressure on me".*

*"I feel that my feature plans do not meet my family's expectations".*

- Fear of acceptance by others.

*"I feel rejected by people around me because of being critical and mad at everything".*

Overall, participants found it unexpectedly difficult to re-adjust to their home culture. Some felt alienated and different from other people and felt the need to associate with students who have had similar experiences. Others became critical of their culture and found some elements of it annoying or inconvenient. This may be because they enjoyed the new values and cultural aspects of the host culture, and felt disappointed that these are not longer allowed to be practiced or are not appreciated. A substantial difference between the cultures was especially observed by women (or husbands/fathers of women) who were no longer able to enjoy the same freedoms and activities as before; however, negative feelings towards the strict socio-cultural norms was also reported by males.

The feelings expressed very often resembled the original culture shock and home-sickness observed when participants first left their country. This suggests that the effects of studying abroad is long-lived and have very important emotional and pragmatic consequences.

**Discussion**



The researcher was expecting most of the participants answers as a result of his experiences and reviewing the literature review, the researcher made sure that his performance will not direct or affect participants attitudes and answers.

Although the questionnaire results were non-significant regarding the independent variables and level of difficulties except length of stay, interviews revealed a different perspective of students' concerns. This again may reflect the low power of the quantitative analyses due to small sample size. Alternatively, this conclusion could be understood as due to the fact that people tend to explain themselves verbally and in a one to one situation better than in writing.

I might totally agree that Piaget's (1965) formulation of assimilation, accommodation and equilibration is applicable to understanding of strategies used by returned students to adjust and cope with their home country's lifestyle. Piaget's theory could explain why Saudi returned participants complained about the delay of their adjustment. They want to apply their old scheme of knowledge on their new re-entry experiences. Assimilation according to Piaget is not enough to produce successful adaptation or adjustment; accommodation is another dimension which is needed to reach the state of Equilibration. In other words, assimilation - using an existing knowledge to deal with new situations - might not be successful unless returners accommodate this existing knowledge to succeed in the process of adjustment. Reverse culture shock involves a situation of disequilibrium and as discussed, adjustment could be achievable through accommodating old knowledge or information to suite a new situation. Accommodation might involve discarding or forgetting the experiences sojourners got when they were abroad simply because people at home will not understand and accept the new persons they became. Assimilation involves re-aligning their cognitive structure with the home culture. During the interviews, some returning students discovered that accommodation and assimilation are the

easiest and perhaps the necessary way to get involved back in equilibrium with the home culture.

As described previously by Gaw (2000), back home readjustment may take the same effort as the first culture shock because students face almost the same difficulties they experienced when being abroad and in addition people around them at home would expect the opposite.

## **Chapter 8**

### **Overall Discussion**

#### *Mixed methods approach*

This thesis relied on a multi-method research or set of related studies which aimed to investigate the W shape's phases of culture shock among Saudi students who studied abroad and returned home after graduation.

In general, any person who is familiar with Saudi culture would not be surprised that Saudi students would face culture shock in the UK. To illustrate this phenomenon I will bring some examples which are familiar in different demographic areas in Saudi Arabia. For example, it is a shame in most parts of Saudi Arabia if a husband and wife hold each other's hands in public. Saudi culture would forbid you to talk to a female unless you are related, and males and females are not allowed to study together in schools or universities. Also women are not allowed to drive. It is a culture which believes strongly in that a religious person could heal all mental and psychological sufferings; a culture which believes strongly that person's wrong or unacceptable behaviors and attitudes might be a result of being possessed or influenced by Satan and he or she could only be healed by a person who claims that he is a religious healer. There are long list of religious and traditional behaviors and attitudes which are considered taboo in Saudi Arabia

culture but normal and ancient traditions in UK culture. Add to that the huge effect of relationships in shaping and directing attitudes or beliefs and so many things that would make it impossible to imagine that the culture shock will be easy on Saudi students.

As discussed before, qualitative method could add deeper and more valid answers to study questions. Interviews and one to one sessions allow the researcher to: clarify questions, observe body language, obtain personal information and beliefs, and provide non threatening environment which probably would encourage participant to express their true feelings and attitudes. These insights enriched and validated the quantitative results and in some cases they clarified and corrected the initial interpretations. The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods offers considerable strengths, and this is especially the case when investigating such complex and sensitive issues. The findings were integrated at both the analysis and interpretation levels, drawing the links between different results and filling the gaps in either method. The advantages of this integration or fusion are easily demonstrated and are reflected in the interpretation of many findings across this thesis. The integration of the two approaches is also enhanced by the fact that Studies 1 and 2 used the same participants and thus any discrepancies could be investigated directly.

### **Summary of findings**

The current thesis contributes to our knowledge of the role of social and cultural identity in adjusting to a new culture. The first study explored the acculturation strategies adopted by Saudi students after moving to study in the UK. The findings suggest that the acculturative stress is related to a number of factors. It is negatively related to both the strength of the original cultural values and ethnic identity, suggesting that people who strongly identify with own culture experience less stress. Possibly, having a strong sense of belonging to a group of similar individuals buffers the negative effects of having to adjust to a new culture.

The multivariate analysis found an overall effect of gender and level of study (junior vs. senior) on the measures of acculturation. Females were found to experience more stress and more willingness to seek help from a counselor. Males, on the other hand, scored higher on measures of collective self-esteem, ethnic identity, adherence to original cultural values, and on both separation/assimilation and integration/marginalization sub-scales of an Arab acculturation scale. This suggests that males and females may have different needs and react differently when moving to a host country. This is not surprising considering the differences in lifestyles of males and females within Saudi culture. It is possible that males' stronger sense of cultural/ethnic identity allows them to better cope with adversity.

When compared to senior students, juniors scored higher on ethnic identity, adherence to original values, integration/marginalization sub-scale of acculturation and collective self-esteem. They also experienced more acculturative stress. It seems therefore that the ties to the original culture are loosened after a year, possibly as a result of adjusting to a new culture. This is consistent with the decreasing levels of stress.

Marital status was not found to affect the main measures. This is in contrast to the findings of Al-Banyan and Abdullah (1980) who reported better adjustment in married as compared to single Saudi students in the USA. However, it is possible that it is the quality of the support received within marriage and not marriage per se that affects people's attitudes and level of stress. It is also possible that other forms of family support (e.g. from parents or siblings) are equally important as the help received from one's spouse.

Subsequently, the findings from the quantitative assessment were further explored in a semi-structured interview. Using thematic analysis, it was uncovered that participants experienced great difficulty in adhering to their cultural values when surrounded by a society so different to their own. They reported missing the supports of their parents and how the lack of

this support structure made it more difficult to face the challenges they were facing. For some students this resulted in feelings of anger/ towards members of the host culture while others deliberately avoided mixing with the host culture to not be encouraged to change their lifestyle – this was true especially for females and for those from traditional families who feared consequences of failing to adhere to cultural standards expected from them. Thus, intergration was rarely the preferred acculturation strategy, especially in the first year of study, and majority of students expressed marginalization. This is worrying as this outcome is not desirable; as suggested by the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), having a strong social identity allows for building a positive self-perception and self-esteem. Marginalization is also negatively related to well-being (Peeters & Oerlemans, 2009) and so this strategy may have the worst long-term effects. In fact, most of the participants reported lowered mental health status. This is consistent with the link between acculturation and mental health issues as found by Aprahamian et al. (2011) and again highlights the need for providing psychological guidance which would enable individuals to achieve a more favourable attitude towards one's own and host cultures. The prevalence of marginalization strategy is also much higher in the interview study compared to the on-line results (although the differences were not statistically significant). This may be because participants could not formulate clearly how they felt towards either culture in the quantitative assessment and felt a greater need for consistency in a questionnaire (i.e. maybe they felt that they should feel positively towards at least one culture). It was also noticed by the researcher that sometimes some participants did not fully understand the meaning of some of the questions in the on-line part and changed their mind after clarification. Alternatively, the marginalization could be a result of the lack of time and resources as reported by some participants, which could lead to lack of contact with members of either culture.

