

A Comparison of Women's Rights in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia referenced against the United Nations Human Rights Legislation and selected United Nations' Millennium Development Goals

Cecilia Felicitas Fyfe

“A Dissertation submitted to Auckland University of Technology in partial fulfilment of the degree of Master of Arts (Social Sciences)”.

2013

Department of Social Sciences

Table of Contents

1.	Introduction	2
2.	The Literature Review	4
	2.1 UN Women	5
	2.2 Empowering Women of the Developing World	8
	2.3 Women's Empowerment in New Zealand and the Developed World Today	8
	2.4 Muslim Women's Rights in the West Today	12
	2.5 Women's Rights in the Arab-Muslim Countries Today	13
3.	The United Arab Emirates-an Overview and Recent History	17
4.	Saudi Arabia-An Overview and Recent History	20
5.	International Human Rights Legislation	21
6.	The UN Millennium Development Goals	24
	6.1 MDG Goal 2. To Ensure Universal Primary Education	25
	6.2 MDG Goal 3. To Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women	27
	6.3 MDG Goal 5. To improve Maternal Health	32
7.	Cultural and Social Traditions in the UAE and Saudi Arabia Impacting on Women's Rights and Empowerment	35
	7.1 Introduction	35
	7.2 Recent Migration and Social Changes	36
	7.3 Women and Traditions in the UAE and Saudi Arabia	37
	7.3.1 The Status of Women in the UAE and Saudi Arabia	37
	7.3.2 Veiling Traditions	38
	7.3.3 Female Genital Circumcision	39
	7.3.4 Status of Saudi Women	39
	7.4 The Family in UAE and Saudi Arabia	41

7.4.1 The Traditional Extended Arab Family	41
7.4.2 Marriage Practices.	42
7.5 Islamic Traditions in Daily Life	43
7.5.1 Islamic Law and Feminism	44
7.5.2 Islamic Funerals and Burial Traditions	45
8. Religion and Punishments in the UAE and Saudi Arabia	46
8. 1 Religious Tolerance	46
8.2 Conservative Behaviour and Homosexual Intolerance	46
8.3 Punishments for Disobeying Shar'ia Law	47
9. Social Services – Women's Education, Sports and Employment	48
9.1 Social Services in the UAE	48
9.2 Women's education and sport in Saudi Arabia	49
9.3 Employment Traditions and Practices for Women in the UAE and Saudi Arabia	50
9.4 Saudi Women and the Identification Card	51
9.5 Domestic Violence in the UAE and Saudi Arabia	51
10. Legal Systems in the UAE and Saudi Arabia	52
10.1 The UAE Federal Constitution and Women's Rights	52
10.2 Family Law in the UAE and Saudi Arabia	53
11. Feminist Movements in the UAE and Saudi Arabia	55
12. Millennium Development Goals – Working towards Women's rights and empowerment in the UAE and Saudi Arabia	58
13. Conclusion	62
14. References	65

Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kevin J. Lee'.

November 2013

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTs

I am very grateful for the help and encouragement, which I have received from Dr. Kate Nicholls and especially Dr. Camille Nakhid, who made an extra final effort for me. Otherwise I would never have completed this Dissertation.

A Comparison of Women's Rights in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia referenced against the United Nations Human Rights Legislation and selected United Nations' Millennium Development Goals

Abstract

This research is a comparison of women's rights in the UAE and Saudi Arabia referenced against the United Nations Human Rights Legislation and certain United Nations Millennium Development Goals. The qualitative methodology employed was based on a review of secondary sources. This method, called Documentary Research or Secondary Analysis, is frequently used with other research methods in the Social Sciences. It is derived from the primary documents of formal studies, public documents, autobiographies and diaries, producing themes. This is quick low-cost research from frequently the Internet, and often the only method of accessing information from restricted societies (Sarantakos 1998).

A brief over-view of women's rights world-wide is discussed, with a focus on New Zealand. A brief summary and recent history is provided of the UAE and Saudi Arabia. Cultural and social traditions including Islamic traditions in many aspects of daily life, religious tolerance, religious intolerance and punishments that might impact on women's rights are discussed. The impact of feminist movements in these two countries is also reviewed. Finally, there is a discussion on the way in which the UN

Millennium Development Goals are working towards women's rights and empowerment in the face of these cultural and social traditions.

1. Introduction

This dissertation presents an analytical framework for assessing the status of women's rights in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia by examining United Nations (UN) Human Rights Legislation and relevant UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG) as indicators. These two countries are neighbouring Arab-Muslim desert countries. Both are monarchies and have new enormous oil wealth as their main asset (Bahgat 1998). Together the UAE and Saudi Arabia have over 30% of the world's known oil reserves, most are in Saudi Arabia (OPEC 2013). Three families in Saudi Arabia have control of their oil reserves. The most important family are the rulers, the al-Sauds (Weston 2011). Saudi Arabia has been a steadfast ally of the West since 1915 and is dependent on the USA for its security (Weston 2011). This important and volatile region was affected by the invasion of Kuwait, the events of 9/11, and in recent years, the Arab Spring uprisings calling for democracy in nearby Bahrain, Kuwait and Iraq.

However, frequently in the literature one reads about the lack of women's rights in these countries, particularly Saudi Arabia (Krause 2009; Varia 2008; Moghadam 2007). This dissertation will examine why this situation has arisen and lasted into the modern world, unlike the dramatic social changes, political and legal improvements

for women in the developed world in just the last few generations. This qualitative study presents first a contemporary literature review of some women's rights worldwide with a comparative look at New Zealand, being the first country in the world to give women the vote.

Three MDG relevant to women's rights will be used to compare the status of women in the two selected case studies of the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. These goals are Goal 2-To Ensure Universal Primary Education. I will review the improvements in women's literacy rates since the MDG were identified in 2000. Goal 3-To Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women. For this I will review any changes to women's civil rights and political involvement, and economic factors, such as women's employment and wages in these countries and how this MDG applies to the large number of foreign women workers living in them.

Goal 5-To Improve Maternal Health. I will examine the changes this MDG has made to the Maternal Mortality Rates (MMR). Many of the other MDG such as banishing extreme poverty and hunger and the lack of clean drinking water do not appear to apply to these two affluent countries. My hypothesis argues that the causes of the lack of women's rights in both the UAE and Saudi Arabia today appear to be as a result of a combination of economic factors and cultural and social traditions. Added to these factors are the newness of very sudden change and the intrusion of the Western world since the discovery of vast oil reserves.

The cultural and social traditions of these two countries that impact on women's rights and empowerment will also be discussed and examined along with family law

and feminist movements. Finally I conclude with how the MDG work towards improving women's rights and empowerment in these countries.

2. The Literature Review

This review gives a contrast of women's empowerment needs in some parts of the developing world, the developed world, and the Muslim-world (in the West today and in some Arab-Muslim countries). Developed countries are regarded as the 34 countries belonging to the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD). Most of these countries are high-income, industrialised western democracies, and have a very high Human Development Index, for example, New Zealand. Only members Israel and Turkey (a secular state) are in the Middle East. There are no traditional Arab-Muslim countries in the OECD (Rosenburg 2013).

First I will discuss the new UN Entity of UN Women, as one of its fundamental aims is to pursue the MDG. I will then also take a brief look at empowering women of the developing world. I will then describe women's empowerment with a focus on New Zealand. I next present the case of Muslim women living in the West today as diaspora women frequently preserve their own culture, traditions and religious practices. These practices appear to be the most common shared feature for Muslim women, even when they are from different countries. "Diasporia" people, is the similar life-style practised by a body of people living outside their traditional homelands (Oxford Dictionary 2002).

Finally I will look at the rights of women living in some Arab-Muslim countries today. Often the women of many of these countries appear to initially have a different set of obstacles to overcome to achieve their fundamental human rights and potential than those of the women of the Western world. Western women want equality in work opportunities and wages. Middle-Eastern women appear to first need, political participation, a modernization of family law, and cultural and traditional social changes.

2.1 UN Women

Since 1976 the UN has provided financial assistance and technical assistance for programmes which foster women's empowerment and gender equality through four distinct agencies:

1. The UN Development Fund for Women.
2. The Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women.
3. The Division for the Advancement of Women.
4. The UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.

In 2010 they were all merged into the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (known as UN Women) which only became operational in January 2011. This Entity was formed especially to accelerate gender equality and

the empowerment of women by bringing together resources and mandates for greater impact. No.5 of their aims is to “Pursue the UN Millennium Development Goals”.

The blueprints of the MDG have been agreed on by most the world’s countries and leading development institutions, which have “galvanized unprecedented efforts” to meet the needs of the world’s poorest people. Therefore UN Women and the MDG co-operate together on these Goals (UN Women 2013).

UN Women has 45 member states from all over the world from countries like; Haiti, Liberia, Egypt and Brazil. Saudi Arabia is even a contributing country to the Executive Board. Each member state provides a representative to serve for 4 years. The President is the currently re-elected President of Chile, Michelle Bachelet.

UN Women focuses on seven fundamental aims:

1. Preventing violence against women.
2. Promoting leadership and partnership.
3. Promoting economic empowerment (mainly about promoting gender equality and empowering women).
4. National planning and budgeting.
5. Pursuing the UN Millennium Development Goals
6. Promoting peace and security.
7. Eliminating HIV/Aids.

To pursue these aims, UN Women's intentions are to support inter-governmental bodies in forming policies, global standards and norms, as no UN agency can directly change a country's domestic legislation. However, UN Women can help member states with changes and provide suitable technical and financial support if requested. Member states can hold the UN system accountable for commitments on gender equality, including regular monitoring (UN Women 2013). UN Women touches the lives of women in many countries world-wide including New Zealand. UN Women New Zealand is one of 16 national committees based in the developed countries offering a global network of support. Advocacy and fundraising projects are held regularly, as is lobbying the New Zealand government. Support is also given for women's rights in the Pacific Island nations where violence is a major problem. In the Solomon Islands support is given for a women's market project (UN Women New Zealand 2013). As the international feminist movement gained momentum in the 1970's, the UN declared the 8th of March as International Women's Day. This has been observed since 1975. The theme for 2013 was to end violence against women (UN Women, 2013).

Although women are half of the world's population, they make up 70% of the victims of violence, with only 20% of law-makers being women. Women also earn up to 30% less than men for the same work. Employment research shows that women do two-thirds of the world's work, but earn only 10% of the world's income. This represents less than 1% of the world's property and illustrates the inequality experienced by most of the world's women (Davidson and McGrath 2011: 872).

2.2 Empowering Women of the Developing World

Over time and in different cultures women's powerlessness or power has varied greatly according to culture, class or caste, education, ethnicity and family position. Still an analysis of gender relations is required and the way in which they are constructed and maintained (Mosedale 2005). Western women with "a high divorce rate and exhausting careerism must not be patronising and assume only their lifestyles can be fruitful" (Nussbaum 2000: 41). Many centuries-old traditions such as those associated with Indian women, both Hindu and Muslim, of "modesty, obedience and self-sacrifice, should not be assumed to be incapable of constructing good lives for these women" (Nussbaum 2000; 41). Obviously factors like increased income and better health are vital for empowerment, but other overall aspects for empowerment must also be considered. First, disempowerment is a term which applies to people who are disadvantaged by gender- power relations shaping their choices, opportunities, and well-being. Secondly, empowerment cannot be given by a third party. Developmental agencies can only facilitate women to empower themselves by promoting favourable conditions for them to use. Thirdly, empowerment means women making decisions about what is important in their lives and being able to carry them out (Mosedale 2005; 244).

2.3 Women's Empowerment in New Zealand and the Developed World today

Gender inequality and attitudes are deeply entrenched in the labour market worldwide. Women have family responsibilities and challenges to birth control. Even in

the female-dominated healthcare professions like nursing and social-work, women are often excluded from responsibility and authority, and higher wages (Davidson and McGrath 2011).

The lives of New Zealand women have changed dramatically since getting the vote in 1893. While not having the factors of many developmental agencies criteria for extreme poverty, there is quite a way to go in areas like work opportunities and wages. Women's participation in the labour force is a significant social change post-World War Two, with a growing number of part-time jobs, changing work and social conditions, and increased female education (Johnston 2005). By the 2000s, many women have held premier jobs such as Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition, Chief Justice, Attorney General and Chief Executives of Telecom and Work and Income New Zealand (Tolich 2001). But this does not reflect the reality for most New Zealand working women. Women comprise almost half of New Zealand's labour force. However in 2012, 35% of women worked part-time, that is less than 30 hours a week (Statistics New Zealand 2012). Part-time and temporary work has few fringe benefits, and few opportunities for further training or advancement. Such workers are unlikely to belong to a trade union or professional organization, and there is usually no sick pay, maternity leave, paid holidays or pension. An example is supermarket employees hired just for the busiest hours. These are low-paid jobs where most of the employees are women (Tolich 2001).

