Comparison Between Islam and Christianity in Influencing the Gender Role of Women in the 21st Century

In the mosaic of 21st-century societal fabric, Islam and Christianity intricately weave contrasting threads in shaping the gender roles of women, as Islam seeks equilibrium between tradition and modernity. At the same time, Christianity navigates the delicate interplay of scriptural interpretations and evolving cultural dynamics. In the ever-evolving tapestry of the 21st century, the dynamics of gender roles have emerged as a central focal point of discussion and societal transformation. Religious beliefs, deeply ingrained in the fabric of communities worldwide, wield a profound influence on perspectives regarding gender. Among the myriad faiths shaping these viewpoints, Islam and Christianity are two major world religions, each adorned with rich traditions and scriptures that intricately contribute to moulding women's roles within their respective communities.

Fatima Mernissi's Methodology of Inferring Gender Equality from the Qur'an and Sunnah

This blog endeavours to navigate the nuanced comparison between Islam and Christianity in influencing the gender roles of women in the contemporary era. As pillars of cultural identity and moral guidance, these religions shape societal norms and expectations. Understanding the subtle interplay between religious teachings, cultural interpretations, and the evolving landscape of gender dynamics is essential for unravelling the complexities that define the status and roles of women in the diverse tapestry of the 21st century.

Chapter One: Christianity and Gender Role

Christianity's stance on gender roles varies, encompassing traditional and egalitarian perspectives. Interpretations range from emphasizing biblical-based traditional roles to advocating for gender equality, reflecting ongoing discussions within the diverse Christian community.

- ## Background

Taghavi (2018) posits that modernization involves declining traditional small communities, expanding personal choices, fostering societal diversity, and cultivating future awareness. Modernized individuals exhibit greater openness to religious change, impacting the evolving role of women in contemporary society, shifting from traditional caretaker roles to active participation

in financial establishments (Kamla, 2019). Marshall (2017) highlights that religions such as Islam and Christianity offer essential freedom and salvation irrespective of gender or status.

Explore the Latest Gender Dissertation Topics

In the 21st century, women's responses to modernization vary, with some adopting reformist beliefs, emphasizing fraternity, resistance, and social equity, while others adhere to fundamentalist perspectives (Richardson and Willis, 2019). Reformist women interpret lessons from religions like Christianity and Islam as unique contributions to the intellectual and scientific progress of the modern world (Al-Hajla et al., 2018).

● **Research Aim and Objectives**

This research examines Islam and Christianity's impact on women's significance and role in the 21st Century. The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Investigate the role of women in the 21st century from a religious perspective.
2. Assess the challenges and barriers associated with the role of women in the 21st Century.
3. Identify key elements relevant to the role of women in the 21st Century, drawing comparisons between Islam and Christianity.
4. Delve into the influence of Islam and Christianity on gender roles and the importance of women in the 21st Century.
5. Provide recommendations for elevating and enhancing the role of women in the 21st Century.

● **Position of a Woman in Christianity**

Boehnke (2011) delineates two prevailing perspectives on the role of women in Christianity, commonly observed among Evangelical Christians: the Egalitarian and Traditional views. The Traditional View underscores the dependence and submission of women to their husbands, defining their role within the church, home, and community. According to Culver et al. (2010), this view allows women to exercise spiritual duties and gifts within a designated sphere under male church leadership. Conversely, the Egalitarian View contends that women can share leadership roles in the church and possess equal rights in marriages founded on interdependent love and mutual submission (Boehnke, 2011; Culver et al., 2010).

A Sociological Approach to Religion and Belief

However, Clark's study (2014) highlights that the role of women in Christianity has been a contentious issue in recent years. The New Testament references women in diverse roles during early Christianity, including "deaconesses" and "Apostles." Yet, the precise nature of these roles remains elusive due to the temporal gap (Clark, 2014). Alexander (2013) emphasizes the New Testament's recognition of women's significant roles in house churches, granting them power. However, limitations are noted, as women are prohibited from serving as priests or bishops. Additionally, King (2014) notes a comprehensive reassessment of women's

position, history, and role in ancient Christianity over the past two decades, revealing discoveries about women who contributed to the formation of early Christianity.

- ## **Influence of Christianity on the Role and Importance of Women in the 21st Century**

Bedana, Laishram, and Singh's research (2016) underscores Christianity's influence on women's roles in 21st-century development and liberation. Conversely, Njoh and Akiwumi (2012) argue that while Christianity has elevated women's status within Christian circles, it has not uniformly impacted their societal standing. Hunt's study (2017) asserts that the role and significance of women have evolved since the third-century New Testament Church. Pui-lan's research (2010) suggests that Christianity's impact extends to cultural and social aspects of women in the 21st century, influencing traditional, social, administrative, and cultural dimensions, as supported by Bedana, Laishram, and Singh (2016). Njoh and Akiwumi (2012) highlight the benefits and opportunities Christianity has provided for women, while Hunt (2017) contends that it has also played a role in dismantling gender roles and challenging women's oppression in urban or larger societal and religious settings.

- ## **Gender Biasing and Christianity**

Moghadam (2019) contends that despite its distinctiveness, the classification of modern women implies a misleading assumption of homogeneity. The term 'modern women' has transformed from an analytical concept to a political term, subject to diverse interpretations by different groups (Sharma, 2016). In media narratives, particularly in Western societies, religions are often invoked to illustrate various forms of women's oppression (Van Osselaer et al., 2020). The diversity in beliefs and practices among Muslim and Christian women in the 21st century indicates the integration of historically, socially, and economically rooted modernization within these religions (Warren, 2018). In culturally diverse countries like India, women continue to face gender bias, contradicting the equality principles advocated by these religions (Mishra, 2017). The impact of religion on women's gender roles is further complicated by the incorporation of modernization into religious traditions, where women are now endowed with inheritance, including land, in contrast to religious norms (Elshimi, 2017). However, there are instances where religion and culture are manipulated to justify the subjugation of certain groups, often using women as political pawns and attributing significance to religion and culture as a means to divert attention from women's human rights.

Swain, Kinnear, and Steinman's study (2015) explores the sociocultural theory, acknowledging societal divisions based on gender differences and labour. Stereotypes surrounding women's increased nurturance, for example, stem from societal expectations for women to take care of children. Similarly, Bleidorn et al.'s study (2016) notes that gender-based and psychological differences arise from stereotypical gender roles assigned by society. Grysman, Merrill, and Fivush's research (2017) highlights how sociocultural theory also considers biological differences that diminish women's societal roles. Early Christian teachings, for instance,

emphasized men's importance due to physical strength and involvement in warfare, while women were confined to roles associated with caregiving and relationships.

Eagly and Wood's study (2016) introduces the social role theory as a useful lens for analyzing women's roles. This theory posits that stereotypes about women arise from the division of labour between men and women. In Western society, men were encouraged to pursue positions of power, while women were confined to nurturing roles, contributing to established stereotypes. The social role theory also suggests that the division of labour between men and women results in differentiated skills, leading to distinct outcomes in similar situations.

Chapter Two: Islam and Gender Role

Islam's perspectives on gender roles are multifaceted, encompassing both traditional and progressive interpretations. While traditionalist views often emphasize distinct roles for men and women based on Quranic teachings, contemporary scholars and Muslim communities advocate for a more egalitarian understanding, asserting that Islam promotes equitable treatment and opportunities for both genders.

• Introduction

Religious perspectives significantly shape the societal roles and importance assigned to women. Examining women's roles within specific religious frameworks has been a longstanding focus, sparking debates on gender priorities (Klingorova and Havlíček, 2015). Some religions elevate women's status above men, while others enforce stringent laws and demand female submission (Hussain, 2010; Phillips, 2009), reflecting historical influences on gender roles. In the 21st century, notable shifts have occurred in the roles and significance of women within families and society. Many religious practices now endorse equality for women in education, worship, business, and government, yet certain foundational concepts and beliefs within each religion may resist such changes (Sharma, 2016; Phillips, 2009).

• Position of a Woman in Islam

Bala (2010) and Bouachrine (2014) assert that in Islam, a woman's position is deemed equal to a man's, with both genders sharing equality in rewards, obligations, and educational opportunities. Women are obliged to worship and be subservient to God, mirroring the same expectations placed on men (Bala, 2010). However, UUA's research (2020) contradicts this, stating that Islam views women as subordinate to men, limiting their access to transportation, education, employment, and self-determination, leading to a dependency on men for basic rights.

Ali Syed (2004) presents conflicting views, acknowledging Islamic texts placing women on equal footing with men while also suggesting a lesser status for women in Islam. Bala (2010), in contrast, emphasizes Islam's provision for women's rights, including freedom of expression, property, marriage, equality in treatment, spiritual duties, political engagement, and employment.

Similarly, Ali Syed (2004) notes that women in Islam enjoy rights related to marriage, financial provisions, divorce, participation in various societal activities, and the custody of children.

Okon (2013) highlights Islam's efforts to enhance women's status compared to the pre-Islamic Jahiliyya period, emphasizing Islam's historical role in protecting and preserving women's rights. Milani (2011) underscores Islam's transformative impact, eliminating legal incapacity and inferiority for women and elevating them to positions of influence, prestige, and equality with men. Islam, according to Milani (2011), even grants women precedence over men in certain roles, such as that of a mother.