Some students also felt dislike towards both the members of host culture (sometimes due to aggression from these members towards them) but also towards fellow Saudi students who, in their opinion, did not follow Islam as much as they should. The qualitative study therefore uncovered some deep underlying issues that may prevent students from fully enjoying and benefitting from their stay in a host culture. There is a clear need for better understanding of own identity in relation to both home and host cultures which would prevent the difficulties encountered by the interviewees.

The results of these studies confirm that the acculturative stress is experienced by those who live in a host culture, especially if this culture is substantially different to one's own (Ye, 2005; Kegel, 2009). The process of social identification (i.e. placing oneself within the larger social categorization system; Tajfel, 1982) is extremely important in shaping people's attitudes which in turn may determine the psychological outcome. Feeling of belonging within a group promotes self-esteem and affects behavior (Ellemers et al., 2002) and thus establishing a positive social identity is essential when coping with challenges of living in another country (Schwartz et al., 2011).

Obvious differences between Saudi and UK cultures may cause a severe culture shock which, according to SIT, might lead to formation of groups and sub-groups to fulfill students' needs for belonging, self-esteem, and security. Interestingly, Saudi students formed groups using tribal and geographic criteria which make it easy for them to build homogeneous groups. Although Saudi students are supposed to belong to so-called collective society, the researcher noticed that Saudi individuals might practice self bias, racisms and avoidance when dealing with other Saudi students. These individuals believe that it is almost impossible to practice Saudi norms and values in UK as a result of lack of resources like time, knowledge, experience,

and money. Some students may maintain false religious images to insure their status in a certain group which prioritize religious attitude as a condition to secure a place as a member.

Although Saudi female students are allowed to practice activities in UK which are forbidden in Saudi Arabia, their families, partners, and tribal norms prevent most of them to practice this freedom. They are very cautious regarding other Saudi students' comments and criticism.

In the next study the researcher acted as a counselor for a group of Saudi students. The previous two studies presented in this thesis suggested that Saudi students would be highly unlikely to seek professional psychological help from a Western counselor, despite reporting a high need for such assistance. The results of the intervention were promising and showed that the perception of cultural shock and interpersonal stress significantly reduced as a result of counseling. This suggest that having access to help from an individual from the same culture can help with the development of successful copying strategies. Students reported being more willing to disclose their problems and more comfortable discussing them because the counselor was perceived as similar to them and thus more understanding of the wider cultural background that may affect the process of acculturation. This favorable feelings towards a Saudi counselor can be understood within the framework of Similarity Attraction Hypothesis (Ward et al., 2008) which states that individuals feel more trust and understanding towards similar others. If the consultant is perceived as different, seeking help is avoided (Henderson et al., 1993). This highlights the need for provision of relevant help to Saudi students who may otherwise miss on the opportunity to develop better copying strategies.

Lastly, the phenomenon of reverse cultural shock (Gaw, 2000) was explored. Students who moved back home to Saudi Arabia after studying abroad were contacted and asked about their experienced of re-adjusting to their home culture. This phenomenon hasn't so far been explored in depth and thus the findings were particularly illuminating. As expected from the W-

shape of culture shock (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963), participants experienced similar shock and stress as a result of returning home. This was largely due to the fact that they have gotten used to (and often really enjoyed) the host culture. However, unlike the original acculturation shock which was greater for females than for males, the re-entry culture shock showed no gender differences. The only factor which was found to affect the level of reverse culture shock was the length of stay in the host culture, with those who were away for more than one year suffering more compared to those who left for a shorter period of time.

The qualitative findings from this study suggested great difficulties in re-adjusting to home culture. Many people found it quite unexpected as they hoped that their return will be smooth and easy. Several interviewees reported missing the host country and some mentioned being annoyed that they had to give up on some social activities which are not permitted in Saudi Arabia (e.g. Valentine's day, sending birthday cards, participating in sports). Participants noticed that their life was different to what it used to be. Some even reported critical attitudes towards certain aspects of Saudi culture and lifestyle and felt that it is difficult to identify with other people who have not experienced a stay in another culture. This feeling of alienation and being misunderstood mirrors the original acculturative stress experienced when in the host country. It is therefore important that students' well-being is monitored not only while in the host culture but also afterwards. Although it was not feasible to investigate the results of counseling for this sample, the results of the interviews strongly suggest that this group is particularly vulnerable and likely to benefit from guidance and psychological help.

Results of the quantitative part of the research, for both host country culture shock questionnaire and home country reverse culture shock questionnaire, were not consistent with previous studies especially among junior students. This could be due to the followings: a) Saudi student's collective values and behaviors are derived from religious background and ignoring



these values is considered a sin according to religious obligations. Also these obligations might direct students to give socially desirable answers to scales' questions. b) It is common in Saudi Arabia that students who are travelling abroad are told, by their parents, relatives or work superiors, that they represent Islam and Saudi society's traditions. This burden forces him or her to maintain the religious personality image which dominates behaviors, motivations, and attitudes. c) Questionnaires, being sent through Saudi Culture Bureau in London and King Abdul-Aziz University in Jeddah, were treated by students and graduates as official documents which should be answered with consideration to their status as dependent of these two formal institutions. d) Questionnaire's answers did not indicate written options to give participants choices to explain their selected item. However, interviews' and counseling results were more consistent with previous studies than the qualitative results.

### **Social identity theory**

The above findings extend our knowledge and applications of the SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The wide range of methodology and approaches all converge to suggest that the way an individual identifies him/herself will affect their behavior, attitudes and psychological outcomes. As suggested by SIT each individual strives to view themselves as productive and positive, and tries to continuously achieve positive social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). As suggested by the current results, this is not an easy task when faced with a new culture that is so different to one's original culture. The stress and confusion experienced by a majority of Saudi students in UK is worrying, but this thesis also shows that the adverse effects can be buffered. The relationship between acculturation orientations and well-being was found to be stronger for ethnic minorities (Ward et al., 2008), suggesting that guidance is needed in order to establish positive coping strategies.

By providing students with means to explore their identity and reflect on own experiences, the negative feelings and attitudes can be minimized. Importantly, both own ethnic identity as well as the characteristics of the host country determine how the new culture is perceived and responded to (Phinney et al, 2011). Identity is a dynamic, ever-changing construct and thus particularly vulnerable to stressful events which may result from transitioning between two different cultures. This highlight the importance of having access to professional (and culturally relevant) help when needed. The consequences of maladaptive changes to one's identity could be profound and should be addressed as they arise to minimize their negative effects.

### **Berry's acculturation strategies**

When a Saudi student chooses separation as an acculturation strategy, he or she may lack self confidence and fear of rejection (to reject before being rejected). Poor social interaction, mastering English language, and difficulties in coping with UK day to day fast life style might cause this attitude. Referring to his clinical observations, Kantor (1993) argued that withdrawing behaviors and shyness (which are syndromes of Avoidant Personality Disorder as described by DSM IV) may lead to hostility. Extremists might make use of this hostility attitude to persuade those students, who already had religious background, to reject anything related to the western cultures, and to adapt or at least sympathize with anti social behaviors in the name of serving Islamic goals. Regarding integration strategy, the researcher believes that most participants revealed their integration choice as a result of socially desirable factor. Assimilation strategy was adapted by fewer participants. This might be due to the need to match groups' norms which most of the times reject others; in addition, Islam forbids its followers to imitate Christians or Jews. Marginalization strategy was also adapted by few participants because coming from collective society would motivate, most probably, sojourners to belong to groups which could not be achievable through this strategy. On the other hand, the interviews

suggested that this may in fact be the most common strategy; however, this may correspond more to the cultural identity confusion as opposed to avoidance of original or host cultural identity. This was in fact a latent factor that emerged from an analysis by Schwartz and Zamboanga (2008) in place of the original marginalization factor. This identity confusion would be in line with other findings from this thesis. The high prevalence of marginalization strategy would be inconsistent with the SIT's assumptions that building a social identity is desirable by all individuals. Identity confusion, on the other hand, would be understandable as the participants were likely still trying to locate themselves within new social circumstances.