The average weekly wage for men working full-time in 2011 was \$920. In comparison, for women working full-time in 2011, the average weekly wage was \$663, a ratio of 72% (Statistics New Zealand 2011). By 2012 the gender pay gap had increased from 12.75% in 2010 to 14.18% (Statistics New Zealand 2012). However, by 2013 the median income for a man was \$36,500 compared to \$23,100 for women. This is of great concern today as the latest Herald figures show from the 2013 census (Savage and Singh 2013). In the public sector gender pay gaps can vary from 3-35% (Glazebrook 2010).

At all ages, women's participation in the workforce is stratified by qualifications and by ethnicity, with European women having greater participation rates in the workforce than women in all other ethnic groups (Johnston 2005). Pacific and Maori people are more likely to work in semi or low-skilled manual work. This produces lower rates of pay and greater vulnerability in a changing economic climate (Mansoor & Boddington 2009).

A UN Report has observed that "no society treats its women as well as its men" (UNDR 1997: 30). Still this report ranked New Zealand and Australia high in world-wide gender equality when using the indices of income and economic participation (UNDR 1997: 30). However, a Human Rights Commission report found that New Zealand has now started to regress in terms of female participation in governance, professional and public life, at a time "when women are increasingly consumers, customers, clients, employers, employees and investors, and at a time when global business requires transformation" (Human Rights Commission 2010: 87). For many

professional women a glass ceiling is soon encountered, preventing promotion and new employment opportunities. The figures from Grant Thornton's International Business Report to mark this year's International Women's Day reveal that the percentage of women in senior management positions throughout New Zealand has stalled at 28%. Compared to the rest of the world, New Zealand is not doing well. In 2012 New Zealand was ranked 10th out of 40 countries surveyed, but this year, 2013, dropped to 17th out of 44 countries. Firms offering flexible hours have dropped from 81% to 78%, making it difficult for women with family obligations to hold a senior management position (Thornton 2013). A study in 2005 by Statistics New Zealand found that five years after completing a degree, male incomes were consistently higher than women's incomes across every field of study. Having children is not always the reason as women now start their families later (Glazebrook 2010). The legal employment situation in New Zealand remains firmly male, despite 62% of new law graduates now being women. Only 17% of partners in large law firms were women, 12% of practising Queen's or Senior Counsels, 20% of Court of Appeal judges and High Court judges and only 26% of District Court judges. Western Europe has the same trend (Glazebrook 2010). With better education and contraception, the average number of children in New Zealand families fell from 4.3 in 1961 to 1.95 in 1996, and was 2.14 in 2009. With this fall was a rise in women's age at marriage, from 21.7 in 1971, to 30.7 years in 1996 (Habgood 2001) and still over 30 years in 2009 (OECD 2009). This meant women spent more time in their 20s in the labour force, and were still in their 40's when their last child left home. Despite the average family size dropping over the last few decades, most New Zealand families now needed to have two incomes coming in. By the mid-1980s the

dual-earner nuclear family had become the dominant arrangement for raising children (Habgood 2001).

Changes to divorce laws and the introduction of the domestic purposes benefit for single parents have assisted women wanting to leave bad or violent relationships.

By 1996, 17.7 % of all New Zealand families were solo-parent households, consisting usually of women and children (Habgood 2001). However the majority of women live with a male partner or husband, without much equality in the household division of labour. Men do 45-46% of the unpaid housework in the home, whereas for women it is 54-55%. However, caring for the young, aged or disabled remains predominantly women's work (Harvey and Thorns 2001).

2.4 Muslim Women's Rights in the West Today

Even though women were equal according to Mohammed and the Qur'an, in many countries today there remains great inequality for Muslim women, even in the mosques and family life of the United States. The American Indian-born author and women's rights activist Asra Nomani is lobbying against this. Apart from changing sexist behaviour in the mosques, Nomani also wants Muslim women to have a right to choose their own partners, be able to refuse her husband marrying a second wife, decide independently about contraception and reproduction, be protected against physical, emotional and sexual abuse, be exempt from punishment for consensual adult sex, and be able to refuse marital sex if wished (Nomani 2005: 295). Britain, like a lot of Western European countries now has a considerable Muslim population. Women unsegregated in Mosques are rare, and also women Imams (prayer-leaders).

To counter the extremist groups living in Britain, the British Muslim Forum now encourages women as Imams. However a lot of Muslim husbands remain traditionalists, not wanting their wives to work outside the home or have political involvement (Muslim Women 2006).

2.5 Women's Rights in the Arab-Muslim countries today

For many observers women's rights are structurally determined by patriarchal state ideology, level and type of development and class. Women's lack of economic power is one of the major reasons for gender inequalities including parenthood, marriage and sexuality (Moghadam 2003). It is suggested patriarchy first developed in the Middle East between 3100-600 BCE as societies changed from being hunter-gathers to settled agriculture, and ownership of property developed. Women were now considered property and especially their role in childbearing, as this transferred property across the generations. Women were also now secluded in the home to protect the blood-line (Lerner 1986; Keddie 2007). The Gulf countries still retain traditional patriarchal practices and the norms of former desert people who regard women as second-class citizens. These societies have only had modernity introduced to them very recently (Moghadam 2007).

Since Islam was introduced into Arab societies, to some observers, the roles of men and women are said to have become more defined and patriarchal. However, for Alvi (2005; 145) the pre-Islamic pagan society in the Middle East with its "fierce victimization of weaker tribes and women" has not changed. Therefore Islam

nowadays is “simply used against women as a pretext for the socio-religious authoritarianism against them” (Alvi 2005: 145). For other observers the religious-cultural norms of the Middle East have constrained women’s civil, political and social rights of citizenship, from family and employment rights to political-judicial decision-making (Mogaham 2007: 45). According to Hisham Sharabi (1988), unlike liberal democratic societies in the neo-patriarchal state, religion is bound to power and state authority. The ruler and ruling party then acts as a patriarch and privileges men over women (Hisham Sharabi 1988).

Recent employment practices in the Arab-Muslim countries are now challenging the traditional patriarchal ideology in the work-place, home, courts, and political and religious arenas. Statistics from Tunisia, Morocco and the Gulf, suggest nearly a third of women work outside the home. Although women are still the majority in jobs like cooks, cleaners, nannies, agricultural-workers and craft-work from the home, they also work in law, medicine, engineering, journalism and television. At least 25% of judges in Tunisia are women, and about 20% of judges in Morocco are women (Femia 2000). Countries with more women in the labour force and greater female enrolment in secondary education (core rights) tend also to have more favourable inheritance and nationality laws (Cherif 2010).

Still media messages focus on the traditional housewife role of women, rather than on women’s increased participation in economic, social and political fields (Trofin and Tomescu 2010). In non-Arab countries there are higher levels of support for women’s rights, a key indicator of personal freedom closely associated with stable democratic regimes. Those who support gender equality were significantly more

likely to support democracy. According to the 2005 Arab Human Development Report, the low status of women is the main obstacle to development of democracy (Al-Khalifa and Al-Khalifa 2007). For democracy in Arab-Muslim countries to develop, a rule of law which would protect gender equality, minority rights, and citizen inclusion would need to be instituted (Rizzo 2007). Liberal theorists argue that democracy is a prerequisite for women's rights and political participation (Moghadam 2007: 2). By 1995 there were 117 electoral democracies in the world. However, elected democracies do not exist in the Gulf area. Opposition and democratic institutions are weak or non-existent in most Arab countries with a lack of real choice in the political systems (Boubakri and Lindahl 2009). In 2008, for overall freedoms, the UAE was rated 2.60 and Saudi Arabia 1.90. The best possible score was 10, which was almost achieved by many Scandinavian countries (Democracy Index 2008).

In Saudi Arabia the closely intertwined royal family and very conservative Wahhabi-style Islam have until now protected the status quo and prevented modern ideas from taking a hold or from allowing change to happen (Kapiszewski 2006). There are also a lot fewer foreign workers and tourists in Saudi Arabia than the more westernised United Arab Emirates.

It is thought by some to be Shar'ia (the moral code and religious law of Islam) which actually degrades women, with the role of culture being the main perpetuator for the oppression of women. However Islam cannot be totally responsible for the lack of Muslim Women's Rights, as Morocco and Tunisia have made sufficient progress

while some countries like Jordan still lag behind. Jordan still condones honour killings by a woman's family for a woman having sex outside of marriage thus destroying the family's honour (Al-Khalifa and Al-Khalifa 2007; Cherif 2010; Keddie 2007). Not all Muslim countries are the same. Albania with a substantial Muslim majority is a secular state, while Iran is an Islamic state (Cherif 2010). Many non-Arab-Muslim countries have extended reasonably democratic political rights to their citizens. These countries include Albania, Bangladesh, Indonesia (the largest Muslim country in the world), Malaysia, Senegal and Turkey, also Lebanon until the 1975 civil war began (Boubakri and Lindahl 2011). Islam has also not deterred women in Bangladesh, Pakistan and Indonesia from reaching top elected political positions (Sabbagh 2005).

3. The United Arab Emirates-An Overview and Recent History

Not long ago, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) was a quiet desert region on the Trucial Coast where the impoverished population made a living from pearl diving, fishing, animal herding and date palm cultivation (Nyall 2006). Oil reserves were discovered in the 50s and oil production started in 1962, soon transforming former fishing villages to modern cities of high-rise buildings and superhighways. In 1968 the British announced their planned departure from the region (Martin 2003). Most of the population now live in Dubai or the capital, Abu Dhabi. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is now the world's fourth richest country (Nyako 2010). Dubai only produces 100,000 barrels of oil per day, compared to Abu Dhabi's 2.7 million barrels of oil per day, 95% of the UAE's total oil production (Millar 2008). Although many inhabitants are still nomadic Bedouins, there are now about 5 million people estimated to be living in the UAE. However this does not include a substantial number of illegal workers (Nonneman 2011: 1233).

Dubai today is the largest city in the UAE with 35.6% of the population. Dubai is the glittering hub of capitalism and tourism, and one of the world's international cities. English is the second language and road signs are in English and Arabic (Lis 2010). Unlike Saudi Arabia it is possible to drink alcohol and gamble in private and licensed premises. Indigenous citizens are 80% Sunni Muslim who rule all the seven emirates, with the remaining 20% being Shiite Muslim (Nydell 2006). In just the forty years since the UAE Federation was formed, the UAE has made unprecedented levels of

economic progress, transforming seven extremely poor and backward desert Emirates into an extremely prosperous nation. The Gross National Income for Dubai is US\$ 41,031 (Kirdar 2010). Only 6% of Dubai's Gross Domestic Product is from oil and gas revenues with the remainder coming from global business, technology, real estate and tourism (Aziz 2008; Nyako 2010).

However, the UAE is not a democracy. Each of the seven Emirates has an absolute, hereditary monarchy. Dubai is ruled by Sheik Mohammed bin Rashid Al- Maktoum, helped by his male family members (Lis 2010). The UAE lacks political parties and democratic institutions (the right to vote for all), elections, labour unions, freedom of speech and a truly independent judiciary (Lis 2010; Kirdar 2010). The UAE has a mixed legal-system based on civil law and Islamic Shar'ia law (Aziz 2008). It uses Shar'ia law only in the areas of inheritance, family law such as divorce and child custody, succession law and the penal law (Ashish 2010; 43). All judges are required to take an oath before the Minister of Justice to apply Shar'ia law, and promise also that no judgement of theirs will contradict Shar'ia law in these areas of law (Nonneman 2011). Civil courts deal with commercial matters and debt recovery (Ashish 2010: 45). Both men and women citizens lack the power to challenge their government democratically as they have 'limited rights' to peaceful assembly and freedom of speech. They are unable to organize and voice their demands without fear of prosecution (Kelly 2009: 6). All public gatherings must acquire government permits first or they are illegal (Kirdar 2010: 19). The government particularly excludes Islamic movements and women from any real political participation (Baoubakri and Lindahl 2009).

It is said that many Gulf rulers reinforce their authority through their welfare states, whereby individuals and tribes are also given generous cash subsidies, food and clothing (Foley 2010). Ibrahim (2008) notes that the citizens of these countries tolerate a degree of political control in exchange for economic and internal security, with foreign migrant workers the most likely group to press for reforms regarding their poor work contracts and conditions. Wages and conditions for these foreign workers are particularly harsh producing high suicide rates (Krause 2009; Skinner 2008; Keane 2008).

About 83% of Dubai's population are from overseas. The Indian sub-continent and South Asia makes up 55% of this population, 25 % come from surrounding Middle-Eastern countries, and about 3% are Western expatriates (Marsh 2010). An "expatriate" is usually a foreign skilled professional worker, and a "migrant" is usually a foreign manual worker. These terms, "can vary according to individual preferences and prejudices" (English Language Learners 2013).