● Influence of Islam on the Role and Importance of Women in the 21st Century

Ahmad and Rae's study (2015) highlights Islam's positive impact on women's roles by removing barriers to participation in business, religious institutions, and peace-making decisions. McIntosh (2010) adds that Islam provides a legal and economic framework for women to operate in businesses, offering distinct rights and responsibilities compared to other religions. Islam fosters a supportive and moral business environment and safeguards women's interests (McIntosh, 2010). Similarly, Self and Grabowski (2012) emphasize Islam's role in providing women with social and economic opportunities while dismantling barriers that hinder their progress.

Speake's research (2012) underscores Islam's attention to women's sexual and reproductive rights, contributing to their social empowerment in the 21st century. Oxford's study (2020) supports this perspective, noting Islam's empowerment of women through enhanced educational opportunities, literacy, job prospects, and active participation in various aspects of community life. However, Bahramitash and Kazemipour's study (2006) introduces a contrasting view, portraying Islam's influence on women's roles as often perceived negatively, with critics characterizing it as conservative and patriarchal.

To Investigate Whether Tourism is a Vehicle for Women's Empowerment" Case Study

● Challenges and Barriers Associated with the Role of Muslim Women in the 21st Century

Khoshdel and Hatamzadeh's study (2012) emphasizes that, despite the advancements in the 21st century, women continue to encounter challenges in various fields, leading to misconceptions about their role and status. Jean, Payne, and Thompson (2015) point out that women's challenges in contemporary times are particularly prevalent in technology, science, mathematics, and engineering, where women remain underrepresented. Shiva (2013) underscores family-related barriers as significant impediments to women's progress in the 21st century.

Banerjee et al. (2018) note the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles across diverse platforms, stressing the importance of advancing women in science and technology for a

country's security, health, diversification, creativity, and innovation. Orser, Riding, and Stanley (2012) further emphasize that, even in the 21st century, women encounter barriers in career advancement and the technology sector, where the lack of women and women mentors remains a notable issue.

- ## Islam and Perceived Extremism

Researchers, including Notermans (2016), Davie, Heelas, and Woodhead (2017), and Ruspini et al. (2018), have identified improper religious standards, misinterpretations, or alterations for political and personal gains as significant determinants limiting women's roles in the modern world. Aplin (2019) highlights that women have been subjected to physical and mental abuse, undermining their capacities and impacting their societal roles. Samani and Marinova (2020) point out that extremist religious groups exploit limitations on basic education and early marriages in Islam to suppress women's modernization. Hilton (2017) argues that religion often plays a role in constraining and undermining women's roles in society. However, Ben-Nun Bloom (2016) contends that limitations on women can empower them to fight for freedom in the 21st century, as recognized by contemporary society.

In Muslim societies, some male religious leaders misuse religious concepts to control women and protect their male-centric and political interests (Sidahmed, 2018). Conversely, religious activist women increasingly use these concepts to advocate for imagined ideals of women's rights and ethics (Fazakarley, 2017). Fideler (2017) suggests that such activists portray conservative religious actions for women's modernization to extend their benefits. Pugh's study (2019) sheds light on the diverse and conflicting use of concepts related to women's modernization in the context of religions like Christianity and Islam.

Based on recent trends, Moghadam (2019) concludes that religious leaders, governments, and women's organizations have manipulated religions to serve conflicting political agendas. Examining contrasting patterns and variations in practices and beliefs among Muslim and Christian societies, McVeigh (2017) emphasizes the need to explore the misconception that religion is the source of women's mistreatment. This study aims to comprehensively understand religion's role in modernising and empowering women in the contemporary world.

- ## Key Elements Pertinent to the Role of Women in the 21st Century with Comparison to Islam and Christianity

The study by Al Alhareth, Al Alhareth, and Al Dighrir (2015) underscores Islam's perception of women as worthy creations of God, viewing them as caretakers of the family, including children and spouses, as corroborated by Shah (2015). Alesina, Giuliano, and Nunn's study (2013) notes that women were often prohibited from assuming leadership roles in earlier Christian societies. Still, the religious prominence of Mary in both Christianity and Islam has facilitated women taking leadership roles in their communities. Lindsey's study (2015) reveals that, in the 21st century, women still grapple with issues like limited access to education, gender-based violence,

human trafficking, and societal constraints. However, Allahdadian and Irajpour's study (2015) argues that societal progress in the 21st century has enabled women to expand their roles and make meaningful contributions.

Eteng's study (2015) highlights Christian opposition to early concepts limiting women's freedom in the Church, emphasizing biblical verses promoting women's submission. Kok's study (2016) echoes this by discussing the Christian Bible's emphasis on women's submission to husbands, the Church, society, and God. Sharify-Funk's study (2016) notes Islamic societal boundaries, positioning men dominantly and women submissively toward fathers, husbands, sons, and brothers. Barlas (2019) argues that misconceptions in Islam about women arise from cultural norms, advocating for gender equality and condemning oppression.

Bierema's study (2016) contends that the role of women has improved in the 21st century, with women taking on leadership roles to promote rights and independent choices. Developed nations, predominantly Christian, witness women advancing alongside men. However, according to Barlas (2019), Islamic societies are deemed backwards due to misconceptions imposed by religious scholars. Toffoletti and Palmer's study (2017) counters this, illustrating the active participation of women from Islamic backgrounds in sports, politics, and business, citing Islam's encouragement of such practices.

- ## Women in Socio-political Turmoil in the 21ˢᵗ Century, a Comparison Between Muslim and Christians

Bierema's study (2016) notes that the status of women in any society is intricately linked to socio-political, cultural, economic, and religious factors. The conditions for women are determined by society's operational and structural activities, particularly in the socio-political realm. Sharify-Funk's study (2016) underscores the historical challenges Islamic and Christian women face in different political domains, highlighting the complexities associated with their positions. Kassa's study (2015) argues that the male-dominated nature of the political environment often raises questions about the status of women in politics. However, Allahdadian and Irajpour's study (2015) rejects this notion, pointing out instances of women leaders overcoming challenges in the socio-political landscape. Islam, as per the study, supports women's political roles, citing examples like the Queen of Sheba and Khadija, who played significant advisory roles.

Various Islamic texts offer examples of women in leadership, challenging earlier perspectives on women's political roles, as noted by Jana (2018). However, recent socio-political conditions in Islamic states have regressed due to women facing deprivation of basic education and gender inequality. Alesina et al.'s study (2013) observes that women were barred from political participation and confined to stereotypical roles in earlier Christian societies. The Old Testament of the Bible, according to the study, restricts women's roles differently than men, positioning them as submissive. In the 21st century, changes in the political landscape have allowed many Christian women, such as Jacinda Ardern, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, to assume leadership roles. Despite facing various challenges, Ardern has navigated crises like terrorist

attacks, natural disasters, economic issues, sexism, and the COVID-19 pandemic. While Muslim women leaders in the 21st century are not as prominent, positive examples like Malala Yousufzai exist. Ryder's study (2015) highlights Malala's empowerment despite facing challenges like terrorism and lack of proper education, serving as a positive influence for Muslim women worldwide.

- # Efforts to Improve the Role of Women in the 21ˢᵗ Century

In the 21st century, evolving global perceptions of women's rights and equality are evident, with increased recognition of cultural and gender diversity. Organizations like the UN actively develop policies, frameworks, and economic incentives to promote gender equality (Allahdadian and Irajpour, 2015; Arat, 2015). Addressing gender-based stereotypes and fostering education for the younger generation, as emphasized by Maguire, Ruelas, and Torre (2016), is a crucial step toward improving women's roles, with proper education on women's rights yielding sustainable results. Arizpe's study (2015) notes that cultural transitions positively contribute to women's empowerment, bridging the gender gap as societies move from traditional practices to embracing technology.

Promoting equality and economic empowerment for women can significantly enhance their societal roles. Cornwall's study (2016) suggests that providing equal economic opportunities can lead to reduced poverty, increased prosperity, improved access to education, and better health conditions. Underdeveloped nations often face gender inequalities, but concerted efforts and campaigns aim to address issues like domestic violence, inequality, and insufficient education and healthcare. The UNDP report 2015 highlights positive developments, with women increasingly taking charge of household responsibilities, as the World Health Organization (2016) noted.

Women's education initiatives are crucial in promoting educational diversity and equipping women with the skills needed for success. However, Bushra and Wajiha's study (2015) argues that educating men about the role of women is equally important, especially in underdeveloped countries where gender perceptions differ from those in developed nations. By focusing on women's educational, economic, and social status, positive strides can be made to enhance women's societal roles.

- # Literature Gap

The role of women in society has been a source of ongoing controversy, often influenced by religious beliefs in various societies and cultures, as highlighted by Bierema's study (2016). Eteng's research (2015) further emphasizes the pivotal role of religion in shaping both positive and negative perceptions surrounding the role of women. Jana (2018) contends that the interpretation of religious texts by men contributes to the oppression of women in religious societies. Despite positive changes offering women equal economic and social opportunities for growth and prosperity (Bushra and Wajiha, 2015), challenges persist, particularly in

underdeveloped regions globally. Notably, a literature gap exists as many researchers focus on women's empowerment without adequately addressing the significant influence of religion on gender roles in the 21st century. This study aims to fill this gap by providing diverse perspectives that integrate women's empowerment with the role of religion.