It seems logical that students who had chosen separation strategy to deal with the host country culture shock would face very smooth adjustment process when they return home. However, the researcher noticed that they may suffer almost the same as who had chosen assimilation strategy. It could be, as they explained, due to the fact that although they isolated themselves from interacting with the host country's social and cultural activities, they were fascinated by the education system, public transportation, health services, public parks, political system, human rights, and time management. When they returned home they could not avoid making a comparison between the host and home country regarding their overseas experiences.

### **Strengths, limitation and Future directions**

The studies presented here expand our knowledge on processes of acculturation. Drawing on multi-method approach, the findings can be combined and integrated, providing an in-depth, comprehensive account of the difficulties Saudi students face when exposed to a new culture and of the outcomes of these experiences. As shown above, qualitative findings may sometimes be misleading as it is only through qualitative assessment that the true meaning of the results can be discovered. Importantly, the researcher decided to include female participants which were not done before by Berry (2001) and which gave the voice to this often ignored sub-

population of Saudi students. As this thesis demonstrated, the social concerns and challenges faced by both genders are different and this should be acknowledged when designing and implementing services for Saudi students. Lastly, this thesis demonstrated the effectiveness of short-term counseling interventions which is of high importance now that many Saudi students are offered the opportunity to study abroad. Therefore the findings of this thesis have important real-life applications and can act as a guide for policy-makers.

However, there were several issues that may be perceived as limitations of the current studies. The small sample sizes in some of the studies could mean that they were under-powered and thus missed some significant effects. Additionally, as a result of lack of resources, this research sample did not represent students' geographical and tribal backgrounds. These two variables have an essential role in all adjustment phases. Also involving more than one researcher in a similar study may increase the number of participants which could lead to results' generalization. This would also allow for testing the inter-rater reliability in the quantitative study.

Another potential limitation which, however, is also a considerable strength of this research is the interdependency between the researcher and the participants. This is referred to as 'reflexivity' and reflects the way in which the object of investigation is influenced by the act of researching it (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1992). Unlike the most common approaches to psychological research, which emphasize neutral, impersonal and objective role of the researcher, the studies presented here were more naturalistic and their aim was anchored in the researcher's desire to learn about and help with the problem faced by other students who, like the researcher, have to face the acculturative challenges. Although some may see this as a limitation, this interdependency and similarity of the researcher and the participants allowed for exploring this topic to great depth and from a culturally sensitive point of view. The

interpretation of the results was also enriched by the fact that it was anchored in a thorough understanding of the culture and social norms of Saudi Arabia by the researcher.

Moreover, as suggested by previous results and this thesis, the characteristics of the counselor affect people's attitude towards seeking and receiving help. This may also affect the answers provided in qualitative interviews. The success of the counseling session could therefore be improved even further by matching the counselor on not only ethnicity but also, for example, sex. However, although this would further our knowledge on the role of similarity in counseling, the actual application of the potential findings (i.e. supplying a counselor who is similar to the student on a number of characteristics) may not be feasible in real life.

Lastly, there is a need for longer-term follow-up studies. The current thesis highlights that even many months after moving to another country or returning home, there are still some unresolved psychological issues and challenges. The present findings cannot answer whether there are any long-term effects of living and studying abroad. This is an important and interesting research avenue which could be explored in the future.

## **Implications**

Saudi government should acknowledge the importance of follow-up workshops to facilitate a productive adjustment for both new and returned students. Therefore, Saudi Ministry of Higher Education should increase awareness of the effect of original culture shock and reverse culture shock through workshops and email messages for all students. Also counseling sessions should be facilitated to help students to experience smooth and productive adjustment and re-adjustment phases. Importantly, the counselor should be of Saudi ethnicity so that students feel more comfortable. Students' service providers in culture Bureaus should be trained to understand and help students who suffer from cultural difficulties; also it would be very helpful

to hire enough Saudi counselors from both genders to provide counseling for all students in UK. Orientation programs about cultural differences should be provided for both new and returned students.

Instead of paying only attention to immigration regulations, host country's universities should have practical roles in demonstrating appropriate activities to facilitate Saudi students' adjustment throughout their studying period.

## **Conclusion**

The importance of this thesis is that it aimed to add, to a limited literature, better and useful information regarding the phenomenon of the W shape culture shock among Saudi students in UK and back home. Research results could be very helpful tool for decision makers in both countries to facilitate students' experiences and minimize inevitable side effects of such phenomena. Because of the nature of the study (involving religious and traditional norms and habits) the researcher was cautious. The Saudi political and social standards are very rigid and this research is a start to encourage sponsors to accept and agree to do more researches in this subject.

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## **APPENDIX**

### **Appendix 1**

## **Examples of the Holy Quran and Prophet Mohammad's (PBUH) sayings and guidance**

Reverence towards the sanctity of the Muslims (Collectivism):

222-"The relationship of the believer with another believer is like (the bricks of) a building, each strengthens the other." He (PBUH) illustrated this by interlacing the fingers of both his hands. Al-Nawawi (2006, p. 77).

224- "The believers in their mutual kindness, compassion and sympathy are just like one body. When one of the limbs suffers, the whole body responds to it with wakefulness and fever" Al-Nawawi (2006, p. 77).

236- "No one of you shall become a true believer until he desires for his brother what he desires for himself" Al-Nawawi (2006, p. 79).

233- "A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim. So he should not oppress him nor should he hand him over to (his Satan or to his self which is inclined to evil). Whoever fulfills the needs of his brother, Allah will fulfill his needs; whoever removes the troubles of his brother, Allah will remove one of his troubles on the Day of Resurrection; and whoever covers up the fault of a Muslim, Allah will cover up his fault on the Day of Resurrection" Al-Nawawi (2006, p. 78).

969-"He who has an extra amount should hand it over to one who has none, and he who possesses surplus provision, should give it to him who is without provision". He named various kinds of possessions until we began to think (realize) that none of us had any right to anything surplus. Al-Nawawi (2006, p. 239).

Selflessness and sympathy:

Allah the Almighty said " And give them (Emigrants) preference over themselves, even though they were in need of that" Al-Nawawi (2006, p. 157).

Husband's Rights concerning his wife:

285-“If I were to order anyone to prostrate himself before another, I would order a women to prostrate herself before her husband” Al-Nawawi (2006, p. 91).

Prohibition of meeting a non-Mahram woman in seclusion:

1629- No one of you should meet a woman in privacy unless she is accompanied by a Mahram (i.e., a relative within the prohibited degree)” Al-Nawawi (2006, p. 368).

288- “I am not leaving behind me a more harmful trail for men than women” Al-Nawawi (2006, p. 91).

Forbidding women from travelling without Mahram:

989- “It is not permissible for a woman who believes in Allah and the Last Day to make a journey of one day and night unless she is accompanied be a Mahram (husband or any relative to whom she is prohibited to marry” Al-Nawawi (2006, p. 244).