4. Saudi Arabia-An Overview and Recent History

Modern Saudi Arabia was established in just 1932 by King Abdul Aziz ibn Abd Al-Rahman ibn Faisal Al-Saud who unified much of Arabia. Like the UAE, the discovery of vast oil reserves has allowed people who had been nomadic Bedouin or semi-nomadic traders for some 3,000 years, to drive Mercedes and live in cities, all in only about forty years (Scott 2006).

This huge Kingdom with endless expanses of empty sand is over one-fifth the size of the continental United States. Oil is its main asset and has provided huge revenues (Bahgat 1998). Saudi Arabia contains 28.7 million residents, consisting of 23 million Saudis, 5.6 million foreigners and an estimated 1.5 million illegal residents. The workforce consists of 35% foreigners. The population growth of Saudi Arabia is one of the highest in the world (Scott 2006: 93), with 60% of the population being under 20 years of age (Scott 2006: 234). Annual income in 2010 was less than US\$15,339 after peaking in 1981 at \$25,000 (Doumato 2010: 425 (Posner 2005)).

Saudi Arabia has one of the most conservative monarchies in the world and is very authoritarian with no Constitution or Succession legislation. The latter has led to family coups and assassinations in the Royal Family of al-Saud (Posner 2005). The King rules by absolute decree with no political parties allowed. Trade unions, workers' strikes and engaging in collective bargaining are also forbidden. Like Dubai, Saudi Arabia lacks real true judicial independence, with all its law coming from the Qur'an and the Sunnah (the prescribed Muslim way of life). Wahhabi Islam

is followed. This is a very strict interpretation of Sunni Islam which has a majority following in just Saudi Arabia and Qatar, but is less rigidly enforced in Qatar (Esposito, Fasching and Lewis 2006: 250).

Saudi Arabia remains a country without the basic freedoms necessary for a civil society to form. There are no constitutional guaranteed rights to free speech for the press, public assembly or religious choice. Punishments are harsh and a national can even be sentenced to imprisonment or death for becoming a Christian (Doumato 2010: 444). In 2002, Freedom House labelled Saudi Arabia as one of the world's most repressive regimes (Kapiszewski 2006). On the Freedom House score for Political and Civil Rights, Saudi Arabia was ranked 1.02 in 2010, after ranking 1.0 in 2004 (1 represents the lowest available score). So changes are happening but very slowly (Doumato 2010: 424).

5. International Human Rights Legislation

I will first examine the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) 1948, as this was the UN's first human rights legislation, I will then lead on to more specific human rights legislation such as the UNs MDG and many others. After World War 2 and the Holocaust, the newly formed United Nations ratified the UDHR. The UDHR contains many Articles which both Saudi Arabia and the UAE constantly violate. These articles include;

1. Article 7 All are equal before the law-----and entitled to legal protection.
2. Article 13 Freedom of movement within the State.
3. Article 16 Equal rights in marriage and at its dissolution.
4. Article 20(i) The right to peaceful assembly and association.
5. Article 21 The right to vote and take part in the government of one's country.
6. Article 23(i) The right to free choice of employment and to just and favourable conditions of work.
 - (ii) Equal pay for equal work.
 - (iii) Fair wages for an existence worthy of human dignity.
7. Article 24 The right to rest and leisure (reasonable limitations of working hours and regular paid holidays)
8. Article 25 The right to a standard of living adequate for health and wellbeing---including adequate food, clothing, housing and medical care.

The International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) 1966 was made in accordance with the UDHR 1948. The ICCPR contains many important issues like civil and political rights and freedoms for the individual; right of self-determination; anti-slavery clauses; rights to liberty of movement; choice of residence and the right to leave any country; equality before the law; religious choice and practise; and the right to form and join trade unions. Neither Saudi Arabia nor the UAE has signed the ICCPR or the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) 1966 (Keane, 2008). This is important as the lack of civil, political and

human rights for women particularly in the Gulf area, is of great concern and contrary to the MDG.

The UAE has signed and ratified four International UN Human Rights Treaties. These include the Convention on Elimination of Racial Discrimination 1965 (CERD)¹. The other Treaties are: The UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (mainly against human trafficking) 2007; the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 1979; and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989 (Kirdar 2010). With bonded labour and all its inhuman conditions being endemic throughout the UAE (Keane 2008), the UAE has not signed and ratified the UN Migrant Workers Convention, nor the International Labour Organizations Migrant Workers Convention. These two Conventions supplement the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (Manseau 2007: 36). For any country signing any International Treaty, the Treaty is powerless until it is incorporated into local domestic legislation. For the UAE special reservations are frequently made to the texts so that they are compatible with the domestic Shar'ia law. These changes though can make a Treaty ineffective and immune to litigation by other countries in the International Court of Justice (Manseau 2007: 41).

Saudi Arabia has signed and ratified the following three international Human Rights Treaties. These are the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime 2007, the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism 1999, and CEDAW 1979. CEDAW was only ratified by Saudi Arabia in 2000. However,

¹ CERD does not prevent distinctions being made between citizens and non-citizens in Dubai (Manseau 2007: 36).

only certain parts which do not conflict with Islamic law have been ratified. With its repressive social policies against women, Saudi Arabia is unequivocally and grossly violating the CEDAW provisions (Alvi 2005), and also the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime by human trafficking (Kirdar 2010).

6. The UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG)

In 2000 the UN produced a list of eight goals to try and achieve by 2015. The aim is to create an environment at the national and global level which is conducive to development and elimination of world poverty. Many of the MDG are particularly directed at empowering women. Several studies show gender equality as a precondition for sustainable growth and poverty reduction (Davidson, et al., 2011: 874).

The International Council on Women's Health Issues (ICOWHI) lists the MDG for promoting good health and empowering women. The ICOWHI adds to the MDG, reducing violence to women and enhancing support for the victims of violence. Violence to women is often a hidden problem and unreported. The ICOWHI aims to educate health workers globally about this problem (Davidson, et al., 2011). The UN's aim is to empower impoverished people by banishing extreme poverty and hunger, combating infectious diseases and the lack of clean drinking water, and promoting literacy (Davidson et al., 2011).

Many of the MDG appear to apply to the poorer parts of the world rather than the wealthier United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. The MDG appearing relevant to the women of the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia are:

Goal 2. To Ensure Universal Primary Education.

Goal 3. To Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women.

Goal 5. To Improve Maternal Health.

I will look at how these Goals have affected women in the UAE and Saudi Arabia since their presentation by the UN in 2000.

6.1 MDG Goal 2. To Ensure Universal Primary Education

In 1996 there were about 597 million illiterate women in the world compared with 352 million illiterate men. Those who cannot read or write are “destined to be on the social and economic margins of our world” (UNICEF 2011). In many societies it is still thought that educating girls is of less value than educating boys. However child mortality rates are highest in homes where the mother is illiterate and unable to access health literature (Wilson 1992). With some education for women there is a higher age at marriage, a lower fertility rate and mortality, enhanced maternal care and reduction of reliance on public welfare. There is also a link between increased women’s education and the push for political participation and voting rights. Therefore men

must be educated on the benefits of educating women and more practical help offered such as reduced education costs, scholarships offered, and a gender-friendly environment (Mogaham 2008: 11).

Education has been the prime area of progress for women in the Gulf region providing an avenue toward broader equality (Kelly 2009). All citizens of the UAE are entitled to free education. Female education and literacy rates have improved a lot. The literacy figures given here are from 15-24 years of age. In 1990, UAE women had literacy figures of 71%, by 2000 this was 79.5% (UNESCO 2000). In 2007, this was 89.2%, usually with 11 years of schooling, six of these school years being compulsory (Nonneman 2011: 1249). By 2013 UAE women were 91-97% literate (Arab World Literacy Rates 2012; UNICEF 2011: 5; Encyclopaedia of Women and Islamic Cultures 2013) and UAE women now have a literacy ratio of 102 women to 100 men (UNICEF 2011).

In 1990, Saudi Arabia had a literacy rate of only 48% for women. This was a great improvement from the 1970 figures of 2% literacy for women and 15% for men (Femia 2000). By 2013 women's literacy had increased greatly to 97% (Encyclopaedia of Women and Islamic Cultures 2013; The Oxford Business Group 2013: 249; UNICEF 2011). This is now similar to the figures for UAE women (Encyclopaedia of Women and Islamic Cultures 2013). It was only in 1964 when the forward-looking King Faisal became ruler that schools were built for girls, now 89% of girls attend primary school. Until the 60's female illiteracy was widespread (Ingalls 2005; Colton 2011: 21). The ratio of literate women to men in Saudi Arabia

was 73.7 in 1990. This has increased to become a 98.6 ratio in 2010 (Millennium Development Goals in Saudi Arabia 2009).

6.2 MDG Goal 3. To Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

Empowerment means a woman has some control over decisions in her life and also in the society in which she lives. Having civil rights, political involvement and employment opportunities are some of the ways of promoting gender equality and empowering women. World-wide, women now make up 19% of representatives in legislatures (UN 2006). However in the Arab-Muslim world, women make up only 6.5%, the lowest percentage in the world. Despite some progress there is still a host of obstacles for women in politics (Sabbagh 2005: 57).

Despite UAE women not having the vote, women now have been appointed to 23 of the 40+ seats in the UAE's federal parliament, and 4 women have been appointed to federal ministerial positions (Krause 2009: 20; UNICEF 2011). This is one of the highest rates of women parliamentarians in the world and contradicts the 6.5% average for this region (Krause 2009).

Saudi Arabia has recently announced it will give women the vote by 2015. If this should actually happen, then the UAE would remain the last country in the world that does not recognize the right of women to vote or stand as electoral candidates. Many surrounding Middle Eastern countries have enfranchised women in recent decades. Some of these countries include Syria 1949, Lebanon 1952, Egypt 1956 and Tunisia

1957 (Rahbani 2010). Despite increased education, women in Saudi Arabia are usually not taught and are unaware of their citizenship rights. There is also a failure of governments to engage in public education campaigns (Ingalls 2005). In the last few years though since King Abdullah's reign, reforms have been made on women's rights, freedom of expression, judicial fairness and religious tolerance. It is thought Saudis have now become freer than they were before. Saudi citizens have greater latitude to criticize their government, and reforms in the justice system may bring more transparency and fairness in judicial procedures (Wilcke 2010). As women become literate and empowered by education, they want to participate in the working world outside the home. There are other factors as well. In 2005, divorce rates in the UAE reached 45%. Therefore more UAE women want paid employment and financial independence, rather than relying on the goodwill of their extended families (Kelly 2009).

Women in the UAE make up 41-42% of the paid workforce (working or looking for work) and work in the public and private sectors (Kelly 2009: 3; UNICEF 2011). World-wide, such women's rates are 52% (UNICEF 2011). There is more employment security and equal wages for women in the public sector than in the private sector where they are less likely to get equal wages. Women's employment has grown with increased education, literacy and government policies to decrease dependency on foreign labour (Kelly 2009). UAE women are entitled to 45 days paid maternity leave from their employer (UNICEF 2011). Women in the UAE had acquired more socio-economic power in the 1990's because they were the only group besides expatriates who were able to fill the positions created by the private sector.

The indigenous men prefer to work in family businesses, the army or government, often occupations which do not require extensive education (Davidson 2009: 7; Foley 2010: 8).

Few UAE women though are found in high management or executive positions. While there are laws for equal pay and training opportunities, these laws are frequently violated with salaries and job perks. While women can file for discrimination with some government agencies, these agencies usually lack the capacity to investigate cases or impose penalties for any violation (Kelly 2009). Many jobs are forbidden for UAE women for many different reasons, and most workplaces are gender segregated (Krause 2009: 9). For women wanting to start up their own businesses in the UAE, there is widespread social disapproval unless the businesses are something like a perfume or chocolate shop. Since 2008 it is possible for UAE women to be judges and public prosecutors (Kelly 2009; UNICEF 2011). Women now have also entered fields traditionally exclusively male, such as the armed forces, police, business, science, and engineering. In the armed forces though, women are still thought to be used more for nursing men, housekeeping and food preparation. Many observers think that these changes are just window-dressing for the outside world, that is a desire to appear modern rather than real change at grass-roots level, with the law still fundamentally biased against poor uneducated women (Dhari 2009: 271).

Women are under-represented in the oil workforce in the Gulf countries. Apart from cultural norms, oil and gas extraction usually offers only barrack-style living in

remote areas. The absence of women in the non-agricultural labour-force leads to less education for women, higher fertility rates, and less influence in the home. On the other hand, export-oriented manufacturing draws women back into the work force while boosting their political influence (Trofin and Tromescu 2010).