- ## Chapter Summary

Chapter 2 of the study presents diverse perspectives on Islam and gender roles, comprehensively introducing the research area and underscoring its significance. It delves into the position of women in Islam, identifying the challenges and barriers they face in the 21st century. The chapter provides a descriptive analysis of Islam's influence on women's role and importance in contemporary times. Additionally, it briefly explores key elements relevant to women's roles in the 21st century, drawing comparisons within Islam. The chapter also touches upon the experiences of Muslim women amid the socio-political dynamics of the 21st century. Notably, it identifies a literature gap in the study, indicating potential areas for further research and exploration.

Chapter Three: Role of Women in the UK and UAE

In the UK, women hold diverse political, business, and academic roles, contributing significantly to various sectors. Similarly, in the UAE, women have experienced progress with increased opportunities in education, the workforce, and government, supported by government initiatives promoting gender empowerment.

- ## Introduction

Duflo (2012) emphasizes the crucial role women have historically played in societal development and progress, contributing significantly to economies worldwide. Despite their substantial contributions, women, as noted by Blossfeld and Kiernan (2019), have encountered challenges such as sexual harassment and domestic violence, facing societal questioning of their role even in the contemporary era. This chapter explores women's multifaceted contributions and challenges, specifically in the UK and UAE. It delves into the impact of religious factors, examining the influence of Christianity and Islam on women's roles in the 21st century. Additionally, the chapter compares women's roles in the UK and UAE, highlighting the unique dynamics shaping their positions in these distinct contexts.

- ## Contribution of Women in the UK and UAE from a Historical Perspective

English Heritage (2020) underscores women's substantial contributions to the UK's history, ranging from World War I nurses and World War II medical professionals and photographers to influential medieval queens. Despite their impactful roles, societal oversight has often obscured women's historical contributions, as noted by Historic England (2017). Although achieving success and high status, many women remain unnamed in history, making noteworthy contributions in fields such as gender experiments, garden shaping, archaeology, technology, science, and geosciences (Burek and Higgs, 2007).

Conversely, the UAE embassy (2009) highlights the pivotal role of women in the UAE's development, spanning infrastructure, economy, and various sectors in both government and the private workforce. Women in the UAE actively engage in politics, education, aviation, and the military, contributing significantly to job creation, demographics, transportation, housing, and various campaigns, including health and social issues. The National (2014) further notes women's participation alongside men in British invasions and political discussions, showcasing their diverse roles as ministers, diplomats, artists, entrepreneurs, healers, and teachers. Almutawa (2016) emphasizes women's substantial contributions to the UAE's pre-oil economy during the 1960s and between 1900 and 1930.

• Challenges About the Role of Women in the UK and UAE in the 21st Century

According to Statista (2019), women face challenges and issues of sexual harassment, equal pay, domestic violence, physical violence, and sexual violence in the 21st Century in the UK. Similarly, according to Sophie (2020), in the UK, women face issues of pay gap (51%), equal opportunities, providing competency (31%), discrimination, workplace policies of paternity and maternity and advancement procedures (42%), and microaggression (64%) including elusive comments, racism, and sexism. Furthermore, as per the study of Sutton et al. (2020), even in the 21st Century, a great lack of women can be seen in positions of power, including courts, corporate boardrooms, and political leadership roles. Women face issues of patriarchy, due to which women are considered less competent and less qualified than men in the workplace. Moreover, women are still believed to be less worthy of educational opportunities and are facing challenges of educational inequality (Sutton et al., 2020).

According to Nammour (2008), women in the UAE face challenges related to job opportunities, leadership, appearance on forums, and international conferences in the 21st Century. Moreover, most women are not allowed to work outside the home. In contrast, women who are allowed to work outside the home and want to pursue highly visible jobs face discrimination due to negative public perception by the media. Further, UAE women face challenges in entry, preparation, and practice in the media field (Nammour, 2008). Al Jenaibi (2015) states that women in the UAE are considered less hardworking and less intelligent than men at work. This discrimination has increased the levels of dissatisfaction, demotivation, and stress among women. Moreover, Salam's (2016) study found that UAE women face the most challenges due to traditions. 30% of women who work reported that the stereotypical portrayal of women has caused issues for them at work, in addition to gender discrimination and sexual harassment.

- # Religious Factors Affecting the Role of Women in the UK and UAE in the 21ˢᵗ Century

According to Klingorova and Havlíček (2015), religious factors have imposed several issues for women living in the UK, and the practice of religious traditions and norms in certain areas has made the issue more complex. It is because these norms and traditions contribute to the formation of gender inequalities and make the role of women subordinate in the community and society. Religious factors have created social and cultural differences between men and women and have negatively affected the role of women in decision-making and doing business in a community. Further, religious factors have also affected society's socio-political activities, cultures, and behaviours towards women. Similarly, according to Woodhead (2012), religious aspects have limited women's social patterns and norms in social and organisational settings.

However, Suwannaphoom (2016)believes that religious factors can empower the role of women in the UK, legitimise and reinforce power interests towards women, and generate resistance to dominancy towards women. At the same time, Woodhead and Catto (2013) believe that religious factors are not the only reason that affects the role of women in the UK. Still, other factors contribute equally or greatly to impacting women's role, including geographic, economic, political, and cultural factors within a region or country. Moreover, literacy, political and educational factors can help women gain power in society through religious factors (Woodhead and Catto, 2013).

Whereas, according to Alibeli (2015), religious factors in the UAE have constantly forced women to honour modesty, limiting the role of women in several areas, including businesses and communities. Moreover, in UAE, society places several religious factors over women in public participation. Further, women are believed to perform only traditional roles in their homes and communities. Moreover, AlMazrouei and Pech (2015) state that the religious factors in UAE have impacted attitudes and behaviour towards women, and men were found to have significantly lower levels of attitudes towards women. It is stated by Soffan (2016) that besides religious factors, other factors, such as marital status, age, education, employment, and religiosity, have impacted the attitudes of men towards women in the UAE. However, as per the study of Madichie and Gallant (2012), religiosity can decrease the negative behaviour of men towards women and support women in opting for their equal rights and education.

- # Influence of Islam and Christianity on the Role and Importance of Women in the UK and UAE in the 21ˢᵗ Century

Bedana et al. (2016) study states that in the 21ˢᵗ century, Christianity has positively influenced the role of women by providing them with liberation and opportunities for personal development. Furthermore, Hunt's (2017) study mentions that the New Testament Church has played a major role in improving the status of women in Christian circles. Moreover, in recent years, Christianity has successfully influenced women's traditional, social, educational, and cultural aspects

(Bedana et al., 2016). Furthermore, the study of Sharma (2016) mentions that in a developed nation like the UK, Christianity has been successful in eliminating the gender roles which were prevalent in earlier times and led to the oppression of women in Christian societies. Furthermore, the study of Ahmad and Rae (2015) suggests that Islam has also played a key role in influencing the role of women by eradicating barriers and enabling them to participate in businesses and religious activities. The study of Alibeli (2015) mentions that in states like the UAE, certain laws are set in place that allow women to actively participate in the economic and legal activities associated with the functions of a business.

Furthermore, Wodon's (2015) study discusses that Islamic laws are implemented to protect women by providing them with a supportive and moral environment for business. The study by Oxford (2020)also mentions that Islam has successfully provided opportunities to Muslim women through education, literacy, and career opportunities. It has mainly been because the people and followers focus on comprehending the teachings of Islam instead of highlighting the stereotype that has been developed against Islam about the freedom and rights of Muslim women.

The women in the UAE are aided by the support of the government and its commitment to providing equal opportunities, resulting in improved standards of women in Arab society. The study of Gupta and Mirchandani (2018) mentions that women in the UAE are an important part of the workforce and are considered essential in contributing to the economy and government of the UAE. Women in the UAE are allowed to participate actively in politics and business and have the right to education. According to the report of the UAE Embassy (2020), women outperform men in the educational department, with 77% of women in the UAE registering for higher education. Similarly, Christian women have been given improved societal statuses within the Christian community. The study of Briggs and Harrison (2015) mentions that countries like the UK in the 21st century have seen major development of women in society, which was less common in the past. Feminism is prevalent in developed societies such as the UK, which is actively playing a key role in providing equal opportunities to men. However, the study of Collier and Raney (2018) argues that women in the UK still face gender inequality and sexual harassment.

Find Out Top Feminism Dissertation Topics 2024

- ## **Differences Between the Role of Women in the UK and UAE in the 21st Century in light of Islam and Christianity**

Gupta and Mirchandani's (2018) study mentions that in recent years, women in the UAE have achieved certain measures that ensure their legal protection. However, the study by Hussain (2015) argues that the UAE also has discriminatory laws against Emirati women where permission to remarry must be taken from a male guardian. Furthermore, Islamic Sharia Law has been used since 2005 to impose such restrictions on women. Women also have to face clothing challenges that restrict them from wearing low-cut skirts and bare shoulders. Due to Islamic Sharia laws, women were confined to homes and had few opportunities. However, in the

20th century, the government established official networking systems for women in business, eliminating the lack of networking between women.