Forbidding Picturing Prophets or their Companions:

The Islamic Fiqh Council of the Muslim World League (2010) issued the following statement:

“Confirmation of the decision of the compound at its eighth session, held in 1405, issued in this regard, the prohibition contained portrayal of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him and the other apostles and prophets and companions, God bless them, and the need to prevent it”.

## **Appendix 2.**

### Attitudes toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help (ATSPPH) – Short Form

(Fischer & Farina, 1995)

INSTRUCTIONS: Use the scale below to indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement.

1

2

3

4

Disagree

Partly Disagree

Partly Agree

Agree

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. If I believed I was having a mental breakdown, my first inclination would be to get professional attention.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The idea of talking about problems with a psychologist strikes me as a poor way to get rid of emotional conflicts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. If I were experiencing a serious emotional crisis at this point in my life, I would be confident that I could find relief in psychotherapy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. There is something admirable in the attitude of a person who is willing to cope with his or her conflicts and fears *without* resorting to professional help.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I would want to get psychological help if I were worried or upset for a long period of time.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I might want to have psychological counseling in the future.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. A person with an emotional problem is not likely to solve it alone; he or she *is* likely to solve it with professional help.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Considering the time and expense involved in psychotherapy, it would have doubtful value for a person like me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. A person should work out his or her own problems; getting psychological counseling would be a last resort.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Personal and emotional troubles, like many things, tend to work out by themselves.

### **Appendix 3.**

#### Asian Values Scale (AVS)

Kim, B. S. K., Li, C., Yang, P.H. (1999)

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Use the scale below to indicate the extent to which you agree with the value expressed in each statement.



1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Moderately Disagree

3 = Mildly Disagree

4 = Neither Agree nor Disagree

5 = Mildly Agree

6 = Moderately Agree

7 = Strongly Agree

\_\_\_\_1. Educational failure does not bring shame to the family.

\_\_\_\_2. One should not deviate from familial and social norms.

\_\_\_\_3. Children should not place their parents in retirement homes.

\_\_\_\_4. One need not focus all energies on one's studies.

- \_\_\_\_5. One should be discouraged from talking about one's accomplishments.
- \_\_\_\_6. One should not be boastful.
- \_\_\_\_7. Younger persons should be able to confront their elders.
- \_\_\_\_8. When one receives a gift, one should reciprocate with a gift of equal or greater value.
- \_\_\_\_9. One need not follow one's family's and the society's norms.
- \_\_\_\_10. One need not achieve academically in order to make one's parents proud.
- \_\_\_\_11. One need not minimize or depreciate one's own achievements.
- \_\_\_\_12. One should consider the needs of others before considering one's own needs.
- \_\_\_\_13. Educational and career achievements need not be one's top priority.

- \_\_\_\_14. One should think about one's group before oneself.
- \_\_\_\_15. One should be able to question a person in an authority position.
- \_\_\_\_16. Modesty is an important quality for a person.
- \_\_\_\_17. One's achievements should be viewed as family's achievements.
- \_\_\_\_18. Elders may not have more wisdom than younger persons.
- \_\_\_\_19. One should avoid bringing displeasure to one's ancestors.
- \_\_\_\_20. One need not conform to one's family's and the society's expectations.
- \_\_\_\_21. One should have sufficient inner resources to resolve emotional problems.
- \_\_\_\_22. Parental love should be implicitly understood and not openly expressed.

\_\_\_\_23. The worst thing one can do is to bring disgrace to one's family reputation.

\_\_\_\_24. One need not remain reserved and tranquil.

\_\_\_\_25. The ability to control one's emotions is a sign of strength.

\_\_\_\_26. One should be humble and modest.

\_\_\_\_27. Family's reputation is not the primary social concern.

\_\_\_\_28. One need not be able to resolve psychological problems on one's own.

\_\_\_\_29. Following familial and social expectations are important.

\_\_\_\_30. One should not inconvenience others.

\_\_\_\_31. Occupational failure does not bring shame to the family.

\_\_\_\_32. One need not follow the role expectations (gender, family hierarchy) of one's family.

\_\_\_\_33. One should not make waves.

\_\_\_\_34. Children need not take care of their parents when the parents become unable to take care of themselves.

\_\_\_\_35. One need not control one's expression of emotions.

\_\_\_\_36. One's family need not be the main source of trust and dependence.

## **Appendix 4**

CSE

**INSTRUCTIONS:** We are all members of different social groups or social categories. Some of such social groups or categories pertain to gender, race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, and socioeconomic class. We would like you to consider your memberships in those particular groups or categories, and respond to the following statements on the basis of how you feel about those groups and your memberships in them. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these statements; we are interested in your honest reactions and opinions. Please read each statement carefully, and respond by using the following scale from 1 to 7:

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Neutral	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I am a worthy member of the social groups I belong to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	I often regret that I belong to some of the social groups I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	Overall, my social groups are considered good by others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	Overall, my group memberships have very little to do with how I feel about myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	I feel I don't have much to offer to the social groups I belong to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	In general, I'm glad to be a member of the social groups I belong to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	Most people consider my social groups, on the average, to be more ineffective than other social groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	The social groups I belong to are an important reflection of who I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	I am a cooperative participant in the social groups I belong to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	Overall, I often feel that the social groups of which I am a member are not worthwhile.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	In general, others respect the social groups that I am a member of.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.	The social groups I belong to are unimportant to my sense of what kind of a person I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13.	I often feel I'm a useless member of my social groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	I feel good about the social groups I belong to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15.	In general, others think that the social groups I am a member of are unworthy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16.	In general, belonging to social groups is an important part of my self image.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix 5.

## Male Arabic Ethnic Identity Measure (MAEIM)

### INSTRUCTIONS

Below are listed a number of statements. For each statement, write the appropriate number (1-7) listed below to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement. Some of the statements are worded positively and others are worded negatively.

1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE

4 = DON'T AGREE OR

5 = AGREE SOMEWHAT

2 = DISAGREE

DISAGREE

6 = AGREE

3 = SOMEWHAT DISAGREE

7 = STRONGLY AGREE

\_\_\_1. I eat Arabic food every week.

\_\_\_2. I would risk dying for my close friends.

\_\_\_3. My parents taught me to be hospitable to foreigners.

\_\_\_4. I have never doubted that God exists.

\_\_\_5. I believe that women should place their family before their career.

\_\_\_6. It is important for me to know that I come from a family of "clean descent."

(i.e., my mother, grandmother etc., were all chaste).



- \_\_\_7. Older people deserve more respect than younger people.
- \_\_\_8. I rarely write in Arabic.
- \_\_\_9. I place little emphasis on my “family name.”
- \_\_\_10. A man is not a man if he hurts his mother’s feelings.
- \_\_\_11. I find that many of my friendships only last a short time.
- \_\_\_12. I have an obligation to my group of friends.
- \_\_\_13. If one of my friends had borrowed money from me but had not paid me back,  
I would not ask him or her to return the money.
- \_\_\_14. When I meet a husband and wife who are living away from their extended  
families (e.g., parents, cousins), I feel sorry for them.
- \_\_\_15. I would never allow my wife to have an abortion/ I would never have an abortion.
- \_\_\_16. I would never shout at my father even if he were to insult me badly.
- \_\_\_17. I consider it an honor to help strangers.
- \_\_\_18. Being an Arab is more important to me than my religion.
- \_\_\_19. I would be reluctant to get divorced as it would give my family a bad name.
- \_\_\_20. Good things only happen to me when God wills them.
- \_\_\_21. I am very proud of my Arabic background.
- \_\_\_22. I would immediately stop my work or study to help out  
a friend (e.g., if his or her car broke down).
- \_\_\_23. I have considerable respect for my father, grandfather(s), uncles, and older brothers.