In Saudi Arabia, due to the enforced separation between genders in public places, the opportunities for women's employment remain limited with the vast majority of working women employed in the Kingdom's single-sex education or healthcare systems. However some Saudi women hold high teaching posts in universities and some work in business and as engineers, scientists and doctors. There are also new opportunities for women workers in women-only manufacturing, shopping malls and hospitality jobs (Doumato 2010; Scott 2006).

Only 10% to 14.4% of Saudi Arabian women are employed in the paid work-force, public and private. Exact figures are difficult to obtain, however it is still quite an increase from 5.4% in 1992. This is the lowest rate of female employment in the world today. There is however, an entitlement to 10 weeks paid maternity leave (Abu-Nasr 2013; Al-Munajjed 2009; Scott. 2006). Saudi Arabia also has the greatest female wages ratio difference to male wages in the world. Women earn an average of US\$ 7,157 compared with men's average of US\$ 36,727. Therefore men earn over five times more than women (Morrison 2012). In 2007, three Saudi Arabian Institutions started to permit women to study law. However, Saudi women lawyers can only act as legal consultants to other women and cannot serve as judges or

barristers in the Courts (Kelly 2009: 4). Unlike women in the UAE, Saudi women cannot drive in public. This can result in having to pay quite a proportion of their wages to a male driver and prevents women doing any job where driving is required. This is the only country in the world to ban women from driving.

There are approximately 450,000 foreign domestic women from developing countries working in the UAE (Sonmez et al. 2013) and approximately 1.5 million in Saudi Arabia (Varia 2008). Although these women make up less than 2 million of the approximate 8 million foreign workers in Saudi Arabia, their embassies report that abuses of them account for the vast majority of complaints. Unfortunately Saudi women's low and unequal status affects foreign domestic women's rights and treatment (Varia 2008). Labour laws throughout the UAE also do not cover foreign domestic workers (Manseau 2007; Varia 2008).

In 2005 there were about 10,000 sex slaves in Dubai, about 80% of them women (Skinner 2008: 182; Goh 2009: 273). People-trafficking for sex-work has been exacerbated by the collapse and impoverishment of the former Soviet Bloc, and the debt crisis in the Global South. Slavery was only abolished in Saudi Arabia in 1962 and in the UAE in 1963 (Manseau 2007: 29). Like domestic workers, sex slaves have had their passports confiscated and are bound by a debt to their employers (Sonmez et al., 2013)². Both groups usually lead an unseen existence. Neither group of women is entitled to MDG such as regular employment, public education or public healthcare. Both groups are at the mercy of their employers.

² Domestic workers are informal workers and sex slaves are illegal residents.

6.3 MDG Goal 5. To Improve Maternal Health

In many of the world's poorest countries arranged child-marriage is the norm. This is in order to collect a dowry and protect family honour from any pre-marital sexual contact by the daughter. Apart from not having any chance of completing their education and securing employment opportunities, their immature bodies and the small pelvises of girl children cannot safely cope with the demands of pregnancy and childbirth, particularly with limited healthcare services. Frequent complications can be death or obstetric fistula, rare conditions in the developed world. Although surgeons are being trained for surgical repairs and healthcare workers are being educated, better maternal care and free treatment should be offered (Odhiambo 2013). The area of sub-Saharan Africa accounted for more than half, 56%, of the world's maternal deaths in 2010 (Odhiambo 2012).

The MDG planned to reduce the world-wide Maternal Mortality Rates (MMR) by 75% between 1990 and 2015. By 2010 the MMR had been nearly halved, down to 47%. Almost 99% of all maternal deaths happen in the developing countries, New Zealand's MMR is in single figures. Southern Sudan has the highest figures in the world with 2.054 deaths per 100,000 live births, and only one qualified midwife per 30,000 people. A woman in Southern Sudan has a 1 in 7 chance of dying from pregnancy related causes (Millennium Development Goals report 2010).

In 1990 Saudi Arabia had a MMR of 48 deaths per 100,000 live births. By 2000 this was down to 23 deaths per 100,000 live births. However in the MDG report for 2010,

the MMR was down to 14 deaths per 100,000 live births for 2010. This is a large reduction in just 20 years, but is still too high. The proportion of births in Saudi Arabia attended to by skilled healthcare professional has increased from 88% in 1990 to 97% in 2010, helping to address the MMR (Millennium Development Goals Report 2010). In the United Arab Emirates the MMR was 14 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2000. However by 2010 the United Arab Emirates MMR was 10-12 deaths per 100,000 live births ((Millennium Developments Goals report 2010: UNICEF 2011).

Deaths in childbirth are usually from haemorrhaging, the uterus rupturing, hypertension, sepsis, or obstructed labour. A lot of these deaths particularly those due to haemorrhaging and hypertension are avoidable (Millennium Development Goals report 2010). Apart from changes in traditional life-style, and little physical exercise, there is a very high fertility rate in Saudi Arabia in particular. The short spacing of multiple pregnancies can result in an accumulation of body-fat which never gets shed (Musaiger 2004: 791). Multiple pregnancies can often be because the husband refuses any form of contraception (Mobarak and Soderfeldt 2010).

Saudi and UAE women typically live veiled outside and/or are indoors a lot. Little sun exposure and lack of milk products, oily fish and green vegetables in the local diet cause a shortage of Vitamin D. This vitamin deficiency combined with little physical exercise results in a defect in the bone-building process, causing the painful bone-softening disease of osteomalacia (rickets in children), which is endemic to women of this region, causing problems for women of child-bearing age. Treatment involves

replenishing the low levels of Vitamin D and calcium (Fuleihan 2009). Health knowledge is very poor with Saudi women, with a high risk of cervical cancer. More health education is needed for these women, and also more female doctors in the rural areas (Osman 2013; Alvi 2005; Almutairi and McCarthy 2012). Among the poorer women of Saudi Arabia, there is still a problem with the communicable diseases of Tuberculosis, Malaria and HIV/Aids. Pregnant women are now routinely screened for genetic blood diseases, as there is a high level of Sickle-Cell Anaemia and Thalassemia endemic from the marriage customs of the region (UN WHO 2011).

Foreign nurses make up 97% of the nursing staff in the UAE, and 67.7% in Saudi Arabia. Nurses come from mainly India and the Philippines, with the remainder from all over the world attracted by the high wages offered. They have been found to have limited knowledge of cultural traditions. Spiritual healing, holy water, jinn possession and Qur'an readings are still widely believed in. There are also problems with the indigenous women's lack of English, shyness, a culture of not speaking directly, and fatalism used to avoid routine health-checks (Almutairi and McCarthy 2012; Sahib et al., 2012). Like Saudi citizens, UAE citizens are entitled to free healthcare. However many still find the local public healthcare is sub-standard and prefer to go abroad for child-birth or advanced treatments (Millar 2008).

7. Cultural and Social Traditions in the UAE and Saudi Arabia Impacting on Women's Rights and Empowerment

7.1 Introduction

This section focuses on some of the cultural and social traditions in Saudi Arabia and the UAE that may be impacting on women's rights and empowerment. Culture is defined as the way of life of an entire society, including language, dress, rituals, norms of behaviour and systems of beliefs. Social traditions are static, unchanging and inherited practices (Collins Dictionary 2005). The subtle difference between the categories makes it difficult to distinguish between them therefore I will not examine them separately.

I will look firstly at the status of women today in both countries (including practices such as veiling and female genital circumcision) and whether the MDG have affected them. I will discuss Islamic daily life and the associated social and cultural practices, religious tolerance and intolerance, punishments for disobeying Shar'ia law, women's special problems in Saudi Arabia, and recent education and employment opportunities. Finally I will look at domestic violence, family law and feminist movements in these two countries.

In the last 13 years, the UN MDG have caused many positive changes for women in the region. Goal 2 aims to promote universal primary education, ensuring more female literacy. Goal 3 is about promoting gender equality and empowerment. This concerns civil and political involvement and more job opportunities. Finally, Goal 5 is to improve maternal health, and decrease the MMR. The MMR has reduced considerably in these two countries since 2000.

7.2 Recent Migration and Social Change

Recent great social change in the Middle East has been the movement of people from rural life and agriculture, to urban dwelling and industry, providing more jobs for women to work outside the home. Only forty years ago, two-thirds of Middle-Eastern people were rural, now half are urban dwellers (Femia 2000). This is particularly true of the people of Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Only recently their nomadic or semi-nomadic trader ancestors were always roaming in search of new pastures for their flocks and camels, or bringing trading goods in caravans (Scott 2006). The people living in this area pre-Islam were Polytheistic and Animist. With the arrival of Islam, tribal customs were displaced with a religious inspired ethical code. Female infanticide was reduced as well as the worshipping of rocks and trees. Still in modern times the Bedouin tradition of great hospitality to a visitor lives on, and strong tribal loyalties linger on (Scott 2006).

7.3 Women and traditions in The UAE and Saudi Arabia

7.3.1 Women in the UAE and Saudi Arabia

A woman in the Arab-Muslim world is a ward of her father when she is unmarried. When she is married, she is a ward of her husband, and if she is widowed, she is then a ward of her eldest son. A woman must have the permission of her husband or male guardian and be accompanied by him to enter a government hospital. The husband or male guardian must always sign for her for any invasive procedure. In rural areas, a husband may forbid his wife to be treated by a male doctor (Mobaraki and Soderfeldt 2010). Both UAE and Saudi women must have the permission of a husband, father or male guardian to be allowed to work outside the home, study or marry. They also currently cannot vote or use international air travel without the express permission of a male guardian. In Saudi Arabia, for internal travel in the Kingdom, the right of a woman to travel without a male guardian's permission is subject to arbitrary approval of the airport staff (Doumato 2010).

With the great social changes being so recent, the Middle East traditional patriarchal structures still mould the lives of their women. Nowhere in Arab societies do women fully enjoy equal rights and opportunities with men. Women are always second-class citizens and denied basic political rights (Moghadam 2007:4; Krause 2009: 4). Discrimination is said to start in early childhood with different roles and preferential family treatment of males over female children. This continues at home, school, university and in the job market. There is a common theme in all the literature that

Dubai (out of the United Arab Emirates) is more liberal and westernised compared to the Arab countries of Yemen, Iran, Oman or Saudi Arabia, however this is not so (Nyall 2006; Country Profile 2007; Rahbani 2010).

7.3.2 Veiling Traditions

Veiling entered the legal codes of Mesopotamia around 1500 BCE, long before Islam. Being veiled was a mark of distinction and status, showing that a woman belonged to a free man (Keddie 2007: 23). Despite Western opposition, for many Muslim women today the veil is a symbol of freedom and pride, not oppression and seclusion. For many users it can offer liberation from the effects of materialistic societies which place too much emphasis on a woman's physical appearance. Girls must veil when their first menstruation begins, then they are considered women and of marriageable age. For the rest of their lives they can only unveil at home, or in front of other women and their immediate family (Keddie 2007; Hughes and Hughes 2005; Sasson 2004). However, foreign women working in Saudi Arabia have found that they must also be very well-covered in long, thick black concealing clothes, before going out in public.

In the UAE, local city women often wear western clothes are frequently unveiled, and can drive (Lis 2010). It is outside the cities that UAE women are usually still veiled, by choice though not by law, but they have little participation in public life. Dubai is still a very conservative and traditional patriarchal society behind the scenes (Nydell 2006; Rahbani 2010).

7.3.3 Female Genital Circumcision

In the past female genital circumcision (FGC) was carried out on most girl children in the Middle East. FGC pre-dates Islam and is not mentioned in the Qur'an. This custom though has rapidly decreased and is said to have stopped in Saudi Arabia, although it is difficult to know for certain (Faier and Torstrick 2009: 121).

7.3.4 The Status of Saudi Women

Life is particularly difficult for Saudi women. The UN ranked Saudi Arabia 92 out of 93 evaluated countries with respect to gender empowerment. This is a ranking determined by women's participation in economic and political life (Varia 2008). Of all the Middle Eastern countries Saudi Arabia also has the lowest score for women's rights (Ingalls 2005). Systemic discrimination against Saudi women denies them equal access to employment, healthcare, public participation, equality before the law and a range of other rights. More recently, in 2010, the Global Gender Gap Report which measures gender-gap variations, placed Saudi Arabia 129 out of 134 countries. This report has four criteria, economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment. There were wide gaps in economic and political empowerment, although there were great improvements in health and education in the last 13 years of the MDG (Hausman, Tyson and Zahid 2010). Saudi women also face barriers in the criminal justice system. With the prevailing norms of gender segregation, Saudi women can be hesitant to walk into a

police station as all the police officers are men, unlike the UAE which has women police officers (Varia 2008; Ingalls 2005).