Similarly, the study of Briggs and Harrison (2015) mentions that the role of women in the UK is far more diverse due to the developed economy and infrastructure. Women in the UK actively participate in politics, have better access to education, and can gain financial benefits. Similarly, despite strict Islamic laws, women can achieve proper education, participate in business, and have job opportunities in the UAE. Therefore, the study of Zeidan (2018) mentions that Islamic and Christian societies in the 21st century have successfully tackled the misinterpretations of religious scriptures and are now providing equal opportunities to women.

- ## **Chapter Summary**

This chapter of the study focused on providing different aspects of the role of women in the UK and UAE. Therefore, the chapter briefly introduces the topic of the chapter and discusses the contribution of women in the UK and UAE from a perspective of history. Furthermore, the chapter also highlights challenges that affect the role of women in the UK and UAE in the 21st century. Moreover, the chapter also identifies the religious factors affecting the role of women in the UK and UAE in the 21st century. This chapter further discusses Islam's and Christianity's influence on women's role in the UAE and the UK, specifically in the 21st century. Chapter 3 also highlights the differences between the role of women in the UK and UAE in the 21st century in light of Islam and Christianity.

Chapter Four: Research Method

The research method functions as the study's investigative blueprint, shaping data collection and analysis. Whether qualitative or quantitative, the chosen method significantly influences the study's reliability and outcomes, aligning with research objectives for meaningful conclusions.

- ## **Research Philosophy**

There are three primary research philosophies: realism, interpretivism, and positivism. Realism offers a practical human perspective on society, emphasizing the human mind's perception of reality. On the other hand, interpretivism involves interpreting research findings based on human interests (Packard, 2017). In alignment with this, the chosen research philosophy for this study is interpretivism. Pham (2018) highlights that the rationale for selecting interpretivism lies in the researcher's capacity to recognize and appreciate variations among individuals and studies during the research process. Given the qualitative nature of this study, an interpretive philosophy will facilitate the simplification and elucidation of the gathered data.

- ## **Research Design**

The research design has been broadly divided into two main groups: quantitative and qualitative. Silverman (2016) has explained qualitative research as a collection of information without quantifiable value. The type of research design employed in this study is the qualitative approach. Glaser and Strauss (2017) noted that the qualitative method helps the researcher understand changing perceptions, attitudes or events for their study. As this study is exploratory, in which literature findings are interpreted, a qualitative design will ensure constructive results.

- ## Research Approach

The research approach is divided into two groups; the deductive approach is specifically performed on established theories to reach a single conclusion (Zalaghi and Khazaei, 2016). The inductive approach is based on empirical observations, in which additional data is collected and observed to test hypotheses and reach a general conclusion. The current study has used an inductive approach to comprehend the research phenomenon subjectively.

- ## Data Collection Method

In a study conducted by Ghauri, Grønhaug and Strange (2020), it is explained that data collection aims at identifying and collecting quality evidence that enhances the current scope of research and adds to the field of study. Data collection methods have been divided into two distinct groups: primary and secondary. In primary methods, the researcher is responsible for gathering first-hand participant knowledge about the subject of study (Keusch, 2015). On the other hand, in secondary data collection methods, previous research is explored and assessed to answer the current study's research questions. For such a research topic, a secondary data collection method was used so that literature, journals, newspapers, official statistics and facts could be quoted and analysed. In the secondary collection, it is easier to recognise and categorise alternative perspectives and find previously unidentifiable linkages (Johnston, 2017).

- ## Data Analysis

The data analysis technique used in this study is comparative analysis, which compares and contrasts the data obtained from the UK and UAE. Onwuegbuzie and Weinbaum (2017) have elaborated that in-depth and critical topic analyses can be easily given by comparing multiple variables. Keeping this in mind, the researcher has opted for comparative analysis so that each variable can be assessed based on one another. This will make the study critical and provide an effective result. Another justification for comparative analysis in a qualitative study is that it proves completely unbiased, increasing a research's validity (Thiem, 2016). As the current study is on religion and specifically comparing religious values of Islam and Christianity, a comparative analysis has been employed to make the findings neutral and credible.

- ## Ethical Considerations

While conducting the current research, the researcher was aware of the sensitivity of the research topic. Therefore, a review of the literature was done with the utmost respect to ensure the integrity of the primary research. Distorting or manipulating results and findings of previous research is against research ethics (Boutron and Ravaud, 2018). In this study, the researcher ensured the integrity of the initial research findings by avoiding discrepancies and quoting the study's conclusions. On the other hand, plagiarism is another ethical consideration while conducting secondary research, which can jeopardise the validity of a study (Mhute, 2013). The material was paraphrased along with accreditation in a well-maintained referral list to avoid this.

Chapter Five: Analysis

Analysis, the intellectual alchemy that transmutes data into nuanced understanding, is the unseen artisan shaping clarity from complexity. In the tapestry of information, analysis is the delicate thread weaving coherence through the intricate fabric of insights.

● Introduction

This chapter has focused on carrying out data analysis for research based on the influence of religions on the Gender roles of women. In contrast, the religions targeted include Islam and Christianity on influencing the importance and role of women in the 21st century. The chapter has carried out a comparative analysis for developing and identifying the key research findings of the study. The comparison will be carried out between the two countries, which are the UK and UAE. The comparative analysis is based on the secondary qualitative analysis for collecting and assessing the research reports and articles that will provide information related to the topic.

● The Influence of Religion on Gender Roles in the UK

Hunt (2017) states in his work that Christianity has removed the gender roles that tend to lead to the oppression of women in urban or large societies and religious domain settings. This means that UK society is presently focusing on the idea that men and women should be given equal rights, which Christianity supports. The author further cites that the role and importance of women have changed significantly owing to the third-century New Testament Church. The notion is also supported by Pui-lan (2010), who mentioned in his study that Christianity had positively affected women's cultural and social aspects in society. This has made it clear that both genders should be allowed independent rights in all aspects without feeling pressured.

However, Schnabel (2016) cites in his study that the influence of religion on gender roles in the UK has been extensive. The researcher further states that Jesus and early Christians lived in a male-dominated society, and the Bible reflects this particular aspect. The belief is that men and women must have different roles still common in certain Christian communities. It would not be wrong to state here that religion, in this case, Christianity, has a significant impact on gender roles in the UK. This notion is further supported by Aune and Nyhagen (2016), who reveal in

their work that Christianity significantly impacts gender roles in the UK because a particular guideline is set for both genders. It is vital that both men and women follow the established guidelines and do not try to opt for equality.

Apart from Christianity, the UK society also has Islam as the religion that is followed by numerous of the country's citizens. As per Bala (2010) and Bouchrine (2014), Islam ensures women are given equal positions to men. Religion offers rewards, obligations and education equally to both genders. It can be said here that in the UK, Muslim men and women are given rights and responsibilities per their religion.

However, McMorris and Glass (2018) do not agree with the notion of Bala (2010) and Bouachrine (2014), citing that Islam has always focused on ensuring that women are oppressed in every way possible. The author further mentions that the UK is a country where implementing Islam is not considered a positive aspect, due to which women's rights are looked down upon. On the other hand, men continue enjoying all the benefits given to them in the name of religion.

• The Influence of Religion on Gender Roles in the UAE

UAE is a country where the focus is more on implementing religion and ensuring that most of its operations are carried out under this particular aspect. Different religions co-exist within the country; however, the major one is Islam. Therefore, t the influence of religions on the Gender roles of women will be contrary in the UAE as compared to the UK. In his study, Bala (2010) clearly states that Islam has ensured that gender roles are carried out in the UAE by providing that both genders are given equal rights. Moreover, the author further mentions that Islam has given women the right to freedom of expression, property, marriage, equality in treatment and spiritual duties, political sphere and employment. It can be analysed from this notion that women are not oppressed by religion, but women empowerment takes place in this aspect.

However, Darakchi (2018) does not agree with the aspect of the positive influence of religions on the Gender roles of women in the UAE. The author is of the view that Islam focuses on restricting women from moving forward in their lives and ensures that they remain part of the household only. This particular aspect is supported by Ruspini, Bonifacio and Corradi (2018), who states that Islam does not consider women to be equal to men and has implemented the notion that women are subordinate to men in every aspect of life. At this point, Okon (2013) rejects the ideology while citing that any oppression of women was seen in the Jahiliyya period, which was pre-Islamic Arabia. Presently, Islam has been working towards providing women with their rights and ensuring their rights are protected.

Apart from Islam, Christianity is also one of the religions followed in the UAE. King (2014) mentions in his study that women's position, history and role have been revised in the last twenty years in ancient Christianity. This means that women are now given equal rights as men, along with ensuring that they are empowered to work. This can be seen in the society in the UAE, where numerous Christian women tend to work and enjoy rights and responsibilities similar to those of men in this religion.

However, Eliason et al. (2017) assert in their study that many Christian men and women do not have equal rights in the light of their religion. The author further states that men are given more preference than women regarding employment or other aspects. In the UAE, the situation is the same as well. In this situation, the notion that Christianity provides equality to men and women is not right.