- \_\_\_24. I express my feelings better in English than in Arabic.
- \_\_\_25. I always obey my father's orders.
- \_\_\_26. I shall always be faithful to the religion of my fathers.
- \_\_\_27. When an important newspaper praises the Arabs, I feel that it is praising me.
- \_\_\_28. I listen to Arabic music at least once a week.
- \_\_\_29. Being an Arab plays an important part in my life.
- \_\_\_30. It is important for me to continue the reputation or "good name" of my family.
- \_\_\_31. I speak Arabic every day.
- \_\_\_32. Growing up, I learned a lot about my grandparents and great-grandparents.
- \_\_\_33. Arabs all over the world are my "family."

## Appendix 6.

### Measuring acculturation among Male Arab immigrants MAAS

Barry, D.T. (2005).

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Below are listed a number of statements. For each statement, write the appropriate number (1-7) listed below to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement. Some of the statements are worded positively and others are worded negatively.

1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE

4 = DON'T AGREE OR

5 = AGREE SOMEWHAT

2 = DISAGREE

DISAGREE

6 = AGREE

3 = SOMEWHAT DISAGREE

7 = STRONGLY AGREE

\_\_\_1. I would much prefer to live in an Arab country.

\_\_\_2. I mix equally well with Americans and Arabs.

\_\_\_3. Most of my friends are Arabs.

\_\_\_4. I am equally at ease socializing with Arabs and Americans.

\_\_\_5. I behave like an American in many ways.

\_\_\_6. I have many Arab and American friends.

\_\_\_7. Generally, I feel more comfortable around Americans than I do around Arabs.

\_\_\_8. I have a lot of difficulty making friends.

## Appendix 7.

### SAFE SHORT (SAFE) Padilla (1987).

	Stress Item	Not stressful	Little stressful	Moderate stressful	stressful	Very stressful
1.	I feel uncomfortable when others make jokes about or put down people of my ethnic background.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I have more barriers to overcome than most people.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	It bothers me that family members I am close to do not understand my new values.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Close family members and I have conflicting expectations about my future.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	It is hard to express to my friends how I really feel.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	My family does not want me to move away but I would like to.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	It bothers me to think that so many people use drugs.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	It bothers me that I cannot be with my family.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	In looking for a good job, I sometimes feel that my ethnicity is a limitation.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	I don't have any close friends.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Many people have stereotypes about my culture or ethnic group and treat me as if they are true.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I don't feel home.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	People think I am unsocial able when in fact I have trouble communicating in English.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	I often feel that people actively try to stop me from advancing.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	It bothers me when people pressure me to assimilate.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	I often feel ignored by people who are supposed to assist me.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Because I am different I do not get enough credit for the work I do.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	It bothers me that I have an accent.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	Loosening the ties with my country is difficult.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	I often think about my cultural background.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	Because of my ethnic background, I feel that others often exclude me from participating in their activities.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	It is difficult for me to "show off" my family	1	2	3	4	5
23.	People look down upon me if I practice customs of my culture.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	I have trouble understanding others when they speak	1	2	3	4	5

**Appendix 8. Schedules for monitoring progress in counselling.**

**Table (6) Weekly checklist**

Concerns	First session	second session	Third session	Fourth session	Fifth session	Sixth session	Seven session	8Th session	9th session	10 session
Increased responsibility										
Managing time										
Changing relationships with family and friends from home										
Marital issues										
Social interaction										
Home sickness										
Hostility										
Isolation or separation										
Relationship with supervisor										
Identity concerns										
Perceived discrimination										
Sleeping problems										
Fear of failure										

## Appendix 9. Client-Counsellor Feedback

<b>Client-Counsellor Feedback</b>					
<p>This form allows you an opportunity to provide feedback to your counsellor after your sessions have finished. This will help your counsellor's professional development as well as helping to improve the service offered to others.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>You DO NOT need to identify yourself.</i></p> <p>Please place a mark in the box which most closely corresponds to how you feel about each statement.</p>					
<b>About the Working Relationship With Your Counsellor</b>					
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	No Strong Feeling	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My counsellor listened to me effectively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My counsellor understood things from my point of view.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My counsellor focused on what was important to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My counsellor accepted what I said without judging me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My counsellor showed warmth toward me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My counsellor fostered a safe and trusting environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My counsellor began and finished our sessions on time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My counsellor followed my lead during our sessions whenever that was appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My counsellor provided leadership during our sessions when/if that was appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My counsellor challenged me when/if that was appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>About the Results of Working With Your Counsellor</b>					
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	No Strong Feeling	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The sessions with my counsellor helped me with whatever originally led me to seek counselling.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any changes which might have occurred in me as a result of my counselling have been positive and welcome.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Overall Satisfaction</b>					
	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	No Strong Feeling	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Strongly Dissatisfied
My overall level of satisfaction with the service provided by my counsellor is:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Based on my experience, I would recommend my counsellor to others.		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Other Comments</b>					
<p>Please use the space below for any other comments you would like to bring to your counsellor's attention. (If there are any matters which you specifically would not have wanted to discuss with your counsellor in person, your counsellor would be especially glad to know of these.) If you include your name in this section, it will be treated as CONFIDENTIAL. If you need more space, please continue on the back or add another page.</p>					

## Appendix 10.

Modified Home-comer Culture Shock Scales (HCSS) Fray, J. S. (1988).

تتضمن الجمل التالية تجارب وخبرات قد يشعر بها أو قد شعر بها المبتعث والمبتعثه العائدين الى الوطن بدرجات متفاوتة من حيث انها قد تنطبق اولا تنطبق عليه او عليها. ارجو اختيار درجة تطابق هذه الجمل مع تجربتكم .

الخبرة	تنطبق بشدة	تنطبق	تنطبق قليلا	لا تنطبق	لا تنطبق بشدة
أعاني أو عانيت من ضعف في إدارة الوقت والتخطيط					
إلتزاماتي الإجتماعية تؤثر أو أثرت على إلتزاماتي المهنية					
بشكل عام أعاني من صعوبات في هذه المرحلة من حياتي					
أشعر أو شعرت بأن جهدي المهني لن أولم يكن محل تقدير					
أشعر أو شعرت بأنني أستطيع التميز مهنيا بعلاقتي أكثر من أدائي					
الشعور بان الحنين لبلد الابتعاث لايزال او كان يراودني بالاستمرار					
أشعر أو شعرت بان الناس يمارسون التمثيل والتظاهر اكثر					
أشعر أو شعرت بالغضب لاضطراري لمغادرت مقر البعثة					
أشعر أو شعرت بعدم الارتياح من قيم واخلاقيات من حولي					

				أشعر أو شعرت بالانزعاج من ان الأشياء لا تبدو على حقيقتها
				أشعر بالحنين عندما أتذكر سكني في بلد الابتعاث
				لاستطيع او لم استطيع فهم كثير من التلميحات الاجتماعية غير اللفظية
				أجد نفساً أو وجدت نفسي كثير النقد لاسلوب الحياة
				نادر ما أشعر او شعرت بالتفهم من اشخاص لم يمروا بتجربة الحياه في الخارج
				أشعر او شعرت بالاستغراب من التشدد في العادات والتقاليد
				يراودني أو راودني الشعور بعدم القدرة على التكيف
				لم اعد قادرا على معرفة توقعات الناس مني
				أشعر او شعرت بالحزن من عادات الاسراف والبخذ
				أشعر أو شعرت بانني غريب وايضا بالوحدة
				أجد او وجدت صعوبة في التأقلم مع اسلوب حياة المجتمع
				أشعر أو شعرت بعدم الرضى عن تفاعلي الاجتماعي
				أشعر أو شعرت بعدم القدرة على فهم الحياة
				أشعر أو شعرت بالخوف من الرفض ممن هم حولي
				أشعر أو شعرت بالانزعاج من عادات الاكل والشرب
				لايستطيع أفراد أسرتي ممارسة النشاطات اليوميه كما كانوا



					في بلد الابتعاث
					أفقدت أو أفقدت مشاركة زوجي أو زوجتي في تحمل مسئوليات الأسرة
					أعاني أو عانيت من خلافات أسرية حادة
					أتمنى أو تمنيت انني لم أضطر الى مغادرة مقر بعثتي

أكتب ماتراه من مشاعر لم يتضمنها الاستبيان أو توصيات لتخفيف سلبيات هذه المرحلة إن وجدت) فضلا أستخدم المساحة الخلفية للصفحة) :

## Appendix 11

Head of School of Social Sciences  
Professor Dany Nobus

**Brunel**  
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WEST LONDON

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24th May 2012

To whom it may Concern

Mr Adel Alyami, who is a PhD student in Psychology at Brunel University, has finished his first part of his research which included distributing questionnaires to Saudi Students in UK, and he has finished analyzing them. He has also interviewed both male and female Saudi students to support the questionnaires findings.