For Saudi women, their overall amount of freedom though still remains the most restricted in the world (Kelly 2009:2). In public places Saudi women must always be veiled and cannot even speak to, or be alone with a man. Going out alone in a public place without a male guardian can put a woman at risk of being arrested and flogged. Despite becoming less rigid in the last few years since King Abdullah's reign began in 2005, gender segregation is still enforced through the *mutawwa* (religious police) who operate in addition to the regular police and are under the control of the Commission for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice. To prevent unrelated men and woman mingling, most offices, restaurants, shopping malls and private homes have separate areas for men and women (Varia 2008; Ingalls 2005). The *mutawwa* have many powers. They can arrest unrelated men and women caught socialising, anyone thought to be engaging in homosexual behaviour or prostitution, enforce Islamic dress codes by beating women with sticks or spray-painting them, and enforce shop closures during the prayer times. They particularly prevent any other religion being practised. The *mutawwa* can also enforce dietary laws (no pork, pork products or alcohol). They can also seize banned products and "un-Islamic" CDs or DVDs of Western music, television shows and films. They encourage tip-offs from individuals, paying money for information leading to disclosure of illegal behaviour (Mehta 2012).

7.4 The Family in the UAE and Saudi Arabia

7.4.1 The Extended Arab Family

In Arab-Muslim society the extended family is the norm and is essential for every individual's personal identity. Obligations to family take precedence over all other obligations. Descent is traced through the paternal line, and the family structure reflects the importance of this principle in kin groups or lineages organized around related males. The members of a family are expected to give aid and assistance to their paternal kinsmen and, in turn, may call upon them in times of need. A newly-wed couple usually live in the home of the husband's family or live close by, and all members of the family eat together. Only upon the birth of a son are the young parents regarded as full members of the adult community. Then the parents will be addressed as the father or mother of the first son, using the son's given name, for example, "abu Abdullah", father of Abdullah, and "umm Abdullah", mother of Abdullah (Lipsky 1959: 297; Saudi Arabia:Understanding 2009: Joseph 2013). Frequently three generations live in a household: the husband and wife, their unmarried sons and daughters, and any married sons with their wives and children. A family is largely a self-sustaining unit, with a typical family business in a town being a family concern consisting of fathers, sons, brothers, or uncles and nephews (Lipsky 1959; Joseph 2013).

7.4.2 Marriage Practices

Traditional values of female chastity and family honour in the Arab-Muslim world have played a major role in marrying off a daughter at a young age. However, early marriage is associated with early childbearing, high fertility or maternal death. Very young mothers are at greater risk of dying from causes relating to pregnancy and childbirth than older mothers (Rashid, Osman and Roudi-Fahimi 2005). However, the average age for marriage nowadays is increasing throughout the Arab-Muslim world with many women now wishing to have a career and not marry at all. Although this trend is happening world-wide, this development challenges deep-rooted cultural values. In Arab society, the family is the main social security system for the elderly, sick or disabled. The high cost of the traditional Arab wedding, on top of rising unemployment, is blamed for the recent increase in “urfi” (de-facto marriage). These are hidden from family though, and offer no financial protection for women or for any children produced (Rashid et al., 2005).

For many Saudi women today, arranged marriage is still popular and usually fixed between the families, particularly by mothers and sisters seeking a suitable match. The parents then negotiate the marriage and the dowry. With a more liberal father or other male family member, the woman may be allowed a brief meeting with her future partner first. Refusal of the chosen partner is usually not allowed. Popularity usually depends on beauty, no physical deformities, and an unflawed reputation. Sometimes though a marriage is arranged for personal or economic gain (Sasson 1992; Mobaraki and Soderfeldt 2010). There are some love-match choices now, but still

tradition lives on and family approval is usually sought by the young couple (Scott 2006: 230).

There is still no legal minimum age of marriage in Saudi Arabia. Frequently one reads of a very young girl being required to marry an elderly man. About 27.2% of Saudi women marry in their teenage years, these women are usually illiterate (Mobaraki and Soderfeldt 2010). Often a woman is required to marry a relative, usually a first cousin. Approximately 57.7% of marriages in Saudi Arabia are consanguineous, as are 50.5% of marriages in the UAE. These marriages produce high rates of infant mortality (18.5 per thousand live births in 2006), despite good healthcare and vaccine programmes. This is because of the hereditary blood-diseases from the consanguineous marriages, and affects 1.5 million Saudis. Abortion is forbidden unless it puts a women's life at risk (Mobaraki and Soderfeldt 2010). There is enormous pressure for women to produce sons, as many as possible. Sons are usually the sole reason for marriage. Male children are treasured, spoiled and privileged over their sisters all their lives, and are typically provided with all the luxuries they desire (Sasson 1992; Mobaraki and Soderfeldt 2010).

7.5 Islamic Traditions in Daily Life

For many people in the Middle East, Islam governs every aspect of day to day life. This can be from eating and drinking, to public behaviour and what clothes to wear

(Ashish 2010). One of the five pillars of Islam for a Muslim is to observe the holy month of Ramadan which commemorates the revelation of the Qur'an to the Prophet Mohammed. Ramadan begins at the sighting of the new moon and ends at the sighting of the next moon. Muslims are expected to totally fast and refrain from eating, drinking, sex and smoking from dawn to dusk. A fifth of the world's population fasts for Ramadan. Ramadan is followed by Eid Al-Fitr, a lively sociable festival which is celebrated for three days. During Ramadan, it is expected that non-Muslims in the UAE and Saudi Arabia, refrain from eating, drinking and smoking in public, and also to dress more conservatively. People who are very young, very old, or not well, are exempt from fasting. Also exempt are women menstruating, who make up the time later on, and pregnant women who are totally exempt from fasting (Ashish 2010).

7.5.1 Islamic Law and Feminism

To some Arab-Muslim women activists, the prophet Mohammed had some sympathy for females. In pagan 7th century Arabia, it was the custom to bury live, unwanted female new-borns. The Prophet banned this practice. The education of girls was made a sacred duty and women were now given the right to own and inherit property. However, the Qur'an allows a daughter only half the inheritance of a son, and also decrees a woman's evidence in Court (at least in financial matters) to be worth only half that of a man's evidence. Also the compensation payable by the killer for the murder of a woman, is only half that of a man (Beyer 2001).

7.5.2 Islamic Funeral and Burial Traditions

The UAE and Saudi Arabia have many similar Islamic rituals for the dead. When a person has died he or she must be buried as soon as possible, or within 24 hours. Bedouin women usually respond to a death with loud laments and ritual wailing. The body is washed, shaved and dried, and sometimes perfumed. Then it is wrapped in a clean white sheet. A male body must be prepared by his wife or Muslim men. With a female body, it is prepared by her husband or Muslim women. The men then carry the body to the Mosque for special prayers. Usually only men are allowed to attend these special prayers. In the UAE women can attend a burial, but must not mix with the men. However, in Saudi Arabia, women are usually forbidden at a burial-site. Nor can they come at a later date to pay their respects. Not being able to attend the burial of a loved one can prevent closure of the loss of a spouse. Before burial, the face is uncovered by the eldest son. The body is now buried, without a coffin, just enclosed in the shroud into an unmarked grave without a headstone. This will be the same procedure even for a King, showing the equality of all before God. There is now three days of mourning, and no family weddings can take place for the next 40 days (Sasson 1992; Fadul 2007; American Bedu 2009).

8. Religion and Punishments in the UAE and Saudi Arabia

8.1 Religious Tolerance

The UAE is very different from Saudi Arabia concerning religious tolerance. Followers of other religions are respected and allowed to follow their religions in peace. In Dubai, one finds Hindu temples and Islamic mosques existing side by side. There are also Christian churches and a *guru dwara* for the Sikh population. The religious festivals of Christmas and Diwali are celebrated throughout Dubai, where most of the population live (Asish 2010).

8.2 Conservative Behaviour and Homosexual Intolerance

Despite the UAE having more religious tolerance, both countries forbid sex outside of marriage and any public displays of affection between a man and a woman like kissing, or even holding hands as violations of Islam. This prohibition also applies to foreign visitors (Ashish 2010). There are several media reports about expatriate workers getting into trouble for disregarding these rules. Homosexual relationships are illegal for both men and women. Cross-dressing or being a Transgender is associated with homosexuality and punishments can be imprisonment, whipping or even death. Despite such severe punishments, in a very strict gender-segregated

society, gay relationships are wide-spread (Sasson 2004: 77; Helie 2004: 120; Keddie 2008:3). For many fundamentalists, people making individual choices about their life-style are seen as a threat, especially when it is women who are doing so. However Muslim sexual minority groups are organising solidarity associations. For security reasons, they are usually located outside Muslim countries. All these associations aim at breaking the isolation faced by their sexual minorities. The Qur'an is being re-examined by gay or gay-friendly theologians and believers, in order to "break the monopoly of male homophobic interpretations." (Helie 2004: 124). Also, more and more people are rejecting the idea that violence against sexual diversity is "divinely sanctioned" (Helie 2004: 124).

8.3 Punishments for Disobeying Shar'ia Law

Shar'ia law, the moral and religious interpretations of the Qur'an along with the traditions set by the Prophet Mohammed, is the law of the land in Saudi Arabia. Crimes are set in three categories. Hudud is one of them. Hudud is about crimes which are denounced by God with punishment outlined in the Qur'an (Mehta 2012). These crimes include, theft, drinking, selling or buying alcohol, use of drugs in any form, defamation of Islam, converting to another faith (religious freedom is not allowed), fornication and adultery. The last two crimes are the most serious. If a person is single, punishment is by flogging. But if married, he or she is sentenced to death by stoning, beheading or shooting. Stoning is the usual method of death. Proof of this crime has to be established by confession, or by four reliable male witnesses to the act (Mehta 2012: Keddie 2007). There have been reports of the stoning to death

of rape victims, whose stories were disbelieved. Men of religion and local newspaper reporters have actually honoured the devoutness of men for killing their wives or daughters for kissing a male in a public place (Mehta 2012: 18).

Like the UAE, Saudi Arabia criminalizes any sexual contact between unmarried men and women as defying Islam. This puts rape victims at a disadvantage as they can be prosecuted and punished for “illegal mixing” or “going out alone” if they cannot meet the strict evidential standards required for rape (Varia 2008: 21). There is little justice for any type of rape victim in the Shar’ia courts (Manseau 2007). Social stigmas punish the victim rather than the male perpetrator as the victim can be accused of immorality. However, no real comprehensive study has yet been done of this problem in the region because of the social stigmas and family honour restricting women’s free speech (Kelly 2009: 5).

9. Social Services - Women’s Education, Sports and Employment in the UAE and Saudi Arabia

9.1 Social Services in the UAE and Saudi Arabia

Like the UAE, the Saudi Arabian government has for years provided, free education (including free university education), free medical services including hospitals, social insurance and a comprehensive range of pensions for its citizens. Subsidies are also provided for agriculture, housing and imported foodstuffs. Free medical services and

hospitals are also provided, if needed, for the millions of pilgrims who visit Saudi Arabia from all over the world every year for the Hajj (Scott 2006: 182).

In both the UAE and Saudi Arabia, the rulers have wanted the development of literacy and modern-day skills for all their indigenous citizens so they can eventually run their own countries instead of relying on very large foreign workforces to do so. In fact, there are so many foreign people living and working in the UAE and Saudi Arabia that both Governments offer financial incentives to their indigenous men to marry their indigenous women. These incentives are to preserve their culture and language (Martin 2003: 53; Rashid et al., 2005).

9.2 Women's Education and Sports in Saudi Arabia

There are also still strong social and religious constraints on young women, even with the richer families. Parents and brothers expect women to get married at an early age and have children, preferably sons. This social pressure can often make young women drop out of college or university to marry (Martin 2003). Despite the improved figures given for female literacy in Saudi Arabia, UNESCO in 2007 estimated that 20.6% of the women in rural areas are illiterate. Many of these inhabitants are still nomadic Bedouin. This is about one million women who do not have the skills for the paid workforce (Nonneman 2011). There still remains some disapproval for educating girls. Co-educational schools are not allowed after primary school level, and sports are forbidden for girls, thus encouraging obesity. It is forbidden in Saudi Arabia for

females to practice any physical exercises in public places (Mobaraki and Soderfeldt 2010). Women also play no part in the traditional sports of the Gulf, for example, falconry, horse riding and camel racing.

9.3 Employment Traditions and Practices for Women in the UAE and Saudi Arabia

To pacify family members and avoid rebellions in both countries the rulers of the UAE and Saudi Arabia have had to give huge allowances, state jobs and land to their extended families. Therefore the “family business” is the largest business in these countries (Elbadawi and Makdisi 2011: 32). However, these jobs have only been given to male family members and relatives (Ebadawi and Makdisi 2011). In 2011, 70% of University graduates in the UAE were women, as many of the men opt for the military, flight training or working in family businesses (Ridge 2011).