• A Comparison Between Religion's Influence on Gender Roles in the UK and UAE

The influence of religions on the gender roles of women in the UK and UAE is different in some ways, as well as similar in some ways. If the focus is kept on the more prominent religion in both countries, it would not be wrong to state that gender roles are seen with equality. Hunt (2017) has stated that Christianity under the New Testament Church has ensured that women are given the importance that they deserve in society, along with women. The same can be said for the UAE, in which Bala (2010) has stated that Islam ensures that women are given the rights to freedom of expression, property, marriage, equality in treatment and spiritual duties, similar to that of men. The idea here is that women are not oppressed in any way by Islam. It can be assessed that when it comes to the specific religion that is followed in each country, gender roles are considered equal.

However, in a similar scenario, if that religion is brought into focus, which is not the main religion followed in the country, the gender roles are not equal in both countries, thereby highlighting the influence of religions on the Gender roles of women. In simple words, the aspect of Islam allowing women to have equal rights to that man in the UK is not widely accepted. McMorris and Glass (2018)stated that in the UK, women are seen as more oppressive and have to ensure that they can attain permission from the men of the family for every little activity they need to carry out. This notion is supported by Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2016), who cites that the life of women under the light of Islam to attain equal gender roles in the UK is difficult as the chances of her getting support in this area are extremely limited. The situation is the same for women who follow Christianity in the UAE. Eliason et al. (2017) believe that Christian women cannot enjoy equal rights in the name of gender roles in the UAE as the focus is usually on men for any employment. However, (Pearce, Uecker and Denton (2019) contradict the view, citing that in comparison to gender roles under the light of Islam, gender roles in Christianity tend to see more equality in the UAE as well. Women and men can have similar freedom, with a minor issue. Many Christian women cannot attain high-profile jobs in the UAE as they are not seen as fit for their positions.

• Women's Contribution to the Socio and Economic Development in the UK and UAE with Implications of Religion

Bierema (2016) states that in any society, the role of women is considered to be of high value, which is determined by the subtle and elusive arrangement of certain factors, including the socio

and economic aspects. The author further cites that women tend to depend on the operational and structural activities of society, which are seen to be responsible for allocating the conditions for women in the socio and economic development of the society. The same can be true for the UAE and the UK society. There is a need to ensure that women are part of the socio and economic development as that is how progressive societies succeed.

However, Davis and Williamson (2019) cite that making women part of the socioeconomic development is an approach that should not be carried out at all. The author reveals in his work that women usually do not have the capability and thought process to play a positive role in society's socio and economic development. Moreover, Leszczyńska and Zielińska (2016) reveal in their work that men should usually be part of socio-economic development because they are aware of the areas that would help make the society successful.

Allahdadian and Irajpour (2015) have stated that women leaders are known for rising to the socio-economic challenges in the past and are continuing to do so in the current situation. The authors further state that Islam has been known for promoting the role of women in politics, with a clear example seen in the Queen of Sheba, who was responsible for making crucial decisions for the state and her people. Similarly, Ryder (2015) cite that many Christian women have started to take up the role of leaders, with a clear example seen in Prime Minister of New Zealand, Jacinda Ardern, who has tackled various issues of terrorist attacks on Muslims, natural disasters, the pandemic of COVID-19 and so on. So, it would not be wrong to state that religion promotes women's being part of socioeconomic development in society.

However, Pfafflin (2019) believes that despite religion promoting women to be part of socio and economic development in the UK and UAE, certain aspects must be considered when bringing women into the socio and economic development. These aspects are the fact that these societies are male-dominated. Therefore, the chances of women surviving and succeeding in these societies are significantly low despite the religion allowing them to be part of the development aspect.

- ## Religious Challenges and Barriers for Women in the UK and UAE

Women's religious challenges and barriers in society, irrespective of the country they are in, remain the same. Some of the major challenges and obstacles have been linked to religion owing to the various thinking patterns that people of different religions have towards other religions, creating conflicts (Singh, 2017). One of the major forms of religious challenges and barriers that tend to occur for women is extremism in Islam. Samani and Marinova (2020) cite in their work that extremist religious groups usually use the limitation on basic education and the need for young marriages in the religion of Islam to oppress women's modernisation and growth. This notion was further supported by Hilton (2017), who cited that religion has started to play a major role in undermining the limit and quality of women in the general public. The notion of extremism is linked to Islam so deeply that it is reflected in the UK and UAE.

Muñoz-Fernández, Assudani and Khayat (2019) do not accept the notion that there are any religious challenges and barriers that are preventing women from moving forward in society in

the UK and UAE. The author further cites in his work that it is not about the societies of the UK and UAE having any religious issues. Rather, these countries have male-dominated societies that prevent women from moving forward. At this point, March (2019) cites the religious challenges and barriers that are not linked to Islam only; Christianity has its fair share of issues. The author cites that the religious difficulties and obstacles that Christian women face are related to the change in symbols representing the religious works. Many analysts believe that if the religious symbols are changed, it will change the numerous aspects of Christianity, affecting women willing to work and be part of society.

Although countries like the UK and UAE have made certain to prevent religious barriers and challenges from taking place, issues continue to exist that prevent women from becoming part of the developmental aspects. Azizah, Qoyum and Prasojo (2019) state that the governments of these countries have taken measures to protect women. Still, they have not succeeded, and women face societal challenges and barriers. According to Al-Asfour et al. (2017), not enough is being done to prevent the religious challenges and obstacles from occurring, and it continues to pressure women to become successful in life.

• Critical Evaluation of the Differences Between Gender Roles in the UK and UAE

There is no doubt that gender roles exist both in the UK and the UAE. Tackett et al. (2018) cite that the preference for giving men employment is significantly higher in the UAE than in the UK. The author further highlights that, to a certain extent, the UK is seen balancing the gender roles in some areas by ensuring that women are also made part of the job sector. However, this notion is not seen in the UAE, which is seen to be a male-dominated society. Longman and Anderson (2016) cite that women currently hold two-thirds of public sector jobs, with 30% in leadership roles and 15% in technical and academic roles. This is quite a low number compared to the percentage of men in the job sector. However, Marler (2016) does not agree that the UAE is a male-dominated society. The author believes that equal opportunities are provided to both genders. There is no differentiation in any way as the government of UAE strongly believes that both genders would bring the success required for the economy.

In contrast to the above situation, the UK has been working towards ensuring that gender roles are carried out equally. The government does not focus on the religion of the individual they are hiring but on the individual's capabilities to the organisation. Bleidorn et al. (2016) cite societal gender-based and psychological differences from the stereotypical individual role assigned and proscribed to each gender. This is an area that the UK government ensures does not become prominent in society.

Gervais (2018) cites that the UK is not focusing on having a balanced gender role in society as it is visible that women are given low-grade jobs compared to men. The country still prefers to ensure that men are given high-profile jobs with high earnings. This does not put the country providing a balanced gender role aspect. At this point, Schnabel (2016) states that the UK is working towards ensuring a balanced gender role is offered to both genders. The author further cites that the UK is considered a more liberal country than the UAE. The chances of the UK

having a balanced gender role for both genders are higher than in the UAE. For the UAE, the notion is that while living in a male-dominated society, men should be given high-profile jobs while women should be given low-grade jobs or stick with jobs that do not play a major role in the country's success.

- ## Comparison Between Islam and Christianity in Light of the Role of Religion and Role of Women in the 21st Century

Islam and Christianity are two religions that have significantly impacted women's role in the 21st century. The studies by Hunt (2017), Bedana et al. (2016), and Ahmed and Rae (2015) suggest that in their respective works, Christianity and Islam have positively influenced women in ensuring that they become part of society through various aspects. Both religions focus on the aspects that women should not be restricted by certain barriers and prevented from taking part in businesses that could also work towards bringing success to the respective countries in the 21st century. The notion is further supported by the UAE Embassy (2020), which cites that women are starting to outperform men in the education department, with 77% of the UAE registering in higher education. The source further asserts that even Christian women are being given improved statuses in society in the Christian community.

However, Aune and Nyhagen (2016) do not agree with the above notion. Aune and Nyhagen (2016) believe that there is a significant difference between Islam and Christianity regarding the role of religion and the role of women in the 21st century. The author believes that Islam still perceives women as being restricted to certain low-grade jobs or, in some cases, restricting them to their homes. Compared to Islam, Christianity allows women to become part of the 21st century by working in different fields and interacting with the opposite gender. McMorris and Glass (2018) state that another oppressive area in which Islam is not letting women come out is the interaction with the opposite gender. Many analysts indicated that women should not interact with the opposite gender as that is not part of the Islamic religion. This further prevents women from becoming part of diverse businesses. It can be said here that this is one of the reasons that has made the UAE more male-dominated while the UK continues to become a more liberal society. There is a need to ensure that women are not restricted due to religious aspects.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

In conclusion, this study embraces interpretivism, unravelling the intricacies of human perspectives within society. The chosen research philosophy adds depth to exploring diverse experiences through a qualitative lens, emphasizing its significance in understanding nuanced qualitative data.