At this stage of the research he needs to provide supporting services which includes offering Counselling and Guidance for students who have identified a need, through your Office, and starting as soon as possible. He would need to continue for an academic year to evaluate the progress and the development of the suggested supporting services.

I am quite sure that your staff would be able to provide the necessary help he might need to accomplish the research goals.

Best regards



Professor Michael Wright MA PhD

Student Supervisor

[Michael.wright@brunel.ac.uk](mailto:Michael.wright@brunel.ac.uk)

## Appendix 12

ROYAL EMBASSY OF SAUDI ARABIA  
CULTURAL BUREAU  
LONDON



سفارة المملكة العربية السعودية  
الملاحقة الثقافية  
لندن

Psychology department  
Brunel University  
UB83PH  
Uxbridge  
Uk

Date: Wednesday, October 17, 2012

### To whom it may concern

Dear sir/ madam,

We would like to inform you that the Saudi Culture Bureau will provide the necessary facilities for Mr. Adel Alyami to accomplish his proposed counselling and guidance support services for Saudi student in UK as part of part of his PhD thesis.

Pleas contact me if you need further information.

**Director of student's counselling department**

**Dr Abdulghani Al-Harbi**

الرقم : التاريخ : الموافق : المرفقات :

**DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH ETHICS CHECKLIST**  
(Effective November 2009)

If the ethics submission relates to staff research for which an application to an external funding agency will be/have been made, then please complete and submit the full University ethics submission form.

**Section I: Project Details**

1. Project title: **Evaluation of counselling in the role of cultural values, attitudes and ethnic identity in acculturation and self esteem of Saudi Students in the UK**

**Section II: Applicant Details**

2. Name of researcher (applicant): **Adel A. Alyami**  
8. Module name and number: **New route PhD in Psychology**  
9. Brunel supervisor's or module leader's name: **Professor Michael Wright**  
10. Brunel supervisor's email address: **Michael.wright@brunel.ac.uk**

**To be completed for all research by the principal investigator, member of staff leading the research, or student supervisor.**

- If applicable, the student states that he or she has read the Brunel University Code of Research Ethics.
- The topic merits further research.
- If applicable, the student will possess the skills to carry out the research by the time that he or she starts any work which could affect the well-being of other people. He or she will be deemed to have acquired such skills on passing the relevant research skills module.
- The participant information sheet or leaflet is appropriate.
- The procedures for recruitment and obtaining informed consent are appropriate.

Please confirm the professional research ethics code that will guide the research (please circle)  
BPS (please state) BPS

- Is a CRB check necessary for researchers/students working on this project?  
Yes No If yes, please confirm by ticking this box that appropriate CRB procedures will be followed
- Is a *new* Risk Assessment required for this research?  
Yes No If yes, please consult the information on the Psychology Ethics webpage, and attach the Risk Assessment to this submission.

M Wright  
PI/Staff/Supervisor signature

11/10/12  
Date

**Section IV: Research Checklist**

Please answer each question by ticking the appropriate box:

	YES	NO
1. Does the study involve participants who may be particularly vulnerable and/or unable to give informed consent, thus requiring the consent of parents or guardians? (e.g. children under the age of 16; people with certain learning disabilities)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Will all participants be age 18 and over?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3a. Will the study require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3b. If the answer to Question 2a is Yes, then will the study involve people who could be deemed in any way to be vulnerable by virtue of their status within particular institutional settings? (e.g. students at school; disabled people; members of a self-help group; residents of a nursing home, prison, or any other institution where individuals cannot come and go freely)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4. Does the research involve observational/ethnographic methods?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5. Will the study involve discussion by or with respondents or behaviour or drug use, where they have not given prior consent to such discussion?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6. Are drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) to be administered to the study participants or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7. Will blood or tissue samples be obtained from participants?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8. Is pain or more than mild discomfort likely to result from the study?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9. Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10. Will the study involve prolonged or repetitive testing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11. Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12. Will the study involve recruitment of patients or staff through the NHS?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13a. Have you undertaken this study as part of your work placement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13b. If your answer to Question 12a is Yes, then have the employers at your work placement conducted their own research ethics review?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14. Does the research involve MRI, MEG, or EEG methods?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



**Give a brief description of participants and procedure (methods, tests used etc) in up to 150 words**

*Rationale of the study.* The previous stage of the research identified an unmet need amongst Saudi students in the UK for counselling to help with cultural adjustment. They expressed unwillingness in accessing the UK University counselling services in that they felt that their cultural background would not be understood. They expressed that they would be more comfortable with counselling under the auspices of the Saudi cultural office and with a Saudi counsellor. The purpose of the next stage of the research is to undertake and assess a small scale counselling intervention with the aim of identifying ways of assisting the adjustment of Saudi students to the UK context.

*Sample:* Counselling will be directed to cultural adjustment and this is a novel intervention with this client group. The aim is to compare 12 students receiving counselling sessions with 12 matched control students who are not receiving counselling.

*Procedures:*

The study will be based on counselling intervention with Saudi students studying in the UK. The investigator is a certified counsellor in Saudi Arabia, and is a graduate member of the BPS. The Saudi Cultural office will provide a private space to interview clients, and has approved the protocol for the study. The counselling group will be assessed before and after the counselling intervention for their social and academic adjustment to study in the UK. Weekly or fortnightly counselling sessions of one hour will be offered. The control group will be assessed at matched time intervals so that time can be used as a covariate in the assessment. Both quantitative and qualitative assessment will be used. The quantitative assessment will be based on the 12-item Culture Shock scale (Mumford, 2000), and will be assessed on two separate occasions (pre and post) in both intervention and control groups.

Informed consent will be obtained from all participants before the start of the counselling intervention. Full anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained in all records, and they will be kept in a secure location.

Name of Principal Investigator at Brunel University (please print): **Adel A. Alyami**

Signature of Principal Investigator at Brunel University: \_\_\_\_\_



E-Mail Address: **adel.alalami@brunel.ac.uk**

Date: **11<sup>th</sup> October 2012**

This request for expedited review has been:  **Approved** (no additional ethics form is necessary)

**Declined** (full University ethics form is necessary)

Signature of PsyREC Officer: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix 14

This appendix is an example of translated and organized interview in study 2

### Gender

Male

Female X

### Marital Status

Single

Married X

### Level of study

First X

Second

Third

More

1. I eat Arabic food every week.

-My husband and kids love to eat Arabic food, so yes I do and make Arabic food especially when I don't have busy days.

2. I would risk dying for my close friends.

-This kind of thought would exist when I was teen ager but now my life and recourses belong to my husband and kids.