More than half of the women employed in the Saudi Arabian workforce now hold a secondary school qualification or even a university degree. In 2006, 57% of university graduates were women, but having a formal qualification does not guarantee a job in the competitive job market. There also remain social attitudes wanting women to stay at home. Of the unemployed, 78.3% of the women are university graduates, compared to 76% of unemployed men who only have a secondary education or lower (Nonneman 2011). Once out in the workforce, if a new woman graduate gets a job, she can encounter open discrimination and hostility from

the predominantly male workforce and frequently given a meaningless, marginal job to do (Martin 2003).

9.4 Saudi Women and the Identification Card

In 2001, Saudi women were issued with their own Identification Cards. With her own Identification Card, a woman can check into a hotel alone and register a business without having to prove first that she has hired a male manager. In the past, the only legal evidence of a Saudi women's existence was the appearance of her name on her husband's Identification Card (Beyer 2001). In the past in both countries, women are not issued with either a birth or death certificate. Now Saudi Arabia collects official census figures, when possible with quite a considerable nomadic Bedouin population, whose births and deaths happen at home. However, until at least 1992, there were no official public records concerning women (Sasson 1992). As the Identification Card must have her unveiled photograph on it, a woman's husband or guardian must give his permission first. In the past, without a separate Identification Card, women's rights could be abused. For instance, in banks, courts and hospitals, with her face covered and no photo on an Identification Card, the women's identity could not be confirmed. When the husband has many wives, a newborn could be even mistakenly registered under another wife's name (Mobaraki and Soderfeldt 2010).

9.5 Domestic Violence in the UAE and Saudi Arabia

Throughout the Middle East spousal rape has not been criminalized, and husbands have the absolute right over their wives' bodies at all times (Krause 2009; Al-Khalifa

and Al-Khalifa 2007). For both UAE and Saudi Arabian women, domestic violence is high with no specific legislation concerning domestic violence (Kelly 2009). For victims there are also high social stigmas and the risk of violating family honour (Kelly 2009: 4). Domestic violence is often unreported, with more affluent women usually receiving more family support than poorer women (Mogadam 2007). In Dubai since 2007, for women fleeing domestic violence, or an abused domestic servant, there are two women's refugees offering accommodation. They must serve the whole of the Emirate. The UAE Women's Federation provides impoverished women with free legal advice and police training for victims (Kelly 2009: 5). However, it does not deal with issues like human trafficking (mainly women), domestic or public violence against women, or discrimination of any type against women. Some government and charitable organizations like the Red Crescent and the Dubai Foundation for Women and Children are attempting to address these issues (Kirdar 2010: 5).

10. Legal Systems in the UAE and Saudi Arabia

10.1 The UAE Federal Constitution and Women's Rights

In the UAE Constitution, while Article 25 awards equal status to men and women, the Constitution does not include any gender-based non-discrimination clause to eliminate existing gender-based inequalities (Kelly 2009: 6; Kirdar 2010: 4). While all the Articles in the Federal Penal Code (No.3 of 1987) are addressed to men and

women equally (except immigration issues), the Penal Code is applied in a discriminatory way, particularly to women and non-citizens (Kirdar 2010: 4). Domestic Family law also reinforces this inequality. The law requires women to seek the permission of their husbands, fathers or male guardians, to seek employment, to start a business and to open bank accounts for their children.

In Article 29 of the Federal UAE Constitution all UAE citizens are guaranteed freedom of movement and residence within the limits of the law. However in practice there are restrictions for both UAE women and foreign women. According to custom, a man can prevent his wife, children or adult unmarried daughters from travelling abroad by confiscating their passports. Government organizations will not challenge this behaviour. Courts also have restricted movement of separated women by ordering them to be returned to the marital homes. These practices have further perpetuated traditional Gulf gender roles and stereo types (Kirdar 2010: 7).

10.2 Family Law in the UAE and Saudi Arabia

It is in marriage and marriage dissolution that UAE women are particularly disadvantaged, as traditional Muslim divorce law is biased against women (Shakir 2010). Family Law has been codified since 2005 after previously being decided on an individual judge's interpretation of the Shar'ia Law. However many existing inequalities have been codified and persistent traditional, patriarchal attitudes undermine any real legal protection. Any real positive changes to Family Law have come by powerful, well-connected women (Kelly 2009: 2).

The UAE Constitution which was made permanent took effect in December 1971 (Nonneman 2011: 1238). While proclaiming equality for all, the Constitution has Articles 20, 56 and 110 giving a husband the right to expect obedience from his wife (Kirdar 2010: 7). Article 15 of the Constitution also declares that “the family is the basis of society” and Article 16 requires welfare and social security legislation be promulgated to “protect childhood and motherhood and those unable to look after themselves”. As a result law and policies are said to “reinforce traditional roles for women rather than encourage any form of equality” (Kirdar 210: 3). About 50% of UAE marriages are still polygamous (Krause 2009:13).

A UAE woman marrying a foreign man cannot confer citizenship on her husband or children, and risks losing her own citizenship on marriage to a foreigner (Krause 2009; Rahbani 2010; UNICEF 2011). Such women must get annual residency permits for her children to attend public school, qualify for university scholarships and to find employment (Kelly 2009). In this patrilineal society, children of a foreign father also cannot claim tribal membership (Faier and Torstrick 2009: 121). Although a marriage can be ended by mutual agreement, the UAE woman must pay back to the husband and his family the dowry received from them at the time of the marriage (Shakir 2010: 58).

Like UAE women, Saudi women are also very disadvantaged by the traditional Islamic family law practiced in their society. While Muslim men can have up to four wives, the right to divorce at will and custody of the children, Muslim women do not automatically have these rights, if they should want any of these rights (Kelly 2009). If a woman is granted a divorce, she is granted custody of any female children until

13 years of age but only up to 10 years of age for any male children (Kelly 2009: 8: UNICEF 2011). However usually a woman loses her right to custody of all her children if she gets remarried, but this is not the case if her ex-husband remarries (Krause 2009:12). A woman also must have a reason to apply for a divorce, but not a man, who since the invention of the cell-phone now can even text a divorce to a wife. Widows and divorcees must wait if they want to remarry. This wait must be for at least 4 months and 10 days, or until any pregnancy is over. Men do not have to wait this time and can remarry immediately if they wish (Shakir 2010: 58). A woman can inherit only half of that of a man, but then may keep it all for her. A man though must provide financial support for his immediate family members and also pay a dowry for any new wife (Shakir 2010: 68).

Since 2007, in Saudi Arabia, amendments to citizenship law now allow the sons of citizen mothers and non-citizen fathers to apply for Saudi residence once they turn 18 years of age. Daughters though in the same situation can only acquire Saudi residence through marriage to a Saudi man. The reason is said to be the belief that foreign men would “trick or seduce” national women to obtain Saudi citizenship with its substantial social benefits (Kelly 2009: 6).

11. Feminist Movements in the UAE and Saudi Arabia

For women in both the UAE and Saudi Arabia, excessively restrictive rules on the formation of civil society organizations make it extremely difficult for feminist

advocates to effectively organize and lobby the government for expanded rights, when the law will not allow criticism or public meetings without a government approval and applying for a permit first (Kraus 2009). There is also a lack of research and data on women's status, impeding the advocacy efforts of non-government organizations and activists (Kelly 2009). Western-style feminism is looked on unfavourably in the Arab world, with any political gains in the UAE largely led by the rulers' wives, called "Sheikas" (Krause 2009: 11). State feminism has become important for achieving education and public roles for women. However, women's roles still appear to be for maintaining the traditional family structure (Dresch 2005). There are many women's groups in the UAE, from expatriate groups to Islamic groups. However they focus more on "development activities" rather than empowerment activities. These activities focus on childcare, healthcare, domestic science and religious studies. These women's organizations are empty of any legal or political ramification. They are tightly monitored with a large amount of their funding directed by the ruler and under the wing of his wife, the Sheika. Women's organizations in the Arab-Muslim countries have been criticized for adopting patron-client patterns of leadership, thus emulating the local patriarchal patterns. State feminism movements are simply not "liberation" but "part of a larger project of reinforcing control by the patriarchal state" (Sabbagh 2005: 57). Despite women's movements being important in the region, they do not touch the majority of women who live in poverty with dire economic needs (Femia 2000). For many of the rulers of the Arab-Muslim world, women's rights are simply regarded as not that important, and often are dismissed as Western propaganda to simply "give Islam a negative image" (Alvi 2005: 157). Despite having great wealth, both UAE and Saudi women

have poor health, little health education and poor social development, in fact just as little as some of the poorer Arab countries (Alvi 2005).

Women activists want reforms in family law and the implementation of CEDAW without reservations. In other countries, feminist groups have had a key role for the expansion of rights and a transition to democratic governance, as has happened in Latin America (Moghadam 2007: 46). There is still “negligible Middle East participation” in the World Social Forum (WSF) or in meetings of transnational feminist networks (Moghadam 2007: 48). The WSF is an annual meeting of alternative globalization movements. The members from many different countries share problems and strategies. Their aim is to create a fairer, just world and promote women’s equality (World Social Forum 2013).

Feminist movements in the Western world and women being enfranchised have only been very recent developments. For both the UAE and Saudi Arabia, having contact with the outside world is quite recent and women’s education and independence are new concepts.

For the women of the UAE and Saudi Arabia, the MDG are committed to universal primary education, gender equality and empowerment and decreased maternal deaths. According to the MDG as women lead healthier, longer lives, receive basic education and have fewer children, they will acquire more independence, particularly financial independence from employment, and acquire increased social status and respect.

12. The Millennium Development Goals – working towards Women’s Rights and Empowerment in the UAE and Saudi Arabia

Many of the social and cultural traditions practised in daily life, have not been impacted by the MDG, particularly within the legal system such as family law and also marriage customs. However women with the confidence of education and with fewer child commitments are better able to speak up for themselves, organize and promote feminist movements and lobby for change.

The extended family and early arranged marriages are traditionally economic, and part of the family social security system. However, one frequently reads now of women protesting against an arranged marriage. As the MDG Goals 2 and 3 promote gender equality and empower women, by having primary education, more job opportunities, and some civil and political rights, acquiring some economic independence will naturally encourage women to assert the right to determine their own lives. Arranged marriage still remains popular with some people, who have known successful arranged marriages (often their parents), and deny that arranged marriage is forced marriage. When the will of the potential bride and bride-groom is established without any pressure, then under such circumstances experience has shown that arranged marriage can be a success (Muslim Arbitration 2013).

The MDG Goal 2 and 3 promote universal primary education and gender equality and empowerment. As women in the UAE and Saudi Arabia become more educated and acquire some skills to be employed in the workforce, they will achieve some form of economic independence. This will bring with it demands for rights and equality, as a rational adult. In family life, women will prove they are just as able as men to earn a living, therefore raising the status of women in the family.

It would be difficult in Saudi Arabia for a non-religious woman wanting to disregard Ramadan practices and traditional funeral and burial practices. However with the UAE having a large mixed population of people and more religious tolerance, these practices should not be so rigid enforced. The gender empowerment principles of the MDG encourage women to become more assertive with their needs, although it could be difficult to change such socially important practices. As Muslim women become more financially independent and assertive, I am sure many Saudi women will demand to be at the burial of any family member for a last farewell and final closure.

The MDG cannot change the words of the Qur'an and the Shar'ia, more liberal interpretations, and seeing women as equals, will need to come from more enlightened Islamic scholars. This will probably happen in time. In the past, some Christian religions have been very strict and cruel, as in the Middle Ages, though most Christian religions have become more tolerant and culturally sensitive.

As both the UAE and Saudi Arabia want to reduce their reliance on outsiders living in their countries and carrying out their skilled work, this factor has probably inspired more higher education and job training skills for women than the MDG have done. In 2004, the UAE government introduced 'Emiratisation' (giving priorities to locals) to encourage employment for its nationals in the public and private sector, and to ensure UAE citizens benefit from the economic growth of the country. A similar programme is being pursued by Saudi Arabia. The Labour Law means that UAE nationals take priority over other nationals when applying for a job (Latham and Watkins 2009).

For both veiling and FGC the MDG have no direct influence, as social and cultural practices must be changed by the people who live with them. However, improving literacy among women will encourage them to travel, read about the outside world, and lobby for change. Although some women will still want to veil, it will be their own choice to do so. The American Somalia-born feminist, Ayaan Hirsi Ali (2007) blames Islamic culture as a driving force for both veiling and FGC (Hirsi Ali 2007). Although to many westerners the veil is a symbol of disenfranchisement and patriarchy, the veil became extremely popular when the French and Turkish governments tried to ban it in public places recently. This symbol of modesty has now become one of assertion and liberation (Flacks 2013).

It is difficult for outside standards to change strict religious interpretations and observances of any country. However, the MDG should help to inspire more modern tolerance, with more basic primary education and increased civil and political rights for women. It was not that long ago in many Western societies, that homosexuality

was against the law, including in New Zealand. For many Fundamentalist churches in the Western world, homosexuality is still not acceptable.