- ## Summary of Findings

The findings of this study are based on the research material imperative for the research. Therefore, the study suggests that in early Christianity, the role of women was considered weak and was only confined to stereotypical roles. However, in the 21st century, Christianity has improved the role and importance of women in Christian societies and communities while removing the gender roles that often led to women's oppression. Similarly, the research also mentions that Islam has raised the status of women by eliminating various legal incapacities and inferiority while also providing them with prestige and influence in the Islamic community and society. More specifically, it is important to mention that the perception of the world towards Islam and its teaching is now increasing due to the continuous efforts made by scholars and Muslim leaders to highlight the true preachings of Islam, especially in the context of the role and rights of Muslim women. Therefore, in the 21st century, women in Islam actively participate in businesses, sports, community services, and Islamic education. However, the study's findings also show that in the 21st century, Muslim women still face various challenges and barriers associated with a lack of education and are often deprived of their rights.

The research also emphasises that due to misinterpretation of Islamic texts for political gains, women often become victims of violence and oppression. However, the findings of this study highlight that various steps are being taken to minimise the challenges Muslim women face. Furthermore, the study also emphasises the role of women in the Christian and Islamic societies by comparing them in detail. Moreover, the study also presents that many Muslim and Christian women can break stereotypes in tough socio-political conditions and overcome barriers by becoming leaders. Furthermore, the study also finds that countries like the UK and UAE have built certain policies to protect women and provide them with equal opportunities.

The UK also strongly focuses on gender roles through religion because of the beliefs related to the different roles of men and women in society. According to the study's findings, Christianity in the UK significantly impacts gender roles. Similarly, the UAE ensures that gender rights are carried out by implementing equal rights. The religion's influence on gender roles in the UK and UAE is different in some ways, as well as similar in some ways. The study suggests that making women part of socioeconomic development is an approach that should not be carried out at all. However, women leaders are known for rising to the socio-economic challenges of the past and are continuing to do so in the current situation. Therefore, the chances of women surviving and succeeding in these societies are significantly low despite the religion allowing them to be part of the development aspect.

• Recommendations

Women worldwide face pressing challenges that demand urgent attention from policymakers, advocates, and non-governmental organizations. While significant strides have been made in aspects of women's empowerment, persistent issues such as the gender pay gap, limited representation in small businesses, poverty, underrepresentation in public offices, and enduring domestic violence continue to undermine progress. Additionally, women grapple with substantial disparities linked to race and ethnicity, negatively impacting their status, health, and overall well-being. To address these inequalities and elevate the status of women, policymakers can implement specific policies and programs with a broad impact on the lives of women, men, and

children globally. The following recommendations aim to enhance the role of women in the 21st century:

1. **Boosting Political Participation:**
   - Facilitate initiatives that empower women to participate in politics actively, amplifying their political voices and representation.
2. **Supporting Work-Life Balance:**
   - Establish a policy infrastructure to assist women in achieving a balance between work and personal life, including provisions for paid family, medical, and sick leave.
3. **Ensuring Reproductive Rights:**
   - Advocate for increased access to reproductive rights, enabling women to engage in effective family planning and make decisions about the size of their families.
4. **Improving Healthcare Access:**
   - Enhance access to healthcare services for women and invest in the healthcare sector to address and prevent chronic diseases affecting women.
5. **Ensuring Equal Employment Opportunities:**
   - Promote equal earnings and employment opportunities for women, encouraging local authorities to scrutinize and address gender-based pay disparities within organizations.
6. **Fostering Economic Opportunities:**
   - Reduce poverty, expand business opportunities, and improve access to education and healthcare to increase opportunities for women.
7. **Enhancing Safety Measures:**
   - Implement policies to ensure women's safety by reducing violence and harassment and actively addressing issues of abuse and stalking.

By prioritizing and implementing these recommendations, societies can create an environment that fosters gender equality and empowers women in the 21st century.

● Conclusion

The research delves into the impact of Islam and Christianity on the role of women in the 21st century, examining the contributions of women from a religious perspective. It discerns that while antiquated perceptions of women have largely diminished, challenges persist for women in Islamic and Christian societies. Issues such as domestic violence, abuse, sexual harassment, and limited opportunities continue to impede the advancement of women in the 21st century.

The study underscores the pivotal role played by Islamic and Christian scriptures in shaping attitudes towards women, revealing distinctive approaches. Islam advocates for gender equality, while Christian scriptures often emphasize the submissiveness of women. Despite these

doctrinal differences, the research observes that women in the 21st century, particularly in Muslim communities, encounter more obstacles than their Christian counterparts.

Even in developed Christian societies, women grapple with challenges in their careers, incidents of sexual harassment, and domestic violence. The study suggests that adherence to the recommendations outlined could catalyze improvement in women's roles across diverse societies.

- ## Future Implications

This study holds significant potential for the global empowerment of women, serving as an educational resource for men on the pivotal role and importance of women in advancing developed and progressive societies. The research equips women to thrive in the 21st century by offering pertinent recommendations and strategies. It suggests actionable measures for policymakers to implement, fostering a safer environment for women and reinforcing their societal significance.

The study's relevance extends to religious leaders worldwide, providing a comprehensive analysis of Islam and Christianity and their impact on the importance of women. This research is particularly valuable for social workers, offering insights into key areas for women's empowerment.

In addition, the research sheds light on the roles and significance of women in both the UAE and the UK, offering valuable insights that can benefit regions grappling with issues of violence and oppression against women. Local authorities can use this information to address concerns and formulate targeted interventions. Furthermore, governments globally can leverage the research findings to identify and address challenges faced by women, laying the groundwork for effective plans and policies.

Religious scholars and students worldwide can find merit in this study, as it provides accurate information and a nuanced understanding of Islamic and Christian scriptures, emphasizing the crucial role of women in society.

References

Ahmad, M. and Rae, J.D., 2015. Women, Islam, and Peacemaking in the Arab Spring. *Peace Review*, *27*(3), pp.312-319.

Al Alhareth, Y., Al Alhareth, Y. and Al Dighrir, I., 2015. Review of women and society in Saudi Arabia. American Journal of Educational Research, 3(2), pp.121-125.

Al jenaibi, B., 2015. The Opportunities and Challenges Faced By Emirati Women in the Media Field. *Global Media Journal*, [online] 4(1-2). Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283480785_The_Opportunities_and_Challenges_Faced_By_Emirati_Women_in_the_Media_Field> [Accessed 30 April 2020].

Al-Asfour, A., Tlaiss, H.A., Khan, S.A. and Rajasekar, J., 2017. Saudi women's work challenges and barriers to career advancement. *Career Development International*.

Alesina, A., Giuliano, P. and Nunn, N., 2013. On the origins of gender roles: Women and the plough. The Quarterly Journal of Economics, 128(2), pp.469-530.

Alexander, L., 2013. Women as leaders in the New Testament. *Modern Believing*, *54*(1), pp.14-22.

Al-Hajla, A.H., Nguyen, B., Melewar, T.C. and Jayawardhena, C., 2018. Advancing Islamic branding: The influence of religious beliefs and religion-compliant product adoption. *The Marketing Review*, *18*(1), pp.25-39.

Ali Syed, M., 2004. *The Position Of Women In Islam*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Alibeli, M.A., 2015. Gender and attitudes toward women in the United Arab Emirates. *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology*, *14*(1-2), pp.109-125.

Allahdadian, M. and Irajpour, A., 2015. The role of religious beliefs in pregnancy loss. Journal of education and health promotion, 4.

AlMazrouei, H. and Pech, R.J., 2015. Working in the UAE: expatriate management experiences. *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research*.

Almutawa, R., 2016. Awareness of Emirati Women's Economic Roles Before the Oil Boom: Changing Perceptions of Gender Roles? *Inquiries Journal*, *8*(10).

Aplin, R., 2019. *Policing UK Honour-Based Abuse Crime*. Springer International Publishing.

Arat, Z.F.K., 2015. Feminism, Women's Rights, and the UN: Would Achieving Gender Equality Empower Women? *American Political Science Review*, *109*(4), pp.674-689.

Arizpe, L., 2015. The intellectual history of culture and development institutions. In *Culture, diversity and heritage: Major studies* (pp. 58-81). Springer, Cham.

Aune, K. and Nyhagen, L., 2016. RELIGION, GENDER POLITICS AND. *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Politics*.

Azizah, S.N., Qoyum, A. and Prasojo, P., 2019, August. Islam, women labour and economic development. In *Proceeding of Conference on Islamic Management, Accounting, and Economics* (Vol. 2, pp. 238-251).

Bahramitash, R. and Kazemipour, S., 2006. Myths and realities of the impact of Islam on women: Changing marital status in Iran. *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies*, *15*(2), pp.111-128.

Bala, H., 2010. Socio-economic status and role of women in Islam towards gender equality. *Gender and Behaviour*, *8*(2), pp.3143-3151.

Banerjee, S., Dafni, U., Allen, T., Arnold, D., Curigliano, G., Garralda, E., Garassino, M.C., Haanen, J., Hofstädter-Thalmann, E., Robert, C. and Sessa, C., 2018. Gender-related challenges facing oncologists: the ESMO Women for Oncology Committee survey results. *ESMO open*, *3*(6), p.e000422.

Barlas, A., 2019. Believing women in Islam: Unreading patriarchal interpretations of the Qur'an. University of Texas Press.

Bedana, L., Laishram, S. and Singh, M.P., 2016. Impact of Christianity on African Women in Buchi Emecheta's Novels.