3. My parents taught me to be hospitable to foreigners.

-Yes they did and sometimes they enforce me specially my mum, and coming from small town makes people more dependable.

4. I have never doubted that God exists.

-It impossible that such an idea comes to my mind.

5. I believe that women should place their family before their career.

-Definitely family first but some time I face a lot of pressure at work or during my study that I seek help from a relative or a close friend to take care of my family business.

6. It is important for me to know that I come from a family of "clean descent."

-In our country you are judged by your family name so it is very important to me.



7. Older people deserve more respect than younger people.

-I agree because they are more experienced and thoughtful.

8. I rarely write in Arabic.

-No, I use spoken and written Arabic almost every day because I contact all my friends and family members back home who did not learn English using internet and social media.

9. I place little emphasis on my "family name."

-No way, my family name provides so many privileges to me. Family name is important in Saudi Arabia.

10. A man is not a man if he hurts his mother's feelings.

-Our religion emphasized on respecting parents specially mothers and who does such behaviors will be subjected to punishment by surrounding people and law.

11. I find that many of my friendships only last a short time.

-Not true because I am so selective in choosing friend whom I can trust.

12. I have an obligation to my group of friends.

-That is natural because we need to exchange support from each other.

13. If one of my friends had borrowed money from me but had not paid me back, I would not ask him or her to return the money.

-It happened once or two times but I always believe that they would return the money when they can. I trust them.

14. When I meet a husband and wife who are living away from their extended families I feel sorry for them.

-Yes I do because extended family would offer help or advice when needed also my children like the extended family gatherings because they know that they could enjoy mixing with all of them regardless age or sex.

15. I would never allow my wife to have an abortion/ I would never have an abortion.

-I might have an abortion if I felt that I will not be able to offer the new child the care he or she deserves and my husband agree with me.

16. I would never shout at my father even if he were to insult me badly.

-Never.

17. I consider it an honor to help strangers.

-Yes if honor here means proud or satisfied because it is not only a social norm but also a religious obligation.

18. Being an Arab is more important to me than my religion.

-They mean the same to me because Islam is the religion of almost all Arabs. There are some minor cultural differences between different Arab countries, but they do have almost the same values.

19. I would be reluctant to get divorced as it would give my family a bad name.

-Being divorced in our country will turn your life as a female to be misery. Every member of the family will suffer the consequences of their daughter divorce. As a result I avoid such situation as much as possible. Even here getting divorce might ruin your career path and force you to return home.

20. Good things only happen to me when God wills them.

-Yes. Everything happens on earth either bad or good must be permitted to happen by God willing, but in the Holy Quran God said that we are responsible to make good things happen.

21. I am very proud of my Arabic background.

-I used to be proud but lately I am confused because of the Arabs' behavior which I noticed happening around me here in UK. or in the rest of the world.

22. I would immediately stop my work or study to help out a friend.

-It depends. I used to do that frequently when I was at home country but here in UK things became different because I used to find support from the extended family to take care of my business while I help my friend.

23. I have considerable respect for my father, grandfather(s), uncles, and older brothers.

-Absolutely.

24. I express my feelings better in English than in Arabic.

-Yes if I have the ability and the environment because our family and society norms are sensitive regarding certain expressions and words we use when speaking to strangers or elderly people.

25. I always obey my father's orders.

-Definitely yes. God ordered us to obey our parents and it is a way of showing gratitude.

26. I shall always be faithful to the religion of my fathers.

-Yes I will because I am totally convinced that what he taught me is the right thing.

27. When an important newspaper praises the Arabs, I feel that it is praising me.

-It is natural to feel happy and proud to read good thing about your country or originals because I believe that will help others who are not familiar with culture of my country to understand me and treat me better.

28. I listen to Arabic music at least once a week.

-Actually every day because my friends back home and I exchange information regarding these issues when we communicate.

29. Being an Arab plays an important part in my life.

-Yes because it was the main reason who made me Muslim and I love our historical heritage.

30. It is important for me to continue the reputation or “good name” of my family.

-Yes it is because they spent a lot of effort to keep it clean and known.

31. I speak Arabic every day.

-Definitely but sometimes I use both English and Arabic when I speak with any family member or Saudi friend here in UK

32. Growing up, I learned a lot about my grandparents and great-grandparents.

-Honestly I do not pay a lot of attention to these issues because their life style was totally different from ours. But I do not mind listen to my mother or father talking about these subjects.

33. Arabs all over the world are my “family.”

-Not really true although we have almost the same values, we differ in our customs and traditions.

34. Educational failure does not bring shame to the family.

-As a female, it less critical to fail than to be a male because our society is dominated by men and they are responsible of achieving prosperity and good life to the country and their families. Therefore my failure will hurt me and will hurt my family but not as much as if my brother’s failure.

35. One should not deviate from familial and social norms.

-I don't agree 100% because life styles are changing and affect old familial and social norms.

36. Children should not place their parents in retirement homes.

-It is considered a sin and shameful in most Saudi families to do that but they might provide home nurturing services or hire a maid if they could afford to do that.

37. One need not focus all energies on one's studies.

-I do that during exams and assignments but my family is very important because I might lose my job or fail as result of unexpected reasons at the same time I will always have my family around me offering me unconditional love.

38. One should be discouraged from talking about one's accomplishments.

-Our religion and our traditions honor humbleness so almost all Saudi people feel shy to talk about their accomplishments and if they do they must acknowledge Gods help and willingness.

39. One should not be boastful.

-Definitely yes. Nor our religion or our tradition accepts such behavior.

40. Younger persons should be able to confront their elders.

-No at all unless the elders' behavior were against the law or society's norms.

41. When one receives a gift, one should reciprocate with a gift of equal or greater value.

-That's popular in our society although less than before.

42. One need not follow one's family's and the society's norms.

-Some time he or she could do that but if caught they will be rejected, isolated or might be jailed.

43. One need not achieve academically in order to make one's parents proud.

-Academic achievements normally makes all of the family and the officials proud but the problem that these achievements will not be supported after that for routine reasons.

44. One need not minimize or depreciate one's own achievements.

-Yes indeed because in our culture we consider that an envy which is a sin.

45. One should consider the needs of others before considering one's own needs.

-I agree with that because our religion focused so much in this issue.

46. Educational and career achievements need not be one's top priority.

-Although our main goal of being in UK is to get better education and improve our career status but that should not affect our care of our families needs.

47. One should think about one's group before oneself.

-AS I said before, it is a religion obligation not a choice.

48. One should be able to question a person in an authority position.

-It was difficult in the past in my country but with the help of social media it became popular.

49. Modesty is an important quality for a person.

-It is a religious obligation, so all Muslims should adapt such behavior.

50. One's achievements should be viewed as family's achievements.

-Of course. Each member of the family had a role even it was minor.

51. Elders may not have more wisdom than younger persons.

-Normally I agree but lately I started to question this believe because I experienced wrong decision made by people I thought they are old enough to know right from wrong.

52. One should avoid bringing displeasure to one's ancestors.

-Only selfish person would do that.

53. One need not conform to one's family's and the society's expectations.

-Although he or she must try, I find it difficult sometimes to conform their expectation because of having so much responsibilities. In addition some of their expectations are not realistic.

54. One should have sufficient inner resources to resolve emotional problems.

-I must agree because our culture is very conservative and to share your problems might affect your life negatively.

55. Parental love should be implicitly understood and not openly expressed.

-In my case my family are open minded so expressing love and care is common in the family but I know other families who fear to lose control over their children if they express their feelings openly.

56. The worst thing one can do is to bring disgrace to one's family reputation.

-It is very true in our country specially if you are a female.

57. One need not remain reserved and tranquil.

-We are not used in mixed cultures to act spontaneously, but here in UK I, sometimes, act naturally.