Punishment by barbaric methods, and lack of women's rights were once the norm in non-Muslim countries. Hopefully more exposure to the West (with frequently more rehabilitation methods for offenders) and increased women's empowerment from the MDG will bring about change and modernization for women. Everyone should be able to go out alone and speak freely to any person. Both Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have expressed concern about the number of people executed in Saudi Arabia every year, often for crimes like suspected witchcraft. In the last two years, after protests from the outside world, Iran has stopped stoning women to death for adultery (Balmasov 2011).

For spousal violence and rape, and unfair, unequal practices in family law, the MDG cannot directly do anything as they cannot force change in another country's domestic laws. As UAE and Saudi women eventually acquire more human rights and are hopefully enfranchised in the near future, unfair practices should change. Change should happen when with increased education, more women acquire high positions in the workforce, electoral positions, and particularly gain higher status and respect in the societies that they live in. Hopefully, with MDG Goal 5, to improve MMR, men will not need to acquire so many wives, as more women will live through pregnancy and childbirth.

The MDG Goal 2, about promoting universal primary education, has caused great improvements in literacy rates in Saudi Arabia. Of course there will be people who object to changes to traditional family ways. However, more female literacy will show girls that they do have some choices in life, and free girls from total submission to family needs and early parenthood.

Social change usually comes from changing local attitudes. Like many other aspects of life, women's empowerment by education inspired by the MDG, will slowly cause changes. Women with some education will refuse to be regarded as just their husband's chattel, but want to be respected as independent individuals.

13. Conclusion

To measure progress for women's rights in this region of world, relevant UN MDG, have been selected and applied using the indicators of universal primary education, promoting gender equality and women, and improving maternal health. I have also examined certain cultural and social factors impacting on women's rights in the UAE and Saudi Arabia today.

The literature review provides a brief view of women's rights world-wide, mainly focusing on New Zealand women, Muslim women's rights in the West today, and a look at women's rights in some Arab-Muslim countries. Recent history and present day views of the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia are given.

In both of these countries, during the years so far of the MDG Goal 2, women's rate of literacy and primary education have greatly improved, particularly those of Saudi Arabia. For the MDG Goal 5, the figures for maternal health and reducing the MMR for both countries have shown significant improvement since 2000. However, for MDG Goal 3 (promoting gender equality and empowering women), where I have looked at civil and political participation, job opportunities and wages, progress is not very good. Some progress has been made in the UAE on both factors, but in Saudi Arabia this has not happened yet, although women have been promised the vote in 2015. Saudi women have the lowest rates of paid employment in the world, and also the greatest women's pay ratio difference to men's pay. With Saudi women's recent greatly increased literacy and education, they are a wasted resource, leading ultimately to large numbers of discontented women. With increasing unemployment and more discontented women there could be a possibility of an Arab Spring-style uprising in the Kingdom eventually.

A particular problem in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia is the unjust treatment of foreign domestic workers and the illegal trafficking of sex slaves (usually women) and not affected by the MDG.

Both these countries have several legal, cultural and social changes to make to satisfy the requirements of MDG Goal 3, particularly Saudi Arabia. These changes have to come from within, as the MDG cannot directly change a country's domestic

legislation. The main reasons for women's lack of rights appear to be newness to the outside Western world, and to its cultural and social traditions and practices have highlighted the lack of women's rights in the UAE and Saudi Arabia. Throughout the region, patriarchal attitudes and prejudices prevail, with the lack of an independent judiciary to uphold basic rights threatening to undermine any possible new legal protection. Effective complaint mechanisms are needed and properly trained court personnel to apply justice in a gender-blind manner (Kelly 2009: 7).

International Treaties although sometimes signed and ratified, are often disregarded or adjusted so they become meaningless. Other changes which would be desirable include the modernization of UAE family law (at odds with CEDAW), and the criminalization of marital rape and other violence against women. Women also should be allowed to retain their citizenship on marriage, and to be able to pass it to their children as they can in the West now (Moghadam 2007: 6). Also wanted is the right for women to vote and stand for electoral office, and greater access to employment opportunities and equal wages.

A common strategy for change would be to organize strong women's groups to fight for equal rights. Collective action should be organized by strong leaders with effective networks of solidarity, procedures of membership and communication with other feminist organizations. It is said, "progressive social transformation is needed for the Middle East region to adjust to the dynamic global changes of the modern world" (Alvi 2005: 157). However, in this part of the world, this will probably be a slow process as progressive social reform requires some big social changes.

14. References

- Abu-Nasr, D. (2013). *Saudi women more educated than men are wasted resource*. Blomberg Markets Magazine, Washington: Blomberg. Retrieved from <http://www.bloomberg.com/markets/magazine>
- Al-Khalifa., N. & Al-Khalifa, M, (2007). Human Rights in the Middle East: The Rights of Women and Children. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 26, (4)
Retrieved from <http://rsq.oxfordjournals.org/>
- Al-Munajjed, M. (2009). *Women's Employment in Saudi Arabia: A Major Challenge*. Retrieved from http://www.booz.com/media/...Womens_Employment_in_S_A.pdf
- Ali Hirsi, A. (2007). *Infidel*. USA: Free Press.
- Almutairi., A. & McCarthy, A. (2012). A Multicultural nursing workforce and cultural perspectives in Saudi Arabia. *The Health*, 333(3) Retrieved from <http://www.thehealthj.com>
- Alvi, H. (2005, June). The Human Rights of Women and Social Transformation in the Arab Middle East. *The Middle East Review of International Affairs*, 9 (2). Retrieved from <http://www.merajournal.com>
- Ashish, M. (2010). *Live and Work in Dubai*. Oxford: HowtoBooks.
- Aziz, B. (2008). *Economic Development in Arab Gulf States*. Retrieved from <http://www.smartech.gatech.edu>
- Bahgat, G. (1998, Summer). The Gulf Monarchies: Economic and Political Challenges at the end of the century. *The Journal of Social, Political and Economic Studies*, 23 (2), 147-175.
Retrieved from <http://www.jspes.org>
- Balmasov, S. (2011, December 16). *Saudi Arabia executes 73 victims of Sharia Law*. Retrieved from <http://English.pravda.ru>World>Asia>
- Boubakria. A., & Lindahl, S. (2009, October 22). *The European Union and Changes to Democracy Building in the Arab World*. Retrieved from <http://A Boubakri, S Lindahl-2009-174.129.218.71>
- Beyer, L. (2001, November 25). The Women of Islam: *Time*. Retrieved from <http://www.time.com.time>
- Cherif, F (2010, October). Culture, Rights and Norms: Women's Rights Reform in Muslim Countries. *The Journal of Politics*, 72 (4), 1144-1160.
doi: <http://dx.org.ezprozy.aut.nz/10.1017/S0022381610000587>

- Colton, N. (2011). *Social Stratification in the Gulf Cooperative Council States*. Retrieved from <http://www.ISC.ac.uk/IDEAS/programmes/.../Kuwait/.../Colton>
- Davidson, C. (2009, Summer), Dubai-Foreclosure of a Dream. *Middle East Report*, 251, 8-13. Retrieved from <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer.html>
- Davidson, P., & McGrath, S., Melies, A., Stern, P., Digiacomio, M., Dharmendra, T., ... Krassen, L. (2011). The Health of Women and Girls Determines the Health and Well-Being of Our Modern World. *United Nations Healthcare for Women International*, 32 (8), 870-886. doi:10.1080/07399332.2011.603872
- Democracy Index (2008). *Economist Intelligence Unit*. Retrieved from <http://www.eiu.com/Democracy Index2008>
- Dhari, H. (2009). Women and Nation Building: The Case of the United Arab Emirates. *Hawwa*, 7 (3) 271-302(32). Retrieved from <http://www.brill.nl/hawwa>
- Doumato, E. (2010). Saudi Arabia. In Kelly, S. & Breslin, J. (Eds.), *Women's Rights in the Middle East: Progress Amid Resistance*. Retrieved from <http://www.sedighedolatabadi.org>
- Dresch, P. (2005). Debate on Marriage and Nationality in the United Arab Emirates. In P. Dresch and J. Piscatori (Eds.), *Monarchies and Nations: Globalisation and Identity in the Arab States of the Gulf*. (pp.1-30). London: I.B. Tauris.
- Elbadawi, I., & Makdisi, S. (2011). Democracy in the Arab World: Explaining the Deficit. *Routledge Studies in Middle Eastern Politics*, 27. Retrieved from <http://www.routledge.com/books/series/SE0823/>
- Encyclopaedia of Women and Islamic Cultures*. (2013). In Saud, J. (Ed.), California: University of California.
- English Language Learners*. (n.d.). Retrieved November 14, 2013 from <http://www.ell.stackexchange.com/englishlanguage>
- Esposito, J., Fasching, D., & Lewis, T. (2006). *World Religions Today*. (2nd. Ed.), Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fadul, N. (2007). Death, Dying & Burial Rites in Islam: *European Journal of Palliative Care*. 4 (4). Retrieved from <http://haywardpublishing.co.uk/ejpc.aspx>
- Faier., E. & Torstrick, R. (2009). *Culture and Customs of the Arab Gulf States*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood.

- Fernia, E. (2000, Spring). The Challenges for Middle East Women in the 21st Century. *The Middle East Journal*, 2, Retrieved from <http://www.mei.edu.Publications/TheMiddleEastJournal.aspx>
- Flacks, A. (n.d.). *Female Genital Cutting, the Veil and Democracy*. Retrieved 18 December 2013 from http://etd.ohiolink.edu/ap:O:O:APPLICATION_PROCESS
- Foley, S. (2010). The Arab Gulf States: Beyond Oil & Islam. *H-Net Reviews in the Humanities & Social Sciences*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Fuleihan, G. El-Hajj. (2009). Vitamin D Deficiency in the Middle East and its Health Consequences for Children and Adults: *Clinical Reviews in Bone and Mineral Metabolism*. (2009) 7: 77-93. Doi: 10.1007/s12018-009-9027-9
- Gender Indicators-Organisation for Economic Co-Operation* (2007). Retrieved from <http://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/43041409.pdf>
- Glazebrook, S. (2010). *Looking through the Glass: Gender Inequalities at the Senior Levels of the New Zealand Legal Profession*. Retrieved from <http://www.courtsofnz.govt.nz/speechpapers>
- Goh, J. (2009, Spring). Deterritorialized Women in the Global City: An analysis of Sex Trafficking in Dubai, Tokyo and New York. *Intersections Online*. 10 (2), 273-324. Retrieved from http://www.depts.washington.edu/.../janice_phaik_lin_goh
- Habgood, R. (2001). Negotiating Housework. In C. Bell (Ed.), *Sociology of Everyday Life in New Zealand* (pp. 52-69). Palmerston North, New Zealand: Dunmore Press.
- Hamdan, A. (2005). Women and Education in Saudi Arabia: Challenges and Achievements. *International Education Journal*. 6 (1) 42-64. Retrieved From <http://www.iecomparative.org/index.php>
- Harvey., P. & Thorns, D. (2001). Houses, Homes and New Zealanders' Everyday Lives. In C. Bell (Ed.), *Sociology of Everyday Life in New Zealand* (pp.30-51). Palmerston North, New Zealand: Dunmore Press.
- Hausmann, R., Tyson, L.,Zahid, S. (2010). The Global Gender Gap Report. *World Economic Forum*. 3-10. Retrieved from http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GenderGap_Report_2010.pdf
- Helie, A. (2004). Holy Hatred: *Reproductive Health Matters*. 12 (23), 120-124. doi: 10.1016/s0968-8080(04)23114-7
- Hughes., S. & Hughes, B. (1998). *Women in Ancient Civilisations: Essays in global and comparative history*. Washington, D.C: American Historical Association.