Ben-Nun Bloom, P., 2016. State-level Restriction of Religious Freedom and Women's Rights: A global analysis. *Political Studies*, *64*(4), pp.832-853.

Bierema, L.L., 2016. Women's leadership: Troubling notions of the "ideal"(male) leader. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, *18*(2), pp.119-136.

Bleidorn, W., Arslan, R.C., Denissen, J.J., Rentfrow, P.J., Gebauer, J.E., Potter, J. and Gosling, S.D., 2016. Age and gender differences in self-esteem—A cross-cultural window. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *111*(3), p.396.

Blossfeld, H.P. and Kiernan, K., 2019. *The new role of women: Family formation in modern societies*. Routledge.

Boehnke, M., 2011. Gender role attitudes around the globe: Egalitarian vs. traditional views. *Asian Journal of Social Science*, pp.57-74.

Bouachrine, I., 2014. *Women and Islam: myths, apologies, and the limits of feminist critique*. Lexington Books.

Boutron, I. and Ravaud, P., 2018. Misrepresentation and distortion of research in biomedical literature. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *115*(11), pp.2613-2619.

Briggs, J. and Harrison, L., 2015. The status of women in UK political science. *European Political Science*, *14*, pp.105-115.

Burek, C.V. and Higgs, B., 2007. The role of women in the history and development of geology: an introduction. *Geological Society, London, Special Publications*, *281*(1), pp.1-8.

Bushra, A. and Wajiha, N., 2015. Assessing the socio-economic determinants of women empowerment in Pakistan. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *177*, pp.3-8.

Clark, E., 2014. *The Roles For Women | From Jesus To Christ - The First Christians | FRONTLINE | PBS*. [online] Pbs.org. Available at: <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/religion/first/roles.html> [Accessed 29 April 2020].

Collier, C.N. and Raney, T., 2018. Understanding sexism and sexual harassment in politics: A comparison of Westminster parliaments in Australia, the United Kingdom, and Canada. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society*, *25*(3), pp.432-455.

Cornwall, A., 2016. Women's empowerment: What works? *Journal of International Development*, *28*(3), pp.342-359.

Culver, R., Foh, S.T., Liefeld, W.L. and Mickelsen, A., 2010. *Women in ministry: Four views*. InterVarsity Press.

Darakchi, S., 2018, September. Gender, religion, and identity: Modernization of gender roles among the Bulgarian Muslims (Pomaks). In *Women's Studies International Forum* (Vol. 70, pp. 1-8). Pergamon.

Davie, G., Heelas, P. and Woodhead, L. eds., 2017. *Predicting religion: Christian, secular and alternative futures*. Taylor & Francis.

Davis, L.S. and Williamson, C.R., 2019. Does individualism promote gender equality? *World Development*, *123*, p.104627.

Duflo, E., 2012. Women empowerment and economic development. *Journal of Economic Literature*, *50*(4), pp.1051-79.

Eagly, A.H. and Wood, W., 2016. Social role theory of sex differences. *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of gender and sexuality studies*, pp.1-3.

Eliason, K.D., Hall, M., Anderson, T. and Willingham, M., 2017. Where Gender and Religion Meet: Differentiating Gender Role Ideology and Religious Beliefs about Gender. *Journal of Psychology & Christianity*, *36*(1).

Elshimi, M.S., 2017. *De-radicalisation in the UK prevent strategy: Security, identity and religion*. Taylor & Francis.

English Heritage. 2020. *Women In History | English Heritage*. [online] Available at: <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/learn/histories/women-in-history/> [Accessed 30 April 2020].

Eteng, N.G., 2015. Christianity and Gender Inequality: The Yakurr Experience. *Asian Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities*, *5*(8), pp.1-11.

Fazakarley, J., 2017. *Muslim Communities in England 1962-90: Multiculturalism and Political Identity*. Springer.

Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E., 2016. Gender, religion and humanitarian responses to refugees. *Religion and the Public Sphere*.

Fideler, E.F., 2017. *Margaret Pearmain Welch (1893–1984): Proper Bostonian, Activist, Pacifist, Reformer, Preservationist*. Wipf and Stock Publishers.

Gervais, C.L., 2018. *Beyond the Altar: Women Religious, Patriarchal Power, and the Church*. Wilfrid Laurier Univ. Press.

Ghauri, P., Grønhaug, K. and Strange, R., 2020. *Research methods in business studies*. Cambridge University Press.

Glaser, B.G. and Strauss, A.L., 2017. *Discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Routledge.

Grysman, A., Merrill, N. and Fivush, R., 2017. Emotion, gender, and gender-typical identity in autobiographical memory. *Memory*, *25*(3), pp.289-297.

Gupta, N. and Mirchandani, A., 2018. Investigating entrepreneurial success factors of women-owned SMEs in UAE. *Management Decision*.

Halberstam, J., 2019. *Female masculinity*. Duke University Press.

Hammersley, M., 2015. Research ethics and the concept of children's rights. *Children & Society*, *29*(6), pp.569-582.

Hilton, M., 2017. *Women and shaping the nation's young: Education and public doctrine in Britain 1750–1850*. Routledge.

Historic England., 2017. *Women's History | Historic England*. [online] Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/inclusive-heritage/womens-history/> [Accessed 30 April 2020].

Hunt, S., 2017. *Christianity*. Routledge.

Hussain, N., 2015. Assessing the impact of religion and family in shaping UAE national women's choice of and engagement with their careers.

Hussain, N.A., 2010, July. Religion and modernity: Gender and identity politics in Bangladesh. In *Women's Studies International Forum* (Vol. 33, No. 4, pp. 325-333). Pergamon.

Igwenagu, C., 2016. *Fundamentals of research methodology and data collection*. LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing.

Jana, P.K., 2018. Religion and culture-related causes of educational backwardness of Muslim women in West Bengal. *ZENITH International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, *8*(4), pp.44-69.

Jean, V.A., Payne, S.C. and Thompson, R.J., 2015. Women in STEM: Family-related challenges and initiatives. In *Gender and the work-family experience* (pp. 291-311). Springer, Cham.

Johnston, A., 2014. Rigour in research: theory in the research approach. *European Business Review*.

Johnston, M.P., 2017. Secondary data analysis: A method by which the time has come. *Qualitative and quantitative methods in libraries*, *3*(3), pp.619-626.

Kamla, R., 2019. Religion-based resistance strategies, politics of authenticity and professional women accountants. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, *59*, pp.52-69.

Kassa, S., 2015. Challenges and opportunities of women political participation in Ethiopia. *Journal of Global Economics*, *3*(4), pp.1-7.

Keusch, F., 2015. Why do people participate in Web surveys? Applying survey participation theory to Internet survey data collection. *Management Review Quarterly*, *65*(3), pp.183-216.

KHOSHDEL, R.M. and HATAMZADEH, N., 2012. PERSONALITY OF WOMAN IN ISLAM AND JUDAISM: THE MYSTICAL POSITION.

King, K., 2014. *Women In Ancient Christianity | From Jesus To Christ - The First Christians | FRONTLINE | PBS*. [online] Pbs.org. Available at: <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/religion/first/women.html> [Accessed 29 April 2020].

Klingorova, K. and Havlíček, T., 2015. Religion and gender inequality: The status of women in the societies of world religions. *Moravian Geographical Reports*, *23*(2), pp.2-11.

Kok, J.K., 2016. Why (suffering) women matter for the heart of transformative missional theology perspectives on empowered women and mission in the New Testament and early Christianity. *HTS Theological Studies*, *72*(4), pp.1-7.

Leszczyńska, K. and Zielińska, K., 2016. Gender in religion? Religion in gender?: commentary on theory and research on gender and religion. *Studia Humanistyczne AGH*, *15*(3).

Lindsey, L.L., 2015. Gender roles: A sociological perspective. Routledge.

Longman, K.A. and Anderson, P.S., 2016. Women in leadership: The future of Christian higher education. *Christian Higher Education*, *15*(1-2), pp.24-37.

Mackey, A. and Gass, S.M., 2015. *Second language research: Methodology and design*. Routledge.

Madichie, N.O. and Gallant, M., 2012. Broken silence: a commentary on women's entrepreneurship in the United Arab Emirates. *The International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, *13*(2), pp.81-92.

Maguirre, M.V., Ruelas, G.C. and TORRE, C.G.D.L., 2016. Women empowerment through social innovation in indigenous social enterprises. *RAM. Revista de Administração Mackenzie*, *17*(6), pp.164-190.

March, K.S., 2019. *Women's Informal Associations in Developing Countries: catalysts for change?* Routledge.

Marler, P.L., 2016. Religious change in the West: Watch the women. In *Women and Religion in the West* (pp. 35-68). Routledge.

Marshall, P., 2017. Western Christians' Responses to Denials of Religious Freedom. *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, *15*(1), pp.102-113.

McIntosh, J.C., 2010. Beyond the veil: The influence of Islam on female entrepreneurship in a conservative Muslim context. *International Management Review*, *6*(1), pp.102-111.

McMorris, J. and Glass, J., 2018. Contemporary approaches to gender and religion. In *Handbook of the Sociology of Gender* (pp. 433-447). Springer, Cham.