58. The ability to control one's emotions is a sign of strength.

-I strongly agree and that was mentioned in one of Prophet Mohammad's Sayings.

59. One should be humble and modest.

-Yes he or she should be humble and modest and that was mentioned also in the holy Quran and Prophet Mohammad sayings regardless others interpretations.

60. Family's reputation is not the primary social concern.

-I disagree because family's reputation builds your status in the society.

61. One need not be able to resolve psychological problems on one's own.

-It depends how serious is the situation but myself I would prefer to deal with my own problems by myself.

62. Following familial and social expectations are important.

-Not always because life changed and we need to be more flexible when dealing with new ideas.

63. One should not inconvenience others.

-Absolutely. Both religion and traditions forbid us from such behavior.

64. Occupational failure does not bring shame to the family.



-My family would understand but I know other girls who pay a lot of concern regarding their issue to avoid bringing shame to their families.

65. One need not follow the role expectations (gender, family hierarchy) of one's family.

It is normal in Saudi Arabia that role expectation excises even in my family because it is believed that this norm guarantee the family unity and harmony.

66. One should not make waves.

-I agree because it might complicate social interactions.

67. Children need not take care of their parents when the parents become unable to take care of themselves.

-That is absolutely not acceptable in my country. In fact it is sinful to do that.

68. One need not control one's expression of emotions.

-Free expression helps me to evaluate the situation and make right decisions so I do not agree.

69. One's family need not be the main source of trust and dependence.

-That's normal in our society because of way we were raised.

**70.** I would much prefer to live in an Arab country.

I had the choice but I preferred UK because I was sure that I will get better knowledge here and my certificate will be more appreciated by my superiors. In addition my children will learn foreign language

**71.** I mix equally well with British and Arabs.

-Yes I do during classes but I avoid Arabs outside the class because we are not used to do that in addition my husband will not like that.

**72.** Most of my friends are Arabs.

-I must agree not because I avoid mixing with other nationalities but I find easier to share my thoughts and experiences with my own language

**73** I am equally at ease socializing with Arabs and British.

-Although I socialize with both of them especially in lectures but I find Arabs offer me more help when I need than British

**74.** I behave like a British in many ways.

-I still wear my Saudi traditional dress but I learn from British new life styles.

**75.** I have many Arab and British friends.

-Yes I do but not close friends.

**76.** Generally, I feel more comfortable around British than I do around Arabs.

-I do feel that if the subject contains or the lecture discusses issues which are taboo in our culture.

**77.** I have a lot of difficulty making friends.

-Actually no. In fact I avoid making more friends because of my duties towards my family and school.

**78.** I am a worthy member of the social groups I belong to.

-As I mentioned before, being active member of a group means that you will pay less attention to your family and school.

79. I often regret that I belong to some of the social groups I do.

-Not true because it is always my choice.

80. Overall, my social groups are considered good by others.

-Yes indeed.

81. Overall, my group memberships have very little to do with how I feel about myself.

-My social group provides me with security and belonging.

82. I feel I don't have much to offer to the social groups I belong to.

-I am an active member in my group but not always.

83. In general, I'm glad to be a member of the social groups I belong to.

-Yes indeed.

84. Most people consider my social groups, on the average, to be more ineffective than other social groups

-Yes specially from groups who have little background about our culture.

85. The social groups I belong to are an important reflection of who I am. It is a fact that I will be judged by others because of my social group behavior.

86. I am a cooperative participant in the social groups I belong to

-As I said before, not always. My family and my study are first.

87. Overall, I often feel that the social groups of which I am a member are not worthwhile

-Not at all.

88. In general, others respect the social groups that I am a member of.

-Yes to some extent.

89. The social groups I belong to are unimportant to my sense of what kind of a person I am.

-My social group is not judgmental but I care to please them as much as I can.

90. I often feel I'm a useless member of my social groups.

-Not at all.

91. I feel good about the social groups I belong to.

Most of the times

92. In general, others think that the social groups I am a member of are unworthy.

-It could be true but that does not bother me.

93. In general, belonging to social groups is an important part of my self image.

-My social group is one part of different resources which reflect my image like my family and my school friends.

94-I feel uncomfortable when others make jokes about or put down people of my ethnic background.

-It bothers me a lot.

95- I have more barriers to overcome than most people

-I consider myself an average person.

96-It bothers me that family members I am close to do not understand my new values.

-Yes indeed because who would understand me if they do not.

97-Close family members and I have conflicting expectations about my future.

-That's normal but does not cause problems.

98- It is hard to express to my friends how I really feel.

-I am cautious about expressing my feelings so It is hard for me.

99-My family does not want me to move away but I would like to.

-That's true.

100- It bothers me to think that so many people use drugs.

-Yes indeed.

101- It bothers me that I cannot be with my family.

-I miss them so much but my husband and my children made it easier.

102- In looking for a good job, I sometimes feel that my ethnicity is a limitation.

-That's normal all over the world.

103- I do not have any close friends.

-I do have relative close friends.

104-Many people have stereotypes about my culture or ethnic group and treat me as if they are true.

-Few people do have this view but I try my best to avoid them because I feel they are hopeless cases.

105- I do not feel at home.

-Yes I do.

106. People think I am unsociable when in fact I have trouble communicating in English.

-My English is not a barrier but it could be my so many responsibilities.

107. I often feel that people actively try to stop me from advancing.

-I avoid mixing with these people if I have the choice at the same time I do not give them the chance to stop me.

108. It bothers me when people pressure me to assimilate.

-I understand why they want me to assimilate but I am comfortable as I am.

109. I often feel ignored by people who are supposed to assist me.

-Sometimes I feel that but I try to find excuses for them.

110.Because I am different I do not get enough credit for the work I do.

-I am an average person who appreciates normal acknowledgment.

111.It bothers me that I have an accent.

- Some times, because I want to be understood and I want to be treated as a native.

112.Loosing the ties with my country is difficult.

-Yes indeed.

113-.I often think about my cultural background.

-Not much.

114.Because of my ethnic background, I feel that others often exclude me from participating in their activities.

-They do when the activities demand certain clothes or movements which are considered sinful in our culture.

115-.It is difficult for me to "show off" my family.

-Not really.

116.People look down upon me if I practice customs of my culture.

-Not really.

117. I have trouble understanding others when they speak.

-Yes I do especially when they talk fast.

118. If I believed I was having a mental breakdown, my first inclination would be to get professional attention.

-I will do that but after consulting my family.

119. The idea of talking about problems with a psychologist strikes me as a poor way to get rid of emotional conflicts

-I agree that some problems are easy to be solved either by time or by talking to a close friend.

120. If I were experiencing a serious emotional crisis at this point in my life, I would be confident that I could find relief in psychotherapy.

-I will do if it was serious crisis which might destroy my family or future.

121. There is something admirable in the attitude of a person who is willing to cope with his or her conflicts and fears *without* resorting to professional help.

-I do admire strong personalities who depend on themselves but we have to be careful how far we could deal with such situation.

122. I would want to get psychological help if I were worried or upset for a long period of time.

-Not really unless I started to lose control over my life.

123. I might want to have psychological counseling in the future

-It is not popular in our culture to seek psychological help because you will be isolated and might lose your job. Myself, I don't think I will do it easily.

124. A person with an emotional problem is not likely to solve it alone; he or she *is* likely to solve it with professional help

-It depends how serious is the problem and the age of the person.



125. Considering the time and expense involved in psychotherapy, it would have doubtful value for a person like me

-I agree to some extent.

126. A person should work out his or her own problems; getting psychological counseling would be a last resort

-I agree.

127. Personal and emotional troubles, like many things, tend to work out by themselves.

-We have old saying that time is the best healer and I agree with that.