- Human Rights Commission (HRC). 2010 *New Zealand Census of Women's Participation*. Retrieved from http://www.live.isitesoftware.co.nz/neon/documentsHRC%20Women's%20Census_2010_WEB.pdf
- Ibrahim, B., & Sherif, D. (2008). From Charity to Social Change: Trends in Arab Philanthropy. *The United Arab Emirates*. doi:10.5743/cairo/9789774162077.001.0001
- Ingalls, L. (May 20, 2005). *New Survey Assesses Women's Freedom in the Middle East*. Retrieved from <http://www.freedomhouse.org>
- Jary, D. & Jary, J. (Eds.), (2005). *Collins Dictionary of Sociology*. (4th Ed.). Retrieved from <http://www.netlibrary.com>
- Johnston, G. (2005). *Women's Labour Force Participation in New Zealand and the OECD*. Retrieved from <http://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/.../labourforce/.../lfpw-johnston.pdf>
- Joseph, S. (n.d.). *Gender and Family in the Arab World*. Retrieved December 18, 2013 from http://www.eden.rutgers.edu/.../Joseph%20_%20Gender%20and%20family%20
- Kapiszewski, A. (2006). Saudi Arabia. *Journal of Asian & African Studies*. 41 (5/6): 459-482. doi:10.1177/0021909606067407
- Keane, D. (2008). Enforcing Migrant Workers' Rights in the UAE: *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights*. 15. 81-115. Retrieved from <http://www.brill.nl/ijgr>
- Keddie, N. (2007). *Women in the Middle East: Past and Present*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Keddie, N. (2008, Fall). Introduction: Innovative Women: Unsung Pioneers of Social Change. *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*. doi: 10.2979(MEW.2008.4.3.1)
- Kelly, S. (2009). *Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa*. Retrieved from <http://www.freedomhouse.org/.../women's%20Rights%20in%the%20/Middle>
- Kirdar S. (2010). *Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa*. Retrieved from <http://www.freedomhouse.org/sites/default/.../United%Arab%20Emirates.pdf>
- Krause, W. (2009). *Gender and participation in the Arab Gulf*. Retrieved from <http://www.Ise.ac.uk/IDEAS/programmes/middleEastProgramme/.../Krause.pdf>

- Latham and Watkins (2009). *Employment Issues in the UAE*. Retrieved from http://www.lw.com/upload/pubcontent/_pdf/pub2801_1.pdf
- Lerner, G. (1986). *The Creation of Patriarchy*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lipsky, G. (1959). *Saudi Arabia: Survey of World Cultures*. USA: HRAF Press
- Lis, S. (2010). *Dubai from Scratch Until Today-A New Vision of Tourism*. Retrieved from <http://ebay.com.au/...Dubai-Scratch-Until-Today-New-Vision-Tourism...>
- Manseau, G. (2007). Contractual Solutions for Migrant Labourers: The case of Domestic Workers in the Middle East: *Human Rights Law Commentary*. Retrieved from <http://thesis.eur.nl/pub/7060Kandalaft%20WGD%202007-08.pdf>
- Mansoor, K. and Boddington, B. (2009). *Population Association of New Zealand*. Retrieved from <http://www.population.org.nz/.../nzpr-volume-36-khawaja-and-boddington-final.pdf>
- Marsh, D. (2010). *The Middle East Unveiled*. Oxford: HowtoBooks.
- Martin, A. (2003, April). An Experience of Teaching in the UAE: *English Today, Cambridge University Press*, 2, 51-54. doi: 10.1017/S0266078403002098
- Mehta, V. (2012, November). Law, Police Investigation and Punishment for Women in Jean Sasson's works. *Spectrum: A Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*. 1(8), 13-30. Retrieved from http://pinnaclejournals.com/spectrum_april2012.html
- Millar, J. (2008). East Leans West. *City Journal*. 2008 Vol.18. 1. Retrieved July 26, 2011, from http://www.city-journal.org/2008/18_1_abu_dhabi.html
- Mobaraki, A., & Soderfeldt, B. (2010). Gender Inequality in Saudi Arabia and its role in Public Health. *Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal*. 16, (1), 113-118. Retrieved from <http://www.emro.who.int/EMHJ.htm>
- Moghadam, V. (2003). *Modernizing Women: Gender and Social Change in the Middle East*. (2nd. Ed.), Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Moghadam, V. (2007). *Governance and Women's Citizenship in the Middle East and North Africa*. Retrieved from a paper presented at the IDRC MENA Regional Consultant, Women's Rights and Citizenship, Cairo, Egypt
- Moghadam, V. (2007). Women's Empowerment. In V. Moghadam (Editor & Contributor). *Patriarchy to Empowerment: Women's Participation Movements and Rights in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia*. (pp.1-13). USA: Syracuse University Press.

- Morrison, S. (2012, March 5). The Best and Worst Places to be a Woman. *The New Zealand Herald*. A13.
- Mosedale, S. (2005). "Assessing Women's Empowerment towards a Conceptual Framework". *Journal of International Development*. 17, 243-257.
Retrieved from <http://www.interscience.wiley.com/jpages/0954-1748/>
- Musaiger, A. (2010). Overweight and Obesity in the Eastern Mediterranean: Can we Control it? *Eastern Mediterranean Health*, 10 (6) 789-792. Retrieved from http://www.emro.who.int/EMHJ.htm/1006/10_6_2004_789_793.pdf
- Muslim Arbitration Tribunal. (n.d.). *Report-Liberation from Forced Marriages*.
Retrieved from <http://www.matribunal.com/...MAT%20FORCED%20MARRIAGE%20REPORT.pdf>
- Muslim Women: Sisters are doing it for themselves. *The Economist*. (2006, July 1). Retrieved from <http://www.economist.com/node/7118033>
- Nomani, A. (2005). *Standing Alone in Mecca*. New York: HarperSanFrancisco.
- Nonneman, C. (2010). The United Arab Emirates. In C. Matthews (Ed.), *The Middle East and North Africa*. 57, (pp. 1212-1249). London: Routledge.
- Nussbaum, S. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nyako, Y. (2010, February). *The United Arab Emirates: Some Lessons in Economic Development*. Working Paper No. 2010/11 United Nations University.
Retrieved January 10, 2011, from <http://www.wider.unu.edu>
- Nydell, M. (2006). *Understanding Arabs*. (4th Ed.), London: Intercultural Press.
- Odhiambo, A. (2012, May 25). *The Paradox of Losing Life While Giving Life in Africa*. Retrieved from <http://www.hrw.org/bios/agnes-odhiambo>
- Odhiambo, A. (2013, August 20). *Kenya: When Childbirth leads to Disability and Despair*. Retrieved from <http://www.hrw.org/bios/agnes-odhiambo>
- Opec Share of World Crude Oil Reserves (2013). *Opec Annual Statistical Report*.
Retrieved from <http://www.opec.org>Home>Data/Graphs>
- Osman, A. (2013, February). Assessment of Osteoporosis KAP among women in Assir region, Saudi Arabia. *Journal of Medicine & Medical Sciences*. 4. (2) 50-55. Retrieved from <http://www.interestjournals.org/.../assessment-of-osteoporosis-kap-among-women>

- Oxford Business Group (2013). *The Report: Saudi Arabia*. Retrieved from <http://books.google.co.nz/books?isbn=1907065768>
- Posner, G. (2005, August 2). The Kingdom and the Power, 1-3. Retrieved from [http://GPosner-New York Times-2005-almendron.com](http://GPosner-NewYorkTimes-2005-almendron.com)
- Rahbani, L. (2010). *Women in Arab Media: present but not heard*. California: Stanford University.
- Rashid, H., Osman, M., & Roudi-Fahimi, F. (2005). *Marriage in the Arab World*. Retrieved from http://www.igwg.org.pdf05/MarriageinArabWorld_Eng.pdf
- Rosenburg, M (2013). OECD Members. *Geography-About.com: Middle East Issues*. Retrieved from <http://geography.about.com>...>Statistics,Lists,&Trivia>
- Rizzo, H., & Abdul-Latif, A. (2007). The Relationship between Gender Equality and Democracy: A Comparison of Arab versus non-Arab societies. *Sociology* 41, 1151. Retrieved from <http://soc.sagepub.com/>
- Ridge, N. (2011, April 14). Why Women Graduates outnumber Men in the UAE: *Gulfnew.com* Retrieved from <http://gulfnews.com/.../Why-Women-Graduates-Outnumber-Men-in-the-UAE-1.7...>
- Sabbagh, A. (2005, November 24). *The Arab States: Enhancing Women's Political Participation*. Retrieved from [http://A-Sabbagh-Ballington,Julie and Karam,Azza\(2005\)Women in...,2005-174.129.218.71](http://A-Sabbagh-Ballington,Julie and Karam,Azza(2005)Women in...,2005-174.129.218.71)
- Sahib, W., Taher, J., El Jabari, C., Hajat, C., Adib, S., & Harrison, O. (2012). *Barriers to Breast Cancer Screening and Treatment among Women in Emirate of Abu Dhabi*. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22764635>
- Sarantakos, S. (1998). *Social Research*. (2nd Ed.), South Yarra, Australia: MacMillan.
- Sasson, J. (1992). *Princess*. London: Bantam Books.
- Sasson, J. (2004). *Daughters of Arabia*. London: Bantam Books.
- Saudi Arabia & Burying their Dead. (2009, April 24). *American Bedu*. Retrieved from <http://Americanbedu.com/2009/04/24/saudi-arabia-and-burying-their-dead/>
- Saudi Arabia: Understanding Umm's and Abu's. (2009 May 21). *Fanack.com*. Retrieved from <http://Americanbedu.com/2009/...saudi-arabia-understanding-umms-and-abu>
- Savage., J. & Singh, H. (2013, December 4). Revealed: What we earn and how your pay rates. *The New Zealand Herald*. A4.

- Scott, M. (Ed.), (2006). *The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*. London: Stacey International.
- Shakir, M. (2010). Men and Women. In F. Pohl (Ed.), *Modern Muslim Societies*. (pp. 60-83). Retrieved from <http://F.Pohl-2010-books.google.com> pp60-83.
- Sharabi, H. (1988). *Neopatriarchy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Skinner, B. (2008). *A Crime So Monstrous*. New York: Free Press.
- Sonmez, S., Apostopoulas, Y., Tran, D., & Retrope, S. (2013). Human Rights and Health Disparities for Migrant Workers in the United Arab Emirates: *Health and Human Rights*. 13 (2). 17-35. Retrieved from <http://www.hhrjournal.org>
- Statistics New Zealand 2011, *New Zealand Income Survey*: June 2011 quarter. Retrieved from <http://www.stats.govt.nz/...NZIncomeSurvey/...NZIncomeSurveyJun11qtrHO>
- Statistics New Zealand 2012, March 2012 quarter. Retrieved from <http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse>
- Thornton, G. (2013). *Women in Senior Management Roles-Gloom below Glass Ceiling*. Retrieved from <http://grantthornton.co.nz/Assets/documents/sector/BA5.pdf>
- Tolich, M. (2001). Current Work Issues. In C. Bell (Ed.), *Sociology of Everyday Life in New Zealand*. (pp. 113-126). Palmerston North, New Zealand: Dunmore Press.
- Trofin, L., & Tomescu, M. (2010). Women's Rights in the Middle East. *Contemporary Readings in Law and Social Justice*. 2 (1). Retrieved from <http://addletonacademicpublishers.com/contemporary-readings-in-law-and-social-justice/journals/crisj/about-the-journal.html>
- UNESCO (2000). *Literacy and Adult Education in the Arab World*. Retrieved from http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/pdf/country/arab_world.pdf
- UNESCO (2012). *Arab World Literacy Rates*. Retrieved from <http://www.uis.unesco.org/FactSheets/.../fs20-Literacy-day-2012-en-v3.pdf>
- UNICEF-Saudi Arabia-Statistics. (2011). Retrieved from http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/saudiarabia_statistics.html
- UNICEF-United Arab Emirate-Statistics. (2011). Retrieved from http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/uae_statistics.html
- United Nations (UN). (1997). *Human Development Report*. Retrieved from http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr_1997_en_contents.pdf

- United Nations (UN). (2009). *The Millennium Development Goals Report in Saudi Arabia*. Retrieved from <http://www.undp.org.s9>
- United Nations (UN). (2010). *The Millennium Development Goals Report in Saudi Arabia*. Retrieved from <http://www.undp.org.s9>
- United Nations Women New Zealand. (2013). Retrieved from <http://www.unwomen.org.nz>
- United Nations Women. (n.d). Retrieved from <http://www.unwomen.org> on the 11 August, 2013.
- United Nations World Health Organization (WHO). (2011). *Women and Health Report*: Retrieved from http://www.who.int/whois/whostat/EN_WH209_Full.pdf
- World Social Forum*. (2013) Retrieved from http://www.globalresearch.ca/the_anti...world_social-forum...world.../5335181
- Varia, N. (2008). “*As if I am not Human*” abuses against Asian Women Workers in Saudi Arabia. Retrieved from [http://www.HumanRightsWatch\(Organization\), NVaria-2008-dspace.cigillibrary.org](http://www.HumanRightsWatch(Organization),NVaria-2008-dspace.cigillibrary.org)
- Weston, M. (2011) *Prophets and Power*. Retrieved from <http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/4795867-prophets-and-princes>
- Wilcke, C. (2010). Looser Rein, Uncertain Gain. *Human Rights Watch*. Retrieved from <http://www.CWilcke-2010-dspace.cigillibrary.org>
- Wilson, G. (1992). In T. Allen & A. Thomas (Eds.). *Poverty and Development in the 1990's* (pp. 29-51). Oxford: Oxford University Press.