McVeigh, B., 2017. *How religion evolved: Explaining the living dead, talking idols, and mesmerizing monuments*. Routledge.

Mhute, I., 2013. Academic Standards, Plagiarism, and Research Ethics. *Preparing your Dissertation at a Distance: A Research*, p.53.

Milani, A.S.F.H., 2011. *The Core of Islam*. Islam in English Press.

Mishra, B.K., 2017. Digital Media in Resisting Social Inequality the Indian Experience. In *Precarity within the digital age* (pp. 123-133). Springer VS, Wiesbaden.

Moghadam, V.M. ed., 2019. *Identity politics and women: Cultural reassertions and feminisms in international perspective*. Routledge.

Muñoz-Fernández, Á., Assudani, R. and Khayat, I., 2019. Role of context on the propensity of women to own business. *Journal of Global Entrepreneurship Research*, *9*(1), p.37.

Nammour, M., 2008. *UAE Women Still Face Challenges*. [online] Khaleej Times. Available at: <https://www.khaleejtimes.com/nation/general/uae-women-still-face-challenges> [Accessed 30 April 2020].

Njoh, A.J. and Akiwumi, F.A., 2012. The impact of religion on women empowerment as a millennium development goal in Africa. *Social Indicators Research*, *107*(1), pp.1-18.

Notermans, C., 2016. *Gender, nation and religion in European pilgrimage*. Routledge.

Okon, E.E., 2013. The status of women in Islam. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, *10*(2), pp.21-27.

Onwuegbuzie, A.J. and Weinbaum, R., 2017. A Framework for Using Qualitative Comparative Analysis for the Review of the Literature. *Qualitative Report*, *22*(2).

Orser, B., Riding, A. and Stanley, J., 2012. Perceived career challenges and response strategies of women in the advanced technology sector. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *24*(1-2), pp.73-93.

Oxford., 2020. *Focus On... - Oxford Islamic Studies Online*. [online] Available at: <http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/Public/focus/essay1107_women.html> [Accessed 29 April 2020].

Packard, M.D., 2017. Where did interpretivism go in the theory of entrepreneurship? *Journal of Business Venturing*, *32*(5), pp.536-549.

Padilla-Díaz, M., 2015. Phenomenology in educational qualitative research: Philosophy as science or philosophical science. *International Journal of Educational Excellence*, *1*(2), pp.101-110.

Pearce, L.D., Uecker, J.E. and Denton, M.L., 2019. Religion and adolescent outcomes: How and under what conditions religion matters. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *45*, pp.201-222.

Pfafflin, S.M., 2019. *Scientific-technological change and the role of women in development*. Routledge.

Pham, L.T.M., 2018. Qualitative Approach to Research: A Review Of Advantages and Disadvantages Of Three Paradigms: Positivism, Interpretivism And Critical Inquiry. *University of Adelaide*.

Phillips, A., 2009. Religion: Ally, threat, or just religion? *Religion, Secularism, and Constitutional Democracy*.

Pugh, M., 2019. *Britain and Islam: A History from 622 to the Present Day*. Yale University Press.

Pui-lan, K., 2010. Christianity and Women in Contemporary China. *Journal of World Christianity*, *3*(1), pp.1-17.

Richardson, A. and Willis, C. eds., 2019. *The new woman in fiction and fact: fin-de-siècle feminisms*. Springer.

Rittichainuwat, B. and Rattanaphinanchai, S., 2015. Applying a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative design in explaining the travel motivation of film tourists in visiting a film-shooting destination. *Tourism Management*, *46*, pp.136-147.

Ruspini, E., Bonifacio, G.T. and Corradi, C., 2018. Women and religion: contemporary and future challenges: editors' introduction. *Women and Religion: Contemporary and Future Challenges in the Global Era*, p.1.

Ryder, P.M., 2015. Beyond critique: Global activism and the case of Malala Yousafzai. *Literacy in Composition Studies*, *3*(1), pp.175-187.

Salam, A., 2016. Challenges faced by working women in Al Ain city, UAE. *International Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences*, *2*(5), pp.189-197.

Samani, S. and Marinova, D. eds., 2020. *Muslim Women in the Economy: Development, Faith and Globalisation*. Routledge.

Schnabel, L., 2016. Religion and gender equality worldwide: A country-level analysis. *Social Indicators Research*, *129*(2), pp.893-907.

Self, S. and Grabowski, R., 2012. Opportunities for women and Islam: variations upon variations. *Applied Economics*, *44*(1), pp.65-79.

Shah, S., 2015. Education, leadership and Islam: Theories, discourses and practices from an Islamic perspective. Routledge.

Sharify-Funk, M., 2016. Encountering the transnational: Women, Islam and the politics of interpretation. Routledge.

Sharma, S., 2016. *Women and religion in the West: Challenging secularization*. Routledge.

Shiva, G., 2013. A study on Work-Family Balance and Challenges faced by working women. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management*, *14*(5), pp.1-4.

Sidahmed, A.S., 2018. *Islamic fundamentalism*. Routledge.

Silverman, D. ed., 2016. *Qualitative research*. Sage.

Singh, S., 2017. Economic Development and the Role of Women: An Interdisciplinary Approach. *Journal of International Economics*, *8*(1), pp.114-116.

Soffan, L.U., 2016. *The Women of the United Arab Emirates*. Routledge.

Sophie., 2020. *What Are The Biggest Challenges Women Face In The Workplace Today? | We Love Salt*. [online] Available at: <https://www.welovesalt.com/news/2020/03/what-are-the-biggest-challenges-women-face-in-the-workplace-today/> [Accessed 30 April 2020].

Speake, B., 2012. Islam and Women's Reproductive and Sexual Rights in the MENA Region. *E-International Relations Students*.

Statista. 2019. *Issues Faced By Women And Girls In Great Britain 2019 | Statista*. [online] Available at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/816121/issues-faced-by-women-and-girls-united-kingdom/> [Accessed 30 April 2020].

Sutton, S., Sitrin, C., Mahoney, B., Gerstein, J. and Touré, M., 2020. *What Are The Biggest Problems Women Face Today?* [online] POLITICO Magazine. Available at: <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2019/03/08/women-biggest-problems-international-womens-day-225698> [Accessed 30 April 2020].

Suwannaphoom, A., 2016. *Religion And Education Around The World*. [online] Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project. Available at: <https://www.pewforum.org/2016/12/13/religion-and-education-around-the-world/> [Accessed 30 April 2020].

Swain, M., Kinnear, P. and Steinman, L., 2015. Sociocultural theory in second language education: An introduction through narratives (Vol. 11). Multilingual matters.

Tackett, S., Young, J.H., Putman, S., Wiener, C., Deruggiero, K. and Bayram, J.D., 2018, July. Barriers to healthcare among Muslim women: A narrative review of the literature. In *Women's Studies International Forum* (Vol. 69, pp. 190-194). Pergamon.

Taghavi, N., 2018. *Facing the conflicts and complicities between capitalist modernisation and Islamisation: a study of women's subjectivities and emancipatory struggles in Iran* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Salford).

The National. 2014. *History Project: Women Are At The Heart Of The Story Of The UAE*. [online] Available at: <https://www.thenational.ae/uae/heritage/history-project-women-are-at-the-heart-of-the-story-of-the-uae-1.274037> [Accessed 30 April 2020].

Thiem, A., 2016. Standards of good practice and the methodology of necessary conditions in qualitative comparative analysis. *Political analysis*, *24*(4), pp.478-484.

Toffoletti, K. and Palmer, C., 2017. New approaches for studies of Muslim women and sport. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, *52*(2), pp.146-163.

Uae-embassy. 2009. *Women In United Arab Emirates: A Portrait Of Progress*. [online] Available at: <http://www.uae-embassy.org/sites/default/files/Women_in_the_UAE_Eng.pdf> [Accessed 30 April 2020].

Uae-embassy.org. 2020. [online] Available at: <https://www.uae-embassy.org/sites/default/files/Women_in_the_UAE_Eng.pdf> [Accessed 30 April 2020].

UUA. 2020. *Handout 3: Position - Muslim Women Are Not Equal*. [online] Available at: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/bridges/workshop14/185708.shtml> [Accessed 29 April 2020].

Van Osselaer, T., Rossi, L., Smeyers, K. and Graus, A., 2020. Charismatic women in religion. Power, media and social change.

Warren, S., 2018. Placing faith in creative labour: Muslim women and digital media work in Britain. *Geoforum*, *97*, pp.1-9.

Wodon, Q., 2015. Islamic law, Women's rights, and state law: the cases of female genital cutting and child marriage. *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, *13*(3), pp.81-91.

Woodhead, L. and Catto, R. eds., 2013. *Religion and change in modern Britain*. Routledge.

World Health Organization, 2016. Annual technical report 2015: Department of Reproductive Health and Research, including UNDP/UNFPA/WHO/World Bank Special Programme of Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP) (No. WHO/RHR/HRP/16.08). World Health Organization.

Zalaghi, H. and Khazaei, M., 2016. The role of deductive and inductive reasoning in accounting research and standard setting. *Asian Journal of Finance & Accounting*, *8*(1), pp.23-37.

Zeidan, D.S., 2018. The resurgence of religion: A comparative study of selected themes in Christian and Islamic fundamentalist discourses. Brill.